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## IMMIGRATION: A NEW PERSPECTIVE IN GERMAN CULTURAL MEMORY

Since the debate on changes to German citizenship law at the end of the 1990s and the passing of the Immigration Act (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*) in 2005, multiculturalism in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) has become a fact not subject to public discussion. Since that time the FRG has defined itself as an immigration country in which foreigners make up a significant portion of society.

According to data from the Federal Statistical Office (*Statistisches Bundesamt*) at the end of 2015<sup>1</sup> there were more than 9 million foreigners in Germany, making up 9.7 % of the population. Among those not possessing German citizenship the largest group is made up of Turks at one and a half million. The next largest group, made up of Poles is only half as large and is followed by Italians, Romanians and Syrians.<sup>2</sup> A large number of immigrants arriving in Germany come from other countries of the EU; however, with the great increase in refugees the number of non-Europeans in the population has also grown.<sup>3</sup>

Also worth mention are those citizens with what is called “an immigration background” (*Migrationshintergrund*) whose numbers have been tracked by the Federal Statistical Office since 2005. This broad category encompasses all those persons who came to the area of the present FRG after 1949, foreigners born in Germany and Germans with at least one non-ethnic German parent. These criteria were met in 2105 by over 17 million people or every fifth resident of the FRG, including every third child.<sup>4</sup> One third of those with an immigration background are second or third generation immigrants born in Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> When the article was being written, data from 2015 were available. In subsequent years the number of foreigners in German society has significantly increased.

<sup>2</sup> <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1221/umfrage/anzahl-der-auslaender-in-deutschland-nach-herkunftsland/> (accessed: 28.11.2016).

<sup>3</sup> EU citizens were 55% of immigrants arriving in the FRG in 2014, a year later this fell to 40%, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, (ed.), *Migrationsbericht 2015. Zentrale Ergebnisse*, 2016, p. 6, [http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2015-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2015-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?__blob=publicationFile) (accessed: 31.01.2016).

<sup>4</sup> <https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/1236/umfrage/migrationshintergrund-der-bevoelkerung-in-deutschland/> (accessed: 28.11.2016).

Immigrants to the FRG come from different social environments and cultural circles and represent diverse political and religious convictions. They bring their personal experiences, family histories and diverse historical knowledge. According to medium term prognoses for Germany, the percentage of people from immigrant communities will continue to grow and together with it the need for reflection on various aspects of immigration, both practical and theoretical.

Although the mass migration of foreigners to the FRG began in the 1950s with the signing of the first labour recruitment agreement with Italy, the development and institutionalization of German research on migration did not occur until the 1990s. At first it was mainly the social consequences of economic migration that appeared at the centre of interest. It has only been in the last decade that the subject of migration research has been expanded to include problems related to discrimination, social exclusion, identity, transculturalism and media representation. The question of relations between historical conditions, migration and memory occurred in German discourse only a little more than a decade ago, which can be interpreted as the result of the focus of German historical research in the 1990s being on ethno-national issues.

In classic writings on cultural memory by theorists such as Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, Jan and Aleida Assmann, individual memory was included within a broader framework of collective memory that creates the foundations for collective identity in which the past, present and future are interconnected. In their model, memory which stores content regarded as canonical for the nation became the primary medium of its own history. In 2001, Etienne François and Hagen Schulze published the three-volume *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* (German sites of memory). In this work “memory sites” are symbolic cultural phenomena that are especially important for a given community. The volume exclusively describes those that crystalize the memory and identity of a national community<sup>5</sup> whereby the concept of the nation as a narrative construction of a common genesis itself became a site of memory. Among the almost one hundred and twenty entries, only two touch on the topic of migration as broadly understood. They describe, however, the experiences of groups who by definition are part of the German nation, Germans expelled from countries of Central and Eastern Europe after WWII and Germans living outside of Germany.<sup>6</sup>

Today even classic works on memory treat the subject as something heterogeneous. Memory is perceived as dynamic, open and issue to negotiation. The ideas of identity, nation and culture, which are used ever more often in the plural, are also subjected to deconstruction. In her critical book *Das neue Unbehagen an der Erinnerungskultur. Eine Intervention* (The New Discomfort in the Culture of Remembrance. An Intervention), published in 2013, Aleida Assmann writes that the German “we” is comprised of many groups with different experiences and therefore many collective memories that occur alongside each other. She enumerates ethnic Germans as

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<sup>5</sup> E. François, H. Schulze, *Einleitung*, in: Idem, (ed.), *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte I*, München 2009, p. 21f.

<sup>6</sup> The entries *Flucht und Vertreibung* as well as *Auslandsdeutsche* in the chapter *Nation*.

the perpetrators of the Holocaust, Jewish fellow citizens who were also their victims, ethnic German victims of the Nazi dictatorship, war and expulsion as well as German victims of persecution in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and finally Germans with an immigration background and the different histories of the countries they come from.<sup>7</sup>

It should also be mentioned that in recent years there has been a steady growth in the percentage of immigrants from countries in which memories of the Second World War and the Holocaust (which are still central points of reference in German memory and identity) play only a marginal role or no role at all, which is a tremendous challenge, especially for teachers of history.

Attention to the gap in German research on memory, resulting from a lack of interest in the topic of migration was first brought by the historians Jan Motte and Rainer Ohliger, the editors of the volume *Geschichte und Gedächtnis in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft* (History and Memory in the Immigration Society). The articles appearing in this volume arose in connection with the 40th anniversary of the signing of the German-Turkish labour recruitment agreement which was observed, with all the attributes of a celebration, in several different locations in the FRG. It was actually the year 2001 that Motte and Ohliger recognized as a turning point for the German immigrant community, also because of the ongoing open debate on the formation of the first German immigration law (finally in force, as previously mentioned, from January of 2005) along with an accompanying general reflection on the place and future of immigrants in the FRG.<sup>8</sup>

Barely a year later, FRG President Johannes Rau in his inaugural speech at the annual convention of German historians posed questions about history as a source of identity in a society in which people from different countries and cultures live. He asked how in this case a common “we” can be built, how to define the historic roots and past of such a society and whether many histories can co-exist in such a society or whether many will be forced to assimilate a single mainstream history.<sup>9</sup> Raising the topic of acceptance for the pluralization of pictures of history and contemplating the possibility of the mutual transfer of knowledge about the past, and simultaneously asking about the role of different historical narratives in the building of identity and sense of community, Rau intertwined two discourses which were conducted independently of each other in Germany in the 1990s. On the one hand, there was a debate on the German past and its remembrance (concerning the publication of Daniel Jonah Goldhagen’s book *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*, the crimes of the Wehrmacht and the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin); on the other hand, there was debate on the future form of the national community, the tightening of asylum laws, and the modernization

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<sup>7</sup> A. Assmann, *Das neue Unbehagen an der Erinnerungskultur. Eine Intervention*, München 2013, p. 28.

<sup>8</sup> J. Motte, R. Ohliger, *Geschichte und Gedächtnis in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft. Einführende Betrachtungen*, in: *Idem*, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Rede von Bundespräsident Johannes Rau zum Historikertag 2002*, [http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Reden/DE/Johannes-Rau/Reden/2002/09/20020910\\_Reede2.html](http://www.bundespraesident.de/SharedDocs/Reden/DE/Johannes-Rau/Reden/2002/09/20020910_Reede2.html) (accessed: 25.11.2016).

of citizenship laws, the outlines of which were created in 1913. Both threads were actually inseparably linked to the definition of German identity and its sources. The new definition of German citizenship, supplemented by a degree of birthright citizenship (*jus soli*) connecting it to the fact of being born on the territory of the FRG, came into force in January 2000, exactly in the same month and year as the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, which obligates signatories to education, remembrance, and research on the topic of the Holocaust. The first German law to comprehensively regulate the question of immigration and integration in the FRG came into force in the year 2005, which also saw the unveiling of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (*Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas*) in Berlin. Internationalisation, globalisation and the later universalisation of memory of the Holocaust,<sup>10</sup> around which German work on memory as well as the commemorative activities still focus, ran in a parallel fashion to changes in approaches to questions of migration, except that it was not until the beginning of the 21st century that immigration, unlike the war and the Holocaust, began to appear in the German symbolic space.

In 2004, Motte and Ohliger wrote further on a kind of “memory vacuum” concerning immigration history, about “symbolic exclusion” or the absence of signs of it in public space and in memory discourse.<sup>11</sup> From the present perspective, it can be stated that the history of foreigners arriving in Germany now enjoys a much greater degree of interest and the work of including it in the stores of German collective memory is being done not only by experts, but above all by representatives of immigrant communities. More and more often they play a significant role among the German elite and their voice also reaches and is respected by broad sections of society. In addition, the growing temporal distance, now measured in terms of generations, dividing the present from the first mass immigration to the FRG after WWII, makes possible and simultaneously forces a turn to that phase of German history.

The history of *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) began in post-WWII West Germany in 1955 with the signing of the first bilateral agreement with Italy for the recruitment of a foreign labour force. The first official recruits from Turkey (still the largest group of arrivals) began coming to the FRG in 1961. The recruitment of guest workers lasted until November of 1973, when the then government decided to stop recruiting workers from outside the European Economic Community (*Anwerbestopp*).

Young guest workers from the time of the economic miracle are now retired and some of them have passed away. Such a time in the lives of witnesses to historical events has been called by the German researcher Jan Assmann a “critical threshold”. Once it has been crossed the manner in which collective memory works changes: “After forty years, the witnesses that have undergone important experiences as adults give

<sup>10</sup> These aspects of memory of the Holocaust as well as their implications are written about by Ljiljana Radonić and Heidemarie Uhl; L. Radonić, H. Uhl, *Zwischen Pathosformel und neuen Erinnerungskongkurrenzen. Das Gedächtnis-Paradigma zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts. Zur Einleitung*, in: L. Radonić / H. Uhl, (ed.), *Gedächtnis im 21. Jahrhundert. Zur Neuverhandlung eines kulturwissenschaftlichen Leitbegriffs*, Bielefeld 2016, pp. 7-25, here pp.10-14.

<sup>11</sup> J. Motte, R. Ohliger, *Einwanderung - Geschichte - Anerkennung*, in: *Idem*, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 18.

up their earlier working life which was oriented toward the future and enter the age in which memory and the desire to preserve and pass it on to others begin to grow".<sup>12</sup> Thus begins the process of replacing communicative memory, which lasts for three to four generations and is created and transferred to contemporaries in intergenerational dialogue. This kind of memory passes away with its witnesses making way for cultural memory, oriented only on certain fixed points in the past. Factual history becomes transformed into remembered history, preserved in the form of rituals and media coverage. Thus, the above-mentioned 40th anniversary of signing the German-Turkish recruitment agreement became the point of departure for the cyclic celebration at the federal level along with other celebrations of that type.

It should be mentioned that in the case of migration to Germany work on memory is accompanied by the development of historical research on this topic. This research is advanced in different degrees depending upon particular periods of migration in the 20th century. The topics of mass displacement of local populations from territories occupied by the Third Reich as well as the use of foreigners as forced labour during WWII are already well documented. This was brought about above all by the foundation *Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft* (Remembrance, Responsibility and Future). For many years the topics of escapees, forced evictions and expulsions of Germans after WWII enjoyed a steady level of popularity. Together with the return of the narrative about the war toward German victims, this topic even gained in popularity. It should, however, be added that due to the common ethnic background in German social awareness those expelled do not function as immigrants.

Under the influence of the most recent developments there has also been an increase, mainly within the social sciences, in the number of academic works on the arrival in Germany of refugees after the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Also resettlers and late resettlers (*Aussiedler, Spätaussiedler*), the largest group among those with an immigration background, who after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, especially the USSR, settled in large numbers in Germany are slowly beginning to appear in the area of academic interests. Due to the short time distance, the arrival of these groups of foreigners to a united Germany does not yet play a significant role in German cultural memory.

The situation is different with the first post-war wave of economic immigration. The collection of materials, research and the dissemination of knowledge on this topic since as early as 1990 has been undertaken by the Documentation Centre and Museum of Migration in Germany (DOMiD - *Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland*) headquartered in Cologne. The original goal of the organisation, which was founded by four Turkish immigrants, was just to record experiences, gather materials for exhibition and to popularize knowledge on the topic of immigration from Turkey to the FRG. In 2007 DOMiD and the registered association "Migration Museum in Germany" (*Migrationsmuseum in Deutschland*) joined

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<sup>12</sup> J. Assmann, *Kultura pamięci*, in: M. Saryusz-Wolska, (ed.), *Pamięć zbiorowa i kulturowa. Współczesna perspektywa niemiecka*, Kraków 2009, p. 81.

forces and the scope of their activities was broadened to include all groups of economic migrants to both the FRG and the GDR. In 1998, DOMiD had become known to a broader public as the organizer of the exhibit entitled *Fremde Heimat* (Foreign Home),<sup>13</sup> the first of its kind in Germany, organized with the participation of immigrants themselves. Other large exhibitions, initiated or sponsored by DOMiD, occurred on successive anniversaries of the recruitment of guest workers.

The increase of interest in the history of just this group was caused above all by the 50th anniversaries of signing the first labour recruitment agreement with Italy (1955), Spain (1960) and Turkey (1961). There were celebrations in many locations in the FRG with a series of official functions, conferences, publications and a series of exhibitions mostly based on the local experiences of urban communities. Under the auspices of the German Museums Association (*Deutscher Museumsbund*) a working group on migration was formed in 2010, while in January of 2011 the newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* wrote about a real boom in migration themed exhibits in German museums.<sup>14</sup>

However, a central museum of migration, which would allow this part of German collective memory greater recognition, inclusion and visibility remains in the planning stages although it is closer now to becoming a reality. From the beginning the idea of creating such an institution at the federal level was the brainchild of the previously mentioned DOMiD, which had collected over 100,000 objects, documents, and video and audio recordings for this purpose. In 2015, this organization presented its idea for the new museum in Cologne, with the support of the former president of the Bundestag Rita Süßmuth of the Christian Democratic Union. It was stressed numerous times by DOMiD that a national museum of migration (and not migrants) should arise as a representative, independent institution in one of the major cities of the FRG through the participation of many communities including those of immigrants.<sup>15</sup> Then in November 2016, the Bundestag set aside the funds within the German Emigration Center (*Deutsches Auswanderershaus*) in Bremerhaven to build a museum of migration bypassing DOMiD and its partners.<sup>16</sup> An alternative space for building the museum for the DOMiD was the internet and under their aegis the Virtual Migration Museum (*das Virtuelle Migrationsmuseum*) was founded.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Fremde Heimat. Eine Geschichte der Einwanderung aus der Türkei*, Ruhlandmuseum Essen 1998.

<sup>14</sup> M. Gogos, *Schaut! Uns! An!*, in: "Der Tagesspiegel" online, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/kultur/ausstellungen-zum-thema-migration-schaut-uns-an/3694136.html> (accessed: 24.11.2016).

<sup>15</sup> DOMiD's concept is presented in an informational brochure: [http://www.domid.org/sites/default/files/broschuere\\_migrationsmuseum.pdf](http://www.domid.org/sites/default/files/broschuere_migrationsmuseum.pdf) (accessed: 24. 11. 2016).

<sup>16</sup> DOMiD issued a press release critical of the government's decision: [http://www.domid.org/sites/default/files/pressemitteilung\\_domid\\_161114.pdf](http://www.domid.org/sites/default/files/pressemitteilung_domid_161114.pdf) (accessed: 24. 11. 2016).

<sup>17</sup> Current information on this undertaking can be found at the blog: <https://virtuelles-migrationsmuseum.org>. The project of the online virtual migration museum, under the name "Lifeways" (*Lebenswege*), has been previously brought to life in North Rhine-Westphalia, the Bundesland where the largest number of immigrants live: <https://lebenswege.rlp.de>; there is also an audio archive: <http://migration-audio-archiv.de>.

Following the example of local museums, which apart from exhibits devoted to migration<sup>18</sup> also conduct educational projects, prepare informational materials and internet data bases in order to help preserve the experiences and reminiscences of migrants, it can be clearly seen that introducing the perspectives of immigrants into German mainstream history is grassroots, regional and often particular in nature. History is told of particular places, of a particular category of immigrant, of a particular national or ethnic group. As a result of this bottom-up process of growth a broad social and political consensus may arise in recognising newcomers and their descendants as well as their history as visible and equal parts of the German past.

This goal cannot yet be regarded as met as can be seen in school textbooks, which are a form of media representation of memory and simultaneously a tool of politics of memory. A guide published in 2013 by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (*Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*) and devoted to the practical teaching of history in immigrant communities contains the optimistic statement that since the end of the 1990s, the subject of migration has become a regular part of German history textbooks.<sup>19</sup> A detailed analysis of the contents of German school books conducted for the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*) showed, however, that the contents of teaching materials in this area leave much to be desired. In German social studies and history textbooks and to some extent in geography textbooks migration is, in the opinion of the report's authors, presented as a source of conflicts, crises and the polarization of society. Migration and diversity are shown primarily as problems and challenges for a society that is homogenous in nature. The authors mention that similar reservations in textbooks date from before the year 2000 and they are critical of the fact that in newer didactic materials the approach to the topic of immigration is not more varied.<sup>20</sup> The recommendations formulated on the basis of these conclusions include suggestions that migration be shown to students in a broader, international and global context, not as a source of problems but as a historical norm.

It is especially important that the history of immigrants not be treated only as the history of those from foreign places but also as in terms of mutual relations and changes occurring in the receiving society. On the other hand, immigrants and their descendants have the right to learn about and assimilate the history of that society without being restricted to topics related to migration.

This is why the collective memory of an immigrant society must take into account many different perspectives. Rainer Ohliger distinguished five kinds of stories which can help co-create this memory. They are: narratives by immigrants about the act of

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<sup>18</sup> Information on earlier and current exhibits on migration can be found at the portal: [www.migration-ausstellen.de](http://www.migration-ausstellen.de).

<sup>19</sup> Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, (ed.), *Praktische Geschichtsvermittlung in der Migrationsgesellschaft. 46 Bausteine für die schulische und außerschulische historisch-politische Bildung*, Bonn 2013, p. 11.

<sup>20</sup> Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration, (ed.), *Schulbuchstudie Migration und Integration*, Berlin 2015, p. 67.

migration, narratives by foreign born minorities (related to the experiences and history of their country of origin), narratives by the majority (the experiences and history of the receiving country), narratives concerning mutual relations between the newcomers and locals, and also European and global or other supranational metanarratives.<sup>21</sup>

It is worth pointing out the fact that thanks to the opening of so many borders, and also through development and the increased availability of modern technology, the internet, satellite television as well as the increased possibilities of travel, the nature of migration processes has changed. The fact of settling in a new country does not have to entail biographical ruptures. Leaving is no longer synonymous with forgetting or being cut off from one's roots. It is possible to maintain old contacts in one's native country even while making new ones. The horizon of memory is broadened and the above-mentioned perspectives and stories may exist simultaneously.

This simultaneity of perspectives can be seen particularly well in literature and art which independent of institutional forms of memory such as museums or celebrations or anniversaries preserve images of the past, through which they can help form memory while at the same time being a place of reflection upon it. Memory about migration is carried mainly in the texts of authors recalling the immigration histories of their own environments or families. The Adalbert von Chamisso award was founded in the 1980s and named after a German poet, who was the son of a French immigrant and is given to authors for whom German is not their first language. Many recipients now belong to the elite of German language authors, such as Ilja Tojanow, Terézia Mora, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Feridun Zaimoglu, Yōko Tawada, Artur Becker and Saša Stanišić, writers from different backgrounds and personal migration experiences. The topic of migration returns also in the works of second generation artists born and raised in Germany such as the director Fatih Akin or the cabaret artist Kayah Yanar, both of whom are known to all of Germany.

Two later examples concerning the beginnings of the immigration by Turkish guest workers to the FRG bear witness to the fact that the younger generation does not only want to pass on knowledge of the past but also take part in the discussion on German cultural memory.

The comedy film *Almanya - Willkommen in Deutschland* (Almanya – Welcome to Germany) by the sisters Yasemin and Nasrin Samderelli, the granddaughters of Turkish immigrants was warmly received by the public. It debuted at the Berlin Film Festival in 2011, 50 years after the signing of the labour recruitment agreement between Turkey and the FRG. It tells the story of a Turkish immigrant, who in the 1960s took advantage of the invitation to the FRG for foreign workers as well as his children and grandchildren. Because the film grandfather Hüseyin Yılmaz, is in the script the million and first guest worker the millionth guest worker also appears. Rodrigues de Sá, a Portuguese immigrant was greeted by representatives of employers and media

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<sup>21</sup> R. Ohliger, "Am Anfang war..." *Multiperspektivische Geschichtsvermittlung in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft*, in: V. Georgi / R. Ohliger, (ed.), *Crossover Geschichte. Historisches Bewusstsein Jugendlicher in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft*, Hamburg 2009, p. 111.

with honours, music, a bouquet of flowers and a present in the form of a motorcycle upon his arrival at the Cologne train station. The millionth gastarbeiter became the most frequently reproduced icon of post-war economic immigration to the FRG.<sup>22</sup> His image was used in the film in the form of television archival materials from 1964, brought to life and filled out by the character of the fictional hero who, like many others, remained anonymous for Germany history.

In the film by the Samderelli sisters there are also calls to remember the rituals of modern Germany. A point of reference is an actual event which took place in the Chancellor's Office in 2008 under the slogan *Deutschland dankt* (Germany is grateful). The gratitude is directed to the first generation of foreign workers who during the economic miracle supported the German economy with their labour and helped make the rapid development of the FRG possible. In the film, among those invited by the Chancellor is grandfather Yılmaz, who is scheduled to give a speech at the event. However, he dies unexpectedly during a trip to Turkey. His place at the celebration is taken by his grandson, the youngest member of the family who represents the generation of the sisters who made the movie. The job of presenting the history of his grandfather falls to him.

The topic of remembering the history of the first generation of immigrants was also strongly emphasised in the 2014 novel by Deniz Utlu entitled *Die Ungehaltenen* (The Indignant). The young heroes of the book, Berliners from the Kreuzberg neighbourhood are the children of guest workers who are disappointed, ailing, leaving this world while feeling marginalized and unappreciated. For the young people from an immigration background shown in the book the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of signing the German-Turkish labour recruitment agreement is an empty gesture, folklore for the masses. They want more, a visual sign of acceptance, a museum which would become a place of intergenerational dialogue and a visible sign of their history, which, above all, would preserve the memory of their fathers and mothers, memory which could be lost together with its witnesses.

Cultural memory is alive and spontaneous. It can, however, be supported in order to protect certain chapters of the past from being forgotten and it can help a society in the search for common points of reference. The Cologne writer and orientalist of Iranian roots Navid Kermani recognizes immigration as a common denominator for the residents of modern Germany. Speaking in the Bundestag on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the passing of the German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*), he stated that taking into account the Germans expelled and resettled after WWII, over half of

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<sup>22</sup> B. Alavi, *Geschichtsbücher als Erinnerungsorte. Ein Gedächtnis für die Einwanderungsgesellschaft?*, in: J. Motte/ R. Ohliger (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 209. The motorcycle given to Rodrigues de Sá was at the end of the 1990s purchased from his family and became part of an exhibition in the House of the History of the Federal Republic of Germany (*Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*) in Bonn. In 2004, the millionth guest worker was even the subject of an academic conference "The millionth gastarbeiter, the motorcycle and the immigrant community of the federal republic" (*Der millionste Gastarbeiter, das Moped und die bundesdeutsche Einwanderungsgesellschaft*). Materials from the conference can be found online at: <http://www.iberer.angekommen.com/Doku/Doku.html>.

the current residents of Germany have some kind of migration background.<sup>23</sup> Many experiences related to immigration occur independently of historical time or ethnic background. As an example, both expellees and guest workers share longings for their homelands, difficulties in integrating or the myth of a quick return home, ideas that were held onto tenaciously both by the arrivals and by the government. Both groups became part of the same history, the history of post-war economic success of the FRG. This example shows that depending on the perspective taken, memory that divided can become shared memory and cultural memory taking into account many perspectives can become both the expression and perhaps a not obvious but important tool of integration in a multicultural society.

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#### ABSTRACT

*The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) now defines itself as an immigration country, and this fully corresponds with the actual situation. As a result of a mass inflow of foreigners, which began in the 1950s, one out of every five German citizens has some kind of family history of immigration. These facts serve as a basis for examining the extent to which the immigration that turned the FRG into a multicultural country has become part of German collective memory. While referring to the concept of cultural memory by Jan and Aleida Assmann, the author presents and analyses modern ways of preserving the immigrant past as well as expressing remembrance about it in the public sphere (celebrations, exhibitions and monographs on culture). The process of including migration in the national history is highly dynamic with its initiators being most often the descendants of immigrants who demand greater pluralism within Germany's cultural memory.*

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<sup>23</sup> Rede von Dr. Navid Kermani zur Feierstunde "65 Jahre Grundgesetz", <https://www.bundestag.de/dokumente/textarchiv/2014/-/280688> (accessed: 29. 11. 2016).