History of State Migration Research in Germany

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"Does the government need a research institution on migration at all?"[1] This question, rather rhetorically put forward by one of my interlocutors, is one core riddle of my dissertation project on knowledge production in the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, BAMF). It seems that there is a basic contradiction at work: On the one hand, expert knowledge is supposed to provide the base for political decision-making to improve its output; the BAMF has a legal commitment to produce exactly this kind of research. On the other hand, official researchers are confident to admit that this concept does not hold to reality: One government researcher called me "naïve" for believing that research had any measurable influence on policy making.[2] Indeed, there is a steadily growing body of critical literature on the repeated failure of the political system to implement scientific findings. In this paper, I develop an alternative interpretation to policy failure similar to Foucault's critique of the prison by turning the question around: Instead of what knowledge fails at achieving, I try to analyze what governmental knowledge produces (Cp. Foucault 1995: 276).

Indeed, a certain governmental perspective which influences policy discourse and public debate is clearly visible, so that it seems plausible that governmental knowledge production fulfills a certain role, albeit not the one defined by law. Discursively, this knowledge is visible in statistical concepts, such as Guest Worker (*Gastarbeiter*), Refugee (*Flüchtling*), Asylum Seeker (*Asylbewerber*) or Migrant Background (*Migrationshintergrund*). All these terms have both a root in social science and in politics, since they describe legal statuses and to a degree social groups. As this Ngram-Analysis from Google Books shows, these terms follow a distinct logic of seasonality, if analyzed against the corpus of Google books with several peaks (Graph 1).

The aim of this paper is to shed light on the conditions of the creation of this discourse on migration. In interplay between legal categories, administrative practice, statistical registration and scientific research, group designations or terms for social processes are created which in turn constitute the foundation for further social research.

The sources of the paper are for the most part the official historiography of
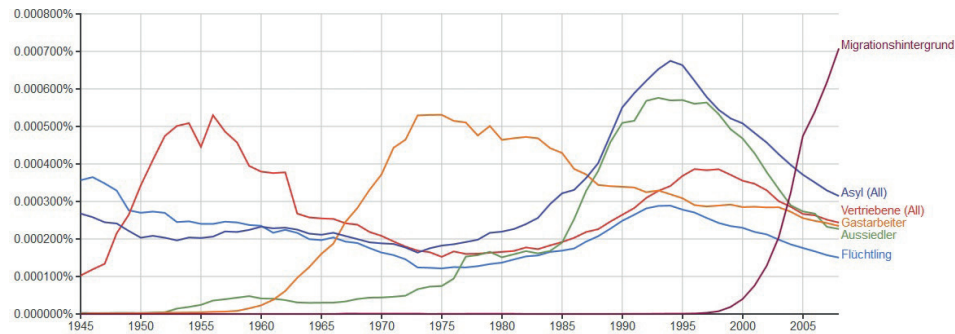
Graph 1: Ngram-Analysis from Google Books

the Federal Office, which has issued several publications on their own history to commemorate anniversaries of the institution (Kerpal 2003; Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2013a; Kreienbrink 2013). These sources are especially helpful to illustrate the self-conception of the Federal Office but should be treated with some critical distance because of the tendency of teleological, conflict-hiding style of historiography that the BAMF shares with many other institutions. These sources are completed with my own field work in the Federal Office and other state institutions, as well as primary sources such as government reports, statistics and other official documents.

By and large, four different phases of development can be discerned: Starting with the expellee and refugee research and politics in the aftermath of the Second World War, policy and research pick up momentum in the late 1960s, when Guest Worker recruitment reached its peak. The years following the halt to recruitment in 1973 and the restrictive turn in the beginning of the 1980s are sometimes omitted in official historiography; it is labelled here as "the lost decade", a phrase coined

by historian Klaus Bade (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2005: 81). Migration research and policy after about 2005 is officially named "Migration and Integration policy".

For several reasons, the Federal Office is a good object of scientific inquiry: Since 2005, this government body is responsible for implementing government migration and especially integration policies including the asylum process. Hierarchically, it is positioned between the ministry of the interior and the communal foreigner's offices, so it negotiates between high politics and street level bureaucracy and is responsible for putting political concepts into practice. Furthermore, the Federal Office reflects in its history the development of German Migration politics in a nutshell: When the BAMF was founded, it was a small and relatively unimportant institutional backwater with a narrowly confined area of responsibility – the recognition of foreign national asylum seekers. The steady increase in asylum applications from the end of the 1970s, with a peak at the beginning of the 1990s, reflects the long-standing dogma of "no country of immigration", which was put into practice

by declaring several ongoing migration movements – Guest Workers, asylum applicants, or resettlers – as exceptions to the rule, for example as "temporary guests" in case of the first two examples, or countrymen returning home in case of the last. Meanwhile, following the belated "paradigm change" with the political recognition of immigration processes and the formulation of integration policies, the BAMF has gained new responsibilities. This is especially true for the field of integration policy, an "absolute novelty" as a BAMF official recalled in an interview, but also for migration research, because of a new research unit at the Federal Office.[3] All in all, the BAMF can be considered as one of the key players in migration policy and knowledge production in Germany.

Power and Knowledge

When doing field work in state institutions, it seems that officials share an almost ritualized refusal of (academic) theory. In an almost emotional outburst, one government official rejected my questions about definitions of basic concepts like "migration" in government migration research:

> If we have a concrete question, we look which methods we can use to answer the question posed to us. In this we are not overly committed to a specific theoretical concept. We work flexibly with what serves best. If we refer to definitions [e.g. in the National Migration Report], [...] these relate to statistical data, and the statistical data depends on legal regulations.[4]

The quote is illustrative in a way, because it reveals some basic mechanisms inherent to state migration research and in general the knowledge produced and used by official administrations. This knowledge is pragmatic in a sense that it is produced for the needs of the day-to-day administration; a knowledge organized in files on single individuals stored in large data systems for specific purposes, like the Foreigner's Central Register *(Ausländerzentralregister)*, which contains data on all foreigners in Germany and serves as the main statistical source for state research in Germany today. According to Christina Boswell, the so called "instrumental understanding of knowledge" is hegemonic both in scientific theory and in state institutions: Knowledge is produced and used for a certain aim, namely to inform policy-making and ensure a high quality of the political process (Boswell 2009: 8).

When looking at the relationship between knowledge and power, Max Weber's and Michel Foucault's work offer widely discussed insights which I find useful for the construction of a makeshift framework of analysis. Following Max Weber as a starting point, his accounts of bureaucracies offer a utilitaristic perspective on knowledge, since only sound knowledge makes sure that a bureaucratic decision fulfills the standard of rationality and the rule of law. In this sense, administrative decisions are determined by scientific research.

Foucault deducts from his historical analysis of different state institutions (prisons, hospitals) an intimate relationship between knowledge and power in general, since systems of order in the "micro physics of power" are always both knowledge and power systems (Foucault 2015: 190). In bio-politics, he broadly

classifies three different styles of govern-mentality, depending on the grade of state intervention and control: Juridical systems, which discern only between legal and illegal, disciplinary regimes, which introduce gradual increments between illegal and legal to influence and monitor the behavior of individual subjects more closely; and security regimes, which steer pre-defined population groups on the basis of risk analyses (Foucault 2004: 24). Especially the latter two types constitute the above-mentioned "micro-physics of power", which develops the more influ-ence on the behavior of subject, the less this influence is visibly in open violence.

Both Foucault and Weber share a gen-eral optimism towards the functioning of bureaucracy. Weber is famous for his praise of rationalist bureaucracies, but also Foucault assumes that bureaucracies in general apply the knowledge that they create in a rationalistic, albeit rather ma-nipulative way.

> Weber saw bureaucratic forms of or-ganization as the very embodiment of Reason in human affairs, so obviously superior to any alternative form of organization that they threatened to engulf everything, locking humanity in a joyless "iron cage", bereft of spirit and charisma. Foucault was more subversive, but he was subversive in a way that only endowed bureaucratic power with more effectiveness, not less. […] Through concepts like governmentality and biopower, he argued that state bureaucracies end up shaping the parameters of human existence in ways far more intimate than anything Weber would have imagined. (Graeber 2015: 58)

Several researchers have found that in day-to-day practice, this ideal does not always hold up to reality where organizations seldom behave according to a rational, interest-driven ideal, formulating a neo-institutionalist approach to knowledge utilization (Boswell 2009: 41). However, in my field work experience, government officials frequently refer to the Weberian ideal of rationalist bureaucracies, especially in Germany, where legal competence is considered the most important skill of higher ranking officials – as opposed to, for example, managerial skills (Boswell 2009: 161). This concept can thus be considered highly influential on a discursive level but is not sufficient to describe the whole range of interactions between administrative action and scientific knowledge.

Following Boswell (2008: 279) and her theoretical framework developed in the field work in immigration authorities in Great Britain and Germany, I want to discern two different types of scientific knowledge that is used in migration politics. On the one hand, a *pragmatic knowledge* used for administrative action, especially for the forming of useful cat-egories of population to create abstract rules of decision. This follows from the Foucault/Weber line of argumentation that good knowledge is paramount for ruling, whether in a rather idealistic or a rather manipulative style of administration and is referred to (in my understanding) by the government official in the quote at the beginning of this section. The other type of knowledge frames and directs the pragmatic knowledge and can be called *symbolic*. This knowledge delivers rather legitimacy than guidelines for administra-tive action and is located more diffusely in political arguments, organizational

structures and so on and not in statistical data on the population. However, symbolic knowledge feeds back on pragmatic knowledge in defining research interests, questions which are considered relevant for policy making, and implicit normative guidelines which are usually not openly discussed. The central hypothesis of this study is that symbolic knowledge influences pragmatic knowledge in an extent that the latter makes only sense within the confines of the first.

Four Phases of Government Migration Research

In the official BAMF-historiography (Heckmann 2013), the beginnings of state migration research are connected to the administration of German refugees and expellees in the aftermath of the Second World War until the beginning of the 1960s. After the war, millions of people were migrating for one reason or the other: Refugees from territories formerly belonging to Germany, ethnic German resettlers from Eastern Europe, persons who lost their homes due to war destruction, concentration camp inmates and forced laborers, or demobilized soldiers.

Remarkably, the most urgent measures were administrative ones. For example, the Bavarian Council for Refugees contacted the American Military Government in 1946 about the problematic deportation of hundreds of thousands of expellees from the Czechoslovak Republic to war-torn Munich. The complaints however encompassed not the deportation itself, but the fact that the deportees were not issued documents (Middelmann 1959: 287).

The social and economic hardship could only be overcome if a proper administra-

tive system was to be installed first, and this required a comprehensive system which sorted the millions of migrants into distinct status groups, according to statistical markers. One of the few administrative acts which was uniformly carried out in all occupied zones of Germany was the census in 1946. The most important and difficult distinction was to be made between Germans and non-Germans, but this could not be done on the basis of citizenship alone, since many of the resettlers were neither born in Germany nor lived within its borders in the past. On the other hand, many non-Germans were still residing in Germany such as displaced persons, former prisoners of war, or former inmates of concentration camps and had to be registered separately. This distinction was paramount for the administration since every group was to be issued different resources.

To solve the problem of nationality, the concept of "ethnic origin" was created as an entry step to German citizenship, if individuals could prove German as a mother tongue or "commitment to the German people". This concept entered official German legislation in 1953 (Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and War Victims 1953) and stands for an effect of problematic administrative continuity. For example, membership in the SS was recognized as "commitment to the German people" in the meaning of the law by administrative courts.

One result of the reestablishment of the administration was the more and more complex hierarchy of different status groups among the refugees. As mentioned earlier, the distinction German/non-German was the most important, and consequentially this distinction was inscribed

in the name of the preceding authority of the BAMF founded in 1953: the "Federal Office for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees" (*Bundesamt für die Anerkennung ausländischer Flüchtlinge*). Within the German refugee population, various legal groups of refugees were created. Those who received the most support were expellees from territories that no longer belonged to Germany (*Heimatvertriebene*), such as Eastern Prussia or Silesia, followed by expellees who moved during the war to the territories lost to Poland and the USSR. Refugees from the GDR constituted a third, less privileged category.

At the same time, a very dense net of scientific surveillance over the refugee population was installed. After the census of 1946 another followed in 1950, and numerous demographic reports on housing, schooling and the work situation of the population. Additionally, larger statistical data collection measurements were carried out: Counting of farms in 1949, counting of production plants and workshops in 1950, counting of apartments in 1951, and so on. The corresponding scientific literature which emerged during the 1950s can be broadly separated into two main streams: a population science driven corpus, which deals mainly with the current situation of the refugees and expellees on the basis of this data, and a more historical-cultural body of literature with politically problematic roots.

The first group is in its outline and make up very similar to contemporary publications in population science and immigration research; even down to the design of the tables and the maps of Germany showing the distribution of various population groups across the country. Questions on the size, composition, dis-

tribution of the population in question are playing the main role, together with questions of the productive factors: Size and structure of financial assets, employment and income situation, as well as the level and extent of education. The perspective of these works is mainly abstract, research objects are usually formulated along the lines of state reason: Research on refugees means research about refugees *in the meaning of the law*; no factors of influence originating from other sources are considered. The perspectives of the state and of the social researcher meet in the expellee statistics, which condense all of these factors into numbers; these numbers are based on legal definitions, and usually on official registration files.

The second line of research stems from a rather problematic tradition of German ethnic research which was developed at about the end of the 19th century, when the question about "Germanness" and German citizenship was discussed in the context of different migration streams. The arguments about German ethnicity and blood were later used politically to legitimize both German supremacy in Central and Eastern Europe and the discrimination of people belonging to a perceived lower class of humans. This of course culminated in its most radical and violent outbursts in form of Nazi extermination policies (Aumüller 2009: 161). The logic of political legitimization does not disappear after the War; it rather takes new forms and replaces problematic concepts like "race" and "blood" with less contested terms like "culture", which are understood in an equally essentialist way. For example, scientists argue against the cultural integration of expellees:

Not only the refugees from the GDR, but also the expellees are full citizens of the Federal Republic. They will not become assimilated Bavarians or Hessians but will stay Silesian or Pomeranian. Because of this fact, the territories occupied by Poland and the USSR are to be considered as federal states of the German Federal Republic (Nahm 1959: 154).

In this context, the somewhat selective representation of research in the official historiography is interesting: According to the official historiography, expellee research was designed as commissioned research to monitor the success of the economic incorporation of the expellees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2013a: 35). This may be true for the population science branch of the research, which served a crucial role in the development of expellee integration measures. In this context, it seems reasonable to assume a classic instrumental use of scientific knowledge in policy design. Also, there are several shared interests between politics and science, like a sound statistical base for both scientific research and proper administrative action.

Following Foucault, the expellee administration can be interpreted as a security mechanism of classification, which transforms a single case into a member of a status group. These groups are classified hierarchically, according to group-specific risks that discern these groups from a norm. Rights and obligations are distributed according to the principle of correcting unfavorite developments. Scientific research is an integral part of this policy style; it helps to design the status groups according to perceived needs and monitors the success or failure of certain political measures.

The second strand of literature however does not fit the tale of "ordering" research for policy design. In contrary, it seems plausible to assume that ethnic research was successful in adapting to the new political climate and offered welcomed arguments to bolster the political support for German refugees especially in the light of the beginning of the East-West Conflict. The expellee population was one of the most important ideological foundations of the upheld claim of formerly eastern territories against all empirical rationality (Pinwinkler 2006: 44). Another example for this influence can be found in the legal act supporting expellees: Expellees were especially encouraged to take up work in agriculture to facilitate the future reoccupation of the former eastern territories (Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and War Victims 1953: 35). This example shows that ethnic research has had measurable influence on policy-making in this phase.

Guest Worker Phase

After 1955, West Germany along with other European states installed recruiting schemes for unskilled laborers from several Mediterranean countries to counter shortages of industrial labor. The guest worker system was designed as a counter-model of classic immigration nations like Canada and the United States. The central concept was pendular migration for individual workers without the intention to transform into more permanent forms of migration. This was organized by several government authorities grouped around the ministry of labor and encompassing every step from recruitment in the home

countries to transport, housing, and the public administration of the workers.

In official government documents and politicians' speeches, an economic-technocratic line of argumentation is visible: The measures discussed are in essence impersonal, the arguments are constructed around abstract objects like "labor force", "shortage of labor", or similar concepts from macroeconomics; it seems that no longer ethnic belonging but rather economic principles legitimize the policy in the larger sense: *Volkswirtschaft* instead of *Volkszugehörigkeit*. Especially after 1967, these arguments are visibly informed by the then dominant economic theory of Keynesianism with a focus on demand-driven economic development and the avoidance of mass unemployment, which could be "exported" through returning guest workers in the case of economic recession (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit 1968: 2). On the other hand, the ethnic principle and the many differences between Germans and non-Germans are frequent points of reference, like in the central political promise of the Guest Worker Regime, that "not a single German worker should suffer disadvantages from guest worker migration" (Dohse 1981).

The official historiography puts the beginning of the new era of migration research into the 1970s, a point of time when municipalities have already accepted the fact of a sedentary Guest Worker population against the official political line of temporality, and developed strategies of integration to counter further social disintegration. This is in a way correct since academic interest started to intensify around that time. However, the recruitment and placement administrations were accompanied by a rather

elaborate system of statistics and reporting, which has had a clear influence on the formulation of scientific studies on Guest Workers. Essentially, the narrow focus on questions of the labor market, combined with a somewhat paternalistic concept of workers who passively react to economic or administrative pressures are characteristic for research of that era (Cp. Bundesanstalt für Arbeit 1973: 10).

Typical "Guest Worker" studies were commissioned by municipalities or regional governments to collect data on social aspects like housing, education, family structures, etc. By and large, the data resembles the one collected during the expellee phase and contains the standard catalogue of population science; albeit with a local focus and different methods of data collection since no central register of foreigners in Germany was available at the time (Mehrländer 1987: 89).

One central concept of the political discussion is the "Second Generation", which was perceived as a "social time-bomb" (Wilpert 1984: 306). This concept is illustrative in a way because it embodies some features of the political discourse which are connecting the sphere of knowledge and the sphere of politics. First, it implies the professional care of children (this is what Second Generation refers to, of course). In the context of state authorities, this means above all schooling and social work, and indeed many publications of the era deal with the specific problems of schooling for foreign children, which established eventually the academic sub-branch of foreigner's pedagogics (*Ausländerpädagogik*). Second, the discourse reflects failures in state planning, since the very concept of the Guest Worker regime was designed to not have a second generation, and the political steps

taken at municipal level were often in opposition to the official state line which continued to claim the non-permanent nature of the presence of foreigners against all empirical reality.

The third aspect refers to the security and danger potential of the Second Generation and can be placed in a larger security discourse on Guest Workers. According to Foucault, some typical features of a security discourse are a diffuse and immanent concept of risk connected to specific "risk groups" of the population or "risk areas", as well as the future-oriented and preventive nature of politics designed to deal with this. One example for this policy is a steering mechanism of 1977 which forbids further inmoves of foreigners into neighborhoods with a high share of foreign population (Dohse 1981: 280).

The central competence of the ministry of labor in this field was replaced by the ministry of interior by the beginning of the 1980s. This illustrates the security turn in migration policy when foreigners were more and more conceptualized as a threat to public order (Eichenhofer 2013: 45). But it should be noted that the coordination role of the ministry of labor made increasingly less sense since the active recruitment of foreign labor was halted altogether in 1973.

All in all, the late Guest Worker Phase demonstrates state failures and proves central arguments of institutionalist approaches which go beyond rational knowledge utilization in administration and stress factors like institutional competition for influence, as well as policy failure and unintended policy outcomes.

A Lost Decade

The "lost decade" is a term coined by historian Klaus Bade and describes the general unwillingness to recognize the permanency of migration in Germany and the resulting lack of political reform from the end of the 1970s onwards. The main reason for this backlog was the official "no immigration" policy, summarized in the infamous dogma "Germany is no country of immigration". It came into being by the end of the 1970s as a new general concept after the end of Guest Worker recruitment and gained influence especially after the conservative turn in government in 1982. "Germany is no country of immigration" is the political line of immigration policy in this decade and can thus be conceptualized as symbolic knowledge in the sense of the framework of analysis. This means that in theory, this principle was to be applied to all the policy related to immigration and foreigners and served as the ultimate justification for often contradictory measures which needed to reconcile the official line with pragmatic need for social policy on a local level. For example, "integration" was understood as a temporary measure to soften social burdens until foreigners return to their home country (Lanz 2009: 105). It also entailed a curious practice of "defensive knowledge refusal" by government officials, as historian Klaus Bade recalls in his autobiography:

> Even the word migration was officially shunned. [...] As a result, in consultation with desk officers, one was informed, sometimes even with a hint of regret, that "if you mention migration here, I can't continue to talk to you" or alternatively "I have to call for the head of department." (Bade 2017: 19)

"No immigration" meant in practice "no immigration, except […]" since the volume of the migration streams did in fact not decline during the 1970s and 1980s, but rather organized in a different way than before. The main channels of immigration and to some degree the main areas of knowledge production shifted from Guest Worker recruitment to asylum, ethnic resettlement and family reunification.

During this decade, ethnic resettlement from Eastern Europe reached a new peak, especially around the end of the 1980s, when hundreds of thousands of ethnic Germans resettled to West Germany in wake of the political revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe. Both institutionally and politically, this was accompanied with the reestablishment of ethnic principle into the migration discourse, since resettlers received preferential status and treatment similar to the expellees in the 1960s. At the same time, the ministry of interior and the newly established office of the government's commissioner for resettlers (*Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Aussiedlerfragen*) made some efforts to frame this population movement not as migration, but rather "tried to present them to us as fellow countrymen",[5] as one government official in the Federal Statistical Office explained.

This rather generous treatment is contrasted with a more and more restrictive policy towards non-German migrants. The example of asylum is illustrative for the relationship between knowledge and policy on a pragmatic level in this decade. The Federal Office for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees had to develop expertise on political struggles in a multitude of different countries, because then and now the asylum status is granted only if applicants prove their individual political persecution. In the asylum process, a dilemma is created between the protection of politically persecuted individuals and decision-making on the basis of pre-defined categories and conditions, which is inherent to bureaucratic work on a growing body of asylum processes. A too schematic way of decision-making is prone to exploits and could often be successfully challenged in court; a too individualistic way would produce extremely long process durations.

Numerous changes in asylum law were discussed and introduced but could not solve this basic dilemma until not the right to asylum, but the access to the process itself were more restricted. In 1980, visa for certain countries of origin (most importantly Turkey) were introduced as a requirement to claim asylum, and even more so after the introduction of "safe third countries" in 1992 (Kerpal 2003: 46), which drastically lowered the numbers of asylum processes. In this context, the category of asylum applicant was invented. Before the end of the 1970s, asylum was usually granted to refugees from Eastern Europe who usually fulfilled the requirement of individual persecution and were furthermore welcomed as a proof of liberalism and openness of Western societies in the context of the Cold War. With a growing influx from underdeveloped countries, alleged misuse of asylum law, and increasing process times, "refugee" was increasingly restricted to the bureaucratic understanding of the word, namely persons recognized as such by the Federal Office. The term "asylum seeker" signified both a transitory stage of governmental examination, but also

increasingly a general mistrust towards foreigners, in line with the general "no immigration" dogma:

> It marks a shift from a period when refugees were universally assumed to need protection and were therefore called refugees from the moment they registered a claim, to the reverse situation in which their claims were presumed to be unfounded by state authorities, unless proven otherwise. The new term "asylum seeker" began to be used to describe an individual's status during this period of doubt. The doubt itself began to constitute the status of asylum seeker to the extent that by the mid-1990s it was firmly established, […] as a shorthand for undeserving and fraudulent (Haas et al. 2010: 6).

All in all, the 1980s are characterized by a policy of denial on a symbolic level, and a continuation of tendencies of securization towards the migrant population especially after the ministry of interior established its coordinating role in migration policy. In this phase the analysis scheme of pragmatic vs. symbolic knowledge seems to be especially productive since it makes effects of knowledge production visible which go beyond the notion of policy failure. The lost decade is a time where the two spheres of knowledge production frequently contradict each other and produce dilemmas for everyday-problems of the administration. One example for this is the above-mentioned field of pedagogics: Foreign pupils had to be alphabetized and schooled to avoid social conflict and meet legal requirements, but not integrated into the German schooling system to discour-age permanent settlement. One solution for this dilemma was a mock-Turkish education program in special classes carried out by German teachers.

Migration and Integration Research

During the 1990s, the "no country of immigration" dogma and the corresponding administrative practices received more and more pressure. Politically, a new social-green government implemented reforms of the citizenship law and the organization of immigration in 2000 and 2005 based loosely on the recommendations of the "Independent Commission Immigration" (*Unabhängige Kommission Zuwanderung*) led by conservative MP Rita Süssmuth. This commission called for a "change of paradigm" (Unabhängige Kommission "Zuwanderung" 2001: 64), an expression I often encountered in documents and during interviews with government officials describing this decade. Although what the commission meant by this is the installation of regular immigration channels after the Canadian point-system which was never implemented, the principle acknowledgement of a sedentary migrant population as well as some legal and administrative changes (like the aforementioned upgrading of the Federal Office) justify this notion, as one government official in the Federal Statistical Office recalls:

> als wir die, die ersten Mikrozensuszahlen in der Pressekonferenz […] in Berlin präsentiert haben, wurde der Präsident im Anschlussinterview im Fernsehen gefragt: "Ist Deutschland ein Einwanderungsland?" Und […] er sagt: "Nein, Deutschland ist

ein Zuwanderungsland. Einwanderungsland würde ja – wie bei den klassischen Einwanderungsländern – voraussetzen, dass man einen Plan hat."

When we presented the first data from Micro census, the president of the Federal Statistical Office, VK was asked during the wrap-up interview on TV whether Germany was a country of immigration. And he said "no, but Germany is a country of in-migration. The term 'immigration country' implies that – like in the classic countries of immigration – there should be a plan."[6]

The paradigm change is visible in the organization of statistical data with the introduction of the new category of "Migrant Background" in 2005. This new concept resulted from a crisis of research. Increasingly, the distinction of social groups based on nationality was becoming less relevant as a social marker due to a rise in naturalizations after the new citizenship law and the continued influx of ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe who behaved socially like immigrants but were not recognizable as such in the statistics. Like in the 1970s, pedagogics played a lead role. The widely discussed PISA study of 2001 revealed great differences in education achievements between foreign and home-born students, based on a new statistical variable which did not only consider citizenship, but also place of birth of the student and the parents. In 2005, the Federal Statistical Office presented the data on "Migrant Background" which was attributed to almost 20 percent of

the population. Foreign-born persons and their descendants are included in this category excluding expellees but including resettlers.

Both the concept of migrant background and the new competencies of the BAMF are embodied in the newly established field of integration policy and the corresponding research unit, also located at the Federal Office. Especially in the first years of the new millennium, a strive towards a scientifically grounded integration policy can be discerned in different authorities. The long tradition of integration policy on the level of municipalities was continued in the creation of communal integration concepts, many of which included a monitoring system based on statistical indicators (Friedrich et al. 2012). In the first research report of the newly established research group of the Federal Office, a call for this policy style is formulated as a program:

The establishment of an indicator system to estimate integration capacities is of utmost importance. Such a system can only be implemented on the basis of sound empirical evidence. This requires detailed and scientifically grounded reporting on social issues in migration and integration. Also, precise policy targets have to be formulated and indicators which display these targets need to be identified (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2005: 80).

In practice, most communal and federal integration concepts systematize their indicators on the basis of Esser's assimilationist theory which is most renowned for the definition of integration dimensions.

Not only in the Federal Office, where several students of Esser were involved in founding the Research Group,[7] but also for example in many of municipal integration concepts, this structure is visible so that Esser's concept can be regarded as the most influential theory in state integration measures (Aumüller 2009: 106). Curiously, it seems that over time, the direct reference to Esser or to the theoretical structure as a whole seems to disappear; When Esser was quoted as a source for the four dimensions in earlier publications, these serve now as headlines for chapters or as a common-sense reference to integration (Eichenhofer 2013: 195).

Recently, the initial impetus for research-driven policy seems to have vanished in favor of a pragmatic compromise which puts measures like language courses into the center of integration policy and resigns from further development on a theoretical or practical level. The language courses are illustrative for this development. When introduced in 2005, they were praised as a central integration policy for new immigrants; two different studies were commissioned to evaluate the organization and course content as well as the success of the students in a longitudinal study (Bundesministerium des Innern 2006; Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2008). The contents of the courses itself were not changed. The concept of 2005 and the renewal of 2015 are almost identical (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2015). Instead, gradually, disciplinary measures are introduced. For example, more and more status groups are obliged to attend the courses (Bundesregierung 2016; Eichenhofer 2013: 60); also, non-attend-ance or failure at the final exam can have consequences for the temporary residence status since 2011. Also, in contradiction to basic conceptions of the term integration, the integration courses become more and more separated, following the recommendation of the BAMF research group that course contents should be tailored more specifically to target groups like women with children, or illiterates (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2013b).

Jutta Aumüller explains this development with some disappointment regarding indicator-based integration policy, which promised initially the unlocking of decades of policy backlog by scientifically grounded steering mechanisms, very much like the bio-politics towards resettlers in the years after the war. These scientific findings were to overcome the political division between multiculturalism and assimilationism which was connected to this backlog and recommend useful and practical solutions regardless of ideological views. One main problem of this concept is however that indicator-based research cannot function properly without the selection of desired values:

> One current research approach is to measure political participation and to conclude that an immigrant group is integrated to the degree that, in aggregate, its participation resembles that of the native majority. On that view, immigrants will be integrated when their participation in alcoholism, drug abuse, pedophilia and pornography is similar to that of the majority. If that is not the kind of integration that is sought, how is it to be defined? (Aumüller 2009: 128)

All in all, there seems to be little consensus about the values behind integration policy, with the exception of language classes. All in all, the reference to integration as a "two-sided process" (Brandt et al. 2012) becomes rather rhetorical and both public discussion and political changes center on bureaucratic changes in the structure of integration courses with sometimes problematic results.

Summary

This brief overview over post-war German migration policy and research reveals some important mechanics of governmental knowledge production. Generally speaking, the framework of analysis seems productive, since both pragmatic and symbolic levels of knowledge production are clearly discernible in every phase. In this context it is interesting that the official BAMF historiography praises the virtues of the former type of knowledge as being applicable to politics, while analysis shows that the latter – as for example in the case of resettler's farms – has sometimes a much more distinct influence on legislation.

The relationship between symbolic and pragmatic knowledge is subject to dynamic development. In some cases, it is sometimes symbiotic, like during the expellee phase when symbolic knowledge on ethnic bonding is reinforced by policy measures supporting the immigrating group. The argument of shared ethnicity is again used to explain the unproblematic economic integration of this population group (Wollenschläger 2003: 41). Sometimes, pragmatic knowledge contradicts symbolic knowledge, like during the lost decade, and produces quite irrational policy outcomes, like the ones discussed in connection with Foreigner's pedagogics.

This example shows clearly the confines of pragmatic knowledge which is grounded not only in a more universal system of values and bureaucratic principles of continuity, but also in a very time-specific political discourse of legitimacy.

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Notes
1. Interview BAMF 4, 28.7.2016.
2. Reseach Notes, 15.7.2015.
3. Interview BAMF 3, 17.9.2015.
4. Interview 1 BAMF, 15.9.2016.
5. Interview 1 Federal Statistical Office, 2 February 2016.
6. Interview 1 Federal Statistical Office, 2 February 2016.
7. Interview 1 BAMF, 15.9.2016.