Korea Migration policy and Migrant Mission in Multicultural Society

한국의 이민정책과 다문화 사회 선교방향

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1. EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION POLICY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

a. Migration during the early European Middle Ages

In 1954, archeologists digging in the Viking village at Helgö, in Sweden, unearthed a small bronze statue of the Buddha dating from the fifth or sixth century A.D., originating in northern India. Similar finds exist elsewhere in Scandinavia and survive as evidence of a vibrant, migratory Viking culture during the 5th to 11th centuries AD. This fact alone helps to explain the dominance of light-coloured hair in northern Europe, indicated in the accompanying graphic.

It was not the first European migrant culture, and it was certainly not the last, to impact the settled tribes of Europe. The Celts are another notable migrant culture as, of course, were the Anglo-Saxons who settled the British Isles. Perhaps the most startling example is that of the Roma peoples of Europe who are the descendents of migrant arrivals from Northern India and who
travelled to Europe, probably via Greece, between 800-1,000 years ago. Their communities provide an uncomfortable reminder of Europe’s inability to integrate some of its historical ethnic and cultural diversity.

Also of interest, given our focus today, should be the European religious foundations of the sixth to tenth centuries that were established by migrant Irish and Anglo-Saxon monks such St. Patrick, St. Willibrord, St. Boniface, and St. Columbanus. The monasteries they founded remain a legacy to the early migratory impact of European Christianity and came to have a substantial bearing on the geography of post-Reformation Christianity in Europe.

b. Migratory theologians of the European Reformation

In 1557 there were more refugees in Geneva than Genevan-born inhabitants, and all thirteen Calvinist pastors were non-Genevans. As a result, employment and housing shortages fuelled resentment towards these foreign migrants.¹ They were not easily integrated into the community, frequently forming their own language-based church congregations, and were never reliable tenants (with limited financial means and liable to return to their homelands with little notice).

Europe’s own historical experience of divinely inspired migration is frequently overlooked in the current debates about Christian responses to migrants in Europe. Missiologist Andrew Walls was one of the first to write about the European missionary enterprise and make reference to it as a form of European emigration. He compares the history of missionary migration from Europe to the growing number of recently colonized lands with the present

migration to Europe by non-western missionaries who have arrived there to evangelise its citizens. Walls has described this as a “great reversal”.2)

The Huguenots were French Protestants of the 17th century, who suffered terrible persecution under Louis XIV after he revoked the Edict of Nantes (1598) in 1685. Religious freedoms were removed with the result that an estimated 200,000 Huguenots emigrated to countries in non-Catholic Europe, including the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and even Russia. Approximately fifty thousand settled in England, introducing the word ‘refugee’ to the English language. English pamphlet literature of the period warned of the threat the Huguenots posed to the employment market, public order and morality. They were felt to have poor standards of personal hygiene and of housing. Some pamphlet writers even pointed out that they ate strange food!

The Geneva Bible is a triumph of English biblical scholarship, achieved by migrant Protestants living in exile in Geneva. Led by Coverdale and John Knox and working under the influence of the migrant John Calvin, the Geneva Bible project contributed directly to the text of the later Authorised Version (1611). Its title page features a print of the Israelites about to cross the Red Sea, hinting at their self-understanding as a migrant community in Geneva.

c. Islamic migration in European history

The arrival of Islam in Europe is also not a recent phenomenon. The Muslim Moors of north Africa invaded Spain in 711AD and threatened northern Europe until their defeat at the hands of the

Frankish (French) military general, Charles ‘the Hammer’ Martel at the Battle of Tours in 732AD. The migrant Moors remained in Spain, naming it Al-Andalus, until the ‘reconquista’ by an alliance of Spanish forces in 1492. In the same year Christopher Columbus left Spain for the New World; a new era of European emigration was soon to be ushered in.

d. Why history?

A historical perspective encourages us to ask why the current moment dominates the discussion about European immigration policy? As a recent commentator noted,

‘First, there is little or no historical depth to the narrative: migration is presented as something new and unprecedented, even though history offers a plethora of previous cases. Second, regional and national perspectives predominate at the expense of what could be a European narrative.’

3) The contemporary idea of ‘Europe’ cannot be conceived of without reference to its long exposure to migration and migrants. Many generations later, the fair-haired descendants of the Vikings of Sweden do not consider themselves Swedish but self-identify as ‘English’, ‘Dutch’, or ‘German’. Despite many exceptions, the history of European migration can be told as a series of narratives of integration in which the Christian community has played a significant role.

When in 1984 the Council of Europe recognized the importance of European pilgrim routes, such as the medieval ‘Pilgrim’s Way’ to Santiago de Compostela, it was acknowledging that the cultural contacts resulting from historical Christian pilgrimage and migration represented one of the earliest approaches to interculturalism and cultural integration.

2. EUROPEAN MIGRATION POLICY AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORKS

a. National political frameworks

Five European cities are now characterised by hyper-diversity: London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Munich. These are cities where at least 9.5% of the total population is foreign born; where no one country of origin accounts for 25 percent or more of the immigrant stock; and where immigrants come from all regions of the world. In Europe, 29 cities have a foreign-born population of over 100,000. London, Paris and Moscow have foreign-born populations of over 1 million.

The daily experience of many national politicians is lived out in the world’s capital cities. The distorting influence of the ethnic diversity of a capital metropolis can be traced in the manner in which journalists report on migration and politicians frame migration policies and laws. It should be no surprise either that hyper-diversity is a feature of church life in the major cities of Europe. In the central administrative districts of London in 2005, for example, church census data indicates that approximately 55-60% of Sunday worshippers are non-white.4)

This diversity of ethnic and migrant presence in the city gave rise to a wide diversity of national policies and laws that determine the treatment of migrants and shape immigration practices. For this reason, increasing attempts have been made to bring migration policy within the competence of the European Union’s Institutions. This has enabled the development of less populist migration policies which draw the views of the more socially liberal countries into the political consensus, and which means that transgressor countries

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then feel the censure of European law, the European Court of Human Rights, and/or the European Court of Justice.

Today, I will discuss the current immigration policy of the European Union. This approach has the advantage of being comprehensive in scope, avoids undue attention to multiple migration policies across the EU member states, and outlines the legal framework within which the immigration policy of EU member states is broadly being drafted and implemented. The disadvantage is that exceptions will be overlooked and departures from the European ‘norm’ will be less obvious. This is somewhat unavoidable. A fuller treatment of national variations and historical development would require more time than we have available this morning.

b. The political framework of the European Union

The European Union avoids defining itself using geographical criteria. Membership of the EU is open to, ‘any European country that fulfils the democratic, political and economic criteria for membership.’ There are currently 27 member states of the European Union, with a population of just over 501 million in 2011. Outlining a vision for a Europe of reconciled nations in 1958, in the

5) Most European countries also belong to the oldest and most extensive institutional expression of collective European identity and political co-operation, the Council of Europe, founded in 1949. It has a current membership of 46 member states including Armenia, Georgia & Azerbaijan, though it currently excludes Belarus. Taken together, these countries had a population of just over 825 million in 2011.
6) In 1993 the European Council’s ‘Copenhagen Criteria’ laid down three criteria that aspirant member countries were required to fulfil: i. Stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; ii. a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; and iii. the ability to take on the obligations of membership, including support for the aims of the Union. They must have a public administration capable of applying and managing EU laws in practice.
aftermath of the Second World War, Robert Schuman inspired a generation of post-war leaders with his calls for a ‘democratic model of governance which through reconciliation develops into a “community of peoples” in freedom, equality, solidarity and peace and which is deeply rooted in Christian basic values.’7) This would require Europe’s disparate peoples to interact, trade, befriend, travel, relocate, frame laws, and marry across national borders. In today’s globalised Europe there can be few people who have no personal experience of migration or its effects. I am married to an American, my younger sister to an Irish citizen, and the middle sister to a Polish citizen. This characterizes the current era of migration in Europe and has stirred many mission field leaders in Europe into seeing migration as a key issue for mission policy and strategy.

3. EUROPEAN MIGRATION POLICY AND THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

a. Migration policy and the legal rights of EU citizens to freedom of movement within the EU

In 1985 every EU citizen was granted the legal right to travel to, reside in, and take up employment in any of the EU member states (although only implemented fully from 1995). Freedom of movement is aimed at increasing the mobility and flexibility of EU citizens within the EU. The policy approach of the EU towards internal migration is best described as ‘management’ rather than ‘control’ and in this respect the EU has gained considerable experience. The European Courts will act where they feel a member state is restricting the rights of individual citizens to enjoy the fundamental

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freedoms they enjoy. The “four freedoms” of movement of goods, services, labour, and capital rest on fundamental principles of EU law. No member state may discriminate against the citizens of another on grounds of their nationality.8)

Unwary observers frequently overlook the fact that the EU’s immigration statistics include residents of EU countries who are entering or re-entering another EU country of which they are already a citizen. This could be where the individuals have worked in another country for an extended period of residency in another country. It might also include children who are citizens of a country on account of one or both parents, and who are entering their country of citizenship for the first time. In 2008, 15% (or more than half a million) accounted for as ‘immigrants’ by the countries of the European Union fell into these categories. Returning missionaries and their children born overseas, contribute to this total.

In 2008, there were 621,000 Chinese citizens living in the European Union, the fourth largest non-EU diaspora group. However, if one factors in the presence of EU migrants residing in other EU states, populations with a larger diaspora presence in Europe than those of China include Romania, Italy, Poland, Portugal, the U.K. and Germany. When reckoning for the apparent ‘failure’ of European immigration policies we must acknowledge such relatively commonplace internal migration.

b. Immigration Policy and the competency of the European Union

The legal competency of the European Union is established by two key treaties. The Treaty of Rome, signed in 1957 (and now known

8) The first paragraph of Article 39 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (Maastricht, 1993) states that 'Freedom of movement for workers shall be secured within the Community.'
as the Treaty for Establishing the European Union or TFEU) and the Maastricht Treaty signed in 1992 (now known as the Treaty on the European Union or TEU). These have been amended by a number of interim treaties, known as consolidating treaties. These include the Merger Treaty (signed 1965), the Amsterdam Treaty (signed 1999), the Nice Treaty (2001) and the Lisbon Treaty (signed 2007).

Within the legal framework established by these various treaties, important aspects of immigration policy have been gradually defined. The legal framework for removing internal border checks (within the so-called ‘Schengen zone’) and governing external border controls was established by the 1985 Schengen Treaty.

Migration and asylum policies were defined by the Amsterdam Treaty (1999) with reference to justice and security policies and, from this point onwards, the EU has gained legal competence in a growing number of areas of immigration policy.

Further important work within the Dublin II agreement (2003) outlined the principle that all applicants for asylum should have their case heard in their original country of arrival in the EU, irrespective of their current place of residence within the EU.

A number of harmonizing measures have been proposed in several EU ‘Green Papers’, or Directives, issued since 2004. These outline the harmonization of European labour markets (2004)\(^9\), the harmonization of migrant integration (2005)\(^10\), the harmonization of asylum (2007)\(^11\), and the harmonization of border management (2008)\(^12\). Since 2004, the EU directives have also dealt with family

\(^12\) A comprehensive vision for an integrated European border management system for the 21st century, 2008.
reunification, the legal status of third-country nationals, students, researchers, victims of trafficking, and the admission of highly qualified third-county nationals.\textsuperscript{13)}

With the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty from 2009, treaty provisions regarding immigration and asylum policy have assumed a move towards greater harmonization of immigration policy across the EU. In 2007, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso remarked to the European media that it was “absurd to have 27 immigration policies in Europe.”\textsuperscript{14)} Subsequently the Lisbon Treaty addresses this in Article 79 which outlines a common European immigration policy:

‘aimed at ensuring, at all stages, the efficient management of migration flows, fair treatment of third-country nationals residing legally in Member States, and enhanced measures to combat illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings.’

Within Europe, the member states currently feeling the most pressure are those at the external borders of the EU, particularly those facing south and east. The Greek, Italian, Maltese, Hungarian, French and Spanish governments have been particularly vocal in their call for greater efforts at harmonization of immigration policy and for greater access to EU funds to meet the cost of immigrant welfare and integration.

c. European Immigration Policy and the harmonization of migrant integration

The EU’s Common basic principles for immigrant integration policy

\textsuperscript{13} Hailbronner, 2010, p4.

\textsuperscript{14} An ethnic Romani man was arrested in November 2007 for the murder of an Italian women. This sparked a wave of ejections of Romanian Romani from Italy on the grounds that security concerns over-ride the EU basis of the free movement of people.
in the European Union (2005) demonstrates a commitment to integration that avoids the French model of assimilation and the multicultural models of the UK, Ireland, and the Netherlands. Integration is now focused on more practical issues including language learning and ensuring access to healthcare, social provisions, education, labour markets, as well as working towards active participation in civil and political processes. The regular interaction of citizens and migrants is acknowledged as a key factor in integration.\textsuperscript{15} The importance of integration to the European political process is seen in the May 2011 publication of Migrant Integration by the EU’s Eurobarometer research agency. Social interaction was most likely in the workplace, followed by school. The main barriers to interaction were language, cultural differences and stereotyping (including casting migrants as criminals, intent on pursuing illegal entry, tax evasion, and corrupt business practices).\textsuperscript{16}

In May, 2007, the then EU home affairs commissioner Franco Frattini said that "There can be no immigration without integration.\textsuperscript{17} In February 2009 the Delegation of the European Commission to the USA reported that "The integration of third-country nationals in EU Member States is one of the greatest challenges facing the common immigration policy and a key element in promoting economic and social cohesion within the EU."\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15} The Council of Europe’s European Committee on Migration had established a Specialist Group on Integration and Community Relations in the late 1990s. It concluded: "a. Integration and identity are dynamic processes, and society is changed by the diverse contributions of both minority and majority groups. b. Integration is a reciprocal process with subjective (the feeling of being integrated) and objective (the factual realities) facets. c. Integration policies should entail a universal human rights and egalitarian non-discriminatory approaches." (Nielson and Vöcking, 1988, p.23)

\textsuperscript{16} EU (2012) Migrant Integration, p5.

\textsuperscript{17} EUObserver.com *No immigration without integration, says EU Commissioner.* 11\textsuperscript{th} May, 2007. http://euobserver.com/9/24038

\textsuperscript{18} European Commission, *Hot Topics: Cultural Diversity and Integration of*
Article 79 of the Lisbon Treaty limits the competence of the EU in respect of migrant integration to either financial support or policy programmes. It has no legal competence in these areas. EU financial grants will be used to encourage harmonized measures in the absence of legal regulations enforcing harmonization. In either case a more satisfactory immigration and integration policy will require a diversity of management and services, adequately funded, to encourage European host societies to change and adapt instead of merely loading the burden of success or failure onto the shoulders of migrants.

4. EUROPEAN MIGRATION POLICY AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

a. The ‘failure of multiculturalism’ is a failure to integrate

During October 2010 German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, announced the ‘failure of multiculturalism’. During February 2011 the premiers of France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, all repeated her claim. In several of these instances, the respective leaders made references to Islamic minority communities and their resistance to integration.

As Governments face financial stringencies across Europe, many fear the financial burden of welfare provision for unemployed immigrants. Of course, the issues of multiculturalism and immigration are not identical but there is a significant overlap. Beyond the claim that multicultural policies are failing western societies it is important to undertake a penetrating analysis of governmental failure in terms

of economic self-assurance and self-confidence. Somewhat surprisingly, Eurobarometer opinion polls show that over the last five years (2005-2010), European citizens have expressed significantly more concern about the economic situation facing their countries than they have about immigration.

In May 2010, in 68 out of 75 European cities a slight majority of citizens felt that the presence of foreigners was good for their city. By contrast, in only 36 of those cities did a majority of citizens feel that foreigners were well integrated into their city. It would seem that the failure of multiculturalism is a failure of integration rather than a failure of welcome or tolerance. Open Society journalist, Helene Irving, wrote following a visit to a London school during February 2011 ‘What struck me as I listened to the students - Muslim, Christian, and of no faith, British and migrant - was their appreciation for living in a multicultural society’.

Multiculturalism has meant different things to different Governments. Relativist multiculturalists argue that all cultures have equal value and that it is wrong to reject any aspects of another’s culture. Integrationist multiculturalists argue that migrants integrate into the host culture best through their own language and culture. Inclusive multiculturalists have argued that cultural elements can be allowed where they do not clash with legal or basic values of the host country.

In practice, many of these approaches are being abandoned in the move towards pragmatic policies of civic integration which stress language acquisition along with close attention to loyalty, integration, and a commitment to national and/or European values and identity. Frequently within Europe, mutual incomprehension seems common in the face of multiple cultural expressions and identities. Consequently, Europe’s governmental institutions have
taken a simultaneous series of appropriate measures to address cultural diversity.\textsuperscript{19)}

\textbf{b. Integration and European cultural diversity}

Prior to the year 2000, references to cultural diversity were frequently couched in terms of cultural co-operation or exchange. The approach of most European governments towards cultural diversity since the 1960s has been to adopt a variant of either multiculturalist or assimilationist policies. The events of 11th September 2001 shook Europe's political institutions, not the least because Islam had been invoked by western-educated, immigrant terrorists in their deadly protest against the dominant assumptions and values underlying social and cultural policy in the 'West'.

As Europeas have been tentatively constructing a policy of interculturalism there has been a simultaneous loss of confidence in multicultural and assimilationist approaches to the management of immigration. The new discourse is being framed with reference to encounter, mutual understanding and awareness, integration, respect, co-existence and exchange.\textsuperscript{20)} It is soon apparent, however, that what constitutes the practice of intercultural dialogue is still far from clear and a consensus of opinion concerning this is yet to emerge within the Europe Union, the Council of Europe, or among the civil society actors active in promoting an intercultural mandate.\textsuperscript{21)}

\textsuperscript{19)} As early as 1954, the Council of Europe adopted a 'Convention on Cultural Diversity'.

\textsuperscript{20)} See for example, the discussion at http://openlines.labforculture.org/about.php. Viewed 9th August 2010.

\textsuperscript{21)} A May 2010 report from the EU Culture Programme of the Platform for Intercultural Europe and Culture Action Europe, noted that the concept was weakly defined and delineated and that no guidance was being provided in order to assess and evaluate what constituted the promotion of effective intercultural dialogue. See Platform for Intercultural Europe, Intercultural Dialogue as an objective in the EU Culture Programme: Summary of Study and Recommendations (Brussels, 2010) p. 2.
In order to provide a clear legal and procedural basis for social policy developments in this area, both the European Union and the Council of Europe have attempted to provide a degree of definitional clarity. The Directorate General of the EU’s Commission for Education and Culture defines intercultural dialogue as ‘a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between individuals, groups and organisations with different cultural backgrounds or world views. Among its aims are: to develop a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and practices; to increase participation and the freedom and ability to make choices; to foster equality; and to enhance creative processes.’


5. A MISSIONAL RESPONSE

a. Church practices that point to alternative European immigration policies

History suggests that European Christianity is an intercultural form of Christianity. Migratory theologians, missionaries, and exiled scholars and church leaders have been involved in establishing

churches and religious communities across the continent. Where the contemporary expressions of those churches and communities adopt a cultural or ethnically exclusivist tone, European Christians with a sense of history do well to retell these stories. European churches that promote or support the anti-immigration policies of the populist political parties are either suffering from historical amnesia or willfully choose to ignore the painful and costly experiences of our forbears in the faith.

My own research in 2001 showed that an increasing concern for the welfare of migrants in Europe correlates with increased frequency of church attendance. Twenty-eight percent of weekly churchgoers were concerned for migrants, whereas only 15% of those who never, or practically never, attended church, expressed a similar level of concern for migrants. Active churchgoers are frequently engaged in church and mission agency responses which have tended to focus on establishing, supporting, and networking with migrant congregations, on promoting social and cultural integration, and on providing welfare and advocacy services for asylum seekers, refugees and trafficked migrants.

In countries that are a source of trafficked individuals, agencies such as the International Catholic Migration Commission have a significant anti-trafficking educational presence. Churches Against Sexual Trafficking in Europe (ChASTE) and similar agencies have adopted advocacy and mobilisation strategies in countries of destination for trafficked women. The Greek Evangelical Helping Hands agency has established refugee centres in Athens addressing a broader range of issues for migrants applying for asylum and seeking refugee status in Greece. In Hungary, the Reformed Church has been active in developing and supporting educational

programmes for the children of refugees.

In 2004 over 150 migrant congregations were mapped in the Danish capital, Copenhagen. Responding to the issues this raises, a Churches Integration Service (KIT) and an Inter-Cultural Centre (TC) have been established by the Danish churches and between them provide training, resources, and support directed towards the integration of migrant congregations within the Danish church context. Similar agencies exist in England, Northern Ireland, Germany, and the Netherlands, whilst in several other European countries this forms a significant part of the programmatic work of a national Evangelical Alliance or Council of Churches.

These changes seem inevitable and necessary. In French-speaking Belgium, 20% of Protestant pastors and between 30-40% of Protestant church members are of African origin. In France, two migrant denominations are members of the French Protestant Federation, and there were a recorded 250 migrant congregations of African origin in Paris in 2005. In several of the German regional church assemblies there are Conferences of Foreign-Speaking Pastors. In the Netherlands there are three larger migrant denominations and a number of smaller groups that are in membership of the Dutch Council of Churches. In Norway there are seven migrant denominations in membership of the Council of Churches.

In 2010, the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe declared a ‘Year of European Churches Responding to Migration’ and, at the conclusion of the year, published the results of its active engagement in integration issues through its MIRACLE programme (Models of Integration through Religion: Activation, Cultural Learning and Exchange). It developed recommendations for European

24) For further information, see
churches struggling to know how best to respond to the presence of migrant Christians in their congregations.

At the gathering of the European Evangelical Alliance and the European Evangelical Missionary Alliance, in Tarragona, Spain, 21st -24th April 2009 the EEA General Secretary, Gordon Showell-Rogers, conceded that ethnic, ‘Integration is on the lips of many politicians and educators in our countries and at EU level. Everybody knows that it is vital. European Christians arguably have an almost unique selling point in this ‘niche market’: truly modeling integrated communities.’

Améline Ekué points to the biblical narrative as a common point of reference for both the powerful and the vulnerable in any Christian discussion of migration in Europe. ‘The individual and collective initiatives of migrant Christians are not only relevant for the understanding of the formation of migrant religious identity, but also for a wider debate on intercultural theology. In this discourse the biblical narrative can serve as a common point of reference, which opens a space of reflection about the Word and the realities of life.’

In 2007, the French Protestant Federation urged ‘a new appreciation of migrant and ethnic minority Churches not as ethnic ghettos but rather as new centres of evangelization. The message of Acts 2 is that the diversity of language is no longer lived to the detriment of communion between the Churches. It is not enough to confess that we believe in the universal Church, it is necessary for us to live what we confess.’

25) 'Christians must be at forefront of ethnic integration, says evangelical leader', Christian Today, April 24, 2009,12:51 (BST)
Whilst European churches have typically responded in an ad hoc and unstructured fashion, this need not necessarily be seen as a weakness. To the contrary, it might be highly appropriate in the face of a contemporary phenomenon that is characterised by transition, liquidity, circularity, contingency, and impermanence. Across Europe there are signs that somewhat more settled patterns of residence are emerging, but significant parts of the migrant community in Europe remain susceptible to economic and employment factors. Flexibility of response and lightweight structures are also likely to remain central characteristics of migrant programmes for the foreseeable future in Europe.

b. De-secularising European Immigration Policies

In the biblical story of Ruth and Naomi, the vulnerable Moabitess declares a willingness to be integrated, ‘Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.’ (Ruth 1:16-18) and she is answered by Boaz, ‘May the Lord reward you for your deeds, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!’ (Ruth 2:11-13). European immigration policy-makers frequently overlook the central place that religious convictions play in the life of migrants.

Whereas citizens of European nation states have tended to see migrants in primarily national terms, increasingly the migrants themselves are taking prior cultural and religious self-understandings into account. As just one example, the International Organisation for Migration defines integration as:

‘...the process of introducing migrants into a new host society and of bringing people of different racial, ethnic, or cultural groups into unrestricted and equal association in a society. A number of models are used to describe this process of mutual adjustment by migrants

and their new host community (often referred to as a “melting pot”).

The definition makes no references to religious identity, religious practice, nor to the benefit experienced by migrants engaging with religious communities in their new country of residence. Such omissions seem to reflect a willful ignorance on the part of secularized Europeans, unwilling to attribute anything positive to the social value of any type of religious faith. Too often it is characterized as socially divisive rather than socially cohesive. A truly missional contribution on the part of the churches to the framing of European immigration policy will strive to keep the religious dimension of the migrant experience in the forefront of the minds of the policy-makers.

On the other hand, it is important to recognise that an Armenian migrant probably sees himself or herself as primarily a religious/cultural Armenian and not primarily as a citizen of a country called Armenia. Christian migrant agencies face the challenge of trying to gather all non-national Christians, irrespective of their geographical or cultural origin, to events such as ‘migrant festivals’. The migrant Christians may see themselves as Nigerian Pentecostals, Syrian Orthodox, or Armenian evangelicals, but they are unlikely to label themselves as ‘migrant’ Christians. Frustratingly, this lessens the potential impact of events, such as migrant events, aimed at integrating Christians of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Churches will need to learn new intercultural skills in order to successfully negotiate the choppy waters of integrating migrants from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
6. CONCLUSIONS

The harmonization of immigration policy, migrant integration, and secular assumptions are likely to drive migration and asylum policy and practice within the Commission and Parliament of the European Union for the foreseeable future. The migration agencies of the churches of Europe are likely to frame their own policies and practices accordingly. These should not ignore an authentically biblical ‘politic’ where the successful integration of migrants is rooted in a theological vision of the integrating, trinitarian nature of God where essential differences are neither obscured nor allowed to become the cause of division or exclusion. The ultimate human experience of integration is found in the offer of salvation, through which God calls together diverse people into the one common household of faith through which His reign extends to all nations; a communion of churches bound together in one body, for fellowship, mutual covenant, and mission.

Darrell Jackson, 16th May 2012

Questions for possible exploration:
We know that many European countries as Germany, England, France, and Switzerland have experienced the painful social disorder and trouble caused by failure of migration policy.
What are the causes of the failure of European immigration policy? (Lack of social integration, religious conflict, advance of Islam, and weakening of church’s social role)
What is the alternative for the failure?
How should churches prepare?
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