



Lilija Wiebe

Rethinking Social Integration

Comparing Martha Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach and
Friedrich Heckmann's Theory of Integration for the Context of Refugees

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This research study is recognized as a Master of Arts in Development Studies at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Abstract

This research study is a reaction to the “refugee-crisis” in mid-2015 and the ensuing recommendation of science to use experiences and approaches from development work to reach sustainable refugee and integration policies. The goal was to compare the Capabilities Approach and Heckmann’s Theory of Integration in order to direct the focus of integration theories away from the weaknesses and towards the capabilities of the refugees in Germany. To achieve this, the Theory of Successful Integration is, based on a comparative analysis (Schneider 1999), related to the Capabilities Approach by Nussbaum via interlinking both theories. The most important results are that the two theories can be combined and that an integration theory with the focus on the capabilities of the refugees could empower the individual immigrants for the integration process. The result may give Non-Governmental Organisations and government agencies in Germany an orientation for their future aid programming.

KEYWORDS: Capabilities Approach, Martha Nussbaum, Friedrich Heckmann, Coordinated Theory approach, refugees, migration, integration, Germany

Foreword

Today it is hard to imagine, that in the 1990s German politicians could claim that Germany was not a country of immigration. Even then, with the “Gastarbeiter” (guest workers) of the 1960s and 1970s and their children and grandchildren, “boat people” from Vietnam, ethnic German immigrants from Russia and Romania and former contract workers from the GDR, migrants had become an important part of German society. Today, in day-care centres and schools, shopping areas and workplaces, it is obvious that Germany is a country of immigration. We cannot deny that we live in a post-migration society and have to deal with the changes caused by migration and adapt our social structures and institutions to this reality.

When the German Chancellor in August 2015 made the widely acclaimed statement “Wir schaffen das!” (We can do it!), the focus was certainly on the initial accommodation, care and registration of refugees mostly from Syria and Iraq. The euphoria of the welcome culture of these weeks and months was overwhelming and many citizens mobilized help for the new arrivals. This euphoria has now largely vanished, but the task remains, not so much to provide for the basic needs of our guests as to support them in becoming recognized members of our society. This is not a task of weeks or months, but of years and generations. Some people see the associated changes as a threat, because Germany will not remain as it was. Others see immigration, especially in view of the demographic developments, as an opportunity for our country to remain fit for the future. In any case, it will be a long and challenging process, which will show that integration is not a one-sided adaptation of migrants to German culture, but that they can make important contributions to the development of our society and enrich our culture.

In this discourse about the future of our post-migration society, Liliya Wiebe's work is an important contribution. She shows that refugees are not just recipients of aid that burden our social systems, but people with skills and resources that can enrich our society. Her research encourages us to focus not so much on the deficits of the migrants, but on their strengths and competences. The study is a conversation of approaches

from two worlds. The capabilities approach developed by the American philosopher Martha Nussbaum and the Indian economist Amartya Sen is a concept for understanding poverty and human development, widely applied in international development cooperation. The integration theory of the German sociologist Friedrich Heckmann, on the other hand, is a well-recognized approach in migration research.

Lilija Wiebe is familiar with these two worlds. She lived with her family for several years in Asia where she was involved in development projects and she has subsequently obtained a master's degree in Development Studies. She is also experienced in accompanying refugees in Germany, helping them to orientate and settle in a new environment. With her research, she has brought theories from these two worlds together with the intention to foster the recognition of the resources of migrants and to promote their integration in Germany and other countries. This study is not a purely academic exercise but an endeavour to improve the practice of government agencies and voluntary organizations working with migrants. I hope that this book will receive the due attention of both academics, as well as practitioners engaged in this field, and that the theory will stimulate a change of practice, so that refugees and other migrants will be encouraged to find a home in Germany and use their skills and strengths for the development of our society.

Dr. Thomas Kroeck¹

¹ Director of Studies, Academy for Christian Leadership (AcF), Research Fellow in the Department of Development Studies, University of South Africa (Unisa)

Acronyms

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| ANKER-Einrichtungen | Aufnahme-, Entscheidungs-, und Rückführungseinrichtungen (Reception, Decision-making and Repatriation facilities) |
| AsylG | Asylgesetz (Asylum law) |
| AufenthG | Aufenthaltsgesetz (Residency law) |
| AWO | Arbeiterwohlfahrt (Workers' Welfare Association) |
| BAFl | Bundesamt für die Anerkennung ausländischer Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for the recognition of foreign refugees) |
| BAMF | Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) |
| BDA | Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände (Federation of German Employers' associations) |
| BMI | Bundesministerium des Inneren (Federal Ministry of the Interior) |
| CBP | Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union |
| CIDOB | Barcelona Centre for International Affairs |

| | |
|------|--|
| DIW | Deutsches Institut für Wirtschafts- forschung (German Institute for Economic Research) |
| DQR | Deutscher Qualitätsrahmen (German Qualification Frame- work) |
| efms | Europäisches Forum für Migrati- onsstudien (European Forum for Migration Studies) |
| ER | Environmental Refugees |
| ESN | European Services Network |
| EU | European Union |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| IAB | Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Be- rufsforschung (Institute for Labour Market and Employment Research) |
| IMIS | Institut für Migrationsforschung und Interkulturelle Studien (Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies) |
| LDCs | less-developed countries |
| LGBT | lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people |
| MDCs | more-developed countries |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |

| | |
|--------|--|
| MIPEX | Migrant Integration Policy Index |
| MPG | Migration Policy Group |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| QCF | Qualifications and Credit Framework |
| RCO | Refugee Community Organization |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SOEP | Sozio-Ökonomischen Panels (German Socio-Economic Panel) |
| SVR | Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen (The Expert Council of German Foundations) |
| TIES | The Integration of the European Second Generation |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees |

UNO-
Flüchtlingshilfe

United Nations Organisation-
Flüchtlingshilfe

(The German UNHCR)

UNRWA

United Nations Relief and Work
Agency for Palestine Refugees in
the Near East

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