The European Union and the Securitization of Migration*

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Abstract

This article deals with the question of how migration has developed into a security issue in western Europe and how the European integration process is implicated in it. Since the 1980s, the political construction of migration increasingly referred to the destabilizing effects of migration on domestic integration and to the dangers for public order it implied. The spillover of the internal market into a European internal security question mirrors these domestic developments at the European level. The Third Pillar on Justice and Home Affairs, the Schengen Agreements, and the Dublin Convention most visibly indicate that the European integration process is implicated in the development of a restrictive migration policy and the social construction of migration into a security question. However, the political process of connecting migration to criminal and terrorist abuses of the internal market does not take place in isolation. It is related to a wider politicization in which immigrants and asylum-seekers are portrayed as a challenge to the protection of national identity and welfare provisions. Moreover, supporting the political construction of migration as a security issue impinges on and is embedded in the politics of belonging in western Europe. It is an integral part of the wider technocratic and political process in which professional agencies – such as the police and customs – and political agents – such as social

movements and political parties – debate and decide the criteria for legiti-
mate membership of west European societies.

I. Introduction

The development of a common migration policy in the European Union (EU)
is embedded in wider societal, political and professional processes that
articulate an endangered society. Western European welfare states face a
multiplicity of challenges to their mechanisms of societal integration and
political legitimacy. These include economic and financial globalization, the
rise of poverty, the deterioration of living conditions in cities, the revival of
racist and xenophobic parties and movements, the estrangement of the elector-
ate from the political class, and the rise of multiculturalism. In this setting
migration has been increasingly presented as a danger to public order, cultural
identity, and domestic and labour market stability; it has been securitized.[1]
Although the social construction of migration as a security question is
contested (for example by social movements supporting a liberal multicultur-
alism (Ireland, 1991)), it results from a powerful political and societal dynamic
reifying migration as a force which endangers the good life in west European
societies.

In this article, I look at how the Europeanization of migration policy is tied
to these wider societal, professional and political dynamics. More specifically,
I deal with the question: how is migration connected to representations of
societal dangers and how is the development of a common migration policy
implicated in making this connection?[2] The key development has been the
technocratic and politically manufactured spillover of the economic project of
the internal market into an internal security project. Immigration and asylum

[1] I will use the concept migrant as a general category including immigrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees.
[2] This journal recently published two articles that looked at the construction of migration as a security
problem in the European Union. Kostakopoulou (2000) showed how the contradiction between an
increasing liberalization of free movement for nationals of the Member States and the development of
restrictive and control-oriented approaches to the free movement of third-country nationals is further
strengthened in post-Amsterdam Europe. She argued that the latter development results from governments
imposing their (domestic) security agendas on the Europeanization of migration policy. Guiraudon (2000)
demonstrated in her article that the internationalization of the (domestic) security agenda develops through
venue shopping in which a multiplicity of agents attempt to overcome constraints they face in the domestic
arena through internationalizing their policies in different venues requiring different strategies and
including different mixes of agents. Both articles identify the restrictive and control-oriented approach as
a security approach – agents and policies frame migration as a security question. However, neither of these
two articles looks in any detail at the complex themes and issues that are implied by the security dynamic
surrounding migration. This article addresses this aspect in greater detail. It highlights the different
dimensions and themes of the securitization of migration and the implication of the European Union in this
process. The result is a more complex and also more messy picture of what precisely makes up the security
frame within which the agents and policy developments analysed in the other two articles are embedded,
and which they have helped to construct and to reproduce.

have been integrated into a policy framework that defines and regulates security issues arising from the abolition of internal border control. However, there is more to the involvement of the EU than this. The explicit privileging of nationals of Member States in contrast to third-country nationals and the generally restrictive regulation of migration sustains a wider process of de-legitimating the presence of immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. EU policies support, often indirectly, expressions of welfare chauvinism and the idea of cultural homogeneity as a stabilizing factor. In the contemporary domestic and European political context, these policies facilitate the creation of migration as a destabilizing or dangerous challenge to west European societies. It also raises questions about how the development of a common migration policy feeds into the wider politics of belonging, that is the struggle over cultural, racial and socio-economic criteria for the distribution of rights and duties in a community. Directly or indirectly, supporting strategies of securitization makes the inclusion of immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in European societies more difficult. It also has implications for the chances of promoting multicultural policies based on a notion of solidarity and a distribution of rights and duties that is not determined by cultural identity.

In the Sections II and III, I will briefly highlight how the most significant steps in the Europeanization of migration policy correlate with a growing consensus about the need to restrict migration and with an increasingly explicit politicization of migration as a danger. In Section IV, I look at the spillover of the economic logic of the internal market into a security logic and at how the Europeanization of migration policy is integrated in this process. The final two sections deal with the question of how the cultural and socio-economic dimensions of the governance of migration feed into the securitization of immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in the EU.

II. European Migration Policy

Although it is difficult to generalize about different policies and countries, it can be argued that in the 1950s and 1960s immigrants were primarily an extra workforce in most western European countries.[3] The economic situation and the labour market required a cheap and flexible workforce that did not exist in the domestic market. Countries like France, Germany and the Netherlands used a permissive or even promotional migration policy motivated by the need for extra labour. In contrast to the present situation in which the question of illegal immigration justifies to a considerable extent the formation of more restrictive migration policies, the legal status of the immediate post-war

[3] For a more general overview of the similarities and difference in migration policy in Europe, see among others, Hollifield (1992), Collinson (1993), King (1993a), Baldwin-Edwards and Schain (1994).

immigrants was not politically sensitive. In France, for example, specialized agencies directly recruited immigrants in the country of origin without always regularizing them in the host country. Their legal status was not of relevance to domestic needs. If anything, their illegality contributed to making them even more flexible and exploitable (Marie, 1988). This does not mean that states did not try to regulate and normalize the situation of immigrants, but the debate about their legal status did not have the prominence and the same connotations that it has had since the 1980s (Marie, 1988, pp. 75–81).

In the late 1960s and the 1970s immigration was increasingly a subject of public concern. There was a shift from a permissive immigration policy to a control-oriented, restrictive policy (Fielding, 1993, p. 43; Hollifield, 1992, pp. 66–73). The change to a restrictive regime and the reassertion of state control in the 1970s did not radically change the understanding of immigrants itself, however. Many of them were still categorized in the first place as guest workers. The restrictive policies were motivated by changes in the labour market and by a desire to protect the social and economic rights of the domestic workforce (Blotevogel, Müller-ter Jung, and Wood, 1993, p. 88).

Political rhetoric, however, increasingly linked migration to the destabilization of public order (Doty, 1996; Marie, 1988; Ugur, 1995). Despite the decisions to halt labour immigration, the immigrant population continued to grow because of permission to immigrate on the basis of family reunion. As a result, public awareness of the immigrant population increased (King, 1993b). The temporary guest workers became more and more permanent settlers who could not easily claim that they were never going to return home. In a sense they became permanent guests (Sayad, 1991, 1999).

During this period, migration policy was not an important issue for the European Communities (Korella and Twomey, 1995; Koslowski, 1998). The free movement of persons did not have priority in the development of the internal market. The free movement of workers from third countries, that is not Member States, was even a more marginal issue in the construction of the internal market (Ugur, 1995).

One of the most significant decisions of this period was Council Regulation 1612/68 which distinguished between the right of free movement of nationals of Member States and the right of free movement of nationals from third countries (Ugur, 1995, p. 967). Ugur argues that this decision laid the foundation for 'fortress Europe' in the area of immigration (1995, p. 977). The Council resolution made clear that the free movement of persons in the internal market would be a prerogative for nationals of Member States (Verschueren, 1991). The idea that citizens of Member States can benefit from special rights was confirmed at the Paris summit of 1973. There it was also decided that the

Community should formulate common legislation for foreigners (Etienne, 1995, p. 148).

A first important step in the development of common positions on migration in the European Communities was the adoption of the action programme in favour of migrant workers and their families in 1974. The increased interest in the question of migration in the EC was connected to its enlargement to the UK, Ireland and Denmark (Callovi, 1992, pp. 355–6).

In the Community migration was mostly considered in the context of social and economic rights and the construction of an integrated labour market in which workers could freely move between Member States. However, since the mid-1980s, the focus has changed. Immigration has been increasingly politicized through the question of asylum, or more precisely through the (con)fusion of immigration and asylum. Asylum has been increasingly politicized as an alternative route for economic immigration in the EU (den Boer, 1995). This politicization also explains why asylum so easily connects to illegal immigration. For example, the section on Eurodac – a database of fingerprints from asylum applicants – in the Austrian Presidency work programme (July–December 1998) explicitly makes a connection between illegal immigrants and asylum: 'In recent years the steep rise in *the number of illegal immigrants (and therefore potential asylum-seekers)* caught has revealed the increasing need to include their fingerprints in the system … ' (Statewatch, 1998, emphasis added).

A significant Europeanization of migration policy took off in the 1980s. Policy co-ordination and development were institutionalized in European interstate co-operation, the European Union, and European transnational co-operation between functional organizations such as the police. First, migration became an important issue in intergovernmental fora in Europe such as Trevi, the Ad Hoc Group on Immigration and the Schengen group (Bigo, 1994, 1996a; Collinson, 1993). Most of these fora were not part of the European integration process in a formal sense. They pre-structured, however, the development of migration policy within the EU. In the framework of the intergovernmental and bureaucratic fora, transnational and intergovernmental policy networks developed which were interested in a co-operative regulation of migration (Bigo, 1996a, pp. 112–45, 196–208). These contributed considerably to a gradual incorporation of migration policy into the constitutional structure of the EU. Following on from the Single European Act (1986) and the momentum developed in the Schengen group, the Treaty on European Union (1992) introduced a Third Pillar on Justice and Home Affairs in which migration was an explicit subject of intergovernmental regulation within the European Union (Sayad, 1994). Soon, dissatisfaction with the intergovernmental approach of the Third Pillar emerged. Moving migration-related

questions from the Third to the First Pillar became one of the key issues for the Intergovernmental Conference reviewing the Treaty on European Union (Commission, 1996). In the Treaty of Amsterdam the sections of the Third Pillar relating to immigration, asylum and refugees were communitarized (Duff, 1997; den Boer, 1997; Kostakopoulou, 2000).

III. The Securitization of Migration

Common regulations on migration in western Europe have emphasized the need for restrictions of population flows (Kostakopoulou, 2000, Ugur, 1995; Miles and Thränhardt, 1995; Alaux, 1991; Soulier, 1989). For example, the Dublin Convention limits the ability of states to pass the buck in the case of application for asylum. It sets out criteria – for example, place of application and family links – determining the state that must process the asylum application. In a way the convention improves the situation for the asylum-seeker. It seeks a quicker and more determinate procedure to deal with the request of asylum, thus reducing the time an asylum-seeker has to spend in detention centres, for example. But this interpretation neglects the fact that the Dublin convention is heavily overdetermined by a policy aimed at reducing the number of applications. Making it impossible to submit applications for asylum in different Member States reduces the chances of being accepted, which obviously will deter some refugees from seeking asylum in western Europe (Bolten, 1991). The restrictive and control-oriented basis of the Dublin Convention is further highlighted by the development of Eurodac. There are many more examples of the restrictive and control-oriented imperative that drives European migration policy. Among the most visible are the co-ordination of visa policy in the Union and the co-ordination and facilitation of so-called readmission agreements. The latter are agreements with neighbouring countries about the readmission of illegal immigrants found on the territory of an EU Member State (Lavenex, 1998).

These institutional developments were also shaped by a thematic change in the problematization of migration. In the 1980s migration increasingly was a subject of policy debates about the protection of public order and the preservation of domestic stability. These debates also represented migration as a challenge to the welfare state and to the cultural composition of the nation. A key theme running through these debates was that migration is a danger to domestic society (Bigo, 1994, 1996a; den Boer, 1994, 1995). In other words, security discourses and technologies penetrated the Europeanization of migration policy. One of the best examples is the 1990 Convention Applying the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985 which connects immigration and asylum with terrorism, transnational crime and border control (Bigo, 1996a;

Verschueren, 1992; Lodge, 1993). It locates the regulation of migration in an institutional framework that deals with the protection of internal security.

The development of security discourses and policies in the area of migration is often presented as an inevitable policy response to the challenges for public order and domestic stability of the increases in the number of (illegal) immigrants and asylum-seekers (Lodge, 1993). In this analysis the security problem triggers the security policy. The policy is an instrument to protect the state, its society and the internal market against the dangers related to an invasion of (illegal) immigrants and asylum-seekers. In other words, the problem comes first and the policy is an instrumental reaction to it.

But this limited interpretation reflects how security practices actually affect social relations. They are also defining practices which turn an issue like migration into a security problem by mobilizing specific institutions and expectations (Wæver, 1995; Huysmans, 1995; Bigo, 1996a; Buzan *et al.*, 1998). It affects the way in which migration is rendered problematic when the police and the related departments in the Ministry of Home Affairs take a prominent role in the regulation of migration. For the police it is part of their profession to produce security knowledge. They have a professional disposition to represent and categorize a policy concern in a security discourse and to propose security measures to deal with it. As a result, immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees are framed as a security problem which is different from an approach by means of a policy which emphasizes that asylum is a human rights question and/or which proposes human rights instruments to deal with the issue.

Security policy is a specific policy of mediating belonging. It conserves or transforms political integration and criteria of membership through the identification of existential threats. In security practices the political and social identification of a community and its way of life develop in response to an existential threat. The community defines what it considers to be the good life through the reification of figures of societal danger such as the criminal, the mentally abnormal, and the invading enemy. In other words, discourses of danger and security practices derive their political significance from their capacity to stimulate people to contract into a political community and to ground – or contest – political authority on the basis of reifying dangers (Campbell, 1992; Huysmans, 1998; Wæver, 1995). For example, Wæver has argued that, in the European integration process, the fear of the return of the nineteenth-century European international system plays an important role in holding the European community of states and people together (Wæver, 1996). Another example is the conservative discourse which identifies multiculturalism as a cause of societal disintegration (the best known version is Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*, 1996). It mediates the differentiation between them and us by identifying other cultures that endanger the survival of the

home culture. Migration is identified as being one of the main factors weakening national tradition and societal homogeneity. It is reified as an internal and external danger for the survival of the national community or western civilization. This discourse excludes migrants from the normal fabric of society, not just as aliens but as aliens who are dangerous to the reproduction of the social fabric. The discourse frames the key question about the future of the political community as one of a choice for or against migration. But it is not a free choice because a choice for migration is represented as a choice against (the survival of) the political community. The discourse reproduces the political myth that a homogenous national community or western civilization existed in the past and can be re-established today through the exclusion of those migrants who are identified as cultural aliens.

One may be tempted to reduce the securitization of migration to the critical action of a few agencies, such as extreme right parties in some European countries. However, the process has included multiple actors such as national governments, grass roots, European transnational police networks, the media, etc. The securitization of migration is a structural effect of a multiplicity of practices. If one wishes to interpret how this structural effect has been produced by the political, professional and social actors involved, one has to focus on the relation between the positions of these actors and the practices they perform. Instead of focusing on how this effect was produced by which actors, I would like to concentrate on the logic of securitization that characterizes this field and on how the European integration process is implicated in its reproduction. In other words, I am primarily interested in the way migration is rendered problematic in the security field and not in the political and societal production of the field itself by a variety of agents and strategies. In particular, I argue that the securitization of migration in the EU and its Member States has developed on the basis of three relating themes: internal security, cultural security and the crisis of the welfare state.

IV. Internal Security and Migration

The securitization of the internal market is the key dynamic through which the European integration process is implicated in the securitization of migration. Its central element is the assumption that, after the abolition of internal border controls, transnational flows of goods, capital, services and people will challenge public order and the rule of law. This link has been constructed so successfully that it has obtained the status of common sense.

The Single Europe Act (SEA) defined free movement in terms of the abolition of internal border controls: the internal market is 'an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods, persons, services and

capital is ensured in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty' (SEA, Art. 13). In the wake of the SEA, EC policies quickly linked the downgrading of internal frontier control to the necessity of strengthening external border controls. The reasoning can be summarized as follows: if we diminish internal border controls then we must harmonize and strengthen the control at the external borders of the European Community to guarantee a sufficient level of control of who and what can legitimately enter the space of free movement (De Lobkowicz, 1994; Anderson, 1996, pp. 186–7). For example, Art. 7 of the Schengen Agreement of 1985 states:

> The parties shall endeavour to approximate as soon as possible their visa policies in order to avoid any adverse consequences that may result from the easing of controls at the common frontiers in the field of immigration and security.

Those who feared that the development of the internal market would lead to a clamp down on international free movement warned that a fortress Europe was in the making (Ireland, 1991; Bigo, 1998). For example, an evaluation of the member organizations of the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles concluded in 1989 that 'we are heading in the wrong direction, motivated by a fortress mentality, and distracted from developing an appropriate response to the global dimensions of the problem' (Rudge, 1989, p. 212).

The link between diminishing internal border controls and strengthening external border controls rests on the double assumption that control of the illegal movement of goods, services, and persons happens primarily at the border, and that the free movement of persons is constituted by abolishing border controls. Although these assumptions are shared by many, they are contestable. For example, personal identity controls increased in the wake of the abolition of internal border controls in some countries of the European Community. Border checks were replaced by an increase in random identity controls across the national territory (Bigo, 1996b; Ceyhan and Tsoukala, 1997). It is not very clear either that the majority of illegal immigrants are smuggled into a country. Staying in a country after a visa has expired is a common form of becoming an illegal immigrant (Salt, 1989). Further, it is doubtful that border control is the main obstacle to the free movement of people in modern societies. The granting of work permits, residency permits and providing access to welfare provisions and social assistance are undoubtedly more important instruments for controlling, improving or limiting the free movement of people (Ceyhan, 1998; Crowley, 1998; King, 1997). Finally, given the high number of people and goods passing borders, it has become impossible to check systematically and consistently everyone and everything crossing borders (Bigo, 1996b).

Nevertheless, the linking of internal and external borders of the European Community has played an important role in the production of a spillover of the socio-economic project of the internal market into an internal security project. This spillover has been formalized most explicitly by the introduction of the Third Pillar on Justice and Home Affairs in the Treaty on European Union (1992), the incorporation of the Schengen agreement in the *acquis communautaire* after the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), and the Council and Commission action plan on how best to implement the provisions of the Treaty of Amsterdam in an area of freedom, security and justice (Statewatch, 1999).

To make the issues of border control a security question, however, the internal market had to be connected to an internal security *problematique*. A key element in this process was the identification of a particular side-effect of the creation of the internal market. One expected that the market would not only improve free movement of law-abiding agents, but would also facilitate illegal and criminal activities by terrorists, international criminal organizations, asylum-seekers and immigrants.

The institutionalization of police and customs co-operation, and the discourses articulating this particular side-effect, produced a security continuum connecting border control, terrorism, international crime and migration.

> [T]he issue was no longer, on the one hand, terrorism, drugs, crime, and on the other, rights of asylum and clandestine immigration, but they came to be treated together in the attempt to gain an overall view of the interrelation between these problems and the free movement of persons within Europe. (Bigo, 1994, p. 164)

Immigration and asylum have a prominent place in this construction (Kumin, 1999; Webber and Fekete, 1996). For example, in his introduction to a short overview of the European initiatives on asylum in 1989, Philip Rudge concludes:

> To an alarming degree decision making in the area of asylum is moving away from the traditional human rights and humanitarian field of policy-making. It is increasingly the subject of fora dealing with terrorism, drug trafficking and policing on the one hand, and with economic streamlining on the other (Rudge, 1989, p. 212).

The security continuum is an institutionalized mode of policy-making that allows the transfer of the security connotations of terrorism, drugs traffic and money-laundering to the area of migration.

More recently the security continuum has been extended from the development of the internal market to the enlargement of the EU to central and eastern European countries (Kostakopoulou, 2000, pp. 512–13). For example, the special European Council meeting in Tampere (15–16 October 1999) on the

development of an area of freedom, security and justice emphasized that the candidate Member States must take on the Schengen *acquis* (para. 25).

The security continuum emerged first of all from professional and political co-operation in the area of internal security in Europe. In the context of quasi-formal and informal 'clubs' on terrorism and drugs – including the Bern Club, TREVI and the Police Working Group on Terrorism – the Schengen negotia-tions and the 1992 project of the EC yielded a network of security profession-als. They produced and distributed internal security knowledge that articulated a continuum between borders, terrorism, crime and migration. Their knowl-edge has a capacity to define security questions. The police are security professionals who are trained to identify and deal with challenges to public order and the rule of law. Their professional status thus gives them the power to identify dangers to the social fabric (Bigo, 1996a; Anderson and den Boer, 1994; Benyon, 1994; Anderson *et al.,* 1994; Guiraudon, 2000).

According to Didier Bigo, this network is operating as a bureaucratic field that has moved beyond the control of the individual organizations and actors. Although it largely originated in the self-interested action and routines of bureaucratic agents – especially the police and customs – it is functioning as a semi-autonomous structure, simultaneously constraining and empowering the agents enacting it. Thus, the network is not an aggregation of self-interests. It functions as a separate 'entity' which exists independently of the individual practices and beliefs (Bigo, 1996a). This bureaucratic network, the knowledge it produces, and the field of struggle and domination in which it exists, play a key role in the Europeanization of Justice and Home Affairs and in the institutionalization of an internal security field in Europe. It structures the setting in which bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic agents struggle over issues such as the definition of migration policy, the distribution of resources and the identification of threats in the EU today.

At present, migration is a nodal point in the internal security field. It is a key issue which facilitates the connection between the professional security practices in the field and the wider normative and political questioning of migration. 'Migration' and related labels such as 'foreigner' and 'asylum-seeker' are politically powerful signifiers in contemporary Europe.[4] They have a capacity to connect the internal security logic to the big political questions of cultural and racial identity, challenges to the welfare state, and the legitimacy of the post-war political order. More generally, migration has become a meta-issue, that is, a phenomenon that can be referred to as the cause

[4] The concept 'signifier' is one of the two dimensions of a sign: signifier and signified. The signifier refers to the expressive dimension of language (e.g. the word 'Europe' spoken, written, symbolized, etc.). The signified refers to the content of language (e.g. the meaning of Europe, such as Europe meaning European integration) (Greimas and Courtés, 1993).

of many problems (Faist, 1994, p. 52). Social and political agencies use the theme of immigration, foreigners, asylum-seekers and refugees to interrelate a range of disparate political issues in their struggle over power, resources and knowledge (Bigo, 1998; Huysmans, 1997).

V. Cultural Security and Migration

The Europeanization of migration policy is not only a technical and professional issue, it is also a hot political issue. It is part of a political spectacle in which the criteria of belonging are contested. The political spectacle refers to the creation and circulation of symbols in the political process. Politics emerges in the spectacle as a drama in which meaning is conferred through evoking crisis situations, emergencies, rituals such as consultations or elections, and political myths. It structures processes of role-taking by the actors and legitimates political decisions often through the evocation of threats or reassurances (Edelman, 1967, 1988). The protection and transformation of cultural identity is one of the key issues through which the politics of belonging and the question of migration are connected (Wæver *et al.,* 1993).

Migration policy, at whatever level it is developed, has to address the reality that European countries have become countries of immigration. Immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees are present and are challenging the myth of national cultural homogeneity. They are a multicultural presence in everyday practices, and are indicative of the fact that cultural identity is not constant but variable (Martiniello, 1997; Cesari, 1997).

The political rendering of cultural identity involves a mixture of issues, including multiculturalism, European identity, nationalism, and xenophobia and racism. But the key element is that the cultural mixing resulting from migration is politicized on the ground that multicultural developments challenge the desire for coinciding cultural and political frontiers (Martiniello, 1997, p. 14). In this dynamic, cultural identity is not necessarily securitized through a radical discourse of a dawning cultural war. Letting migration figure as a dangerous challenge to the vaguer notion of social and political integration of society has strong securitizing effects (Heisler and Layton-Henry, 1993). Discourses representing migration as a cultural challenge to social and political integration have become an important source for mobilizing security rhetoric and institutions. For example, forms of new and radical conservatism, which include the clash of civilization discourses, articulate a dream of cultural, spiritual and/or racial unity which is threatened by factors such as cultural decadence and a dawning cultural war. Migration and supporters of a liberal multiculturalism are among the internal and external enemies challenging the rescue of the national tradition and the protection of western

civilization (Dahl, 1999; Habermas, 1989; Huntington, 1996; McCormick, 1997). Also the extensive media coverage of immigrant involvement in riots in urban ghettos, the political rendering of these riots as manifestations of incivility, and the political revival of the notion of a dangerous class help create the ground for reifying cultural danger (Rey, 1996). But the supporters of a more liberal migration policy in the EU also share the assumption that migration challenges the viability of traditional instruments of social and political integration, most notably, nationalism. The difference is that they see this as a chance for changing societies rather than a threat to the tradition that has to be neutralized (Habermas, 1992; Soysal, 1994; Sayad, 1991; Weinstock, 1997).

The European integration process is involved in the development of and the struggle against the representation of migration as a cultural danger. Three themes are central. The first is the cultural significance of border control and the limitation of free movement. The second is the question of integration or assimilation of migrants into the domestic societies of the Member States. The third is the relationship between European integration and the development of multicultural societies.

First, border control and by implication the internal security problematic created in the EU has a cultural dimension. Although it is often suggested that external borders have been fortified for all so-called third country nationals, this is not what has happened in practice. Border control is polysemic; individuals crossing borders are often differentiated according to more than one criterion (Balibar, 1994, p. 339). The EU's external borders, for example, have been more 'real' for most non-OECD nationals than for members of OECD countries (Thränhardt and Miles, 1995, p. 9).

> [W]ithin Europe, there is now a widely held view of cultural closeness and similarity between all the 'nations' of western Europe, a commonality which is constructed and legitimated by means of signifying and naturalising difference in relation to the population of the peripheries of the world economy who 'for their own good' are requested to remain 'where they naturally belong'. (Thränhardt and Miles, 1995, p. 10)

This differentiation is confirmed in the list determining the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of a visa for entering Member States of the European Union.[5] Moreover, by linking illegal immigration and asylum-seekers one inevitably envisages and singles out Third World nationals simply because many asylum-seekers arrive from these countries. They are easily pictured as culturally (and sometimes also as racially) different. To an extent, the cultural implications of border controls are an indirect consequence of the

[5] The list was requested under Art. 100c of the Treaty on European Union.

cultural origins of asylum-seekers and therefore the cultural effects are not necessarily intended. For example, the cultural consequences of border closure result partly from class interests and shifts in the labour market. Since western markets seem to demand especially skilled labour, the restrictive policies target primarily unskilled and semi-skilled migrants, who tend to belong to non-OECD countries (Miles, 1993, pp. 179–80). One has to be cautious about this latter argument, however. Some economic sectors in particular regions and cities depend on unskilled labour and on the illegal, and therefore cheaper and more flexible, employment of immigrants (Vidal, 1999; Morice, 1997). But the fact remains that the regulation of asylum and the mediation of immigration through the labour market has cultural effects in the sense that the skilled foreign labour force tends to be culturally similar and that asylum-seekers tend to be perceived as culturally different.

Some argue that, in addition to cultural criteria, racism also plays a role in the regulation of inclusion and exclusion of migrants (Sivanandan, 1993). While nationalism is a cultural discourse, racism is a biological discourse that unifies a community in the name of somatic or biological criteria such as skin colour, height, facial characteristics, etc. (Miles, 1989; Wieviorka, 1991). The argument is that the EU develops an Euro-racism (Pieterse, 1991; Sivanandan, 1990, pp. 153–60; Webber, 1991). However, as Miles (1994) and Wieviorka (1994) have argued, it is problematic to claim that the diversity of racist practices in different Member States and the racial effects of the European integration process produce a specific form of racism that is present in all Member States. National policies against racism and xenophobia, and the historical and political context in which racism and xenophobia have emerged, differ considerably across the Member States. For example, a debate surrounds the question of whether the European policy initiatives against racism and xenophobia should follow the British model of race relations. This model is contested because some argue that it institutionalizes racial differentiation. But the disagreement also rests on the difference between the British model and the way in which some of the continental countries have dealt with racism and xenophobia (Miles, 1994; Wieviorka, 1994).

There is, however, a more indirect connection between migration policy in the EU and racism and xenophobia. Emphasizing restrictions and control implies a negative portrayal of groups of migrants. Such a policy risks sustaining public expressions of racism and xenophobia in the present political context. The targeted groups often have an explicit link to Europe's colonial history and/or have traditionally been subjected to racist stereotyping, such as the gypsies. So irrespective of some recent initiatives to combat racism and xenophobia such as the creation of a European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (*OJ,* 1990, 1995, 1996, 1997), the EU is indirectly implicated

in the rise of racist and xenophobic reactions to asylum-seekers and immi-grants. This view, however, does not imply that the EU is actively implicated in the formation of a European-wide specific form of racism, as the Euro-racism argument seems to suggest.

A second theme that introduces the question of migration and cultural identity into the EU is the integration of immigrants into domestic societies. For example, the Commission has recently voiced concern about the promo-tion of the integration of immigrants (Commission, 1998). But the need to integrate immigrants has also been used to justify a restrictive migration policy (Ugur, 1995; Bigo, 1996b).

A policy of integration may be part of progressive multiculturalism, which supports the integration of immigrants by granting them political rights as a means to create a genuinely multicultural society. But emphasizing the need to integrate immigrants can also directly or indirectly confirm a nationalist desire for a culturally homogeneous society, identifying immigrants as the obstacle to a successful realization of this desire (Blommaert and Verschueren, 1992, 1998). Integration policies often, at least indirectly, uphold the assump-tion that a culturally uniform society existed before migration started, irrespec-tive of whether the policy expresses a desire for re-establishing the forgone homogeneity. As a result pro-integration projects position migrants outside the national or European social formation of which they are a constitutive part. Migrants emerge as late arrivers who disrupted a culturally homogenous space, irrespective of their contribution to the creation of the society as it exists today. Therefore projects supporting the integration of immigrants risk confirming the notion that the different life-style and culture of the (non-integrated) migrants are potentially destabilizing to the social formation (Miles, 1993, pp. 175–85).

The third theme is the development of multicultural and non-racist societies in Europe. In the EU this theme plays an important role. The development of a common migration policy is presented as an instrument for dealing with the rise of racist, xenophobic and extreme nationalistic practices in Europe (Guiraudon, 1998; Ireland 1995, p. 257). The European Parliament, recently followed by the Commission and the Council, has for a long time cautioned against the revival of racism, xenophobia and extreme forms of nationalism (EP, 1991). Anti-racist and pro-migration movements have organized them-selves across national boundaries in the EU. They act in the European political space so as to be in a better position to support rights for immigrants and asylum-seekers and to articulate their support for a multicultural society at the level of the EU (Ireland, 1991; Kastoryano, 1997).

The politicization of a multicultural and a non-racist EU articulates a specific fear of (a possible revival of) the European past. Wæver has argued

that the security identity of the European integration process is based on a fear of the return of the balance of power system which fragmented and ruled nineteenth-century Europe and culminated in the First and Second World Wars (Wæver, 1996). The debates about multiculturalism are based on a variation of the fear of the return of the old Europe. They articulate a security identity that rests on the fear of the revival of extreme nationalism, racism and xenophobic reactions which destabilized the domestic and European political space in the first half of the twentieth century. The peculiar characteristic of the contemporary dynamic is that this haunting past is reactivated via a politicization of migration.

The migration policy developed in the EU is ambivalent in the way it deals with this fear. On the one hand, the Europeanization of migration policy indirectly sustains nationalist, racist and xenophobic reactions to immigrants. It portrays immigrants and asylum-seekers primarily in negative terms. They are presented as an acute problem challenging societal and political stability and the effective working of the internal market. In doing so, the EU feeds the idea that migrants do not belong to the European communities, that they are a serious burden for European societies, and, therefore, that they should be kept at a distance. It is a policy that confirms nationalist and xenophobic positions and to that extent undermines the initiatives for the institutionalization of a more inclusive multicultural Europe which would provide extensive political, economic and social rights to immigrants.

On the other hand, the EU also campaigns against the revival of nationalism, racism and xenophobic reactions. Furthermore, European integration is in essence a multicultural project supporting the cohabitation of different nationalities in social, economic and political space. The politicization of migration has not only led to a restrictive migration policy undermining multiculturalism in the EU. It has also contributed to making the question of multiculturalism figure prominently in debates on European integration (Leveau, 1998). Besides the policy initiatives for multiculturalism that are developed in the EU,[6] there is a flourishing intellectual debate on the relationship between European integration and the creation of a post-national citizenship. A key question in the latter context is the extent to which the European integration process has created an opportunity structure for separating citizenship – or political identity – from nationality. The central issue is whether European integration will create an opportunity for granting political rights on the basis of residence independent of the nationality of the person (Close, 1995; Ferry, 1990, 1991,

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[6] For example, antiracist projects running during 1997 in the Framework of the Youth for Europe Programme; Commission (1998); European Parliament (2000); and the Commission's overview of Europe's commitment in the fight against racism and xenophobia (Commission, 1997).

1992; Habermas, 1992, 1994, 1998; Martiniello, 1995a, b; Meehan, 1993; Soysal 1994).

A multicultural project, however, has its own dangers in the present European context (Martiniello, 1997). It always risks slipping into a reductionism that politicizes migrants predominantly via their cultural identity. In other words, it feeds the cultural reification of immigrants and asylum-seekers. This may turn out to be problematic because the structuring of the political debates about migration in cultural terms has played an important role in giving nationalist movements and extreme right-wing parties a prominent place in the political field. Part of their success rests on a skilful mobilization of nationalist, xenophobic, and racist feelings through the reification of a burdensome and threatening cultural other.

VI. Welfare, Security and Migration

Belonging is not only mediated through cultural identity – or nationalism – and through policing borders in contemporary west European societies. Access to social and economic rights is also crucial in the governance of belonging in the welfare state. Who has a legitimate right to welfare provisions? Migration features prominently in the contemporary struggle for the welfare state. More specifically, immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees are increasingly seen as having no legitimate right (which is different from their legal rights) to social assistance and welfare provisions.

As a result of successive economic recessions and the rise in unemployment since the early 1970s, the struggle over the distribution of social goods such as housing, health care, unemployment benefits, jobs and other social services has become more competitive. Scarcity makes immigrants and asylum-seekers rivals to national citizens in the labour market and competitors in the distribution of social goods. This has resulted in an increasingly explicit assertion of welfare chauvinism, or the privileging of national citizens in the distribution of social goods (Faist, 1994, pp. 61–6; Ceyhan, forthcoming, 1998; Brochman, 1993). For welfare chauvinists, immigrants and asylum-seekers are not simply rivals but *illegitimate* recipients or claimants of socio-economic rights. Moreover, offering welfare provisions is presented as a magnet pulling migrants into the EU. Curtailing social assistance and access to other social rights for immigrants and asylum-seekers can then be justified as an instrument for limiting the number of applications for asylum and immigration.

Through the transferability of social entitlements for nationals of the Member States and the exclusion of third-country nationals from it (Geddes, 2000), the development of welfare chauvinism is mirrored in the co-ordination

of social policy. The positive spin-off of the internal market in the area of social entitlements is, thus, largely reserved for nationals of the Member States.

Given that employment is an important path to access social rights beyond the right of social assistance, favouring Community manpower also feeds into welfare chauvinism. For example, the Justice and Home Affairs Council, after its meeting in Luxembourg (20 June 1994), stated that it approves of temporary employment of foreigners

> only where vacancies in a Member State cannot be filled by national and Community manpower or by non-Community manpower lawfully resident on a permanent basis in that Member State and already forming part of the Member State's regular labour market. (Quoted in Ireland, 1995, p. 262)

Access to social rights and the possibility of transferring rights between countries are key instruments of social integration of both the domestic society and the EU (Donzelot, 1994). It is a key issue in the politics of belonging in welfare states. Welfare chauvinism is a strategy of introducing cultural identity criteria in an area in which belonging is determined on the basis of social policy criteria, such as health, age, disability and employment. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that support for curtailing social rights of immigrants often also implies support for the idea that migration is a threat to cultural homogeneity.

> Recent political conflicts around social rights of immigrants have often been based on the claim that the willingness to share social goods distributed by the welfare state needs a basis of common feeling. It is thus not surprising that those political actors opposed to (further) immigration, and/or to granting certain social rights to immigrants, have tended to refer to the alleged threat immigrants pose not only as economic competitors in the labour market and for social policies ('they take away our jobs and our benefits') but also as a threat to the cultural homogeneity of the national state. (Faist, 1995, p. 189)

Welfare chauvinism emerges under a radical or a more moderate form. In its radical form, the socio-economic stigmatization portrays migrants as profit-eers who try illegitimately to gain benefits from the welfare system of a community to which they do not belong. They are strangers who exploit the society that is so kind as to house them. They have become free-loaders illegitimately taking advantage of a welfare system under pressure who, thus, constitute a strain upon the system itself. The migrant is transformed from a competitor into someone committing welfare fraud (Faist, 1994, p. 61). A more moderate version relates the necessity for controlling migration to economic recession, which limits employment opportunities for migrants and proportionally raises the costs of sustaining them. Here one seeks to curtail the social rights of immigrants and asylum-seekers, not because they are free-loading,

but because a community should first and foremost provide benefits and welfare for its 'own' people. In this view, shrinking resources create pressure for a redistribution of employment opportunities and social rights favouring the nationals of EU Member States.

The disqualification of migration in expressions of welfare chauvinism is given a wider societal significance through the use of metaphors such as an 'invasion' or 'flood' of asylum-seekers (Faist, 1994, p. 61). In a welfare state struggling to guarantee an acceptable level of socio-economic rights, these metaphors portray immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees as a serious threat to the survival of the socio-economic system. In the political spectacle these metaphors help to dramatize the socio-economic problematic of the welfare state by framing it in a security discourse: experiences of economic and social uncertainty are translated into opposition to and fear of immigrants and asylum-seekers.

The securitization of migration in the context of the debates about the future of the welfare state is also embedded in a struggle for political legitimacy in and of the post-war political order in Europe. Challenges to the welfare state, which started to be the subject of turbulent debates in the 1970s (Held, 1987, pp. 221–64), cannot be reduced to a question of economic recession or a breakdown of the spiral between rapid economic growth and the creation of social rights. The crisis is in essence a political crisis about the decline of the post-war technology of integrating society and state by creating solidarity among the different classes through redistribution, welfare provisions, and a generalized system of insurance against accidents (Donzelot, 1994, pp. 185–263; Habermas, 1976). Thus, welfare chauvinism is not only a strategy in the socio-economic fight for the protection of social and economic rights for nationals of the Member States. It is also played out in a directly *political* struggle in which immigrants, asylum-seekers, foreigners and refugees are constructed as scapegoats to remedy declining political legitimacy. In the present political context, expressions of welfare chauvinism thus facilitate a connection between the socio-economic questioning of migration as a financial and economic burden to challenges to the political identity of welfare states and their governments.

That the Europeanization of migration policy connects to the struggle about the future of the welfare state is not surprising. The European integration project is steeped in the problematic of the welfare state. For example, the key areas of European integration – the development of the internal market and EMU – are not just technical economic projects aiming at the development of an economic level playing-field to improve the global competitiveness of European firms and the attraction of its market for foreign investment. The integration project is embroiled in the political game of preserving the legitimacy of post-war political order and political regimes. The EU functions

simultaneously as a scapegoat for unpopular decisions and as a political attempt to redraw the circle between economic growth and welfare provisions (Leander and Guzzini, 1997; Frieden *et al.,* 1998).

In the EU, the restrictive migration policy, the construction of a security continuum, and the policy of favouring the free movement of nationals of Member States in the labour market and social policy area at the expense of third-country nationals are politically significant because they sustain the construction of a scapegoat in a political and socio-economic struggle for the transformation and conservation of the welfare state. However, it does not follow that the construction of inimical relations between an indigenous population and foreigners dominates the debate about the future of the welfare state in the EU. Rather, the interpretation proposed here suggests that EU policies and politics partly sustain expressions of welfare chauvinism and the potential and actual slip from welfare chauvinism into a securitization of asylum-seekers, immigrants and refugees in the political struggle surrounding the question of the future of the welfare state.

VII. Conclusion

In contemporary Europe, migration has become a meta-issue in the political spectacle. It has become a powerful theme through which functionally differentiated policy problems, such as identity control and visa policy, asylum applications, integration of immigrants, distribution of social entitlements, and the management of cultural diversity are connected and traversed. Discourses and governmental technologies reifying immigrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and foreigners as a dangerous challenge to societal stability play a prominent – though not exclusive – role in connecting these different issues.

The Europeanization of migration policy has made a distinct contribution to this development. It has directly securitized migration by integrating migration policy into an internal security framework, that is, a policy framework that defines and regulates security issues following the abolition of internal border control. It has also indirectly sustained the securitization of migration. The construction of the internal security field, the restrictive migration policy, the privileging of nationals of Member States in the internal market, and policies supporting, often indirectly, expressions of welfare chauvinism and the idea of cultural homogeneity as a stabilizing factor feed into the negative politicization of immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees as an illegitimate presence and scapegoat. Such a negative rendering of migration at the European level further bolsters domestic political spectacles in which migration is often easily connected to security-related problems such as crime and riots in cities, domestic instability, transnational crime and welfare fraud.

   This raises questions about how the development of a common migration policy feeds into the wider politics of belonging, that is the struggle over cultural, racial and socio-economic criteria for the distribution of rights and duties connected to membership of the national and European community. To the extent that the Europeanization of migration policy fosters the securitization of migration it sustains a radical political strategy aimed at excluding particular categories of people by reifying them as a danger (for example, to cultural values, to the provision of social assistance, to public safety, to health, etc.). Supporting the construction of destabilizing factors and dangers in policies regulating membership of a community renders the inclusion of immigrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in the EU more difficult. It also has an impact on the kind of solidarity, social integration, cultural identity, civility and public order that is promoted in the community.

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