

**FLIGHT AND MIGRATION**  
**Between Homelessness and Hospitality**

**One World Theology**  
**(Volume 13)**

# FLIGHT AND MIGRATION BETWEEN HOMELESSNESS AND HOSPITALITY



Edited by  
**Klaus Krämer and Klaus Vellguth**



**FLIGHT AND MIGRATION**  
**Between Homelessness and Hospitality**  
**(One World Theology, Volume 13)**

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## Preface

The challenges posed by migration and flight are the center of interest in this volume of the *One World Theology* series in which theologians from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe present their specific, context-related perspectives on a number of key theological, missiological and universal Church issues. The discussion of migration and flight in this volume reflects both the character and the objective of the *One World Theology* series with its focus on missiology and the universal Church. One of its main aims is to ensure that the topics concerned are seen and debated from differing standpoints. Hence, in each of the anthologies in the series theologians from different geographical and cultural backgrounds have an opportunity to set out their views and thus to contribute to a polyphonic universal Church discourse. In the first chapter of the present volume the authors investigate the causes of migration and flight in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe. In the second chapter they turn their attention to the situation of refugees and migrants in the different regions and continents. The third chapter presents theological and socio-ethical perspectives on flight and migration while the fourth chapter is devoted to the provision of pastoral care for migrants in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. In the fifth and final chapter the contributors examine the responses of the Church to the challenges arising from migration and flight on the different continents.

In his article on “Determinants and Organization of Migration in Asia”, Graziano Batistella shows that there are many different ways of regulating migration on the continent and tackling it in a constructive manner. He points to the migration corridors that exist and says that the organisation of migration has become a lucrative, albeit problematical business. He argues that the migrants themselves should be treated as subjects in the regulatory schemes and advocates their involvement in the development of viable concepts. In conclusion

Batistella categorises the phenomenon of migration in words that ring true in both Asia and beyond: “Migration is a statement against the unjust order of the world. The division between affluence and poverty, protected for centuries by arms and policies of exclusion, is being questioned in the US, in Europe and in Asia. It is no longer possible that some will enjoy prosperity because others suffer impoverishment. The well-being of some requires the inclusion of all.”

In his contribution entitled “Poverty, Violence and Marginalisation – Causes of Migration and Displacement in Latin America” Josef Estermann says that the composition of modern-day Latin America is the outcome of three movements of migration and conquest. First of all, there was the migration of the *mestizos*, whose ancestors originally came from Europe. They mixed with the indigenous population to varying degrees. Secondly, there is the original indigenous population who were severely decimated and have been virtually excluded from public life for a long period of time. Thirdly, there is the Afro-American population, the descendants of African slaves, who continue to suffer discrimination and exclusion. The impoverishment of large sections of the population of Latin America has led to internal migration to the slum areas of big cities as well as to cross-border migration. Estermann makes it clear that poverty, violence and alcoholism are fuelling migration in Latin America, which has one of the largest emigration rates in the world.

Jordan Nyenyembe from Tanzania says in his contribution examining the “Causes of Migration and Flight in the African Context” that the classification of migration as a problem is the result of a Eurocentric perspective on the issue. Taking into account the Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* issued by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, he focuses attention on an interpretation in which migration is seen from a salvation perspective: “The African migrants can be agents of transformation to the receiving communities in America and Europe [...]. Biblically and theologically the migration of humanity is a blessing not a problem.”

The articles in this first chapter dealing with the causes of flight and migration from Africa, Asia and Latin America are followed by a contribution from Klaus Vellguth headed “Pull Factors as a Blessing. Migration as a valuable impetus for European societies

in more than just economic and demographic terms” in which he looks at why refugees and migrants choose Germany as a country of destination. He begins with a historical retrospective in which he makes it clear that migration is inseparably bound up with the history of *Homo sapiens* as a race. He goes on to examine the pull factors for migration to Germany, making a distinction between refugees and asylum seekers, on the one hand, and migrant workers on the other. He concludes by showing that the Church’s position on migration at the beginning of the third millennium correlates with an economic perspective in which migration is recognised as a positive economic factor.

In the second chapter the authors look into the situation facing migrants and refugees in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. In his article on “Coexistence and Interaction between Immigrant and Local Catholics in Germany” Tobias Keßler points out that migration and flight cannot be seen exclusively as a challenge to society. On the contrary, as exemplified in the work carried out by Giovanni Batista Scalabrini, migration can be seen as an expression of God’s plan of salvation, through which He aims to bring together all nations as a single people. Keßler feels that, confronted with the phenomenon of migration, the Church needs to develop a perichoretic understanding of communion which encourages unity in diversity rather than cultural assimilation.

In their joint contribution entitled “Out to Work: International Labour Migration and Changing Parental Roles in the Philippines” Maruja Embeasis, Valentin Mendossa and Cecilia Ruiz Marawe point to the fact that almost ten per cent of the gross domestic product in the Philippines is made up of transfer payments from abroad, where a total of 1.8 million Filipinos work. Women are mostly employed as domestic workers in the Gulf States and other regions, which means the husbands they have left behind are obliged to play a new role and bring up the children. On the other hand, men working as migrants abroad to support their families also have to develop a new understanding of their role as fathers (and presumably also as husbands). Migration ultimately has a dramatic effect on the relations between family members in the Philippines and often results in lasting changes.

Jorge E. Castillo Guerra deals with migratory movements in Latin America and the Caribbean. He starts with an analysis of the

causes and pastoral challenges of migration before going on to examine the incipient theology of migration. He makes it clear that, in describing the contexts of migration, a distinction must be made between emigrants, transmigrants and immigrants in terms of their individual identity as well as between countries of origin, transit and destination, although in reality the categories can become blurred. As regards the provision of pastoral care for migrants, Castillo Guerra says that at its Fifth General Conference in Aparecida in 2007 the Latin American Episcopal Council addressed the issue of migration and concluded that pastoral care for migrants was inadequate to the challenges faced. The bishops noted that migrants should not be treated exclusively as the objects of assistance-based, diaconal pastoral care: "Emigrants are likewise disciples and missionaries and are called to be a new seed of evangelisation, like the many emigrants and missionaries who brought the Christian faith to our Americas" (Aparecida 377). Castillo Guerra says that a theology of migration evolves when the theological currents in the countries of origin and the destination countries do not match the migrants' real lives. He emphasises that, in the relevant theology, migration is put in a salvation perspective as a source of opportunity, although it does not overlook the vulnerability of the migrants themselves. According to Castillo Guerra, the theology of migration acknowledges that, for many migrants, their journey is an experience with God, because they can feel that he is going with them. Finally, the theology of migration states that migration can become a mystical experience making it possible to read the Bible in a new way, interpreting the essence of its message as grace, as freedom from exclusion and humiliation and as hope for a more humane world.

Closing the second chapter, Mathias Burton Kafunda explores the situation facing migrants and refugees in Africa. He criticises the fact that in most African countries there is no comprehensive legal or political approach to the issue of migration and refugees because African countries are more concerned about their sovereignty and safety than with the fate of migrants and refugees. Consequently refugees in many African countries are forced to live in restricted zones or camps in which they experience poverty, helplessness and a lack of any prospects. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many of the migrants and refugees are traumatised by oppression, war, rape, torture, the murder of family members, homelessness,

etc. He says that "by confining migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) to camps humanity has failed at protecting, defending and developing life of the stranger who is the image of Christ."

In the third chapter the authors offer theological and socio-ethical perspectives on migration and flight. The first contribution is from Fabio Baggio, who begins by looking at the theological dispute over questions of migration in the course of the Church's history. He then expounds on several Christian and socio-ethical principles to which he attaches key significance in the context of modern-day human mobility: the principle of respect for human rights, the principle of the promotion of human dignity, the principle of the superiority of the common good; the principle of the universal destination of goods, the principle of global stewardship, and the principle of global citizenship. Theology and ethics, he says, are called upon to contribute to an understanding of the phenomenon of human mobility. He is convinced that theological and ethical reflections can help restore a more humane and humanizing face to migration policies and practices.

Addressing the question of "How Much Migration Can Theology Tolerate?" Polykarp Ulin Agan, an Indonesian theologian, examines the religious affiliations of recent asylum applicants in Germany and notes that migration has brought about a religious and demographic shift in German society. He proceeds to look at the extent to which migration is a *locus theologicus* and then sets out theological perspectives on migration, focusing on socio-ethical aspects of migration issues and arguing in favour of a greater sensitivity towards migration. Building implicitly on a theology of natality, Agan points out that being born into the community of human solidarity is an improbable coincidence. He asserts that being born into one's own (national, geographical or contextual) identity is even more unlikely. This makes it all the more important to practise solidarity with the human family beyond one's own national, contextual or geographical setting.

In his article entitled "Migration and Memory: An Ethic for Migrants" the Vietnamese-American missiologist, Peter Phan, describes memory as an ethical duty for migrants not to forget their own past, just as Yahweh enjoined the Israelites to remember where they came from. Phan provides theological justification for the *metanoia* in that migrants are charged with promulgating God's mighty

deeds. On the other hand he points out that the migrants' own past should make possible for other migrants what God made possible for them. Phan looks into what and how migrants should remember. He presents a culture of remembering which encompasses remembering truthfully, remembering justly, remembering forgivingly and remembering constructively: "The ultimate goal of truth-finding, restoring justice, and forgiveness is to build a society in which all citizens can live in freedom, equality, and harmony, and in which, at the minimum, abuses of human rights will not occur again."

Examining "Theological and Socio-Ethical Perspectives on Migration/Flight" Jaco Beyers points out that strangers can be seen as a threat, an asset or an opportunity. He outlines the biblical foundations of a theology of hospitality in which it is essential to "recognise the need of the stranger as an opportunity to exhibit divine love through acts of kindness". Beyers emphasises that care for strangers or the needy should not be misconstrued as an opportunity to convert them to the Christian faith. On the contrary, Christians should keep on expressing the love of God to all humans, no matter what their political, economic or social status may be.

The articles in the fourth chapter explore practical pastoral care for migrants. In his article on "Pastoral Care for Refugees and Migrants" Stefan Heße, Chairman of the Commission for Migration of the German Bishops' Conference, starts by looking at what pastoral care means for refugees and migrants before concentrating on pastoral care for Catholic migrants. He distinguishes between migrants and refugees and makes it clear that the provision of pastoral care for non-Christian refugees constitutes a special challenge for the Church in Germany. Given that twenty per cent of the population in Germany has an immigration background, Heße underlines the pastoral need to strengthen the capacity of the faithful to authentically live out their faith in what will be multi-cultural and pluri-religious societies in the future. He considers the voluntary work performed by many Christians, especially the help they have provided for refugees, as vivid testimony that the real wealth of the churches is the charisma of the baptised.

In her article "Witness as *Withness*. Pastoral Care of Migrants in Asia" Gemma Tulud Cruz deals first with the various dimensions of migration in Asia and then looks into the different types of labour migration. She makes reference to the documents of the Federation

of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), which since its Fifth General Assembly in Bandung (Indonesia) in 1990 has regularly issued statements on matters of migration. The author concludes by stating that the pastoral care of migrants in Asia is not just owned and embraced by the clergy, religious, and pastoral agents but also by the migrants themselves: "Moreover, it is about witness as *withness*, about accompaniment. It is about a Church of the poor where the poor, in this case the migrants, are not simply passive recipients but also active agents in the transformation of their lives, the Church, and the world."

The provision of care for migrants has a long tradition in Latin America. As Carmem Lussi notes in her contribution on "The Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America", the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) made it clear as far back as 1955 that "particular care must be taken to ensure that in all the countries of Latin America the work of spiritual assistance for migrants is performed". In the years that followed that focus was extended. While it had initially been exclusively on migrants who had left their home countries, it now also encompassed the fate of the families left behind as well as the social structures affected by migration. In 2003 the CELAM Justice and Solidarity Department was entrusted with providing pastoral care for migrants. In its current work CELAM highlights the role of migrants as agents, the provision of a Pastoral of Human Mobility and the importance of closer networking between institutions and countries in order to exert political influence through the establishment or consolidation of networks in the Church domain and by lobbying.

David Holdcroft starts his assessment of pastoral care for migrants and refugees by looking at the situation in Africa. He makes it clear that the complexity of many forced displacement scenarios, which involve demoralising accommodation in barracks or refugee camps, entails new challenges to which the Church in Africa must find adequate responses. Holdcroft also remarks that six of the ten main countries from which refugees come are in Africa and that the migrants' countries of destination are for the most part also in Africa. He says this is partly because there are no major geographical barriers to migratory movements in Africa and partly because the language families are relatively similar, which means that migrants can quickly settle in other regions on the African continent. Another

reason he gives for African migrants being able to find a new home in Africa is that, in contrast to the situation in Europe, North America and Australia, there is generally no xenophobic marginalisation. On the contrary, alternative communitarian and integration concepts such as *ubuntu* facilitate the absorption of migrants in different parts of Africa. Community-based pastoral care, which ties in with the *ubuntu* concept, apparently also contributes to the integration of migrants into a new geographical setting. Holdcroft warns that this involves the risk of underestimating the complexity of migration processes. However, he says that the Jesuit Refugee Service and other Church organisations do not ignore these dimensions of the refugee question but rather encourage new forms of communitarianism which enable migrants to maintain their own identity.

The contributors to the fifth and final chapter of this volume consider the responses of the Church to the challenges posed by migration and flight. Luigi Sabbarese begins by stating that the issues of migration, exile, flight, etc. were dealt with at an early stage in both Latin and Eastern canon law. He highlights the need to guarantee the legal status of pastoral care for migrants in accordance with their respective language area, nationality and rite and, in doing so, to comply with the Church's principle of communion. The primary aim here is not to provide "protection for others" but to secure protection of communion so that the catholicity of the Church can be effected in the particular churches.

Approaching the issue from an Asian perspective, Mary John Mananzan illustrates the Church's response to the challenges of migration and asylum by taking the Philippines as an example. She begins by outlining the three waves of migration in the history of this island state in South-East Asia and then examines in detail the main problems facing Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) as migrant workers. In addition to the problems arising from the separation of families she focuses on the scandal of human trafficking to which female migrant workers, in particular, are exposed. Mary John Mananzan describes the response of the Church in the Philippines to migration and reports on the work of the Episcopal Commission on Migration and Itinerant People (CMI). She concludes by describing her personal experiences of work with migrants as a Benedictine missionary and the endeavours of the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) in Manila.

Gioacchino Campese then explores the responses of the Church to the challenge of immigration and explains the pastoral models of a mission *for* the migrants, a mission *of* the migrants and a mission *with* the migrants. The latter model takes as its basis a Church which acknowledges that its mission cannot merely consist of the provision of services for migrants and refugees, but must engage in a fully-fledged "being with them", in human relations among equals, in deep, healing friendships. This pastoral concept of a mission *with* the migrants requires a marked ability to listen and to engage in dialogue as well as patience and a flexible resilience towards others. Campese emphasises that a pastoral approach of this kind is in accordance with God's will that the Church should be a sign and witness of peaceful coexistence in a globalised, multi-cultural and multi-religious world.

In their article on "The Response of the Church in Africa to Human Migration and Refugees" Muthupei Albert Mutavhatsindi and Maniraj Sukdaven explore the historical roots of migration in Africa and show how the specific discipleship of Christ can be practised against the background of migration in Africa. They start by listing the economic, demographic, social and ecological factors that encourage migration and emphasise that it is the duty of the Church to provide pastoral care for migrants. They then go on to investigate the extent to which migrants can be active as missionaries themselves, describing refugees and migrants as those to whom the Church must provide pastoral care. They underline the need for holistic pastoral care that comprises a physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual dimension. The authors stress the need to develop contextual evangelising concepts which are intercultural in nature and can provide answers to the paradigm shifts of the present and the future.

We owe a debt of gratitude not only to the authors who have contributed to this thirteenth volume in the *One World Theology* series, but also to the missio staff members Lydia Klinkenberg, Katja Nikles, Dr. Marco Moerschbacher and Dr. Stefan Voges, without whose conceptual advice this volume would not have been possible. Our special thanks go to Tobias Keßler of the Institute for Global Church and Mission (IWM) who has been closely involved for many years with migration and migration theology and shared his invaluable expertise with us in the preparation of this volume. Our thanks also go to Martina Dittmer-Flachskampf and Miriam Niekämper for the careful

preparation of the manuscripts and Christine Baur for her attentive proofreading. Finally we also wish to say thank you to the staff of the mikado missiology library whose copious research work was crucial in the work on this volume in the *One World Theology* series. We hope very much that this latest volume in the *One World Theology* series will generate interest in the theological discourse within the universal Church and provide fresh ideas on how theology and the pastoral ministry of the Church can be re-thought and realised in the age of migration.

*Klaus Krämer*  
*Klaus Vellguth*

## Causes of Migration and Flight

# Determinants and Organization of Migration in Asia

Graziano Battistella

The causes of migration have been examined many times. To the layman's opinion which attributes migration to the desire of people to escape conditions of political and economic insecurity, the social sciences have added more refined ways to explain the whole migratory phenomenon. They have addressed questions such as why people move from some countries more than others, why they go to certain destinations more than others; why some people move and others do not; what factors are there that encourage and discourage migration; how long migrants tend to remain abroad and why some return. There is no generalized agreement on the determinants of migration as migration is considered too complex a phenomenon to be captured by a single theoretical explanation. At the same time, there is some convergence on the fact that theories complement each other and so it is possible to arrive at some overall view on the origin, development and ending of migration.<sup>1</sup>

Asia, as the continent with 60 percent of the world population, is the context of different types of migration. In addition to the huge movement of internal migrants, particularly in the very populous countries like China, India and Indonesia, migrants from Asia constitute almost half of the permanent migration to the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Temporary migration, mostly to the Gulf countries, involves millions of migrants from South and Southeast Asia. Finally, countries in Asia are affected by internal displacement caused by natural disasters and political instability, by the movement of refugees escaping conflict and persecution and by smuggling and trafficking in persons. In this regard, the causes of migration from Asia do not differ theoretically from the causes of similar movements in other countries, although explanatory factors can be specific.

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<sup>1</sup> Massey, Douglas. S. et al., "Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal", in *Population and Development Review*, No. 19 (1993) 3, 431–465.

This short contribution will limit itself to the causes of temporary and forced migration. It will illustrate first the general background contexts, analyse some intervening factors, and then look at the role of intermediaries and the different corridors. The chapter concludes with a word on governance.

### The background contexts

Migration is the result of imbalances among countries at the demographic, economic, social and political levels. It is not possible here to explore the reasons why these imbalances came to be as it would require detailed analysis which is impossible to summarize in a few words.

At the demographic level, there are huge imbalances in Asia, which lists some of the most populated countries, like China, India and Indonesia, and some of the least populated like Mongolia. Migration, however, is not triggered by differences in total population. Rather, the growth rate of the labor force and even more the proportion of the population in the young cohorts of the labor force, which usually encompasses the migrants, as well as the dependency ratio (working over non-working population) are more relevant as potential migration factors. The demographic decline is a concern in East Asian countries, including China, which recently relaxed its one-child policy, without obtaining the expected results, as less than expected people applied for a second child due to social and economic reasons. If high population growth might constitute a premise for the availability of people who cannot find employment in the country to go abroad, low population growth does not translate automatically into immigration, as other factors determine whether the country intends to absorb foreign labor force or not. Utilizing migration as population replacement is not a policy that countries pursue. Pairing the development of migration on the fertility transition, which involves all countries as they move through the modernization process, was the attempt of Zelinsky<sup>2</sup>, but his theory is not automatically applicable to the complex transformation of major countries like China and India.

Economic imbalances are also pronounced in the region, as one can glean from the 2015 Gross National Income (GNI) per capita of

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Zelinsky, Wilbur, "The hypothesis of the mobility transition", in *Geographical Review*, No. 61 (1971), 219–249.

US\$ 730 of Nepal, or \$1070 of Cambodia and \$1280 of Myanmar, and the \$85,430 of Qatar, \$52,090 of Singapore, and \$36,080 of Japan, according to the World Bank. Wage differentials have long been considered a major factor in determining migration flows. The neo-liberal economic approach was corrected several times with input from Harris and Todaro<sup>3</sup>, who emphasized the importance of expected salaries rather than just salary differentials, from Piore<sup>4</sup>, who underscored the role of the segmented labor market, or from the new economics of migration<sup>5</sup>, which preferred to consider migration determined by the desire of the family to spread risks rather than by wage differentials. Undoubtedly, as the economic factor is relevant in all migration decisions, also migration from Asian countries originates from low or middle income states and goes to high income countries, such as the Gulf Countries in West Asia, the more developed economies of Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in Southeast Asia and the high income economies of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in East Asia. However, migration occurs also among countries where the income differentials are not steep, such as between Bangladesh and India, or in occupations where earnings are not significantly superior to average incomes in the home countries (as it is for domestic workers employed in the Gulf region).

The social and cultural contexts differ also significantly throughout Asia. While in East Asia Confucian values have merged with Taoist and Buddhist traditions, West Asia is dominated by the Islamic culture. In South Asia the Hindu and Islamic traditions have lived side by side not without conflicts while Southeast Asia is more diversified and includes the Philippines, the only country – with East Timor – with a Christian majority in Asia. The cultural backgrounds influence the approach to migration, both in allowing or sanctioning the propensity to migrate as well as in the acceptance of migrants within society. The adherence to the national culture has always discouraged Japan from opening the borders to labor migration, while the Islamic context in the Gulf countries has allowed a massive inflow of foreign workers while barring them from remaining and integrating in the local culture.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Harris, John R./Todaro, Michael P., "Migration, unemployment and development: A two-sector analysis", in *American Economic Review*, No. 60 (1970) 1, 126–142.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Piore, Michael J., *Birds of passage. Migrant labor and industrial societies*, Cambridge 1979.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Stark, Oded, *The migration of labor*, Oxford 1991.

Basically, the strict temporary migration system prevalent in Asia is also a solution to avoiding the disruption of the cultural equilibrium established within Asian societies.

Finally, differences are profound also at the political level. Asia is home to different ways in which people participate in the governance of their respective country. Many nations rely on a traditional democratic system, where people can choose candidates from different parties, while others are led by the one-party system or have militaries playing a heavy role in public affairs or function as kingdoms, led by a sovereign. If some regions are relatively stable, others like the Middle East, are perennially traversed by turmoil. Conflicts give rise to displacement and forced migration. In addition to the crisis in Syria, and the decade-long displacement of refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq, displacements have occurred also in Myanmar, in particular for the Rohingyas in the south and the Kachins in the north.

The background contexts constitute the premises for migration, but, except for political conflicts giving rise to forced migration, they do not directly determine migration flows as intervening factors and intermediaries are necessary to orient and facilitate the movement of people across countries.

### The intervening factors

Migration flows are often determined by political and economic circumstances taking place in different parts of the world. Over 90 percent of labor migration from India and Pakistan is directed toward the Gulf countries. The percentage is slightly lower for migration from other South Asian countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal, while even from the Philippines over 60 percent of migrants end up in the Gulf countries. The relevance of the Middle East for labor migration from Asia defeats some theoretical constructions, such as the theory that migration tends to move along corridors established by historical connections, such as colonial ties. No obvious previous connections existed between the Gulf region and Asian countries. The intervening factors which originated migration to the Gulf were the 1973 Yom Kippur war, the consequent energy and economic crisis in the west, the ending of the labor migration program in Europe and the beginning of major construction projects in the Gulf, a region rich in capital but with limited human resources. Foreign companies

were allowed to hire Arab and then Asian workers under a temporary migration system (the kafala system) where citizens were granted the role of sponsors for the foreign workers. The system has serious limitations in terms of protection of the rights of workers, but in different forms it was adopted also by other countries in Asia.

Intervening factors are necessary also in the countries of origin to originate and characterize a migration flow. In the case of Korea, migrants in the Gulf countries were employed mostly by Korean companies, their remittances were directly paid in Korea and the sustained growth of the Korean economy led to increased opportunities of employment within the country, to the point that migration only lasted a quarter of a century. In the Philippines, the slow economic growth and high unemployment rate led the president, Ferdinand Marcos, who had imposed martial law in 1972, to adopt in 1974 a migration program intended to respond to a temporary condition in the labor market, but which was never substituted by alternative employment and continues until now.<sup>6</sup>

The inherent scarcity of labor force in Singapore, the unfavourable work conditions in the plantation sector in Malaysia, the need to modernize the infrastructures and the possibility to count on huge capital reserves in Taiwan can be considered also intervening factors which led to the establishment of migration programs with different characteristics.

Often migration begins in a spontaneous and sometimes irregular way, but it is the sanctioning of migration policies that determine whether it will expand and continue. Migration policies serve different objectives. In countries of destination they ensure the flexibility of the labor market, protect the occupations of citizens and minimize integration costs. In countries of origin they intend to protect migrants while facilitating employment. Migration policies do not work perfectly and sometimes contribute to irregular migration. However, they also provide the conditions for migration to continue after it was initiated by the intervening factors.

The continuation of migration is also ensured by social networks. Social networks consist in the number and types of persons a migrant

<sup>6</sup> Cf. IOM (International Organization for Migration)/SMC (Scalabrini Migration Center), Country migration report. The Philippines 2013, Makati City/Quezon City 2013.

knows and who can be instrumental in facilitating the migration process. They constitute social capital which can be translated in real capital when the information and assistance they provide decrease the costs of migration. Social networks can ultimately contribute to creating a culture of migration, whereby overseas work is normally inserted in the aspirations of people, particularly the young ones. Social networks can also lead to irregular migration and trafficking in persons when migrants prefer to follow the corridors suggested by relatives and friends rather than the ones indicated by official authorities.

### The intermediaries

Over 90 percent of labor migration in Asia is organized by a vast web of recruitment and placement agencies which function both at the origin and destination. In the origin country, recruitment agencies advertise available jobs overseas, provide the migrants the necessary information, prepare the work contract and offer the assistance that allows the migrants to land a job in a foreign country. In destination countries, placement agencies perform an intermediary role between employers and recruitment agencies, but also have other functions, depending on the configuration of each country. Recruiters should be paid by the employers for their services. However, competition among the many agents (only in the Philippines where they are more than 1200) leads the recruiters to provide employer with workers for free and get their payment from the migrants. In other situations they get paid both by the employers and the migrants. In some cases, migrants are not charged any recruitment fee, but it is the minority of the cases. In the Philippines, domestic workers are exempt from recruitment fees, but the norm is not always respected.

In addition to recruiters, migration is facilitated by other intermediaries, including travel agents, government officials and medical clinics. These intermediaries can also be a stumbling block for migrants, particularly when corruption increases the cost to migrate for the migrants. Before going abroad, migrants are required to undertake a health examination. In some cases, countries specify only a restricted number of clinics where such examination can take place, and this can result in high travelling and procedural costs.

In a break with the widespread private intermediation of migration,

South Korea has returned to the government-to-government system which was prevalent in the post-war migration in Europe. The government of South Korea has signed Memoranda of Agreements (MOUs) with various Asian countries. Migrants who go to Korea will register in the country of origin and that information will be made available to the employers in Korea for the proper matching between jobs and skills. The system seems to be working properly, except that even this migration is not cost free and produces overstayers, as migrants are allowed to work in Korea only for two periods of 4 years and 10 months each.

### The corridors

In general terms, East Asia and West Asia (Middle East) can be considered regions of destination, while South and Southeast Asia are regions of origin of migration. However, each region is interested both by in- and out-migration. In particular, people from Nepal can freely enter India, while migrants from Bangladesh end up mostly in an irregular way to East India, particularly Assam. In Southeast Asia, Malaysia and Singapore are destination of migrants from Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, while Thailand is the destination of migrants from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. The republics of Central Asia witness migration movements with Russia.

Regular migration takes place in all corridors traversing the Asian sub-regions. At the same time, no region is immune from irregular migration. The different regions can be characterized by different types of irregularity.<sup>7</sup> In East Asia, irregular migration takes place mostly in the form of overstaying the terms of the contract. In the Middle East, irregular migration is the result of several factors, including irregular practices by recruiters, placing workers in different jobs and different employers than the ones stated in the contract, migrants escaping unbearable working conditions, as in the case of many domestic workers, or migrants who have been laid off without compensation, as it happened recently to 11,000 Filipinos. Overstaying the hajj (the traditional pilgrimage to Mecca) can also be a reason for irregularity.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Battistella, Graziano/Asis, Maruja Milagros B. (Eds.), *Unauthorized Migration in Southeast Asia*, Quezon City 2003.

In South and Southeast Asia, irregular migration is mostly the result of entering another country without the proper documentation. This happens because countries like India and Bangladesh or Myanmar and Thailand share long and porous borders. Reducing irregular migration has long been an objective of all countries. However, irregular migration persists not because some migrants are inherently attracted into the violation of migration norms, but because policies do not respond adequately to the demand of the economies for foreign labor or requirements that are imposed are considered too cumbersome. On the other hand, it is also true that irregular migration serves tacitly the objectives of countries of origin to facilitate foreign employment and of countries of destination to utilize labor force that can quickly be repatriated if the economy slows down.

A specific corridor where irregular migration occurred together with human trafficking and slavery is that between Myanmar and Thailand involving in particular the Rohingyas. Long established in the state of Rakhine in Myanmar, the Rohingyas, a Muslim population, have been denied the right to remain in said country. Accused of intending to Islamise the country, they have been treated as immigrants from Bangladesh and persecuted. Many have tried the routes provided by smugglers, leading mostly toward Thailand, and ended up detained by the smugglers while waiting for payment from their families or placed in conditions of slavery. When Thailand was asked to crack down on smuggling of people, the Rohingyas, together with other migrants from Bangladesh, found themselves on boats rejected by all countries, before ending up in Malaysia and Indonesia for a temporary period of one year. In Malaysia they were kept in limbo, as they were denied the right to work. Even the great political changes that have taken place in Myanmar did not result in immediate solutions for the Rohingyas.

The story of the Rohingyas well illustrates the fact that migration, also in Asia, is increasingly taking place in mixed-flow corridors, where regular and irregular migrants, smuggled and trafficked persons aim for the same destinations, but perhaps with different arrangements and certainly with different costs.

### **The governance of migration**

The governance of migration is posing difficult challenges to all governments in the world. Migration has become controversial not

just in European countries, stressed by the regular arrival of people who need to be rescued at sea or by the demand of refugees from Syria and other places, but also in the US, where it is a contested issue in the presidential campaign. While Donald Trump is suggesting a higher wall between the US and Mexico, Europe has negotiated a deal with Turkey to keep the migrants from entering. The situation in Asia seems rather more peaceful, as about 5,000 migrants leave the Philippines every day. Is the Asian model of migration governance more successful and to be adopted also in other regions?

Temporary labor migration, the prevalent system in Asia, ensures that migrants stay only in the country of employment for a limited period of time (mostly two years) and then return home. The non-permanent loss of workforce seems in the interest of countries of origin, while the lack of integration in countries of destination avoids the threat to the local cultures. However, temporary migration in Asia presents some fundamental, although not necessary, flows. Migrants are basically denied the possibility to participate in the life of the local society, as they are mostly confined in dormitories, barracks or camps; their rights in some systems, like the kafala system, are curtailed as they cannot leave the job or the country without the authorization of their sponsor; domestic workers are often victimized because they are not granted the protection as workers. Most of all, migrants are denied agency, as they cannot opt to stay in the country and to be joined by their family, unless they are highly skilled workers.

The governance of migration requires a multi-level approach.<sup>8</sup> In fact, in addition to national policies, countries in Asia have recently engaged in many bilateral agreements and they have dialogued in consultations such as in the Colombo Process and the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. Their participation in multilateral agreements is much less, except for the Philippines. Nevertheless, what might be most lacking is the fact that migrants practically have no voice and negotiating power. Until the profound imbalances of the region – which through intervening factors and intermediaries encourage people to migrate – are tackled, migrants will continue to go abroad. Migration is a statement against the unjust order of the world. The division

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Battistella, Graziano, "Multi-level policy approach in the governance of labour migration: Considerations from the Philippine experience", in: *Asian Journal of Social Science*, No. 40 (2012), 419–446.

between affluence and poverty, protected for centuries by arms and policies of exclusion, is being questioned in the US, in Europe or in Asia. It is no longer possible that some will enjoy prosperity because others suffer impoverishment. The well-being of some requires the inclusion of all.

## Poverty, Violence and Marginalisation Causes of Migration and Displacement in Latin America

Josef Estermann

For a long time Latin America, just like North America and Australia, was considered an *immigration continent par excellence*. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many people moved from the Old World to the various republics of the New World, which were still sparsely populated at the time.<sup>9</sup> One classic example is Argentina, which provided a new home for many European immigrants, particularly from Italy, as well as from Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>10</sup> One of the descendants of this wave of migration is Pope Francis – Jorge Mario Bergoglio – who grew up in an Italian immigrant family in Argentina. Francis' father, Mario José [Giuseppe] Bergoglio (1908–1959), had emigrated to Argentina from Portacomaro near Asti in Piedmont in 1929, finding employment with an Argentinian railway company and, in 1935, marrying Regina María Sivori (1911–1981) whose parents also came from Italy but who was born in Buenos Aires.

There was a radical change of direction in migration in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, when more and more Latin Americans emigrated to Europe, the United States and Canada, with a much lower number going to Australia and New Zealand. There are hard and fast reasons for this development, of course, and they have often changed over the past fifty years. Whereas in the 1970s and 1980s migration was clearly caused by the many *military dictatorships* ruling Latin American countries (in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Nicaragua and El Salvador) and also by *civil wars* (in Peru, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia and Guatemala), a new form of migration became noticeable from the 1990s onwards, coinciding with

<sup>9</sup> Thirteen million Europeans emigrated to Latin America between 1870 and 1930, including approximately 6 million to Argentina, 4.3 million to Brazil, 600,000 to Cuba and 440,000 to Uruguay.

<sup>10</sup> In 1914 the Argentinian provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba and Santa Fe had twice as many foreign-born residents as locally born inhabitants.

the Fall of the Berlin Wall<sup>11</sup>. This new form of migration was caused by economic, political and cultural/ethnic factors, which I will now link with three associated phenomena: *poverty, violence and marginalisation*.

### From the continent of hope to the poorhouse of the world

For a long time, the New World was portrayed by seafarers, conquerors and also by Spanish and Portuguese missionaries as a continent of hope, where the “heresy” of the Reformation had no place and where the “Moors” definitely had no right to exist. The political philosophy of European modernism projected many of its utopias onto the canvas of what came to be known as America and entire communities headed for the New World in the hope of a better life. This North-South migration, however, coincided with two other phenomena which also had irrevocable demographic consequences: the genocide<sup>12</sup> of the indigenous population of *Abya Yala*<sup>13</sup> and the slave trade from Africa across the Atlantic to the New World.<sup>14</sup>

Since the supposed “discovery” of their continent by Europeans the Latin American population has experienced *extremely varied phases of development*. The first of these phases was a disastrous decline. When Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean islands in 1492, the territory of modern-day Latin America probably had an

<sup>11</sup> This meant the end of the Cold War and hence also the end of the (frequently US-supported) dictatorships in Latin America. It was additionally a time of rapid social upheaval (neoliberalism, structural adjustment programmes and free trade).

<sup>12</sup> While the debate continues about whether the term genocide can be correctly associated with the decimation of the indigenous American population (South and North America), the figures speak a clear language. It seems plausible to assume a figure of around 35 to 40 million victims for the territory which later became known as Hispanic America. The estimates for North America vary between 7 and 10 million indigenous people and those for Brazil between 500,000 and 2.5 million. In Hispanic America alone, the indigenous population was reduced by around 90% in the first 150 years after the Conquista.

<sup>13</sup> This is the indigenous name for “Latin America”. The term *Abya Yala*, which comes from the Kuna tribe in Panama, literally means “land in full maturity” and was initially suggested in the 1980s by the Bolivian Aymara leader, Takir Mamani, as the indigenous name for the continent called America. The name America is known to have come from the Italian seafarer and cartographer, Amerigo Vespucci (1454–1512). Vespucci’s *Lettera* were published in Latin in 1507 by the German cartographer, Martin Waldseemüller, who called the new continent “America” in honour of Amerigo. Before 1507 the newly “discovered” territories were known as the West Indies (*Indias Occidentales*).

<sup>14</sup> Scholars currently assume that between 1519 and 1867 around 11.06 million Africans were forcibly taken to America as part of the Atlantic slave trade, including 3.9 million to Brazil.

indigenous population of around 50 million. Most of them lived in the Mexican Highlands and in the Andes. Only half a century later 90 per cent of the local population had died. Their deaths were caused by imported diseases such as smallpox, the plague, measles and typhoid as well as hunger, consumption and systematic murder. By 1650, only four million indigenous people were still alive, so that the European rulers felt compelled to import large numbers of black slaves from Africa to Latin America in order to provide sufficient workers for their plantations. Throughout the colonial period some nine million Africans were taken to Latin America. During the 200 years that followed the decimation Latin America experienced a slow growth in its population. Even by 1850 the population – then 30 million – had still not reached its pre-colonial level.

Today’s Latin America is the result of *three movements of migration and conquest*. The first population group, whose ancestors originally came from Europe, are known as *mestizos*: depending on the region, they mixed with the indigenous population to varying degrees, leading to a range of phenotypes. Secondly, there is the original indigenous population who were severely decimated and have been virtually excluded from public life for a long period of time. Thirdly, there is the Afro-American population, the descendants of African slaves, who continue to suffer discrimination and exclusion.<sup>15</sup>

This shows that Latin America was only a *continent of good hope* for Europeans. Some of them sought their luck in America, as it was called, in the hope of profit or adventure – (from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries). Others were forced to emigrate in order just to survive (from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). For the other two population groups, however, this continent – which quickly came to be described by its conquerors as Latin America – was a “valley of tears”, a land which had been plundered and looted. Today’s continuing large-scale poverty among the indigenous and Afro-American populations has its roots in the

<sup>15</sup> There is also a fourth group comprising the descendants of East Asian immigrants mainly from Japan and Korea, known as *chinos/chinas*, who have largely kept themselves separate from the rest of the population right up to the present day. One prominent example is Alberto Fujimori, the President of Peru from 1990 to 2001, of whom it is said that he may not even have had Peruvian citizenship. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Latin America had a population of around 800,000 East Asians, most of whom had settled as contract workers.

continent's indescribable history of colonialism and slave trade. It is neither new nor endogenous, having its structural roots in the 500 years since the *Conquista*. One new element in the 20<sup>th</sup> century's increasing destitution and poverty is that the mestizo population, too, – i.e. the ordinary people – have gradually fallen victim to exploitation, corruption and nepotism, perpetrated by an elitist oligarchy.

Latin American liberation theology has its sociological origins in the poverty that became a mass phenomenon during and after the Second World War. It was also the time when the flow of migration from Europe to Latin America stopped relatively abruptly, accompanied by a gradual opposing trend bolstered by the continent's military dictatorships. Within a short period of time Latin America changed from a region of immigration to a major source of emigration. Whereas the migration balance had been virtually constant for around four hundred years,<sup>16</sup> it suddenly became negative. Large-scale poverty first drove people from rural areas into towns and cities, leading to the rise of well-known *slums and then mega-cities* such as São Paulo and Mexico City. Later they increasingly went to other countries as well, partly within Latin America itself (about one quarter), but mostly away from the continent to Europe, the United States and Canada – in other words, the global north.

### Poverty and internal migration

The structural causes of poverty and destitution which caused these migration movements have their origins in colonial history. They are now reflected in the continuing dependence of supposedly independent national states and in the newly created dependency of those countries – referred to as “neo-colonial” in the “dependency theory” that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. The rise in Latin America's internal and external migration was mainly caused by *structural adjustment measures*<sup>17</sup> imposed on many Latin American countries

<sup>16</sup> The “migration balance” is the quantitative difference between immigrants and emigrants. If this balance (i.e. MB = I-E) is negative, it means that emigration exceeds immigration, although this does not automatically lead to a demographic reduction in the population.

<sup>17</sup> The purpose of such measures is largely to make a given country fit for the global market. However, for the vast majority of the population this means an erosion of social welfare and workers' rights, while for companies and transnational businesses it means deregulation, greater flexibility and higher profits.

by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the 1980s. Many resources that were important for the lives of ordinary people were privatised, e.g. mining and the extraction of oil and gas, forcing large numbers of families to migrate from rural to urban areas.

A classic example of such “*internal migration*”<sup>18</sup> is the Bolivian satellite town of El Alto. It was still part of the La Paz district until 1985 but over the intervening thirty years it has experienced such a major increase in population that it now has a larger population than its parent city, La Paz. The vast majority of today's population in El Alto consists of rural migrants. They are mainly economic refugees, initially from the mining regions that were abandoned in the wake of neoliberal structural adjustments and later from farming communities whose plots of land had become smaller and smaller until they were no longer adequate to ensure survival. Finally, there are those who pursue the “dream of a better life” in the city. Such causes (the privatisation of mining companies, redundancies, droughts, inadequate plots of land) are known as push factors<sup>19</sup>. In addition, internal (as well as external) migration is caused by certain pull factors, i.e. the attractiveness of the city as a place that offers better education for children, employment for adults, social advancement and greater prestige.

*Poverty and destitution* continue to be the most important push factors for internal and external migration in many Latin American countries right up to the present day. The stages of such migration can be traced relatively clearly and chronologically. The first stage is a rural exodus from areas that have virtually no infrastructure and where the population has almost no chance of survival due to climate change and the prices for agricultural products on the world market. Over the past one hundred years Latin America has experienced unparalleled urbanisation. In many countries the rural/urban population ratio has literally been reversed within a century. Whereas in

<sup>18</sup> Internal migration takes place inside a country either from villages to a city (a rural exodus) or from small urban centres to big cities. External migration, on the other hand, is transnational or international and is generally described as emigration or immigration, depending on the perspective.

<sup>19</sup> When looking at the causes or reasons for migration, the relevant studies distinguish between those driving people to leave their region, country or continent (push factors) and those in which the target country exerts a considerable attraction (pull factors), prompting people to leave their own environment and set off on an often extremely arduous journey.

the early 20<sup>th</sup> century only 10% of Latin Americans lived in towns and cities, this figure subsequently increased to as much as 41% in 1950 and is now nearly 80% (compared with 72% in Europe). Moreover, the forecast for 2030 is 84.3%.

This development has led to the rise of all too familiar slums (e.g. *favelas*, *villas miseria*, *pueblos jóvenes* and *asentamientos humanos*)<sup>20</sup> and gigantic urban hubs (with populations of up to 25 million) that do not exist in Europe. Until 1970 the migration flow only affected the biggest cities in Latin America, turning them into *megacities*. In 1950 Buenos Aires was the only city with a population of over five million. In 2010 Latin America had seven megacities, of which four have populations of over 10 million: Mexico City, São Paulo, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro.<sup>21</sup> They frequently hit the headlines as sadly notorious hotbeds of extreme poverty, pollution and crime. Within a very short period of time Latin America has replaced North America as the global region with the highest level of urbanisation.

### Transnational migration caused by poverty

The next stage is migration to different countries within Latin America. This started in the 1980s and was driven not only by poverty, but also by structural violence, the drug trade and increasing crime rates. There are countries with a *positive migration balance*, so-called “host countries” such as Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Venezuela, and those with a *negative migration balance*, such as Bolivia, Paraguay, Colombia, Peru, El Salvador, Mexico and Haiti. At the moment, for example, Argentina has 1.5 million legal Latin American immigrants (above all from Paraguay, Bolivia and Peru), while the Dominican Republic has nearly half a million Haitians and Costa Rica has over 300,000 immigrants from other Latin American countries (nine per cent of the total population).

Finally, migration reaches *beyond Latin America* – a development which has led to a negative migration balance since the 1950s but only began to assume dramatic proportions in the 1980s. The

<sup>20</sup> Different regions of Latin America use different terms, some of them euphemistic, to describe their slums. Favela is the Brazilian word, villa miseria (“city of misery”) is used in Argentina, pueblo joven (“young village”) in Peru, and asentamiento humano (“human settlement”) and *barriada* (“city district”) are used in most other areas.

<sup>21</sup> The others are, in order of size: Lima, Bogotá and Santiago de Chile.

most important receiving country for Latin American emigrants is the United States. In 2000, the year of its last census, the United States had 35 million so-called *Latinos/Latinas*<sup>22</sup>, making up 13% of the country’s population, including around 13 million Mexicans or *Chicanos/Chicanas*. However, many Latin Americans have also fled from economic and political hardship (largely caused by military dictatorships) to European countries. Cultural affinity and language have prompted them to travel mainly to Spain and Italy. In 2001 Japan had about 200,000 Latin Americans of Japanese descent (*Nikkeis*).<sup>23</sup> They returned to their homeland for economic reasons, their ancestors having originally left Japan with the same motivation.

The United Nations Population Division currently still records an annual *net emigration* (i.e. negative migration balance) of 800,000 Latin Americans per year, i.e. a net migration rate of 1.5 per thousand inhabitants. Globally, in relation to its total population, Latin America is therefore the region most affected by outward migration. Net emigration in Africa, by contrast, is only 0.5 per thousand, while in Asia it is 0.3.

### Fleeing violence in its many different forms

Apart from poverty and economic hardship, violence in its many forms remains one of the most frequent causes of (both internal and external) migration in Latin America even today. Although traditional military dictatorships are now a thing of the past, many Latin American countries have experienced bloodless coups or abuses of power leading to the establishment of authoritarian, near-dictatorial regimes (such as in Honduras, Guatemala, Venezuela, Brazil, Cuba, Nicaragua and Bolivia) which do not tolerate any genuine opposition or freedom of expression. At the same time there are also remnants of guerrilla movements and thus civil-war-like situations (Colombia); violence caused by drug cartels (Mexico, Colombia and Central America); increasing numbers of youth gangs, so-called *maras* (El

<sup>22</sup> The name varies, depending on people’s origins and destination. In the United States itself Latin Americans who were born or have grown up there are generally known as Hispanics. However, this term is not used by such Latin Americans themselves, who prefer the generic term *Latinos* (or, more comprehensively, *Latinos/Latinas*, for the sake of gender equality) or specific national terms such as *Chicanos/Chicanas* for migrants from Mexico.

<sup>23</sup> *Nikkei* is the term for people of Japanese descent living outside Japan. Latin America’s *Nikkei* population is approximately 2 million, of whom 1.4 or 1.5 million live in Brazil, and 120,000 in Peru. Over the last 20 years there has been a significant return of *Nikkeis* to Japan.

Salvador, Honduras); a dramatic rise in so-called femicides<sup>24</sup>; the trafficking of women; the organ trade; and the abduction of minors.

One particular type of violence is perpetrated by large transnational corporations, with national governments acting as their helpmates, in the form of the extraction and exploitation of natural resources. Land is frequently grabbed for the purpose of growing monocultures of (genetically manipulated) crops such as soya, maize, oil palms and sugarcane in order to produce animal feed or biodiesel. This tendency has assumed dramatic proportions in parts of Latin America (especially in Colombia, Brazil and Central America) and is now seen as one of the main reasons for the migration of the displaced farming population. Moreover, *mining projects* and *oil extraction* often lead to violence, because they are frequently undertaken without the approval of the people affected, causing expulsions, environmental pollution and military and police brutality without any government intervention whatsoever.

Finally, there is the phenomenon of *domestic violence* which has reached intolerable levels in many regions as the result of widespread *machismo* and alcoholism. Victims of domestic violence are mostly women and children who try to escape from the vicious circle of violence at home, the outcome being (internal) migration and displacement. Another strategy that has become increasingly widespread recently is the conversion (of women) to neo-Pentecostal or fundamentalist churches that prohibit alcohol consumption. There are, of course, also women who try to flee to Spain or the United States for economic reasons, but whose trigger for doing so is an increase in the domestic violence they suffer. This example shows that migration is not a monocausal phenomenon. On the contrary, migration or displacement can stem from a variety of motivations comprising both push and pull factors.

### Marginalised and discriminated

Mention must be made, finally, of a further cause of (internal and external) migration in Latin America which has gained in significance

<sup>24</sup> Killings of women on account of their gender, has been prompted by jealousy, drunkenness or machismo. Fourteen of the world's 25 worst affected countries are in Latin America. On top of the list is El Salvador with 14 femicides per 100,000 followed by Honduras with 11. Ninety-eight per cent of all femicides go unpunished.

recently. Although many countries can point to positive trends in the integration and political participation of indigenous groups within the population (e.g. in Ecuador and Bolivia), there have also been opposing trends accompanied by a new level of *racism*, *homophobia* and *neo-colonialism*<sup>25</sup>. The most discriminated segments of the population continue to be ethnic minorities, especially in countries with relatively small percentages of indigenous populations, such as Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela; Afro-Americans (in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic), women (especially indigenous and Afro-American women) and members of the LGBTI community as well as religious minorities.<sup>26</sup>

Discrimination and marginalisation as reasons for migration and displacement very often go hand in hand with poverty, violence and insecurity. They are rarely the sole reasons for migration. A few countries (such as Bolivia and Ecuador) now also have the phenomenon of "*inverted racism*". Whites and people of mixed race (*mestizos*) are being pushed to the margins of society by an indigenous majority that holds political and economic power. As the members of this target group have sufficient resources to mitigate their situation, discrimination of this kind only leads to external migration in a very small number of cases. A few countries have such extremely restrictive policies and legislation on abortion, divorce and homosexuality (Chile, Costa Rica and El Salvador) that there are occasionally cases of people emigrating for these reasons.

Furthermore, the migration balance of Latin America is still clearly negative at the moment (i.e. there are more people leaving the continent than entering it), although the past 10 years have now also seen the *phenomenon of returnees*, as migrants are returning to Latin

<sup>25</sup> The term neo-colonialism was coined by Kwame Nkrumah, the former president of Ghana. In his book *Neo-colonialism, The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965) he drew attention to the continuing significance of colonial power structures in so-called post-colonial societies. The term is primarily associated with international finance and transnational companies in a stage that is also referred to as a second colonisation. We are currently witness to a third colonisation encompassing primarily the IT industry, the globalisation of Western consumerism and the flow of money from the south to the north due to tax evasion, corruption, the looting of national treasuries and nepotism.

<sup>26</sup> The latter includes, for instance, the Mennonites, Afro-American cults (such as Candomblé and Santería) and indigenous communities, which are under threat partly through the aggressive evangelistic strategies of evangelical groups or which are even in danger of losing their cultural identity (ethnocide).

America from Europe and the United States. This is less a matter of improved living conditions in their countries of origin (although this also occurs) and has more to do with the deteriorating situation in the countries of immigration. The crisis in Europe and uncertainties concerning the forthcoming US administration may well be accelerating this tendency. It cannot therefore be categorically ruled out that, in the medium term (i.e. in 20 or 30 years), Latin America might revert from a continent of emigration to a continent of immigration, especially the re-immigration of its own nationals.

## Causes of Migration and Flight in the African Context

Jordan Nyenyembe

The theme of migration has increasingly become a topic of interest in workshops, seminars and conferences. The scope of massive displacement of people which characterizes the human family today has made some scholars to refer to our own times as “the age of migration.”<sup>27</sup> However, discourses about the causes of human migration have been misguided by its pre-dominant economic and security perspectives. And because of that, contemporary migration strategies by the policy makers are much more restrictive than streamlining the inspiration and respiration of the fresh air to our common humanity on earth. Conferences, workshops and research papers have been crafted mainly with the view on how to alleviate the displacement and flights of the people. This tendency has not adequately assisted the human family to grasp the spiritual input inherent in human migration.

This article wants to strongly guide the reader to recognize the spiritual dynamics at work putting the people on the move from the African continent in particular, and from all over the world in general, whether by choice or through external pressure. With this in mind, the reader will get to grasp that migration of human family has something of the divine mandate. The Christian understanding of migration will help in changing our mind on the way we perceive and define human displacement and treat immigrants. The holistic understanding of the migration will affect a soul-search leading to the conversion of hearts, and thus to change our attitude towards the various types of migrants. The misery of migrants all over the world challenges us to see “the love of Christ toward migrants (that) urges us (cf. 2 Cor 5:14) to look afresh at their problems, which are to be met with today all over the world.”<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Castles, Stephen/Miller, Mark J., *The Age of Migration: International Population in the Modern World*, New York 42009.

<sup>28</sup> Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Instruction Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2004, No. 1.

## The difficulty with the Title

### *It passes the idea that Migration is a Problem*

Scholars conceive that studies which seek to know the causes of issues are tailored to propose solutions to a seeming problem(s) confronting the society. This is what researchers call as “‘the root causes approach’ or a ‘comprehensive approach.’”<sup>29</sup> It follows that the issue of migration and displacement is approached *prima facie* as a problem to combat. “There are obvious merits in tackling causes of conflict and other causes of distress to people in developing countries but when it is motivated specifically by the desire to prevent migration this can be counter- productive.”<sup>30</sup>

It is no wonder that discourses about the African migrations tend to diffuse the idea that it is a human crisis. The international media coverage on the African immigrants contributes to this stalemate. They predominantly focus on the tragedies befalling the immigrants and less on what the African immigrants contribute for the transformation of the West. The following headlines speak well: “New Migrant Boat Disaster Off Lampedusa”<sup>31</sup> or another one “Migrants Die as Burning Boat Capsizes Off Italy.”<sup>32</sup> Yet, another heart rending headline: “700 Migrants Feared Dead in Mediterranean Shipwreck.”<sup>33</sup> It is estimated that about 40,000 African migrants have drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, making the watery crossing between Africa and Europe to be described as the “world’s largest marine cemetery.”<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Gent, Saskia, “The Root Causes of Migration: Criticising the Approach and Finding a Way Forward” in: Sussex Centre for Migration Research 2002 in <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=mwp11.pdf&site=252> (06.07.2016).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Codon, Sandra, “New Migrant Boat Disaster On Lampedusa,” ANSA Med (12 May), at: [http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/generalnews/2014/05/12/new-migrant-boat-disaster-off-lampedusa\\_89e8a6d2-5293-484f-aac9-08f664ac471a.html](http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/generalnews/2014/05/12/new-migrant-boat-disaster-off-lampedusa_89e8a6d2-5293-484f-aac9-08f664ac471a.html) (23.07.2017).

<sup>32</sup> Yardley, Jim/Povoledo, Elisabetta, “Migrants Die as Burning Boat Capsizes Off Italy”, in: New York Times (3 October 2013), at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/europe/scores-die-in-shipwreck-off-sicily.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/europe/scores-die-in-shipwreck-off-sicily.html?_r=0) (23.07.2017).

<sup>33</sup> Kingsley, Patrick/Bonomolo, Alessandra/Kirchgaessner, Stephanie, “700 Migrants Feared Dead in Mediterranean Shipwreck”, in: The Guardian (19 April 2015), at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/19/700-migrants-feared-dead-mediterranean-shipwreck-worst-yet> (23.07.2017).

<sup>34</sup> Davies, Desmond, “Lost at Sea: African Youth hungry for Opportunities”, in: New African Magazine (November 2014), <http://newafricanmagazine.com/lost-sea-african-youth-hungry-opportunities/> (23.07.2017).

While it is true that many people are dying in their bid to reach Europe and that something has to be done to prevent that, what is not true is the message all these information conveys that the migration is a problem.

Moreover, migration today is commonly understood in terms of posing a security problem. The African immigrants from North Africa, Eritrea and Somalia have been put into spotlight as perpetrators of terrorist acts. The borders between Europe and Africa have been fortified. There is a tension between security and human rights preoccupation. In fact the mistreatment of migrants by security authorities in the West does not get a wide coverage. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) states, “most migrant deaths occurred as a result of deliberate mistreatment, indifference or torture by smugglers, or misadventures by migrants themselves.”<sup>35</sup> There is an ethical and moral issue at stake, which is undermined by the governments, security guards, the smugglers and the migrants themselves. It is important therefore, to interrogate the migration policies which present the migrants as a threat for Europe; while neglecting that the migrants as human beings are also subjects of human rights who deserve to be secured and protected.

At the core of conceiving migration as problem is the association which the African migration gets with the state of poverty and conflicts related to it, as a push factor. The International Labour Organization (ILO) makes a clear link between poverty and migration by summing up reasons for human trafficking as “poverty on one hand, and increasing demand for cheap labour on the other...”<sup>36</sup> Contemporary migrations, are often marked by injustices, abuses and exploitations, such as human trafficking. This scenario poses new challenges to the human community. Capitalistic interests tend to view migration solely as an economic process; thus migrants are just factors of production and subjects of human rights and even not as agents of dialogue.<sup>37</sup>

We agree as true the affirmation that some of the causes which force the African people to move away from their home communities,

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> ILO, *Trafficking in Persons Overseas for Labour Purposes: The Case of Ethiopian Domestic Workers*, Addis Ababa 2011, 25.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Baggio, Fabio/Brazal, Agnes M. (Eds.), *Faith on the Move: Towards a Theology of Migration in Asia*, Manila 2007, vii.

are occasioned by conflicts in the competition for scarce resources, environmental scarcity and in search of employment and better life elsewhere. This, however, do not justify the conclusion that African migration is a problem. Even as some of the African migrants are forced to migrate because of the sufferings caused by war, droughts, and lack of employment, these challenges should not define human migration as a problem. The situation of sufferings and despair which is a push factor for many young people in Africa is a reality. Yet, it is good to remember that “the suffering that goes with migration is neither more nor less than the birth-pangs of a new humanity, on the other [hand], the inequalities and disparities behind this suffering reveal the deep wounds that sin causes in the human family. They are thus an urgent appeal for true fraternity.”<sup>38</sup> Human migration should not be presented as a problem but a blessing, given that, it is often “determined by a free decision of the migrants themselves, taken fairly frequently not only for economic reasons but also for cultural, technical or scientific motives.”<sup>39</sup>

#### *It reflects a Euro-Centric Perception about Migration*

The title: “Causes of Migration and Flight in African Context” conveys the message that the flight and the migration of people is a one- way- road. The one way perception which sees the Africans as being displaced to the West negates the fact that westerners and Asians are “migrating” to Africa in a new scramble for its natural resources. In addition, it portrays African migrations as isolated cases. There are even some in the West who “think that there is a danger that the whole poor continent of Africa will invade rich Europe.”<sup>40</sup> This is not true at all. First, it has to be noted that, “Europe is a migration destination for people from all over the world. The common assumption that strongly emphasizes migration from Africa is wrong, however.”<sup>41</sup> And, second, one has to take into account the fact that many young Africans under the pressure to support their extended families are compelled to displace internally and not away from the

<sup>38</sup> Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2004, No. 12.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Bihizo S.J, Rigobert Minani (Eds.), *Migration in and Out of Africa: Jesuits Ministry Outlook*, Nairobi 2015, 10.

<sup>41</sup> Collier, Elisabeth W./Strain, Charles R. (Eds.), *Religious and Ethical Perspectives on Global Migration*, Lanham 2014, 89.

continent. This makes it possible for them to attend in person their sick parents and relatives, for example, and to cater for their children. It is an outright exaggeration to state that majority of African migrants displace to Europe. Not every young person in sub-Saharan Africa can afford travelling expenses across the desert and the Sea. Third, the dynamics of globalization have made every continent, every region and countries to be a locus for receiving and for the sending of migrants. “The International Organization of Migration (IOM) provides statistics that shed light on the multiple facets of human mobility across all continents. Many geographic regions play a double role in the migration dynamics because they create emigration regions which, at the same time, are also immigration regions.”<sup>42</sup>

The alarmist rhetoric which portrays African immigrants as invading Europe is linked to stereotypical ideas of Africa as a continent of poverty and conflict. Representations of extreme poverty, starvation, warfare and environmental degradation amalgamate into an image of African misery. The Euro-centric discourse on migration is accused of racial bias on the ground that only the undocumented migrants from the South including those who hail from Africa are referred as “illegal migrants.” Scholars contend that “those who are called ‘illegal migrants’ are ‘non European and non whites.’”<sup>43</sup> The word “illegal” depicts social inequality. It says that society is divided between those who have the right to migrate and those who have not. One gets the impression that travelling worldwide is a privilege of the citizens from the Western hemisphere. This is clearly evident in the tourism industry for example. Most tourists travelling around the world are from the affluent West, only one in five international tourists come from outside Europe or America. In fact only one in twenty comes from Africa, the Middle East, or South Africa.<sup>44</sup>

The Euro-centric perception works in defence of the “Fortress Europe” which orchestrates the *Europeanization* of migration, and

<sup>42</sup> Castillo Guerra, Jorge E., “Contributions of the Social Teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on Migration,” in: *Exchange Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research*, No. 44 (2015), 407.

<sup>43</sup> Bacon, David, *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*, Boston 2008, v.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. MacComick, Patrick T., “The Good Sojourner: Third World Tourism and the Call of Hospitality,” in: *Christian Ethics*, No. 24 (2004), 97.

*migrantisation* of Africa. The perception has fuelled the resentment and mistrust of the other in migration debate. It has paved a way for the *we* versus *the other* approach. Most of the migration discourses are deflated with a dichotomist logic which paves the way to the supremacy of the powerful. Unfortunately, “This ‘colonialist’ sometimes ‘racist’ attitude obviously continues to structure constellations and communications between citizens of European states and migrants seeking their place and opportunities to participate in these societies.”<sup>45</sup> The global system which favours the people of a certain category, has led humanity today to “have lost a sense of our interconnection with each other.”<sup>46</sup>

#### *African Migrations: “A New Pentecost”*

The desperate situation of migrants and the anxiety the host communities faces require a spiritual input in the migration debate. This is going to assist us to get to know the positive part of migration. Living the reality of migrations today, Christian churches in Africa experience the breath of the Holy Spirit who is blowing across the whole continent. Blessed Pope Paul VI states that, “we live in a most privileged moment of the Spirit.”<sup>47</sup>

#### *Africa: “Land of the New Pentecost”*

While signing the post-synodal exhortation *Africae munus* (On Africa’s Commitment), retired Pope Benedict XVI called the African region “as land of a new Pentecost.”<sup>48</sup> The description of Pope Benedict XVI that defines the continent of Africa as the “land of the new Pentecost” is providential. The labour migrations and other forms of human displacement within Africa and outside Africa should be understood from the perspectives of biblical stories, namely that of the tower of Babel (see Gen 11:1-9), and the story of Pentecost event in the Acts of the Apostles (see Acts 2:1ff). The Church lives between

<sup>45</sup> Collier, Elisabeth W./Strain, Charles R. (Eds.), op. cit., 96.

<sup>46</sup> Groody, Daniel, “Migrants and Refugees: Christian Faith and the Globalization of Solidarity”, in: International Review of Mission 104 (November 2015), 314–323, here: 317.

<sup>47</sup> Pope Paul VI, Post synodal exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Vatican City 1975, No. 65.

<sup>48</sup> At the signing of the Post-Synodal Exhortation: “Africae munus” (Africa’s Commitment) at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Quidah – Benin on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2011, Pope Benedict XVI said “Africa, the land of a New Pentecost, put your trust in God!”, <http://www.catholicnes.sg/index.php?option=comcontent&view=article&id=677> (23.07.2017).

two contrasting poles: it is facing the temptation to incline to the tower of Babel philosophy: maintaining a stability posture with its pastors fortified within the comfort zones on the one hand; and the Pentecost event from which the Church has to go forth driven by missionary impulse to all the peoples, especially among the persecuted, and those left at the margin, on the other hand. The tower of Babel story depicts the rebellious attitude of humanity against the Creator. God created human persons in His own image. He then commanded them to fill the earth and to be masters over it (see Gen 1:27-29). This commandment is accompanied with the blessings which God gives to all His creation.

God has ordained from the beginning that the human family should be on a migratory state to fulfil the creation mandate “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Gen 1:28). However, the human attempt to construct the tower and establish a *stabilitas* contradicts the mandate to displace and fill the earth. In the story itself, when the builders of the tower came down to the plain land they decided to settle and to build the city with a sophisticated tower. “Certainly, there is arrogance in their desire to make a name for themselves and for the signature building in their city to be a tower with its head in the heavens.”<sup>49</sup> By settling down in the city which has its distinctive tower pointed up to heaven, the people of Babel denied to follow the migratory path to transform the whole world.

The settling down to a permanent locus is not what Abraham the father of our faith did. This is the man who chose to leave behind his homeland and to migrate to where God had wanted him to go. Abraham is different to the people of Babel, who conceived the migration of people in a negative way. Where the tower builder set out to make a new for them, God promised Abraham’s name would be great. Abraham models a life that “goes forth.” Where Babel builders find a place that looks safe and comfortable and decided to dwell there, Abraham leaves his country, his tribe, and his father’s household to the place that God will show him. His courage to accept the status of migrant makes him the source of blessing to the people all over the earth (see Gen. 12:3).<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Rogers, Jessie, “Our Comfort Zone and the Tower of Babel”, in: *The Furrow: Journal for the Contemporary Church* (December 2014), 608.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

The African migrants can be agents of transformation to the receiving communities in America and Europe. According to the book of the Acts of the Apostles, after the day of Pentecost, the disciples of Jesus did not remain in Jerusalem. But it is mentioned three times that the early Christian communities in Jerusalem were “scattered” (see Acts 8:1-4; 11:19), the same word used both for self justification of the people in Babel to settle “otherwise we shall be scattered all over the earth” (Gen 11:4); and for the consequence which God affected to them, “thus the Lord scattered them from there all over the earth” (Gen 11:8). Thus, biblically and theologically the migration of humanity is a blessing, not a problem.

#### **African migrants in our midst<sup>51</sup>: “A Caravan of Solidarity”<sup>52</sup>**

To conclude this article, it worthwhile to note that migration as global phenomenon has brought the migrants in our midst. Regardless of the causes which have pushed them out from their home countries and regions the displaced are messengers sent by Christ. It will be a mistake even unchristian to mistreat them, and to undermine them simply because they are “strangers” or poor.

At this time marked by human displacement of different kinds, it is necessary to restore the Christian virtue of solidarity. The Bible provides us enough example of personalities such as Abraham who welcomed the three strangers (migrants) by providing them food. It is from his generosity that the visitors reciprocated by revealing the secret for their coming, and Abraham could bargain for the welfare of Sodom and Gomorrah. He was also promised a son, The widow of Sarepta was given in plenty after spending the few from what she had to let the man of God prophet Elijah, a refugee, eat something (see 1 Kings 17:7-16).

We have tried to point out that the migration of people is a divine plan, and that human migration should be looked at as a blessing. Migrants today bring to the host populations the culture of diversity

<sup>51</sup> This is partly a title of my forthcoming book entitled *Migrants in Our Midst: Christianity in Africa and the Mineworkers*, Eldoret 2017.

<sup>52</sup> The phrase, “A Caravan of Solidarity” is borrowed from Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World, Vatican City 2013, No. 87. The concept is used to denote a genuine experience of fraternity which is expected among Christians at this time of migration.

that is reminiscent of what was witnessed at the time of Pentecost in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit at work in America and Europe through the African migrants, summons the people to reject the rebellious attitude of Babel. This is by appreciating the migration of peoples, welcoming the migrants and by embracing differences through fraternal gestures. Since God is our fellow traveller, members of the human family must know how to live together. The wave of migrants fleeing sufferings and persecution from Africa and the Middle East unravels the “new Pentecost” calling all of us to live “the spirituality of communion.”<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Pope Benedict XVI, *Post Synodal Exhortation Africae munus*, No. 34.

## Pull Factors as a Blessing

### Migration as a valuable impetus for European societies in more than just economic and demographic terms

Klaus Vellguth

When people ask about the reasons for migration, the answer sounds banal at first. Man is quite simply a *Homo migrans*. Commenting on this, Hansjörg Vogel once remarked very aptly: “Have you ever seen a person with roots? The people I know only have legs.”<sup>54</sup> Migration is a recurrent phenomenon in the history of humankind and without it the human family could not have developed into what it is today. Prehistoric finds reveal a history of intercontinental migration which began in Africa. Paleoanthropology, a specialist area of anthropology dealing with humanity’s tribal history, assumes that the earliest representatives of *Homo sapiens* emerged two hundred thousand years ago in Africa. Having learned how to handle fire, they developed tools that made them independent from their immediate environment and then began migrating and settling all over the world. Hence, people resident in non-African cultures, in particular, owe their present cultural home to migration in prehistoric times. These early migratory movements meant that *Homo sapiens*, who first emerged in East Africa two hundred thousand years ago, subsequently spread across the entire globe and succeeded in reaching Australia fifty thousand years later.<sup>55</sup> Neanderthal man, who occupied large parts of Europe for a while, came from a form of *Homo sapiens* resident in Africa. Migration was thus the prerequisite for people to be able to settle all over the world. According to the latest paleoanthropological research, the ancestors of today’s Europeans have their origins in Africa.

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<sup>54</sup> Vogel, Hansjörg, “Migration und Religion – zwei Schlüssel zur menschlichen Identität”, in: Migration: Challenge to Religious Identity II (Forum Mission, No. 5), Kriens 2009, 205–216, here: 205.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Krause, Johannes, “Ancient Human Migrations”, in: Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft (Eds.), Migration (No. 15), Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2013, 45–63.

But the influence migration has had on Germany and Europe is not just a prehistorical phenomenon. In ancient times migratory movements were an integral part of the lives of individuals, of peoples and of cultures.<sup>56</sup> The history of modern Europe, too, is a history of migration.<sup>57</sup> As far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century the European regions – the Iberian Peninsula, the Mediterranean region, the Atlantic coastal areas, Northern Europe, Western and Eastern Europe – merged to form an area of migration.

Life and culture in present-day Germany, too, are the product of migration processes. In the past, Germany was frequently described as a country of poets and philosophers, although by no means all of them were German-born, as two examples will illustrate. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), a philosopher of the Enlightenment, may have lived in Königsberg, but he had Scottish blood in his veins. Judged by today's standards, the Romantic poet Clemens Brentano (1778-1842) belonged to the second generation of immigrant workers. The time gap should not blind us to the fact that German history has always been a history of both immigration and emigration, innumerable Germans having sought their fortune in the past outside the country's borders. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century alone over 100,000 emigrants made their way across the ocean to America to start a new life there. At that time a third of the population of Chicago were Germans. Even the Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz, was an ethnic German immigrant. Born in Liblar near Cologne, he emigrated to the USA in 1850. German immigrants to the USA were treated no differently than the migrants who settle in Germany today. In his memoirs August Spieß, who was born in Friedewald near Bad Hersfeld in North Hesse and later lived in Chicago, wrote: "I confess that I should never have made the mistake of coming into the world as a foreigner."

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Oltmer, Jochen, "Kleine Globalgeschichte der Flucht im 20. Jahrhundert", in: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. 26–27 (2016), 18–25, here: 19.

<sup>57</sup> This is not to imply that in the past migration has been a specifically or exclusively European phenomenon. At about the same time as the post-war period Germany 15 million people in India were displaced in the wake of the country's decolonisation. After the founding of the state of Israel in 1948 a total of 1.2 million Jews set out for Israel to find a new home there. In the Korean War five million people were displaced from their homeland.

### Migration at the outset of the third millennium

The 20<sup>th</sup> century, in particular, stands out as a century of migration in Europe. The number of (world) war refugees in the eight years between 1914 and 1922 is put at four to five million. At the end of the Second World War there were ten times as many people on the move, altogether around 40.5 million.<sup>58</sup>

This makes it all the more surprising that since 2015 there has been widespread use of the term "refugee crisis" with large sections of society in Germany regarding migration as an unexpected "wave" that is threatening to engulf the country. Back in 1990, the Club of Rome made the following forecast: "Our descendants will probably experience mass migration on an unprecedented scale. This process has already begun if we think of the boat people from the Far East, the Mexicans making their way illegally into the United States and the Asians and Africans heading for Europe. In an extreme scenario [it] is not difficult to imagine untold hungry and desperate immigrants landing in boats on the northern shores of the Mediterranean."<sup>59</sup>

At the beginning of the third millennium there are, indeed, more refugees and migrants living far away from their native countries than ever before in the history of humankind. It should not be forgotten in this context that developed countries have contributed in no small way to the increase in migration by providing only minimal or no development aid.

The social sciences distinguish between national and international migration, defining international migration as a permanent change of location which "can be associated with the crossing of a

<sup>58</sup> This figure does not include the (non-German) forced labourers or the 13 million Germans who were expelled from the territories previously annexed by Germany.

<sup>59</sup> King, Alexander et al., *Die globale Revolution*. Spiegel Spezial 2/1991: Bericht des Club of Rome 1991, 42f. Taking up this forecast, Paul Michael Zulehner wrote at the time: "Large migratory movements are predictable, and not just for reasons of political, racial or religious persecution, but also because of the need for economic survival. In the future, migratory movements of this kind in Europe will not only proceed from East to West but to an even greater extent from South to North. Demographic developments in the south of the planet are different from those in the north. By the middle of the coming century the inhabitants of today's industrialised countries will make up less than 20 per cent of the global population. That produces an enormous population pressure which, in combination with a lack of equal opportunities as well as of tyranny and oppression, will trigger massive northward migration which it will be impossible to contain." (Zulehner, Paul Michael, *Pastorale Futurologie*, Düsseldorf 1989).

border and a change in the social and cultural reference system.”<sup>60</sup> According to United Nations<sup>61</sup> estimates, the number of international migrants worldwide has risen from approximately 173 million at the turn of the millennium to a total of 244 million at present. The number of refugees in 2015 was 65.3 million, the highest figure since the end of the Second World War. Nevertheless, “only” 3.2 per cent of the global population are counted as migrants and therefore (by definition) among those whose main place of residence has been outside their country of origin for at least one year.<sup>62</sup>

At the beginning of the third millennium, Christians are numerically the largest religious group among migrants. The noted PEW Report says that 49 per cent, i.e. almost half, of all migrants in the world are Christians, followed in second place by Muslim migrants (27 per cent). Fifteen per cent of migrants worldwide are practising Jews, Hindus or Buddhists or members of some other religion. Nine per cent of all migrants say they have no religious belief.<sup>63</sup> The share of Christian migrants is even higher in Europe. Fifty-six per cent of migrants in the European Union are Christians, followed again by Muslims (27 per cent). Seven per cent of migrants in the European Union profess Judaism, Hinduism or Buddhism or are adherents of some other religion. Ten per cent of migrants in the European Union are not adherents of any religion.<sup>64</sup>

However, the majority of migrants do not find a new home in Europe but end up “stranded” in Asian or African countries. Regine Polak rightly points out that the talk of “refugee flows” swamping Europe is misleading and that it reveals an ignorance of global devel-

<sup>60</sup> Reinprecht, Christoph/Weiss, Hilde, “Migration und Integration: Soziologische Perspektiven und Erklärungsansätze”, in: Fassmann, Heinz/Dahlvik, Julia (Eds.), *Migrations – und Integrationsforschung – multidisziplinäre Perspektiven: Ein Reader*, Vienna 2012, 13–34, here: 15–16.

<sup>61</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015\\_Highlights.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf) (01.11.2017).

<sup>62</sup> Not included in these figures are internally displaced persons and non-documented migrants.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. PEW Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life, *The Global Religious Landscape, 2012*, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/> (01.11.2017).

<sup>64</sup> Cf. PEW-Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life, *Faith on the Move. The Religious Affiliation of International Migrants, 2012*, <http://www.pewforum.org/2012/03/08/religious-migration-exec/> (01.11.2017).

opments.<sup>65</sup> In this context Walter Pohl points out that such a perception or depiction builds on narratives which have been associated with xenophobia and hatred of foreigners ever since the Migration Period.<sup>66</sup>

According to UN figures, there were some 16 million Africans on the move in 2015. Only a small number of them managed get to Europe. The African countries most affected are Sudan (3,078,014), South Sudan (2,540,013), the Democratic Republic of Congo (2,415,802), Somalia (2,307,686), Nigeria (1,668,973) and the Central African Republic (1,004,678).<sup>67</sup> In 2015 there were 76 million migrants living in Europe, but the list of countries with the largest proportional share of refugees in the overall population was headed by two Asian countries, Lebanon (18.3 per cent) and Jordan (8.7 per cent). There was also not a single European country among the top five countries with the most migrants in absolute figures. These were Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran and Jordan.

Of the 10,039,080 migrants in Germany recorded by the Federal Statistical Office in the 2017 Statistical Yearbook 7,073,980 migrants, i.e. the overwhelming majority (70.5 per cent), were from Europe. Far fewer migrants (2,077,330 = 20.7 per cent) were from Asia, while 510,535 migrants (5.1 per cent) came from Africa. The yearbook lists a total of 259,840 migrants (2.6 per cent) from America and, finally, 16,805 migrants (0.2 per cent) from Australia and Oceania. One per cent of the migrants were stateless or could not be assigned to any nationality.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Polak, Regina, *Migration, Flucht und Religion: Praktisch-Theologische Beiträge* (vol. I: Grundlagen), Ostfildern 2017, 32. Cf. idem, “Flucht und Migration als Chance”, in: *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft*, No. 99 (2015) 3–4, 202–212.

<sup>66</sup> Pohl, Walter, “Die Entstehung des europäischen Weges: Migration als Wiege Europas”, in: *Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft* (Eds.), *Migration* (vol. 15), Vienna/Cologne/Weimar 2013, 27–44.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Schonecke, Wolfgang, “Das koloniale Paradigma bleibt ungebrochen: Die komplexe Geschichte der Migrationsbewegung in Afrika”, in: *Herder Korrespondenz*, No. 70 (2016) 10, 37–40, here: 37.

<sup>68</sup> Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch 2017*, Kap. 2.3.4 Migration – Ausländische Bevölkerung in Deutschland 2016, 47; [https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/StatistischesJahrbuch/StatistischesJahrbuch2017.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/StatistischesJahrbuch/StatistischesJahrbuch2017.pdf?__blob=publicationFile) (09.12.2017).

### Pull factor: flight and the hope of asylum

When people in Germany talk in a general way about migrants, they basically mean all the people belonging to a group which has moved its main place of residence permanently to Germany. A fundamental distinction must be made here between migrant workers and refugees. While there is no general right to immigration into Germany, the right of asylum is a human right resting on humanitarian grounds which is enshrined not only in the Geneva Convention on Refugees, but also in the Basic Law (Constitution) of the Federal Republic of Germany. Asylum seekers and those granted asylum are messengers from a world of inequality, poverty and violence. As Aleida Assmann has written: “Today’s migrants are bringing the reality of trouble spots and wars, which continue to smoulder outside of Europe and repeatedly flare up again, right to the heart of Europe. They constantly highlight what we would prefer to ignore: our integration into a globalised world with all the positive and negative consequences of mobility that [it] entails. What we hope and believed was far away and could be kept at a distance has now moved uncomfortably close to us.”<sup>69</sup>

One of the reasons why Germany is attractive for needy and persecuted migrants is that, along with the Scandinavian countries, it offers the best social protection in the whole of Europe. This ultimately has to do with the fact that Germany is one of the richest and most advanced countries in the world.<sup>70</sup> As a rule, the residence rights of refugees whose status is governed by the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees<sup>71</sup> rest on their eligibility for asylum in accordance with Article 16a of the Basic Law<sup>72</sup>. In addition, there are migrants who

<sup>69</sup> Assmann, Aleida, “Der europäische Traum: Was wir aus Flucht und Vertreibung lernen können”, in: Herder Korrespondenz, No. 70 (2016) 9, 13–16, here: 14.

<sup>70</sup> Mack, Elke, “Muss Barmherzigkeit grenzenlos sein? Humanität gegenüber Migranten als ethisches Dilemma”, in: Theologie der Gegenwart, No. 59 (2016) 3, 173–188, here: 174.

<sup>71</sup> Migrants who seek refuge in Germany because of their economic plight or to escape the effects of the climate or environment must be distinguished from those seeking refugee status in accordance with the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The group of refugees not covered by the Geneva Convention on Refugees is likely to increase dramatically in the future.

<sup>72</sup> Article 16a of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany states that persons persecuted on political grounds shall have the right of asylum. This article was formulated in an awareness of the flows of refugees from the fascist and communist dictatorships before and during the Second World War. Whereas the right of asylum was enshrined as a legal entitlement in both the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany and in the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic in 1949, the right of asylum in the

are not recognised as being entitled to asylum but who are granted temporary subsidiary protection as refugees.

In Germany the right of asylum has had constitutional status since 1949 (Article 16a of the Basic Law). The Geneva Convention on Refugees (Articles 1 and 2) states that protection must be granted to any person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion (such as certain religious groups, dissidents, homosexuals, etc.). However, German asylum law protects only victims of political persecution, provided they can verify that they have suffered violations of their human rights in their country of origin. No protection is provided under German asylum law for victims of other emergency situations such as poverty, catastrophic famines, territorially limited civil wars, natural disasters, for victims of social oppression (for example, forced prostitutes, women threatened by genital circumcision, climate refugees, social outcasts, unattended sick people, etc.) or for victims of failed states – perhaps the overriding cause of destitution, lawlessness and poverty.

When more and more people made their way via Turkey to Greece in 2015 – and thus into the European Union – and Germany opened its gates for the refugees, it turned out that the other member countries of the union were not prepared to implement the EU-wide solution initially planned by the European Commission, which envisaged a fair distribution of the refugees across all the countries. A number of Eastern European states were the first to spurn the European solidarity union, while some Western EU countries initially adopted a wait-and-see policy before pursuing a course of action which had nothing to do with solidarity at all but was explicitly anti-migration.<sup>73</sup> In 2015, Germany let hundreds of thousands of refugees into the country in a move that was widely considered as triggering a “refugee crisis”. Ultimately, however, this was a European crisis reflecting a lack of European solidarity or European identity capable of laying the foundations for a common policy.

GDR Constitution of 1968 was turned into a discretionary provision. Henceforth the right of asylum was no longer an individual right (and entitlement) but was regarded as an “act of clemency by the state”.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Küppers, Arnd/Schallenberg, Peter, “Flucht und Migration als Herausforderung christlicher Nächstenliebe”, in: Theologie der Gegenwart, No. 59 (2016) 3, 189–201, here: 193.

The hopes of a European identity, a common European policy or at least European solidarity ultimately proved an illusion. The decision taken by the German government in view of the migrants waiting “at the gates of Europe” was thoroughly humanitarian. However, it had unintended side-effects which the Nobel Prize winner in economics, James Buchanan, described as constituting a “Samaritan’s dilemma”<sup>74</sup>. The German government’s humanitarian stance triggered pull factors and fuelled expectations, which meant that more and more migrants began making their way to Europe, since it was apparently willing to take them in.<sup>75</sup> This did not result in unchecked flows of refugees, however. Had this been the case – which broad sections of the German population came to fear for a while – they would have dramatically exceeded the country’s capacity to absorb them.

In view of the migrants standing at the gates of Europe in 2015, representatives of the Church in Germany, too, called for implementation of the universal human right to freedom of movement, which rests on the Christian view of humanity, and of the right to a protective community association. “If we let people in need die at our borders, then I’m done with Christian identity”<sup>76</sup>, said the Chairman of the German Bishops’ Conference, Reinhard Marx, in response to the European identity and solidarity crisis.

The theologian, Ottmar Fuchs, who in view of the lack of support for solidarity in the discussion about migration said that those with a narrow nationalist mindset struck him as being more alien than many a migrant, found similar words: “Wherever the sole objective is to call for internal solidarity with one’s own people and this objective is pursued with hatred and aggressiveness, those who endorse it in Germany strike me as being far more alien than all the refugees taken together. Wherever people do everything in order not to become the neighbours of those who are on the move and seeking a new home, wherever attempts are made to keep these people at arm’s length, even if that means letting them drown in the Mediterranean, there is no longer any possibility of reaching a compromise. There is what you might call a split in our country between those who have become

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Buchanan, James, “The Samaritan’s Dilemma”, in: Phelps, Edmund (Eds.), *Altruism, Morality and Economic Theory*, New York 1975, 71–85.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Küppers, Arnd/Schallenberg, Peter, op. cit., 196.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.katholisch.de/video/16086-jeder-mensch-ist-ebenbild-gottes> (11.11.2017).

alienated, because they do not want to countenance the presence of outsiders and despise them, and those who are constructively seeking ways and means of accommodating them.”<sup>77</sup>

The Central Committee of German Catholics recently issued a statement describing a humane asylum policy as a task facing the European Union as a whole. It urged political leaders in both the European Union and Germany to press for the granting of international protection in Europe and to support a European asylum system to that end; to respect the protection of human life as the overriding priority at the external borders of the European Union; to extend opportunities for legal and safe access to international protection; to reform the Dublin system; to develop supportive and transparent distribution mechanisms at the European level; and to ensure fair and standardised asylum procedures.<sup>78</sup> This statement is not an expression of unrealistic Christian romanticism. On the contrary, it is a socio-ethical position which essentially also recognises – at least as an *ultima ratio* – the legitimacy of state restrictions on migration, if migration means damage being inflicted on “the good of the (recipient) community”<sup>79</sup>, prevention of the reliable institutional provision of “welfare state regulations as well as democracy and the rule of law”<sup>80</sup> or an overstretching of the absorption capacity of a country’s social systems. At no time in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany has there ever been such a situation, however.

Consequently the migration researcher, Paul Collier, is among those who call for the adoption of a generous, humanitarian refugee policy. At the same time, however, he emphasises the importance of a “pragmatic immigration policy” which takes due account of economic and social facts and, with that in mind, he goes on to formulate the realities and limitations of an immigration policy. Collier points out

<sup>77</sup> Fuchs, Ottmar, “‘Wenn Fremde bei dir in eurem Land leben...’ (Lev 19,33-34): Zukünftige Herausforderungen durch die aktuelle Migrationsbewegung”, in: *Theologie der Gegenwart*, No. 60 (2017) 1, 47–71, here: 47–48.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Zentralkomitee der deutschen Katholiken, *Eine menschenwürdige Asylpolitik als Gemeinschaftsaufgabe der Europäischen Union: Erklärung der Vollversammlung des Zentralkomitees der deutschen Katholiken vom 24. November 2017*, Bonn 2017, 4.

<sup>79</sup> Johannes XXIII., *Encyclical Pacem in terris*, 11.04.1963, No. 106.

<sup>80</sup> Deutsche Bischofskonferenz/Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgruppe für weltkirchliche Aufgaben (Eds.), *Ökonomisch motivierte Migration zwischen nationalen Eigeninteressen und weltweiter Gerechtigkeit: Eine Studie der Sachverständigengruppe “Weltwirtschaft und Sozialethik”*, Bonn 2005, 1–67, here: 40.”

that, for socio-ethical reasons, an immigration policy must consider not only the interests of the migrants, the host countries and the people already living in the host countries, but also the interests of the countries the migrants have come from and of the people who have been left behind there.<sup>81</sup> In doing so he focuses his attention on the refugees and asylum seekers as well as on economic migrants.

### **Pull factor: labour migration**

Even though the migration debate over the past few years might indicate the opposite, the vast majority of migrants in Germany are not refugees applying for asylum in Germany. They belong to the group of labour migrants.

In studies of the economic factors encouraging migration to Germany the focus is often initially placed on push factors as a means of explaining why people (have to) leave their native countries and wish to settle in Germany. These factors have been examined in earlier contributions in this volume supplied by Graziano Batistella in respect of Asia<sup>82</sup>, Josef Estermann as regards Latin America<sup>83</sup> and Jordan Nyenyembe concerning Africa<sup>84</sup>. There can be no denying that the combating of the causes of migration and flight is crucially important in the age of globalisation.

However, an examination of the push factors cannot ignore the fact that economic migration – and especially migration in Europe – is also attributable to numerous pull factors. There can be no denying that, from an economic point of view, migration is mostly productive for the host countries. In economic terms it is recognised that societies which are open to migration profit from the increase in prosperity among various groups in society. This is readily apparent from the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Although Germany twice laid the world to waste in the first half of the twentieth century, foreign countries quickly reached agreement to help rebuild it after

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Collier, Paul, *Exodus: Warum wir Einwanderung neu regeln müssen*, Munich 2014.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Batistella, Graziano, "Determinants and Organisation of Migration in Asia" on pages 3–12.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Estermann, Josef, "Poverty, Violence and Marginalisation – Causes of Migration and Displacement in Latin America" on pages 13–22.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Nyenyembe, Jordan, "Causes of Migration and flight in the African Context" on pages 23–31.

the Second World War. At that time nobody screamed "stop capital investment!", when foreigners began pumping their money into the shattered country. Nobody demanded "German goods for Germans!", when an export-led economy was established. Hence the prospering West German economy (whose products labelled "Made in Germany" "migrated" all over the world) was built up with foreign support. Indeed, as early as the mid-1950s an urgent search for workers was launched outside the country. Nine labour recruitment agreements were consequently signed in the years from 1955 to 1968 between the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries<sup>85</sup>, the original purpose of which was to regulate the length of time and conditions under which foreign workers were to be employed in Germany. Their stay in the country was initially to be limited.<sup>86</sup> The Federal Labour Office set up recruitment agencies of its own in several Mediterranean countries. Whenever German employers signalled a need for workers these agencies moved into action, recruiting foreign workers who were welcomed with open arms in Germany. Between 1955 and 1960 the number of foreign workers almost quadrupled from 80,000 to 300,000. As early as 1964 the millionth migrant worker, Armando Rodriguez from Portugal, was officially welcomed with a bouquet of flowers and presented with the gift of a moped, the event being duly reported and celebrated in the media. At that time no group of any social relevance raised its voice to warn against the country being "flooded with foreigners" or "overrun by foreign influences". The guest workers, as they were called, were regarded as important cogs in the wheels of the German economy.

The active recruitment of foreign workers lasted until 1973 when, as a result of the oil crisis and the beginnings of unemployment in the German labour market, a halt was called to any further recruitment. In 1991 a law on immigrants came into force which was designed to regulate the presence of foreigners in Germany. This law stipulated that every foreigner required permission to enter and stay in Germany. Short stays of up to three months not involving gainful

<sup>85</sup> Labour recruitment agreements were concluded with Italy (1955), Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963) South Korea (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968).

<sup>86</sup> Comparable agreements for the employment of so-called contractual workers were signed between the German Democratic Republic and Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mozambique, Poland, Hungary, Yemen and Angola.

employment were exempted from this obligation to obtain official approval. This marked the temporary end of the active recruitment of foreign workers until a special arrangement was introduced in the year 2000 in the form of a Green Card, the purpose of which was to attract (initially 10,000, later) 20,000 highly qualified foreign IT specialists to Germany.<sup>87</sup>

As a result of demographic developments, however, the Federal Republic of Germany continues to depend economically on immigration from other countries. Long-term studies show that, as far as the labour market is concerned, migration has positive long-term effects, even if the arrival of migrants can lead to problems in the short term. It is interesting to note that this also applies to the low-wage sector, where the presence of migrants leads to a job upgrade effect among the low-skilled.<sup>88</sup> This makes it all the more astonishing that migrants have latterly been seen as a threat and not as an opportunity for society in Germany – and that in a situation in which the “sharp decrease in the working population” constitutes the real threat. In fact, the declining labour pool threatens not only the country’s economic growth and stability, but also its social security systems and consequently society as a whole.<sup>89</sup> From an economic point of view and considering population developments in Germany, demographic compensation by means of migration cannot be avoided.<sup>90</sup>

Andreas Rauhut points out that, while they might suffer above-average unemployment rates, migrants are important for the financing of the pension scheme since they are a crucial source of financial support for the susceptible, contribution-financed

<sup>87</sup> The German Bishops’ Conference reacted swiftly to the arrival of the so-called “guest workers”. Immediately after the conclusion of the recruitment agreements it contacted the bishops’ conferences in Italy, Spain and Portugal and asked for foreign-speaking priests and nuns to be sent to Germany to provide pastoral care for the workers. (Cf. Die deutschen Bischöfe, Eine Kirche in vielen Sprachen und Völkern – Leitlinien für die Seelsorge an Katholiken anderer Muttersprache, Bonn 2003, 5.)

<sup>88</sup> Rauhut, Andreas, “Angst und Erlösung: Theologisch-ethische Betrachtungen zur Aufnahme von Flüchtlingen”, in: *Theologie der Gegenwart*, No. 59 (2016) 3, 202–217, here: 209.

<sup>89</sup> Fuchs, Johann/Kubis, Alexander/Schneider, Lutz, *Zuwanderungsbedarf aus Drittstaaten in Deutschland bis 2050: Szenarien für ein konstantes Erwerbspersonenpotenzial unter Berücksichtigung der zukünftigen inländischen Erwerbsbeteiligung und der EU-Binnenmobilität*, Gütersloh 2015, 78.

<sup>90</sup> Sinn, Hans-Werner, “Ökonomische Effekte der Migration”, in: *ifo-Schnelldienst*, No. 68 (2015), 1–6, 3.

pension fund. This is because they “receive much less by way of contribution-financed transfer payments than the local population does”<sup>91</sup>. Evidence shows that, in the course of their lives, migrants in Germany pay more in taxes and contributions than they receive in the form of social transfers.<sup>92</sup> Moreover, the favourable age structure of migrants means that they generate considerable gains for the contribution-financed systems.<sup>93</sup> As regards their level of education and qualifications, too, migrants are instrumental in bringing about positive social developments in Germany. In 2012 the share of new migrants with a degree or university entrance qualifications was higher than the federal average.<sup>94</sup>

It is thus an opportunity and not a threat when social scientists say that, given the prosperity gap between the rich Western industrialised nations and the poor developing countries, the acceleration principle<sup>95</sup> will mean that the pull factors for economically motivated migrants attracting them to the rich countries, including Germany, will become stronger.<sup>96</sup> However, there is a need to develop strategies for integration and interculturalism in order to meet the challenges connected with the pending migration processes.

### Migration as an opportunity – a salvation perspective

The Catholic Church recognised the social and humanitarian challenges posed by migration at a comparatively early stage, setting up the International Catholic Migration Commission in 1952. That year also saw the appearance of the Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia*. An important milestone in the documents issued by the Magisterium was the Instruction *Erga Migrantes* of 2004, which placed migration in a salvation perspective. Returning to the “unity of the whole human race”<sup>97</sup> referred to in *Lumen Gentium*, the Church places migration

<sup>91</sup> Brücker, Herbert, *Auswirkungen der Einwanderung auf Arbeitsmarkt und Sozialstaat: Neue Erkenntnisse und Schlussfolgerungen für die Einwanderungspolitik*, Gütersloh 2013, 28.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Bonin, Holger, *Der Beitrag von Ausländern und künftiger Zuwanderung zum Deutschen Staatshaushalt 2014*, Mannheim 2014, 53.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Rauhut, Andreas, op. cit., 210.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. *Ibid.* 211.

<sup>95</sup> Collier, Paul, op. cit., 265.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Mack, Elke, op. cit., 178.

<sup>97</sup> LG 1.

and the concomitant transformation of monocultural societies into multicultural societies in a universal salvation perspective, points to the various dimensions of migration and calls for international coordination and cooperation. *Erga Migrantes* says, for example: “International migration must therefore be considered an important structural component of the social, economic and political reality of the world today. The large numbers involved call for closer and closer collaboration between countries of origin and destination, in addition to adequate norms capable of harmonising the various legislative provisions. The aim of this would be to safeguard the needs and rights of the emigrants and their families and, likewise, those of the societies receiving them.”<sup>98</sup> In this context *Erga Migrantes* also takes up the ethical question of a new international economic order for a fairer distribution of the goods of the earth, pointing out that an economic order of this kind would “make a real contribution to reducing and checking the flow of a large number of migrants from populations in difficulty.”<sup>99</sup>

*Erga Migrantes* regards the admission of migrants not as a diaconal option or an act of mercy that is only right and proper for the Church, but as the self-realisation of the Church. This applies to all structures, social forms and levels within the Church. “The admission of migrants, travellers, and pilgrims on the move makes the Church what it is.”<sup>100</sup> Thus *Erga Migrantes* states: “Welcoming the stranger, a characteristic of the early Church, thus remains a permanent feature of the Church of God. It is practically marked by the vocation to be in exile, in diaspora, dispersed among cultures and ethnic groups without ever identifying itself completely with any of these. Otherwise it would cease to be the first-fruit and sign, the leaven and prophecy of the universal Kingdom and community that welcomes every human being without preference for persons or peoples. Welcoming the stranger is thus intrinsic to the nature of the Church itself and bears witness to its fidelity to the gospel.”<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2004, 8.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> Lussi, Carmem, “Die Mobilität des Menschen als theologischer Ort: Elemente einer Theologie der Migration”, in: *Concilium*, No. 44 (2008) 5, 551–562, here: 552.

<sup>101</sup> Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2004, 22.

However, it is not the Church documents on questions of migration that currently attract the attention of the general public. Right at the beginning of his pontificate in the first half of 2013, Pope Francis focused public awareness on the refugee drama during his first “programmatic” journey as pope to the refugee island of Lampedusa. Since then he has tirelessly pointed to the fate of the refugees and called upon Catholics the world over to lend their support to people on the move. The prominent German journalist, Heribert Prantl, wrote of this new papal style: “He takes the Gospel so seriously that all those who previously regarded it as a theological poetry album are beginning to feel queasy.”<sup>102</sup>

Perhaps Pope Francis is so sensitive to the fate of migrants because he himself was a “second-generation migrant” in Argentina, his parents having immigrated from Italy. This makes it all the more important for Pope Francis to see migration in a hope and salvation perspective. He said in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, for example: “Human mobility, which corresponds to the natural historical movement of peoples, can prove to be a genuine enrichment for both families that migrate and countries that welcome them.”<sup>103</sup>

Needless to say the challenges associated with migration cannot be overlooked. They range from cultural difficulties such as machismo, misogyny, patriarchal attitudes, anti-Semitism, racism and corruption to criminal practices such as drug trafficking, theft and physical violence (including sexual violence). However, particularly in view of latent xenophobic attitudes in Europe, it is important not to overlook either the opportunities afforded by migration and the associated significance of integration and inter-culturalism. Studies of the social cohesion brought about by migration show that an increase in migration and the share of foreigners generally goes hand in hand with reduced levels of resentment.<sup>104</sup> At the same time life satisfaction among the indigenous population increases if immigrants live in their

<sup>102</sup> Prantl, Heribert, “Kapitalismus tötet? Der Papst hat Recht: Er proklamiert ein Konzept der solidarischen Ökonomie auf der Basis des Evangeliums”, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* of 7/8 December 2013, 22.

<sup>103</sup> Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 19.03.2016, No. 46.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Wolf, Carina/Wagner, Ulrich/Christ, Oliver, “Die Belastungsgrenze ist nicht überschritten: Empirische Ergebnisse gegen die Behauptung vom ‚vollen Boot‘”, in: Heitmeyer, Wilhelm (Eds.), *Deutsche Zustände*, No. 3, Frankfurt/Main 2005, 73–91.

immediate surroundings, provided their own life context is not seen as being under threat. However, it is also clear that poverty is a “driver” of xenophobia. Divisions in society brought about by social and economic factors foster the development of xenophobia, which in socio-psychological terms can be described as a “neurotic shift in which a subconscious conflict (such as fear of poverty) encounters something different and specific, in this case ‘outsiders’.”<sup>105</sup>

The fostering of intercultural skills in the target countries of migration and the combating of the causes of flight in many parts of the world are among the key challenges facing a “world in the throes of change” in this age of globalisation. In his *Motu Proprio Humana Progressionem* of 17 August 2016 Pope Francis announced the institution of a Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development<sup>106</sup> which addresses the challenges arising from globalisation in the form of migration, environmental pollution, poverty, disease, marginalisation, unemployment, natural disasters, wars, human trafficking, slavery and torture. Worthy of particular note is that the Department of Refugees and Migrants will be run by the pope himself. This makes it clear that Pope Francis has made the issue of migration a top priority. In taking such a keen interest in the question of migration he has his sights on more than just the involvement of the Church.

In his document *Welcoming, Protecting, Promoting and Integrating Migrants and Refugees* issued for the 104<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, Pope Francis reaches out beyond the Church to address all political and social players. He specifically calls for humanitarian corridors and family reunifications, demands labour market access for asylum applicants and advocates a general easing of the conditions for naturalisation.<sup>107</sup> At the same time he points out that integration can only succeed if societies in the host countries offer public and social space to those seeking to integrate and facilitate

<sup>105</sup> Etzersdorfer, Irene, “Was ist Xenophobie?”, in: Etzersdorfer, Irene/Ley, Michael (Eds.), *Menschenangst: Die Angst vor dem Fremden*, Berlin 1999, 79–112, 101.

<sup>106</sup> Apostolic Letter Issued *Motu Proprio* by the Supreme Pontiff Francis Instituting the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu\\_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio\\_20160817\\_humanam-progressionem.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio_20160817_humanam-progressionem.html).

<sup>107</sup> Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 104<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018, “Welcoming, Protecting, Promoting and Integrating Migrants and Refugees”, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_20170815\\_world-migrants-day-2018.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20170815_world-migrants-day-2018.html) (16.12.2017).

their political, cultural and religious participation while also accepting their right to be different: “Integration is not an assimilation that leads migrants to suppress or to forget their own cultural identity. Rather, contact with others leads to discovering their ‘secret’, to being open to them in order to welcome their valid aspects and thus contribute to knowing each one better.”<sup>108</sup>

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

# Situation of Migrants/ Refugees in Different Contexts

# Coexistence and Interaction between Immigrant and Local Catholics in Germany

Tobias Keßler

The number of Roman Catholics in Germany who have either a non-German passport or an immigrant background<sup>109</sup> was estimated at around 4.4 million in a micro-census in 2011. They thus make up about 19 per cent of all Catholics in Germany.<sup>110</sup> To provide pastoral care for Catholic immigrants the Church in Germany has given preference to the creation of so-called *missiones cum cura animarum* rather than personal parishes.<sup>111</sup>

At the Second Vatican Council the Roman Catholic Church redefined its relationship with the world, adopting a change of position which also affected the relationship between the universal Church and its particular churches.

According to the Council, “each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church” (*Lumen Gentium* 13). The Council thus provided ecclesiological justification for a vision of the universal Church as a community of

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<sup>109</sup> The term “immigrant background” has been coined to classify individuals for whom “at least in principle it is possible to establish a need for integration” – Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden-Gruppe VI A. (Eds.), 2013, *Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit: Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund (Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2012)*, URL: [https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund2010220127004.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund2010220127004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile) (25.01.2014). People with an immigrant background comprise “all those who have immigrated to the current territory of the Federal Republic of Germany since 1949 as well as all foreigners born in Germany and all individuals born in Germany as Germans with at least one parent who immigrated to Germany after 1949 or was born there as a foreigner” (from: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, *Participation and Recognition*, October 2010, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/07588.pdf>, 2).

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Schohe, Stefan, “Seelsorge für Migranten in Deutschland”, in: Kessler, T. (Eds.), *Migration als Ort der Theologie (Weltkirche und Mission, No. 4)*, Regensburg 2014, 35–64, here: 37–38.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Bertsch, Ludwig et al. (Eds.), *Gemeinsame Synode der Bistümer der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Offizielle Gesamtausgabe (Neuausgabe mit einem Vorwort von Karl Kardinal Lehmann)*, Freiburg im Breisgau et al. 2012, 391, Anordnung 2.3.

particular churches, in which each of them “has something to say and to give”, while also being able to receive from the others.<sup>112</sup>

In the “age of migration”<sup>113</sup> this ecclesiological vision acquires additional significance. It is certainly true that befriending people from different backgrounds, languages and cultures presents particular churches with an opportunity to rediscover the scale of their catholicity. If they are to seize this opportunity, however, migration and displacement must not be seen merely in terms of the challenges they present to society. A one-sided approach of this kind entails regarding immigrants exclusively as at the receiving end of churches and their charitable work, while denying them any recognition as active protagonists. Migration and displacement should rather be viewed as signs of the times<sup>114</sup> that require an in-depth theological approach. This was grasped over a hundred years ago by Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, the Bishop of Piacenza and founder of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinian Missionaries), a fraternity that looks after migrants. Scalabrini described the phenomenon of migration as more than a matter of social hardship, given that it manifested traces of God’s plan of salvation, through which He aims to bring together all nations as a single people.<sup>115</sup> With this goal and the statements of the Second Vatican Council in mind, the Church aspires to be a sacrament of unity within society.<sup>116</sup>

The Church in Germany is, therefore, among the organisations whose response to international immigration is to work for increasing

<sup>112</sup> Weber, Franz, “Spannendes Abenteuer Weltkirche? Wahrnehmung welt- und ortskirchlicher Lernprozesse”, in: *Diakonia*, No. 33 (2002) 3, 170–176, here: 172.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Castles, Stephen/Miller, Mark J., *The Age of Migration – International Population Movements in the Modern World*, Basingstoke 2010.

<sup>114</sup> See, for example, Polak, Regina, “Migration als Ort der Theologie”, in: Keßler, Tobias (Eds.), *Migration als Ort der Theologie (Weltkirche und Mission, No. 4)*, Regensburg 2014, 87–114; Polak, Regina, “Perspektiven einer migrations-sensiblen Theologie”, in: Dahlvik, Julia/Reinprecht, Christoph/Sievers, Wiebke (Eds.), *Migration und Integration – wissenschaftliche Perspektiven aus Österreich: Jahrbuch, No. 2/2013*; [Second Annual Conference on Migration and Integration Research in Austria, 18–19 September 2012] (*Migrations- und Integrationsforschung, No. 5*), Göttingen 2014, 95–214; Polak, Regina, “Migration as a Sign of the Times: Questions and Remarks from a Practical-Theological Perspective”, in: Gruber, Judith/Rettenbacher, Sigrid (Eds.), *Migration as a Sign of Times*, Leiden et al. 2015, 47–78.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Keßler, Tobias, “Migration als Zeichen der Berufung: Italienischer Scalabrini-Orden hilft Brücken bauen”, in: von Clausewitz, Bettina (Eds.), *Zuflucht Europa (Jahrbuch Mission, 2016)*, Hamburg 2016, 61–66, here: 63.

<sup>116</sup> LG 1.

togetherness between local and immigrant Catholics. At the same time, however, it is not oblivious to a certain parallel existence between the two groups, and there has even been talk of a “secondary church”<sup>117</sup>, a “parallel church”<sup>118</sup> and, indeed, a “ghetto”<sup>119</sup>. So there is every reason to inquire into the discrepancy between ideal and reality. This will involve looking not only at interaction between local and immigrant Catholics in the local churches, but also at the activities of the Church as an institution. I consider it unfortunate that when the Church looks at the relationship between the two groups it takes its cue from the public debate and sees the matter as an issue of integration. This view totally fails to recognise the divergent logic of integration, on the one hand, and *communio* (fellowship), on the other. Hence it is essential to examine the ecclesiological implications of migration-induced fellowship between Catholics from different backgrounds, languages and cultures.

### The political structuring of the relationship between local and immigrant Catholics

The theory of social differentiation identifies three forms of societies that differ in the way they make primary distinctions: a society with segmental differentiation, a society with hierarchical differentiation into strata (an estate-based society) and a functionally differentiated society (a so-called modern society). Crucial to the matter we are addressing here is the difference between the last two types. In an estate-based society with hierarchical differentiation into strata, individuals are included from the moment of their birth and it is virtually impossible for outsiders to be integrated into this society. In a modern society, by contrast, inclusion follows the modern principle of freedom and equality for all individuals and is primarily a matter of performance. However, this principle – though universal as such – is effectively limited by the existence of nation states with territorial boundaries, thus resulting in a “specific universalism” which initially

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Deutsche Bischofskonferenz (Eds.), *Eine Kirche in vielen Sprachen und Völkern: Leitlinien für die Seelsorge an Katholiken anderer Muttersprache (Arbeitshilfen, No. 171)*, Bonn 2003, 20.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Horn, Carsten, “Im Gespräch: ‚Es gibt erprobte Modelle der Kooperation‘”, in: *Presseamt des Erzbistums Köln (Eds.), Aktuell: Nachrichten, Berichte und Termine, Cologne 2003*, 15–18, here: 16.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

extends only to the nationals of a country. Yet even in a nation state not all individuals meet the same requirements or have the same opportunities for participation, which is why there is a welfare state to apply the mechanism of social compensation.

The criterion of performance, however, creates a universalism of inclusion which can be summed up as follows. Each and every individual is welcome, provided he or she fulfils the requirements for inclusion that are specific to the system, e.g. qualifications to practice as a doctor or to carry out a specific function within an enterprise. In other words, the question of a worker's background, culture, religion or political creed is largely irrelevant to the question of social inclusion. The phenomenon of universal performance-based inclusion thus functions as an enabling principle for international migration. With this in mind, migration can be understood as a "geographical form of mobility to realise opportunities for inclusion"<sup>120</sup>.

In the target country of migration, however, seizure of this opportunity can potentially undermine the relationship of performance and loyalty between the state and its citizens, and so the national welfare state sees a need to intervene in "the forms of migration in modern society and to maintain a relationship among the community of citizens which is based on loyalty and performance. Based on this criterion, the welfare state becomes a filter for the attempts of migrants to use their geographical mobility to secure inclusion in operational systems and their organisations. By proceeding in this way and also by introducing different immigration categories, the state establishes a reference framework, which can then give rise to national or ethnic interpretations of community for the formulation or settlement of migration-related conflicts."<sup>121</sup>

The likelihood of such conflicts increases to the extent that social inequality becomes a permanent fixture along ethnic boundaries. If inequality on an international scale is taken as a point of departure, this can certainly enhance the opportunities migrants have of achieving inclusion in their destination countries.<sup>122</sup> However, the permanent

<sup>120</sup> Bommes, Michael, "Migration in der modernen Gesellschaft", in: Bommes, Michael (Eds.), *Migration und Migrationsforschung in der modernen Gesellschaft: Eine Aufsatzsammlung* (IMIS-Beiträge, No. 38), Bad Iburg 2011, 53–72, here: 62.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Bommes, Michael, "Zur Bildung von Verteilungsordnungen in der funktional

and sometimes cross-generational discrimination of migrants in the destination region can have a long-term detrimental impact on social cohesion and cause increasing irritation when set against modern principles of freedom and equality.

Within a nation state international migration leads to fears of rising social welfare costs and dwindling sovereignty caused by a supposedly lower level of loyalty on the part of immigrants. Transcending any party-political differences, this situation engenders a political interest on the part of national governments to limit immigration, establish some permanent legal distinctness and treat its own nationals and foreigners differently. The fact that Germany spent many decades denying that it was to all intents and purposes a country of immigration is the logical outcome of this situation.

National scepticism towards immigrants contributes in a major way to the narrative of foreigners as beneficiaries of the social welfare state, their share in the development of an affluent society being largely ignored. The deliberately engineered contrast between immigrants and locals paves the way for the fiction of an inescapable competitive rivalry between the two groups, resulting in numerous conflicts that resound even within the Church.

### The ambivalent talk of integration

Germany's 2005 Immigration Act marked a turning point in the country's political discourse. Although this act was a compromise, it was nevertheless a milestone – in formal terms at least – in the treatment of migration, since it put an end to decades of denial and a refusal to accept the fact of immigration. This turning point also gave rise to a new political focus which has manifested itself in a sustained and intensive discourse on integration.

Political science describes integration<sup>123</sup> as a process which, in keeping with the modern principles of freedom and equality, aims

differenzierten Gesellschaft – erläutert am Beispiel ‚ethnischer Ungleichheit‘ von Arbeitsmigranten", in: Bommes, Michael (Eds.), *Migration und Migrationsforschung in der modernen Gesellschaft: eine Aufsatzsammlung* (IMIS-Beiträge, No. 38), Bad Iburg 2011, 73–100, here: 85–96.

<sup>123</sup> To follow up on these ideas see Schulte, Axel "Integrationspolitik – ein Beitrag zu mehr Freiheit und Gleichheit in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft?", in: Baringhorst Sigrid/Hunger, Uwe/Schönwälder, Karen (Eds.), *Politische Steuerung von Integrationsprozessen*, Wiesbaden 2006, 27–58.

to achieve increasing equality between immigrants and nationals. Freedom and equality are seminal to the concept of human dignity and constitute the foundation of human rights. They are mandatory principles for the conduct of politics in constitutional democracies. Whereas, in the early stages of immigration, some temporary unequal treatment of foreigners and nationals can be reconciled with the promise of the democratic rule of law, a country can be deemed to have a “significant democratic deficit”<sup>124</sup> if there is any ongoing unequal treatment of individuals who are permanently subject to state rule.

What makes the public discourse on integration so ambivalent is that the turning point it has undergone has in no way overcome the fear of a potential loss of sovereignty as a result of international immigration or of the nation state being burdened with increased social welfare costs. On the one hand, the state has an interest in limiting immigration, but there are also concerns about the political correctness of such limits in view of the modern values of freedom and equality. This conflicting situation means that a symbolic integration policy aims primarily to sustain faith in the possibility of equality despite ever higher hurdles.<sup>125</sup> What has changed, therefore, is mainly the semantic shell of the debate on migration and not so much the facts.

Furthermore, the political direction taken means that there are now numerous organisations presenting themselves as integration experts in order to exploit the financial resources made available by the state to facilitate integration. They address the problems of integration but they do not resolve them, as this would remove the ground from under their own feet. They need to credibly present their interventions as a success, while at the same time pointing to the need for further work to be done. The method they mostly adopt is to assign responsibilities to themselves and to third parties in a way that would be unlikely to withstand empirical scrutiny. The added advantage of this trick is that migrants can again be blamed for failed endeavours at integration.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Bommes, Michael, “Integration findet vor Ort statt: Über die Neugestaltung kommunaler Integrationspolitik (2008)”, in: Bommes, Michael (Eds.), Migration und Migrationsforschung in der modernen Gesellschaft: Eine Aufsatzsammlung (IMIS-Beiträge, No. 38), Bad Iburg 2011, 191–224, here: 200.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Kunz, Thomas, “Integrationskurse auf kommunaler und auf Bundesebene – eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit einem neuen Steuerungsinstrument am Beispiel der

Moreover, in order to ensure that there is an ongoing need for integration, the benchmark for success is raised higher and higher. As a result, immigrants are under pressure to assimilate, which explains the scepticism and negative attitude of many immigrants towards the debate on integration. Their negative attitude is consequently construed as a refusal to integrate and so the wheel turns full circle.

In the German church, too, internal relations between immigrants and locals are treated as a matter of integration. Church-based integration work is focused [...] “inwards”, aiming at *communio* (fellowship) between local German churches and native language churches, as a “sign and instrument” of God’s love. [...] What the church confesses to be – an image and likeness of God’s love and even a sacrament of divine unity – it seeks to realise [...] “within”.<sup>127</sup>

In taking over the language of the public debate for its own internal definition of relationships, the Church unwittingly imports its logic as well, which expresses itself in the “carrot and stick” principle.<sup>128</sup> Despite a superficial appearance of reciprocity, the resulting dynamic is actually centripetal and therefore diametrically opposed to the centrifugal thrust of the Gospel.<sup>129</sup> By inadvertently equating *communio* and integration, those who would otherwise see themselves as brothers and sisters in baptism perceive their mutual relationships mainly as a problem of coexistence between foreigners and locals. This applies even within the Church – with all the negative baggage this kind of relationship entails. Moreover, it means the foundering of the critical and salutary appeal to the social environment to embrace a unity lived in Pentecostal diversity.

Stadt Frankfurt am Main”, in: Baringhorst, Sigrid/Hunger, Uwe/Schönwälder, Karen (Eds.), Politische Steuerung von Integrationsprozessen, Wiesbaden 2006, 175–193.

<sup>127</sup> Deutsche Bischofskonferenz (Eds.), Integration fördern – Zusammenleben gestalten: Wort der deutschen Bischöfe zur Integration von Migranten; 22 September 2004 (Die deutschen Bischöfe, No. 77), Bonn 2004, 21–22.

<sup>128</sup> The relevant Church documents do in fact reveal efforts to define integration as something mutual. However, these efforts to redefine integration were doomed to failure from the very beginning, given that the prevailing understanding of integration is that it is a process of unilateral adjustment – an understanding that has been propagated by the media.

<sup>129</sup> See, for example, Hamann, Ulrike et al., Koordinationsmodelle und Herausforderungen ehrenamtlicher Flüchtlingshilfe in den Kommunen: Qualitative Studie des Berliner Instituts für empirische Integrations- und Migrationsforschung, URL: [http://www.bertelsmannstiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/Koordinationsmodelle\\_und\\_Herausforderungen\\_ehrenamtlicher\\_Fluechtlingshilfe\\_in\\_den\\_Kommunen.pdf](http://www.bertelsmannstiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/Koordinationsmodelle_und_Herausforderungen_ehrenamtlicher_Fluechtlingshilfe_in_den_Kommunen.pdf) (26.08.2016).

## The established Church and its outsiders

An empirical study entitled *The Established and the Outsiders* and the theoretical insights it opened up was published in 1965 by Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson.<sup>130</sup> Numerous sociological studies have referred to it to explain the relationship between locals and immigrants.<sup>131</sup> The research on which Elias bases his figuration or process theory focuses on the relationship between an established population and new arrivals who share the same language and culture. This gives rise to a development which can also be ascertained in encounters between locals and immigrants in the context of international migration. In other words, distinctive linguistic, cultural and phenotypic features are not the immediate triggers of conflict between the groups concerned, but serve above all to provide secondary legitimisation for unequal treatment. On the contrary, what causes conflicts is that the new arrivals unwittingly break unwritten rules and standards and are therefore perceived as endangering the existing social order.

The established group consequently tries to stigmatise the outsiders by ascribing certain characteristics to them and by distancing themselves from them, while any conciliatory efforts from among their own ranks are sanctioned. If there is a marked imbalance of power at the beginning of immigration it tends to become more entrenched, whereas a minor imbalance of power – due, for example, to the established being heavily dependent on the outsiders – gradually leads to a balance and may in fact result in counter-stigmatisation or even a

<sup>130</sup> Elias, Norbert/Scotson, John L., *The Established and the Outsiders*, first published by Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, London 1965, revised edition published by University College Dublin Press, 2008, as volume 4 of the *Collective Works of Norbert Elias*.

<sup>131</sup> See, for example, Bauböck, Rainer, "Etablierte und Außenseiter, Einheimische und Fremde: Anmerkungen zu Norbert Elias' Soziologie der Ausgrenzung", in: Nowotny, Helga/Taschwer, Klaus (Eds.), *Macht und Ohnmacht im neuen Europa: Zur Aktualität der Soziologie von Norbert Elias*, Vienna 1993, 147–166; Eichener, V., *Ausländer im Wohnbereich: Theoretische Modelle, empirische Analysen und polit.-praktische Maßnahmenvorschläge zur Eingliederung einer gesellschaftlichen Außenseitergruppe (Kölner Schriften zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftspolitik, No. 8)*, Regensburg 1988; Korte, Hermann, "Die etablierten Deutschen und ihre ausländischen Außenseiter", in: Gleichmann, Peter Reinhart/Goudsblom, Johan/Korte, Hermann (Eds.), *Macht und Zivilisation: Materialien zu Norbert Elias' Zivilisationstheorie*, 2 (Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, No. 418), Frankfurt am Main 1984, 261–279; Treibel, Annette, "Etablierte und Außenseiter: Zur Dynamik von Migrationsprozessen", in: Nowotny, Helga/Taschwer, Klaus (Eds.), *Macht und Ohnmacht im neuen Europa: Zur Aktualität der Soziologie von Norbert Elias*, Vienna 1993, 139–146.

reversal of roles. The locals' intuitive awareness of the contingency of their own position is at the root of their struggle to retain power and of that of the immigrants to acquire it.

As a social structure the Church is by no means immune to such power struggles within its own ranks either. The particular Catholic churches in the German-speaking countries are a special case globally in that they are constituted as modern organisations. This makes the relationship between immigrants and locals within the Church distinctly volatile, as the two groups have strongly diverging views about the nature of the Church and its mission.

The functional differentiation of society, regarded by the Church as a process of secularisation,<sup>132</sup> has led to the Church losing in relevance. This development has recently been exacerbated by cases of sexual abuse and financial scandals, resulting in a serious drop in membership. In view of this situation, and despite incessant talk of the end of the *Volkskirche* (i.e. the church as an all-encompassing national church), the Catholic Church in Germany is making enormous efforts to regain the social respect it has lost. It is trying to present an image of progressiveness and is for the most part uncritically adapting its activities to contemporary standards. For example, local churches are increasingly employing professional organisational consultants, commissioning social analyses to give their activities an adequate market focus, adopting the language of business organisations, simulating a capacity for action and a fresh start by means of internal restructuring, and running church management courses, etc.

Another fateful development for the Church is the focus of its pastoral care on what it sees as the dominant milieu in society, while neglecting the milieu of the lower strata of society and totally underestimating their social capital.<sup>133</sup> This shows that the Church is striving for influence and power, although this is at odds with the transformation recommended by the Council from a self-centred

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Kaufmann, Franz-Xaver, *Kirchenkrise: Wie überlebt das Christentum?*, 4<sup>th</sup> revised and extended edition Freiburg im Breisgau 2011, 76–82; Ziemann, Benjamin, *Katholische Kirche und Sozialwissenschaften 1945–1975 (Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft, No. 175)*, Göttingen 2007, 11.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Foitzik, Alexander, "Sehhilfe für die Kirche: Ein Kongress zu Ansätzen einer milieusensiblen Pastoral", in: *Herder Korrespondenz*, No. 67 (2013) 1, 29–33, here: 32.

religious community towards a selfless pastoral community<sup>134</sup> and thwarts any genuine sense of solidarity with those on the margins of society.

This creates an ambivalent attitude towards the presence of Catholic immigrants. Given dwindling membership of the Catholic Church, immigrants are, on the one hand, welcomed as reliable churchgoers who also contribute financially to the Church. On the other hand, their mentality and religious practices are classified and disparaged as pre-modern and they are seen as obstacles to the local aim of emancipating the Church within society. In other words, although Catholic immigrants are welcomed by German local churches, they are not accepted as they are. This leads, almost unnoticed, to an expectation that the immigrants should adjust, a process which is easily camouflaged by the semantics of integration and the language of Germany's public debate. By adopting this attitude, the German particular church simply ignores the salutary critical potential that resides in an outside perspective on its distinctive character as a large, modern and professionalised organisation. Hence it also bears responsibility for the alienation of its members and, consciously or unconsciously, takes no account of the marked self-centredness that characterises its activities as a professional church.<sup>135</sup> The supposed superiority of its professional standards of pastoral care in the local churches would appear to justify an unquestioningly paternalistic attitude towards newcomers. This diagnosis highlights the urgent need for theological and ecclesiological reflection.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Sander, Hans-Joachim, Nicht ausweichen: Die prekäre Lage der Kirche (GlaubensWorte), Würzburg 2002.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Kaufmann, Franz-Xaver, op. cit.; Karle, Isolde, "Religion – Interaktion – Organisation", in: Hermelink, Jan/Wegner, Gerhard (Eds.), Paradoxien kirchlicher Organisation: Niklas Luhmanns frühe Kirchensoziologie und die aktuelle Reform der evangelischen Kirche (Religion in der Gesellschaft, No. 24), Würzburg 2008, 237–257; Karle, Isolde, "Pfarrerinnen und Pfarrer zwischen Interaktion und Organisation", in: idem (Eds.), Kirchenreform: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven (Arbeiten zur Praktischen Theologie, No. 41), Leipzig 2009, 177–198; Nassehi, Armin, "Die Organisation des Unorganisierbaren: Warum sich Kirche so leicht, religiöse Praxis aber so schwer verändern lässt", in: Karle, Isolde (Eds.), Kirchenreform: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven (Arbeiten zur Praktischen Theologie, No. 41), Leipzig 2009, 199–218.

### Communio as a never-ending process of communicating unity and diversity

The West with its emphasis on rationality has fallen victim to a long-standing preference for unity<sup>136</sup>. This preference is reflected in the emergence of the German state as a civilised nation and, as a corollary, in the ideal of homogeneity as a defining characteristic of its model of ethical and cultural citizenship.<sup>137</sup> The unacknowledged power struggles between locals and immigrants, which are hidden behind a culturalist perspective, conceal a dilemma: the difficulty of understanding unity and diversity as non-competitive and mutually reinforcing parameters. This is where theology comes in.

Diversity (catholicity) and unity are essential characteristics of the Church and form part of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, in which they reflect fundamental qualities of the triune God. The long theological tradition of attributing less value to diversity than to unity is due not least to a flawed interpretation of the story of the Tower of Babel.<sup>138</sup> It suggests that diversity is the result of a reduction in our quality of life, caused by the Fall, which, at the end of time, will be resolved by the unity of everything that exists in and with God. This interpretation is a fatal error. Theologians such as Gisbert Greshake and Medard Kehl, by contrast, rightly emphasise that both unity and diversity originate from the nature of God and that this was already expressed in the creed of the Early Church.<sup>139</sup> Identity and difference are irrevocable parts of God's nature and are characterised by the uninterrupted self-expression of the persons of the Trinity within the meaning of the *relatio subsistens*. *Communio* must therefore be

<sup>136</sup> Cf. Greshake, Gisbert, Der dreieine Gott: Eine trinitarische Theologie, Freiburg im Breisgau/Basel/Vienna 21997, 61–64.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Koopmans, Ruud, "Deutschland und seine Einwanderer: Ein gespaltenes Verhältnis", in: Kaase, Max (Eds.), Eine lernende Demokratie: 50 Jahre Bundesrepublik Deutschland (WZB-Jahrbuch, 1999), Berlin 1999, 165–199.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Uehlinger, Christoph, Weltreich und "eine Rede": Eine neue Deutung der sogenannten Turmbauerzählung (Gen 11:1–9) (Orbis biblicus et orientalis, No. 101), Fribourg 1990; Kessler, Tobias, Il racconto della torre come chiave ermeneutica del fenomeno migratorio – esegesi e lettura simbolica di Gen 11:1–9 (Dissertation di licenza), Rome 1999; Ebach, Jürgen, "Rettung der Vielfalt: Beobachtungen zur Erzählung vom Babylonischen Turm", in: Becker, Dieter (Eds.), Mit dem Fremden leben: Perspektiven einer Theologie der Konvivenz; Theo Sundermeier zum 65. Geburtstag (Missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen N.F., No. 12), Erlangen 2000, 259–268.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Greshake, Gisbert, op. cit., 219; Kehl, Medard, Die Kirche: Eine katholische Ekklesiologie, Würzburg 21993, 75. For what follows see also Greshake, op. cit.

understood as the never-ending communication of unity and diversity. Mission thus becomes a synonym of communication as a *communio*-focused process through which those who are permanently different form part of one another. This mission is *perichoretic*, i.e. it has its origin in the relationship between the three persons of the triune God, and it includes a *kenotic*, i.e. self-emptying, aspect, which expresses itself in the incarnation of God's Son, His life and His death on the cross.

The Church is called upon to reflect this process of kenotic perichoresis in the relationships between baptised Christians. *Communio* within the Church is not a possession. Rather, it is the outcome of a relentless struggle to communicate unity and diversity – an outcome that is consistently fragile due to the tension between historical imperfection and eschatological fullness. This struggle can only succeed by being alert to the power of the Holy Spirit, which is the very principle underlying these two poles. Irrespective of the phenomenon of global migration, this process of communication is the abiding internal and external task of the Church. Migration and displacement give this task a completely new and urgent dimension however. On the one hand, this is the first opportunity in history to ascertain the scope of global catholicity in everyday church life at the local level, i.e. the extent to which a given particular church is dependent on the universal Church. On the other hand, the Church faces the challenge of harnessing the Holy Spirit in order to overcome the social convention whereby newcomers are treated by locals with an air of unquestioning paternalism. In kenotic terms, the Church's mission largely takes the form of removing the barriers that separate locals and strangers.

Ottmar Fuchs points out that the need to remove barriers stems directly from the command to love one's neighbour.<sup>140</sup> In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) Jesus provides an eloquent illustration of the removing of barriers, which involves redefining the concept of a neighbour. The removal of barriers between ourselves and strangers involves communicating a sense of belonging. This means that anyone wishing to overcome barriers must be willing to change. In the case of immigrants and locals who see themselves as disciples of Jesus Christ, they must realise that the call for the

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Fuchs, Ottmar, "Die Entgrenzung zum Fremden als Bedingung christlichen Glaubens und Handelns", in: idem (Eds.), *Die Fremden*, Düsseldorf 1988, 240–301.

kenotic removal of barriers extends to them both. However, to ensure a fairer distribution of this obligation, so that *communio* can flourish, it is important that the losses migrants have typically experienced<sup>141</sup> can be appreciated as genuine relinquishment. It is irrelevant for this purpose that this relinquishment was largely forced upon these people in the wake of their migration.

As mentioned earlier, befriending migrants entails a willingness to change. In terms of faith it also presents a great opportunity for anyone who is open to this experience. In fact, people often experience God in a way that reflects what Johann Baptist Metz aptly describes as a "messianic future" which disrupts rather than confirms a person's "bourgeois future".<sup>142</sup> The precarious situation a migrant or refugee faces should, of course, never be wished on anyone. However, it is precisely the powerlessness of these people that makes them aware of their existential dependence on God, who reveals Himself to them in this way and often strengthens them irrespective of their religious creed. Hence their lives often carry a clear message for all those who are settled, who have a tendency to take their supposed certainties for granted and who are therefore in danger of forfeiting this central dimension of their faith.

<sup>141</sup> Knowledge of such losses has prompted the psychotherapist, Wielant Machleidt, to describe migration as a third experience of individuation which, typically, goes hand in hand with a period of cultural homelessness. See, for example, Machleidt, Wielant, *Migration, Kultur und psychische Gesundheit: Dem Fremden begegnen* (Lindauer Beiträge zur Psychotherapie und Psychosomatik), Stuttgart 2013. Local Christians must therefore be helped to understand the special difficulties with which immigrants are confronted in the course of their migration. It is important that locals should be able take sufficient account of such problems when trying to foster fellowship between the two groups.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Metz, Johannes Baptist, *Jenseits bürgerlicher Religion: Reden über die Zukunft des Christentums*, Munich/Mainz 1980, 10.

## Out to Work

### International labor migration and changing parental roles in the Philippines<sup>143</sup>

Maruja M. B. Asis, Valentin Mendoza and Cecilia-Ruiz Marave

*Since my wife left for abroad, I'm here with the kids,  
I just focus on the children, even if you can pay a helper,  
you wouldn't be able to closely monitor the children.*

Enrico, left-behind father

*He's the one who cooks breakfast for us, and when I'm sick  
he's the one who takes care of me. He's the one who launders  
the clothes. He attends meetings. He's okay but it's different if  
the mother is the one caring. Because the mother is, of course,  
the light of the home ... because Papa is doing a woman's work.  
When he goes out, he takes me along, whenever I like to go.*

Eunice, Enrico's daughter

Working abroad has been part of the strategies employed by Filipino families and households to promote family welfare. Starting with some 36,000 workers deployed to the Gulf region in 1974, the numbers progressively increased over the years. In 2015, 1.8 million Filipinos sought work abroad. The Philippines is not only a major source country of workers for the global labor market, it also ranks among the top five countries receiving remittances. In 2015, remittances to the country amounted to USD25.8 billion, which account for 8-10 percent of the country's GDP. The gender composition of overseas Filipino

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<sup>143</sup> An earlier version of this article was published by the Jesuit Conference for Asia and the Pacific, the organization which provided funding for the 2015 round of data collection. The team thanks the Scalabrini Center for People on the Move for its assistance in recruiting interviewees, the migrant fathers who agreed to be interviewed, and the school administrators, teachers and Grade 6 students of Canossa Academy of Lipa for their cooperation in the letter-writing activity. The article also draws on data from the Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia-Part I (CHAMPSEA-I) Project in the Philippines. Thank you to Brenda S.A.Yeoh and Elspeth Graham, Principal Investigators, for permission to use the data from the qualitative interviews, to Wellcome Trust for supporting the research, and to all the families which participated in the project.

workers has changed since large-scale labor migration started in the 1970s. Initially, international labor migration was towards the oil-rich Gulf countries comprising mostly men who were recruited to work on massive infrastructure projects. By the 1980s, the labor market needs of the Gulf countries expanded to other sectors and industrializing countries in Asia also started to recruit foreign workers to address labor shortages. Domestic workers became one of the occupations that were in demand in overseas labor markets, although for different reasons. In the Gulf region, foreign domestic workers are employed as a sign of affluence whereas in East and Southeast Asian countries, they are recruited to allow local women to participate in the paid labor market. The demand for domestic workers is the main driver of female migration. Although the Philippines is a source country of migrant workers of various skill levels and occupations, for many years now, migrant domestic workers (who are mostly women) are the largest occupational group leaving the country every year.

In the Asian context, temporary labor migration has created transnational families because migrant workers, particularly those in less-skilled occupations, are the only ones who are allowed to work and stay temporarily in the destination countries, usually for a work contract of two years, while their families are left behind in the countries of origin. Highly skilled and professional migrants, however, are allowed to bring their family members with them. Except for the privileged few, international labor migration results in the separation of migrants and their families. When it was mostly men who went abroad to work, there were already concerns raised about the impact of fathers' migration on their families. Although it was not an ideal situation, the migration of fathers to work abroad was seen as part of their role as the primary breadwinners. Also, findings from research indicated that while mothers were initially burdened with the responsibility of being both fathers and mothers to the children, overall, families adjusted to the situation.

When women started to migrate in large numbers, the concerns amplified because migrant mothers were transgressing traditional expectations of mothers as nurturers. If mothers can be fathers, there were concerns that fathers may be less prepared and/or less willing to take on caregiving roles. In the Philippines, the traditional parental roles are summed up in the imagery of the father as the pillar (in

light of their breadwinning role) and the mother as the light (in light of their role as nurturers) of the home. Some studies have suggested that when it is the mothers who migrate, household arrangements undergo more adjustments, and fathers actually pass on the caregiving responsibilities to other women and girls in the family or household, and migrant women continue to mother from a distance. Findings from qualitative studies and more recent research, however, suggest that fathers – whether as current or return migrants or as left-behind – are involved in caregiving responsibilities than had been acknowledged earlier.

This article focuses on fathers as carers of young children and their understanding and practices of care work. Data for the study came from various sources: qualitative interviews conducted with nine fathers and three interviews with young children carried out in Laguna in 2009 as part of the Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia-Part I Project in the Philippines, interviews conducted in 2015 with 13 migrant fathers who were home for vacation or were about to leave for another overseas assignment, and children's letters to their fathers. In cooperation with a school, Grade 6 students were invited to write a letter to their fathers in connection with Father's Day (which fell on 21 June 2015) indicating how their fathers care for them, how they feel about their father's care, and their wishes for their fathers. In reporting the findings, we have changed the names to protect the identity and privacy of the research participants.

### Fathers as Carers

The global care chain concept helps to explain the preponderance of migrant women engaged in care work (also called reproductive work), i.e., paid or unpaid work involving care which promote the welfare of others (e.g., household tasks, child care, caring for the sick, or teaching). The large numbers of Filipino women migrants engaged in domestic work reflects women from developing countries assuming the caregiving responsibilities of women in more developed countries, who can then participate in the paid labor market. Migrant women, in turn, transfer their caregiving responsibilities to other women in their home countries.

Men as carers are absent from the global care chain. Data from the survey component of CHAMPSEA-Part I indicate that the situation

is quite different on the ground. Overall, women were the majority of carers: mothers were the carers in almost all non-migrant households while in migrant households, 67.9 percent named mothers as carers; 11 percent had fathers as carers; and 21.4 percent mentioned other carers (e.g., grandmothers). Thus, care work is changing in migrant households and part of the change is the participation of fathers in this task.

If only jobs abroad were available, fathers would prefer to work abroad. The demand for domestic workers made it easier for women to migrate, hence, the men reluctantly agreed to the migration of their wives. The left-behind fathers did not consider it unusual to take care of their young children. When asked what would have happened if he did not agree to this assignment, Romy exclaimed, “Is that possible? I think it is not possible that you wouldn’t agree to take care of your kids?” Another father, Raul, reported that it was not difficult to care of their three children while his wife was working in Saudi Arabia: “caring for the children should not be considered a job [...] it is a natural role for parents.”

In their dual role as mother and father, the men had to reduce their time with their friends. Mario admitted that it was not easy to modify his ways, but he had to because “it’s really the obligation of a parent to do what needs to be done for the children.” In describing how they care for their young children, the left-behind fathers followed what their wives used to do. Similar to the minutiae of everyday life that Enrico described at the beginning of this paper, Dante related his daily routine in caring for his daughter: “I tell her to fix her hair and not to go out without having washed her face or gargled. [On school days] I wake up early; I prepare the food. Then I pack her food. Her clothes need to be ironed. If the clothes had not been ironed on Sunday, I need to wake up early the following day.”

Even with their best efforts, however, several fathers commented that a mother’s care is still different, especially in raising daughters. Felipe, one of the fathers had this to say: “For a mother to be a father, it’s okay. But for a father to be a mother, it’s more difficult because you have to raise a kid like a woman [...] it is hard to raise a daughter, it is hard because you cannot know what she wants, [...] what’s going to happen.” Fathers who worked at home and outside the home have also experienced the double-shift women in a similar situation go

through. As one of the fathers put it, “My burden is double unlike before. When I was just playing the role of a father, when I get home, I can just lie down and sleep. Now when I come home, I still have to cook.”

In the case of migrant fathers, they see their role mainly as providers and the care of the children is the main responsibility of the mothers. Most of them considered providing for their families as the most difficult part of being a father. While working abroad makes it easier to provide for their families, it also comes with a steep price, i.e., being separated from their families. In conversations with women migrants in domestic work, it is not uncommon to hear them wondering how their own children were being cared for while they care for other people’s children. Migrant fathers also wonder how their wives and children are faring in their absence, although not with the same level of immediacy because of the different nature of their work. During the interviews, migrant fathers turned emotional when they talked about being apart from their families. Although they did not have problems with their children, somehow the separation created some emotional distance between them. Some of them expressed sadness that they could not share the responsibility of rearing their children with their wives. Although they fulfill their responsibility as the family’s provider, they were sad about their absence from their family’s daily life.

The separation between migrants and their families has been assuaged by communication, which they acknowledged, is a lot easier now because of mobile phones, Skype, Facebook and the like. Several fathers revealed that when they return home, initially, the children would seem shy around them. They make an effort to spend time with their families when they are home: they would cook, they would bring the children to school, and they would play with them.

While they perform different roles, the left-behind fathers and migrant fathers share the same goal of wanting to raise their children well. In the changing geography of family life created by migration, fathers and mothers may have to change roles and make adjustments. Their shared goals as parents and their similar principles and approaches in raising their children help in easing the difficulties of separation.

### Children's views of their fathers

The CHAMPSEA-Part I interviews with children in mother-migrant families revealed that sons and daughters seem to have a different appreciation of how their fathers cared for them. According to the boys, they had adjusted to their mothers' absence, thanks to the care provided by their fathers. In contrast, the girls expressed that they would prefer rather that their fathers work overseas and have their mothers at home with them. Eunice's reflection at the beginning of the article hints at her discomfort with her father as her carer. Despite the long list of work that her father does in her mother's absence, Eunice does not see him performing "real" work. This view suggests the general lack of appreciation for care work that is traditionally expected of women. When fathers engage in care work, their work is not devalued but may also be seen as a deviation from traditional notions of masculinity.

On the other hand, the letters that children wrote to their fathers point to the manifold and multi-faceted ways in which children viewed and regarded their fathers. For all children, the role of fathers as providers was the most common image they had of their fathers. In addition, they also saw their fathers as givers of life, carers, protectors, teachers, spiritual guides, playmates, encouragers and role models. These views are suggested by the following:

"Thank you for working hard to provide for me and our family. We never went without; we always had food on the table, a roof over our heads, clean clothes to wear. Thank you for all the sacrifices you have done not only for me but for the whole family. Thank you for sending me and my sister to school, for us to have quality education. Thank you for keeping us safe all the time. Thank you for raising us good and right." (Girl1, 11years old)

"First of all, I want to say thank you for taking care of me. Thank you for working abroad just for our future. Thank you for giving me a nice life. Thank you for giving me all the things that I need. If you were not born, I will not be in the world. When I grow up, I want to be like you. You're the best dad because you know how to cook, wash the clothes, aside from that you are my provider and protector." (Boy1, 11 years old)

For children whose mothers are working abroad, they were appreciative of how their fathers cared for them:

"Our father takes care of my family cheerfully and sweetly. I feel really proud of my father. He always tries to take care of three kids without my mother (who is abroad)." (Girl2, 11 years old)

"Thank you for taking care of us, [for] cooking food for us every day because mommy is not here. You wash our clothes, wash the dishes and even clean our home. You are not only my dad, you are also my mommy." (Girl3, 11 years old)

The stresses, issues and problems that trouble their families were not lost on the children, and for those who recognized some family problems, the children acted like parents, expressing support for their fathers, or reminding their fathers to be better:

"Whatever problem you are facing, please remember that we, your family, are here for you to support you. You were the one who taught us not to give up in the face of problems." (Girl4, 11)

"Always pray and do not drink alcohol (please)." (Girl5, 11)

Memories of the times shared with their fathers were gratefully remembered by the children. The details with which they recalled family highlights, such as family trips and birthday celebrations, or even ordinary events reflect the power of memories that the children carry with them.

### Conclusion

Findings from this exploratory study suggest that fathers in transnational families are more involved in parenting, in general, and care work, in particular, than is generally recognized. Fathers who perform care work while their wives work abroad take their caregiving role as part of their responsibilities while migrant fathers who are unable to fulfill this role and compensate for it by engaging in care work when they are home.

Of two recent publications, *Globalized Fatherhood*,<sup>144</sup> and *State of the World's Fathers: A MenCare Advocacy Publication*,<sup>145</sup> the

<sup>144</sup> Inhorn, Marcia C./Chavkin, Wendy/Navarro, Jose-Alberto (Eds.), *Globalized Fatherhood*, New York/Oxford 2015.

<sup>145</sup> Levto, Ruti, et. al. *State of the World's Fathers. A MenCare Advocacy Publication*, Washington 2015, [http://sowf.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/08181421/State-of-the-Worlds-Fathers\\_23June2015.pdf](http://sowf.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/08181421/State-of-the-Worlds-Fathers_23June2015.pdf) (23.07.2017).

authors of the latter publication noted most research, policies and programs concerning fatherhood have been implemented mostly in the western countries and more developed countries while in lower income countries, “the interest in fatherhood is more recent and tends to be framed as an entry point to improving reproductive health and preventing violence”.<sup>146</sup>

Further research on the impact of migration on fathers and fatherhood will hopefully generate more interest in the future. Involving men and boys in care work will go a long way in raising children to become caring and responsible adults. One insight from the *State of the World's Fathers* report – and which is suggested by the present study – is that “the involvement of fathers or father figures in child-rearing, and quality of time spent by both parents, results in enhanced cognitive, emotional, and social development for both children and parents”.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 91.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 78.

## Migration Movements in Latin America and the Caribbean

### Current Situation, Pastoral Support and a Theology of Migration

Jorge E. Castillo Guerra

The latest migration movements in Latin America and the Caribbean have placed people in vulnerable situations upon leaving their countries. Streams of so-called legal and illegal migrants, as well as migrant workers and refugees, are moving both within regions and from one region to another. In the course of this decade the region has developed into a transit region for transcontinental migration movements. This raises three questions. How can we describe the current migration movements in Latin America and the Caribbean? What are the criteria for providing spiritual help to migrants? How does the migrants' experience of life and faith influence our current reflection on the mystery of God?

The purpose of this article is to examine these questions by examining three thematic complexes: (1) the conditions of migration, (2) pastoral care provided for migrants, and (3) the emergence of a theology of migration.

#### The extent of human mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean

Independence from European colonial empires and the definition of borders for the new nations gave rise to human mobility, as people migrated both within and away from the American continent but also into this region from other continents, especially from Europe. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), around 28.5 million people or 4% of the overall population in this region have their origins in other countries. The five countries at the top of emigration statistics are Mexico (11.8 million), Colombia (2 million), El Salvador (1.3 million), Cuba (1.2 million) and the Dominican Republic (1.1 million). The most

popular destination is the United States, which receives the largest number of migrants (20.8 million), followed by Spain with 2.4 million. According to the 2013 statistics, Europe currently has about 4.21 million Latin Americans.<sup>148</sup>

The steady increase of migrants and refugees is being carefully recorded by the relevant UN institutions. A report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expresses concern about the so-called Northern Triangle of Central America, comprising Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. Data from 2015 showed that 109,800 refugees from those three countries had applied for asylum abroad. The majority wanted to move northwards, i.e. to Mexico, the United States and Canada, while others wanted to flee to Belize, Costa Rica and Panama. The number of migrant children and young people from this region has assumed dramatic proportions; according to figures for 2014 around 52,000 were arrested at the US border.<sup>149</sup>

Money transfers sent by migrants to their home countries are vital for the unstable economies of Latin America and the Caribbean. In Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador, Jamaica and Guatemala, for example, they account for 10% of GDP.<sup>150</sup>

These figures give a general impression of the extent of human mobility in Latin America, yet they require explanation and further reflection. First of all, we need to take a closer look at the causes of migration and why people seek refuge outside their home countries. In migration research the causes for relocation are generally classified by their severity or necessity in order to explain whether they are voluntary or forced. Migration is considered to be voluntary if there is no direct threat to a person's life or limb. Poverty falls into this category. Migration is seen as forced if there is a direct threat to a person's life, e.g. through violence.

Both voluntary and forced migration can be caused by so-called push factors, meaning that migrants see relocation as a possible

<sup>148</sup> Cf. UNHCR, Respuesta regional a la situación del Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica: Llamamiento suplementario 2016, Geneva, <http://www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/scripts/doc.php?file=t3/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10665> (22.05.2017); Córdova Alcaraz, R., Rutas y dinámicas migratorias entre los países de América Latina y el Caribe (ALC) y entre ALC y la Unión Europea, Geneva 2012.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

answer to problems in their home countries, e.g. inadequate job opportunities, lack of a health system, cultural oppression, gender discrimination or criminal violence. These are situations which prompt people to migrate to countries that offer legal or illegal access and which have more control over such problems. Within the destination countries so-called pull factors are at work: due to certain values or symbols that are propagated on the internet or in other sources of information, an almost mystical picture is conveyed about the availability of material goods and about safety and security in such countries. These pull factors are therefore the result of propaganda about wealth and neoliberal prosperity, thus creating a myth about happiness and identity as goals which can be achieved through the consumption of material goods.

Yet although these distinctions appear plausible, they are not undisputed. In the 1990s a critical movement developed within migration research that emphasised the transnational perspective in the everyday lives of migrants. The anthropologists Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc define "transnationalism" as something based on the migrants' experiences of relationships and identification. They refer to them as "transmigrants" and define them as immigrants "whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interrelations across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state".<sup>151</sup>

According to this theory, an explanation in terms of push and pull factors restricts everything to an economic perspective, as if migration were just a matter of supply and demand. The transnational perspective focuses on the exchange that takes place via migrant networks in the destination countries, and the ties maintained by migrants with relatives in their countries of origin. From this perspective, ties as well as tangible and symbolic forms of communication together with family reunifications in the destination countries lead to the emergence of new families, new communities and new networks of transnational exchange.<sup>152</sup> But there are

<sup>151</sup> Glick Schiller, Nina/Basch, Linda/Szanton Blanc, Cristina, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration", in: *Anthropological Quarterly*, No. 68 (1995) 1, 48–63, here: 48 – on the internet at: <http://www.veratelles.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/NinaSchiller-et-alii-FromImmigrant-to-Transmigrant-1995.pdf> (16.08.2019).

<sup>152</sup> Cf. Herrera, Gioconda, "Elementos para una comprensión de las familias transnacionales", in: Hidalgo, Francisco (Eds.), *Migraciones: Un juego con cartas marcadas*, Quito 2004,

other aspects which are equally important if we are to understand the difficult decision people take to leave their family, friends and accustomed environment, e.g. the migrants' education, the financial options to cover the high cost of illegal immigration, the hazards along transit routes and whether or not there is a "migration culture" in their countries of origin.

It should be noted that the distinction between voluntary and forced migration cannot really be defined with sufficient clarity. As in other parts of the world, immigration from Latin America partly has its roots in a variety of political, ethnic, cultural and economic conflicts as well as in environmental changes resulting from climate conditions caused by *El Niño*. Other causes are discrimination on the grounds of gender or sexual orientation, and urban violence. Conflicts can vary in intensity, so migration is merely an *option* for some, but a *necessity* for others. If the decision to leave one's own country is prompted by pressing issues preventing a decent life, then migration is only an option. In such a case, emigration is merely a voluntary search for new horizons that might resolve problems and meet specific needs. On the other hand, emigration is forced if people or groups are compelled to leave their country, be it through coercive measures undertaken by the government (or a military power) or because of a serious threat to life and limb.

The reasons for migration within the Northern Triangle of Central America vary, although they are closely connected. Commenting on the reasons for migration in this region, Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, says it is often difficult to distinguish whether migration is caused by poverty or violence. As he sees it, migration driven by poverty or social marginalisation is similar in significance to the growing phenomenon of forced displacement due to organised criminal violence (perpetrated by criminal and youth gangs as well as by drug cartels). Forced displacement, he says, causes migration movements both within the country and across its borders. He regards these as relatively new forms of displacement which require innovative solutions.<sup>153</sup> The Northern Triangle of

215–232. For an overview of transnationalism in Latin America, see Weeks, Gregory/Weeks, John, "Immigration and Transnationalism: Rethinking the Role of the State in Latin America", in: *International Migration*, No. 53 (2015) 5, 122–134.

<sup>153</sup> Grandi, Filippo, "Llamado a la Acción: Necesidades de protección en el Triángulo Norte

Central America is one of the most violent regions in the world, particularly because of its combination of poverty and violence. Van Hear expresses this succinctly in saying that it is impossible to distinguish clearly between voluntary and enforced migration in this region, as not many migrants act entirely voluntarily or entirely involuntarily. Migration, he says, always includes an element of coercion, yet in most cases there are also some choices.<sup>154</sup>

### Migration and the redefinition of territories

As I have explained in other publications, when people embark on a migration process they experience a range of transformations in their identity in relation to the countries concerned. They are *emigrants* when they leave their own country, *transit migrants* in transit countries and *immigrants* upon entering their destination country.<sup>155</sup> The term *migrant* or, from a transnational perspective, *transmigrant*, unites all these identities in relation to several countries. In their countries of origin, migrants are seen as people who leave that country, while in the host country they are seen as entrants from outside.

It should also be emphasised that the migration process leads to a new perception of territory. In Latin America and the Caribbean there has been a change in the perception of countries in which migration takes place, as a result of which they are divided into *countries of origin*, *transit countries* and *destination countries*. But a country can feature in two or three of these categories. Mexico and Colombia, for instance, are emigration countries, but their geographical positions also make them transit countries for migrants from Latin America, the Caribbean and other continents. As it is extremely difficult to enter the United States either legally or illegally, migrants get stuck in Mexico, as a result of which Mexico has effectively become a host country.

de América Central", Round Table in San José, Costa Rica on 6 July 2016, 3, [http://www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/scripts/doc.php?file=t3/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10687\(22.05.2017\)](http://www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/scripts/doc.php?file=t3/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10687(22.05.2017)).

<sup>154</sup> Van Hear, Nicholas, *New Diasporas: The Mass Exodus, Dispersal and Regrouping of Migrant Communities*, London 1998, 42.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Castillo Guerra, Jorge E., "Theologie der Migration: Menschliche Mobilität und theologische Transformationen", in: Kessler, Tobias (Eds.), *Migration als Ort der Theologie*, Regensburg 2014, 115–145; Castillo Guerra, Jorge E., "From Faith and Life of a Migrant to a Theology of Migration and Intercultural Convivencia", in: Gruber, Judith/Rettenbacher, Sigrid (Eds.), *Migration as a Sign of the Times: Towards a Theology of Migration*, Leiden 2015, 107–129.

Many Latin American countries have recently developed into transit countries and are being overrun by unexpected migration flows from Africa (Horn of Africa, Nigeria and Ghana), Asia (China, Bangladesh and Nepal) and Cuba. These new routes have become alternatives for the circumvention of repressive border protection policies in Europe. African migrants, in particular, have been crossing the Atlantic in ships. It takes about two weeks for them to get to Brazil, from where they plan to move on to the United States and Canada. They travel in coaches and boats and cross dangerous jungles on foot. In this way they can illegally cross up to eight borders and pay large sums of money to traffickers, known as coyotes. Or they fall victim to gangs of criminals who specialise in robbing migrants. Since the end of 2015, Cubans have been trying to reach the United States via Ecuador. To stop the influx the Nicaraguan government has closed its borders, thus triggering a humanitarian crisis in Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia, which have been compelled to set up refugee camps. To stop the arrival of new refugees these countries, too, have closed their borders. Moreover, Central American governments have been helping Cubans to get to Mexico so that they can reach the United States on land rather than by sea and benefit from the *dry feet policy*. Other migrants, including about a thousand Africans, are stranded in Costa Rica and Panama, because Nicaragua continues to keep its borders closed. It is estimated that about 2,000 Cubans hoping to get to the United States are stranded in Colombia. Other migrants stranded in Colombia are from Haiti and Asia.

### Pastoral care for migrants

The Latin American Church has developed a pastoral care system for migrants based on the Church's social doctrine on migration.<sup>156</sup> Its fundamental principles go back to the Apostolic Constitution *Exsultans in Domino* by Pope Pius XII (1952), which contains ethical,

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Baggio, Marileda/Susin, Luiz Carlos, "O clamor das migrações eo magisterio da Igreja", in: Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana, No. 29 (2012) 39, 211–228; Blume, Michael "Migration and the Social Doctrine of the Church", in: Campese, Giocchino/Ciallrella, Pietro (Eds.), Migration, Religious Experience, and Globalization, New York 2003, 62–75; Battistella, Graziano, "The Human Rights of Migrants: A Pastoral Change", in: Campese, Giocchino/Ciallrella, Pietro, *ibid.*, 76–102; Castillo Guerra, Jorge E., "Contributions of the Social Teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on Migration: From a 'Culture of Rejection' to a 'Culture of Encounter'", in: Exchange (Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research), No. 44 (2015) 4, 403–427.

spiritual and theological reflections on migration. The Apostolic Exhortation *Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* by Pope Paul VI – a *motu proprio* edict (i.e. an edict written by the Pope on his own initiative) – and the instruction *De Pastoralis Migratorum Cura* by the Bishops' Conference, both issued in 1969, specify criteria for defining and organising a pastoral care system for migrants. In 1970 Pope Paul VI founded the *Pontificium Consilium de Spirituali Migrantium atque Itinerantium Cura* (the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People).

Following the guidelines set out in the *Pontificium Consilium de Spirituali Migrantium atque Itinerantium Cura*, the Latin American bishops have submitted countless proposals on developing a pastoral care system for migrants over the past four decades. The bishops see such a pastoral care system as essential in order to care for those who are permanently away from home as well as for those who are only temporarily in that situation, such as tourists, sailors, students and pilgrims.

Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting of the Latin American Episcopal Council (*Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano*, CELAM) in Puebla, Mexico, in 1979, there has been a greater emphasis on the situations and spiritual needs of migrants (No. 1291 of the final document, in particular). This has included an urgent appeal to the consciences of nations and humanitarian organisations to deal with the issues that arise when hosting migrants and integrating them into a given country (No. 1292).<sup>157</sup> These proposals and the substantial influx of Central American refugees have led to the establishment of the *Secretariat for the Pastoral Care of People on the Move* (SEPMOV) in 1985. This new secretariat has been entrusted with the task of analysing and researching problems of migration, organising seminars, distributing publications spreading knowledge about the reality of migrants and raising public awareness of the situation of migrants, particularly those of displaced persons and refugees, since they are particularly vulnerable.

<sup>157</sup> Latin American Episcopal Council, La evangelización en el presente y en el futuro de América Latina – Documento de Puebla – Tercera Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano, Puebla 1979 [The Evangelisation of Latin America Now and in the Future – final document of the 3<sup>rd</sup> General Conference of the Latin American Episcopal Council], [http://www.celam.org/doc\\_conferencias/Documento\\_Conclusivo\\_Puebla.pdf](http://www.celam.org/doc_conferencias/Documento_Conclusivo_Puebla.pdf) (22.05.2017).

The 4<sup>th</sup> General Conference of CELAM in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in 1992 took stock of the reality of migration in both the countries of origin and destination countries: “Countries facing particular migration problems for social and economic reasons generally lack the social means to stop migration. Host countries tend to prevent access. This has serious consequences, causing the disintegration of families, the erosion of productive forces in our countries, the uprooting of people and insecurity as well as the discrimination, exploitation and moral and religious degradation of migrants.” (No. 187).<sup>158</sup> According to the bishops, pastoral care should pay more attention to specific problems concerning the dignity of female migrants (No. 110) and the issue of religious rootlessness among young migrants (No. 130). The bishops say it would be good to look into the tired faces of migrants who are not met with a dignified welcome and so discover the countenance of God in their faces (No. 178). A range of pastoral guidelines was specified in Santo Domingo with the aim of strengthening pastoral care and raising awareness among government institutions, so that they take action to prevent the causes of migration, and of providing alternative options to avoid it (Nos. 188-189).

The 5<sup>th</sup> General Conference of CELAM in Aparecida (Brazil) in 2007 put a greater emphasis on the migration problem (Nos. 411-416).<sup>159</sup> In the run-up to the conference, reports were prepared with a view to coordinating migration-focused pastoral care for Latin Americans on different continents. In the final document the bishops identify poverty, violence and a “lack of opportunities [...] for professional development” as the main causes of migration (No. 73). Migration has a detrimental effect on families and leads to a loss of human capital, which causes the countries concerned to become impoverished. Poor migrants, in particular, are affected by slavery,

<sup>158</sup> Latin American Episcopal Council, *Nueva evangelización, promoción humana, cultura cristiana – Jesucristo ayer, hoy y siempre – documento de Santo Domingo – Cuarta Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano, Santo Domingo 1992* [New Evangelisation, Promotion of Man, Christian Culture – Jesus Christ Yesterday, Today and Forever – Final Document of the 4<sup>th</sup> General Conference of Latin American Episcopal Council in Santo Domingo], [http://www.celam.org/conferencia\\_Domingo.php](http://www.celam.org/conferencia_Domingo.php) (27.07.2016).

<sup>159</sup> Latin American Episcopal Council, *Documento Conclusivo de Aparecida – Quinta Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano y del Caribe, Aparecida 2007* [final document of the 5<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Latin American Episcopal Council in Aparecida, Brazil], [www.caritas.org.pe/documentos/documento\\_conclusivo\\_aparecida.pdf](http://www.caritas.org.pe/documentos/documento_conclusivo_aparecida.pdf) (22.05.2017).

human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women. To ensure coexistence between people from different cultural backgrounds, the bishops call for the creation of spaces in which different cultures are respected for their diversity: “Accepting cultural diversity, which is now imperative, entails overcoming approaches that seek to create a uniformed culture with approaches based on their own unique models.” (No. 5). Commenting on Christian hospitality, the bishops say: “The plight of refugees merits special mention, and challenges the capacity for hospitality of society and the churches.” (No. 73)

The bishops voice criticism of the pastoral care approach to migration, believing it to be inadequate: “Some ecclesiastical movements do not properly integrate into parish and diocesan ministry; by the same token, some church structures are not sufficiently open to welcome them.” (No. 100e) To address these shortcomings the bishops emphasise their understanding of the Church as a “Church without borders” and as a “family Church”. It should be a place where migrants can be accepted and there can be “encounters between foreigners”, thanks to an appropriate attitude, spirituality and the creation of suitable structures (No. 412). In addition to such endeavours, the bishops suggest educating the clergy and training the laity in such a way that they are sufficiently well prepared for the challenges of human mobility before they actually encounter it (No. 413).

In the final document of Aparecida, the bishops honour migrants not just as people created in the divine image, but also as carriers of faith: “Emigrants are likewise disciples and missionaries and are called to be a new seed of evangelisation, like the many emigrants and missionaries who brought the Christian faith to our Americas.” (No. 377).

Episcopal conferences nowadays work with other organisations in coordinating and training pastoral care workers in their ministry to migrants. Religious orders as well as religious and secular communities in the form of NGOs run humanitarian projects to support, accept and provide information for migrants. A good example is the pastoral ministry of the Scalabrini missionaries (*Congregatio Missionariorum a Sancte Carolo*) and the *Jesuit Refugee Service*. This is hard work and involves great difficulties, continuous tension with governments and death threats. Mention should be made, in particular, of the prophetic witness of the Mexican priest, José Alejandro Solalinde Guerra.

## Theology of migration

To understand the transformation of migrants' faith, it is important to understand both the identities they develop in the course of their migration and the places they pass through. This article started with reflections on the need to gain a theological understanding of people's experience of life and faith.<sup>160</sup> Theologians with experience in ministering to migrants have contributed valuable insights to the development of a new theology. The theology of migration rests on new foundations, which have their starting point in the realities of human mobility. They are the result of interaction between two elements: the Christian faith arising from the migrants' human condition, on the one hand, and the Bible and tradition, on the other. Unlike other objects of theological reflection, migration offers opportunities in the development of a new theology. For the sake of brevity I will limit myself in what follows to some key aspects that characterise the theology of migration. These are based, in particular, on the experiences of Latin Americans in the Netherlands that have come to my attention.

First of all, a theology of migration arises when the theological currents in the countries of origin and the destination countries do not match the migrants' real lives. These theological theories are only applicable on a local scale and are designed to deal with local issues. As transmigrants, however, migrants need a translocal theology, i.e. a theology that reinterprets the theological currents in the relevant countries of origin (e.g. Indian theology) and in the migrants' destination countries (e.g. *public theology*) from the perspective of the migrants' journey. A theology of migration takes account of the

<sup>160</sup> To obtain a better understanding of the theology of migration see the extensive bibliographical references on this topic in my following publications: Castillo Guerra, Jorge E., "Hacia una teología de la migración: perspectivas y propuestas", in: Chakana, No. 2 (2004), 27–51; idem, "Theology of Migration: Essay on Intercultural Methodology", in: Campese, Gioacchino/Groody, Daniel (Eds.), *A Promised Land, A Perilous Journey*, Paris 2008, 243–270; idem, "Diaconía de la cultura y la relación: contribuciones de migrantes para una transformación intercultural de las sociedades de acogida", in: Fomet-Betancourt, Raul (Eds.), *Alltagsleben: Ort des Austauschs oder der neuen Kolonialisierung zwischen Nord und Süd*, Aachen 2010, 331–356; idem, "Teología de la migración: movilidad humana y transformaciones teológicas", in: *Theologica Xaveriana*, No. 63 (2013) 176, 367–401. Cf. also Baggio, Fabio/Brazal, Agnes M. (Eds.), *Faith on the Move: Toward a Theology of Migration in Asia*, Quezon City 2008; Campese, Gioacchino, "The Irruption of Migrants: Theology of Migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", in: *Theological Studies*, No. 73 (2012) 1, 3–32; Cruz, Gemma Tulud, *Toward a Theology of Migration: Social Justice and Religious Experience*, New York 2014.

migrants' *experience of everyday life, faith and death*, reflects their type of journey, their current interaction with local and transnational communities and the way in which those experiences and orientations transform their faith and identity.

Secondly, a theology of migration recognises that migration is something positive for many people, as it opens up new opportunities. At the same time, however, a theology of migration involves siding with migrants because of their vulnerability as victims of international borders which they increasingly come to see as walls of inhumanity. Borders are places of exclusion which are currently rendering more clearly visible what Pope Francis has described as the "globalisation of indifference".<sup>161</sup>

Thirdly, a theology of migration acknowledges that, for many migrants, their journey is an experience with God, because they can feel that he is going with them and helping them to overcome daily obstacles. Those who understand migration as a test of faith rediscover God as the source of their hope and as the One who will never forsake them. Also, at the various transit locations, they experience God's hand through the migrant shelters and the solidarity of many volunteers. In the host countries, Christian churches become second homes to them. The Church makes it easier for them to settle in, and it is a place where they find new friends, support groups, groups that provide them with information, and a place where they can share their experiences of faith with other migrants. The fellowship of the Church enables them to resume their struggle for dignified treatment in societies where migrants are perceived as a threat to security, welfare and identity.<sup>162</sup> Recent paintings such as *Pilgrim God, Cristo Mojado*<sup>163</sup> and *Church on the Move*, which originate in the everyday lives of migrants, form the basis for new theological currents which should enable us to see God's footsteps in today's history.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Homily of Holy Father Francis, Arena Sports Camp, Salina Quarter, when visiting the refugee island of Lampedusa on 8 July 2013, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130708\\_omelia-lampedusa.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa.html) (22.05.2017).

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Zapata-Barrero, Ricardo, "Teoría Política de la Frontera y la movilidad humana", in: *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, No. 29 (2012), 39–66.

<sup>163</sup> Translator's note: Literally "the wet Christ". It can be seen as an allusion to the "wet feet / dry feet policy" or as expressing the predicament of refugees in sinking boats at sea and as symbolising Christ giving his full attention to migrants.

Fourthly, a theology of migration states that migration can become a mystical experience that enables us to read the Bible in a new way, interpreting the essence of its message as grace, as freedom from exclusion and humiliation and as hope for a more humane world. Likewise, it produces a tangible experience of the work of the Holy Spirit, who brings about understanding and unity as essential foundations for intercultural togetherness in a given society.

Fifthly, a theology of migration attempts to address the emotional and cognitive aspects of the migrants' human condition and to accept the *sensus migratorum*. This legitimises it as an academic theological discipline and enables it to reflect theologically upon human mobility and upon cultural and religious differences and affinities in the host countries.

### Conclusion

Based on the questions I asked at the beginning of this article, I have outlined three perspectives for understanding human mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean. My main focus has been on the situation in Central America. Based on the documents of the Latin American Episcopal Council, I have drawn up the most important points in respect of migration-focused pastoral care. The various General Conferences, from Puebla to Aparecida, reveal a growing interest in migration that matches the sharp increase in the vulnerability of the most destitute and abused migrants. The situations of migrants and refugees, the compassion, solidarity and Christian love expressed through pastoral ministry, the practical exercise of faith and the real-life testimonies of migrants are all elements which are prompting a new theological reflection in our time. This reflection aims to cultivate a sense of transformation with a view to intensifying a sense of togetherness between different groups in society.

## Situation of Migrants/Refugees in African Context<sup>164</sup>

Mathias Burton Kafunda

The rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers) begin with the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching,<sup>165</sup> namely, the dignity and sanctity of the human person. Dignity and sanctity of life 'flows from being created in the image and likeness of God- the *Imago Dei*.<sup>166</sup> 'The sacredness of life gives rise to its inviolability' and "in the depths of his conscience, man is always reminded of the inviolability of life – his own life and that of others – as something which does not belong to him, because it is the property and gift of God the Creator and Father."<sup>167</sup>

From the inviolability of life stems human rights. "Human rights, therefore, were inscribed by the Creator in the order of Creation ... [they are not] concessions on the part of human institutions, [or] on the part of states and international organizations. These institutions express no more than what God Himself inscribed in the order He created, what He Himself has inscribed in the moral conscience, or in the human heart."<sup>168</sup> It is argued therefore that the right to life and the conditions worthy of life (human rights) – when threatened by poverty, injustice, religious intolerance, armed conflict, and other root causes – give rise to the right to migrate.<sup>169</sup> Following the right to migrate is the subsequent social justice call for all agents, individual

<sup>164</sup> The views and opinions in this post are solely to the author attributable and not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the institutions for which the author works or worked.

<sup>165</sup> The Catholic Social Teaching is derived from the Gospels and the words of Christ; statements and encyclicals of the popes; and statements and pastoral letters of bishops around the world.

<sup>166</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*, 71/AAS 87, Bonn 1995, 39.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, New York 1994, art. 196–197.

<sup>169</sup> Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, joint pastoral letter concerning migration, January 2003, 28–29.

or collective, to share in a responsibility to protect the human rights of these vulnerable individuals.

### Sovereignty over Protection problem

In response to the social justice call to protect the human rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers) the international community has established an impressive body of instruments on human rights norms and standards to ensure that rights of migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers) are protected. These instruments reflect a fundamental human value on which global consensus exists.<sup>170</sup> States voluntarily commit themselves to a series of obligations upon ratifying these instruments, which demand respect for the rights, dignity and integrity of individuals and families. Most countries in Africa have ratified at least some of these instruments.<sup>171</sup> Despite these instruments providing exacting guidelines to establish human rights norms and standards for migration and refugees, and despite most African countries ratifying or being signatories to international and/or continental instruments protecting refugees and migrants, a comprehensive legal and policy approach to migration and refugees is not evident in most African countries.

In Africa, policy and practices regarding migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) reflect that states are

<sup>170</sup> Feller, Erika, "International Refugee Protection 50 years on: The protection challenges of the Past, Present and Future, in: IRRC 843 (2001) 83, 582.

<sup>171</sup> The key international and continental instruments relating to migration and refugees are: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); Geneva conventions and related protocols (1949); Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols (1949); and Refugee Convention (1951) and additional protocol (1976) relating to the status of refugees; African charter on human and peoples' rights (1981); Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa (1969); Declaration on the human rights of individuals who are not nationals in the country in which they live (1985). Additional frameworks include; International convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families (1990); Convention on the rights of the child (1989) and its optional protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflicts and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000); Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (1979); International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights (1966); International covenant on civil and political rights (1966); International convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (1965); Convention against transnational organised crime and its protocols to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons and against the smuggling of migrants by land, air and sea (2000); Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities (1992); Guiding principles on internal displacement (1998); and the African charter on the rights and welfare of the child (1990).

more concerned about their sovereignty and protecting themselves from migrants than protecting migrants and refugees from human rights abuses and ensuring that their vulnerability is not exploited. The focus of most legal instruments is "enforcement, control and exclusion."<sup>172</sup> The particulars vary from country to country but the overall intent is similar. The substance of most acts and regulations in the African region consider immigrants and refugees as a problem that needs to be controlled.<sup>173</sup> The protection of the rights of migrants and refugees is not a priority of the legislation and regulations but rather emphasis is placed on control of 'undesirables' and their removal from the country.<sup>174</sup> This is the misguided belief that puts emphasis on safeguarding sovereignty over and above the protection of human rights.

Underneath the surface of the "sovereignty over protection" debate, there are often unresolved fears of newcomers, strangers, pluralism, conflict and change. In this trend of thought, the majority of states regard migrants as a problem and associate them with so-called 'illegal' arrival, the evils of people smuggling, and as a burden on the taxpayer.<sup>175</sup> As such, it has become more common to refer to migration policies as forms of migration "control," which presumes an inherent security risk stemming from migration. Consequently, the issue of safeguarding sovereignty takes priority over and above the protection of migrants which reinforces states' goals of preventing any immigration by emphasizing these presumed security concerns. Sadly, these practices seem to have widely been accepted and regarded as effective, however harsh they may be. It has led to what Pope Francis referred to as "the globalisation of indifference" that "has taken from us the ability to" see the wrong in the practices that don't

<sup>172</sup> Olivier, L., "Immigration and Refugee Legislation in Southern Africa", in: Open Space 3 (2010) 3, 9.

<sup>173</sup> Oloka-Onyango, Joseph, "Beyond the Rhetoric: Reinventing the Struggle for Economic and Social Rights in Africa", in: California Western International Journal 26 (1995) 1, 1-31.

<sup>174</sup> Regulatory frameworks largely indicate that migrants/refugees need to be controlled and preferably repatriated: Lesotho's Aliens Control Act of 1966, Namibia's Refugees (Recognition of Control) Act of 1999 and the Immigration Control Act of 1993, Swaziland's Refugees Control Order of 1978 and Zambia's Refugee Control Act of 1976 and its Immigration and Deportation Act of 1967, amended in 1994.

<sup>175</sup> Oliver, Alex, "The Lowy Institute Poll 2014", in: Lowy Institute (2014), 10, <https://www.loyyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institutepoll-2014> (23.05.2017).

protect migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) from human rights abuses.<sup>176</sup>

It is a fact indeed that sovereign nations have the right to control their borders. The traditional thought of the Catholic Church recognizes the right of nations to control their territories, a right arising from their responsibility for the common good. However, as Pope Pius XII indicated, this right is not absolute. State sovereignty “ although it must be respected, cannot be exaggerated to the point that access to this land is, for inadequate or unjustified reasons, denied to needy and decent people from other nations...”<sup>177</sup> Balancing rights then becomes critical. The U.S. and Mexican bishops note that individual rights and state responsibility for the common good are complementary. They note that, “while the sovereign state may impose reasonable limits on immigration, the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated. In the current condition of the world, in which global poverty and persecution are rampant, the presumption is that persons must migrate in order to support and protect themselves and that nations who are able to receive them should do so whenever possible.”<sup>178</sup>

### Camps as Failure to defend and Develop the *Imago Dei*

Different states’ goals of safeguarding sovereignty by emphasizing the presumed security concerns have culminated in the enforcement of the protracted situations for migrants (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, migrant workers). The protracted situation is, ‘One in which migrants find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A migrant in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance.’<sup>179</sup>

<sup>176</sup> Pope Francis, Homily of Holy Father Francis, ‘Arena’ sports camp, Salina Quarter, Lampedusa, 8 July 2013.

<sup>177</sup> Pope Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia* (Vatican City 1952), 57.

<sup>178</sup> Catholic Bishops of Mexico and the United States, op. cit., 39.

<sup>179</sup> UNHCR, “Protracted Refugee Situations”: Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, Standing Committee, 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting, UN Doc. EC/54/SC/CRP.14 (10 June 2004), 2.

Protracted situations typically involve restrictions on migrants’ movement and employment possibilities, and confinement to camps. For instance, in the Southern Africa region, with the exception of South Africa, by law and in practice, countries in the region require migrants/refugees and asylum seekers to live in designated areas (usually some form of camp). These countries like most countries in Africa have the policy that requires heterogeneous migrant (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) populations to be confined to camps in remote, poverty stricken and chronically insecure regions of the country.

The great majority of camp situations in the world are found in Africa.<sup>180</sup> Disappointingly, camp populations are growing each day in Africa; a situation that has led to closing and reopening of camps in most circumstances. By the end of 2015, the 10 countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees were in developing regions, based on United Nations Statistics Division classification. Five of these were in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>181</sup> With 4.4 million individuals, the sub-Saharan Africa region hosted the largest number of refugees in 2015. Refugees originating from five countries (Somalia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and the Central African Republic) accounted for 3.5 million (80%) of the total refugee population residing in this region by the end of 2015.<sup>182</sup> There are notable camps across Africa<sup>183</sup> and rapidly growing camp populations

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49.htm> for a list of countries included under each region.

<sup>182</sup> UHCR, “Global Trends-Forced Displacement in 2015”, 14, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf> (16.07.2016).

<sup>183</sup> Notable migrants/refugees camps in Africa include the Bredjning in east Chad hosting Sudanese from the Darfur region; Dosseye in the south of Chad hosting immigrants from Central African Republic; Nakivale, Kayaka II in Uganda a hosting people from South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo; Doro, Yusuf Batil camps in South Sudan hosting Sudanese; Buduburam camp in Ghana home to Liberians; Dabaab camps in North Eastern Kenya hosting people from Somalia; Sahrawi camps in South Western Algeria; Ras Ajdir camp close to Tunisian border in Libya hosting Libyans; Dzaleka camp in Malawi home to people from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and economic migrants passing through from Ethiopia and Somalia; Nyarugusu camp in Tanzania hosting people from Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi; Kakuma camp in Kenya home to South Sudanese; Bwagirizia camp in Burundi hosting people from Democratic Republic of Congo; Dolo Odo camps in southern Ethiopia hosting Somalis; Osire camp in central Namibia accommodating people from Angola, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Somalia; Minawao Camp in Cameroon home to people from the Central African Republic, Menta camp in Burkina Faso hosting Malians; PTP camp in

have meant that minimum international standards for humanitarian assistance in camp areas are becoming harder to meet each day.

Confining migrant (refugees, immigrants, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) to camps in remote, poverty stricken and chronically insecure regions of countries, is a problem which exists at the cultural, social and political level. At these levels it reveals it's more sinister and disturbing aspect in the tendency, ever more widely shared, to interpret confining of migrants to camps as legitimate expressions of safeguarding sovereignty, to be acknowledged and upheld as good. Take for instance, Dzaleka camp in Malawi, (*a place I have personally visited several times in the course of writing this article*), situated in the rural Central Malawi at about 45Km from the Capital Lilongwe. As of March 2016, Dzaleka hosted 25,200 migrant (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers).<sup>184</sup> Dzaleka camp has a total land area of 201 hectares (2.01 kilometres) meaning a population density of almost 12,900 per square kilometre. The camp is heavily congested and surrounded by local villages with little room for expansion according to the Camp Administrator and others.<sup>185</sup> The camp is no longer a temporary shelter. It has existed for more than 20 years since government converted an old prison to shelter people fleeing Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. Dzaleka camp situations are not designed to develop human life because migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) are under heavy restrictions on freedom of movement and access to the economy through employment. These restrictions prevent migrants from finding reliable employment, perpetuating rough and unbearable situations.

The camps restrictions make migrants qualify for all the three dimensions of poverty: lack of income and assets; voicelessness and powerlessness in the institutions of State and society; and vulnerability to adverse shocks, linked to an inability to cope with them.<sup>186</sup> In

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eastern Liberia home to people from Ivory Coast; M'Bera camp in southern Mauritania hosting Malians; Choucha camp in Tunisia hosting refugees from 13 different countries who fled from Libya.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Malawi: Inter-agency Operational update (22 March 2016), available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56fcd6894.html> (28.07.2016).

<sup>185</sup> Cf. UNHCR, Draft Livelihoods Strategy-Malawi Dzaleka Refugee Camp (31.07.2016).

<sup>186</sup> Cf. World Bank, Poverty Measurement and Analysis, available at [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/383606-1205334112622/5467\\_chap1.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/383606-1205334112622/5467_chap1.pdf).

camp situations, migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers), are not only without national protection, but also desperately poor. Camps are tragic situations of profound suffering, a total lack of economic prospects, idleness and anxiety about the future. These camp restrictions placed on migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) are humanly constructed diagrams of the rules of human reasoning which make migrants live under conditions and circumstances that cause indignity; thereby tarnishing the image of God. Just as Ochs puts it, "to cause indignity is to tarnish the *Imago Dei*; to suffer indignity is to suffer the tarnishing of the imago."<sup>187</sup>

Human life is supposed to be defended and developed. By confining migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) to camps humanity has failed at protecting, defending and developing life of the stranger who is the image of Christ. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus instructs us to welcome the stranger: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me" (Mt. 25-35). As we welcome the stranger into our midst, we welcome Christ Himself, for in the face of the migrant, immigrant, and refugee, we see the face of Christ.<sup>188</sup> In the Gospel of Luke, this is made clear in the experience of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-15), as they become witnesses to the Truth by welcoming the stranger, who is Christ. In other words, in the protection of refugees, states are individually or collectively called to go beyond the law just as Boaz cared for Ruth, a widow and a foreigner, giving her far more than what the law required (Ruth 2:2-23).

The theological underpinning, therefore, that makes a compelling case against camps is that our faith is rooted in the mystery of the Trinity: the divine relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God's own essence is a communion of persons. Created in God's image, human being is called "to live this Trinitarian reality."<sup>189</sup> The practical experience with migrants and refugees in camps across Africa reveals a harsh reality of lack of Trinitarian experience. Dislocated persons

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<sup>187</sup> Ochs, Peter, "Logic of Indignity and Logic of Redemption", in: Soulen, Richard Kendall/Woodhead, Linda (Eds.) *God and Human Dignity*, Cambridge UK 2006, 143.

<sup>188</sup> Catholic Bishops of the United States, *Mission for Migrants – Catholic Social Teaching and Migration* (1<sup>st</sup> April 2006).

<sup>189</sup> Catholic Bishops of the United States, *Catholic Social Teaching Scriptural Guide*, 2010, 6.

living in camp situations typically have lost or become separated from family members, have forfeited all personal possessions and assets and exhausted any resources of monetary value,<sup>190</sup> and have been cut off from essential social- and economic-support networks.<sup>191</sup> Although one can find islands of strength and determination, many dislocated men, women, and children have been traumatized by the experiences of oppression, war, rape, torture, the murder of loved ones, homelessness, and flight, and suffer from serious illness, injury, malnutrition, continual fear of abuse, depression, and post-traumatic-stress disorder.<sup>192</sup> They often are without means of protecting and supporting themselves and are prone to prolong cross-group distrust and hostility.<sup>193</sup>

Since the human being is called to live the Trinitarian reality, “human beings are indeed set within a structure of relationship which they have not constituted, but which is constitutive for their being. These relationships which are given for us comprise our relationship as creatures to God and to the whole of human creation; they comprise our relationship to other persons and to ourselves.”<sup>194</sup> Camp conditions, therefore, prohibit migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) to participate in God’s own essence of communion of persons by denying them the right to a wage-earning employment; right to the choice of residence and the freedom of movement. Consequently, the current protection system of migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) doesn’t “recognise the created sociality of all human being” but “contradicts it” through construction of camps that substantially limit all sociality of migrants

<sup>190</sup> Cohen, Roberta/Deng, Francis Mading, *Masses in flight: The global crisis of internal displacement*, Washington, D.C. 1998, 25.

<sup>191</sup> Cernea, Michael M., “Internal refugee flows and development-induced population displacement”, in: *Journal of Refugee Studies* 3 (1990) 4, 369–401; see also Hansen, Art “Once the running stops: Assimilation of Angolan refugees into Zambian border villages”, in: *Disasters* 3 (1979) 4, 369–374.

<sup>192</sup> Woodrow, Peter J., “Promotion of health care among Khmer refugees in Greenhill Site B”, in: Anderson, Mary B./Woodrow, Peter J. (Eds.), *Rising from the ashes: Development strategies in times of disaster*, Boulder 1998, 304–305; see also Maynard, Kimberly A., *Healing communities in conflict: International assistance in complex emergencies*, New York 1999, 12, 117–119.

<sup>193</sup> Cuny, Frederick C. “Viewpoints: Research, planning and refugees”, in: *Disasters* 3 (1979) 4, 339–340.

<sup>194</sup> Schwobel, Christoph, “Recovering Human Dignity”, in: Soulen, Richard K./Woodhead, Linda (Eds.), *God and Human Dignity*, Cambridge UK 2006, 44–58.

(refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers).<sup>195</sup> Confining migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers), to camps is an immoral practice that does not uphold justice and mercy.

## Conclusion

The teaching of church on migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) gives us a legal framework to understand this complex public policy issue. This legal framework is rooted in human dignity and freedom founded in God, without which the human laws necessary to guide migration and the common good can never be correctly formed. Hence, the contemporary African response to migrants/refugee situations of camps stands in stark contrast to what God Himself inscribed in the order He created, what He Himself has inscribed in the moral conscience of human beings. Human life is supposed to be defended and developed. By confining migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers) to camps humanity fails at protecting, defending and developing life of the stranger who is the image of Christ.

The biblical call for us is to welcome the stranger and go beyond what the law asks of us. Integration is the preferred solution. Integration means that migrants/refugees do not have to self-settle without status. It carries with it an agreement from the host government to provide the refugee with full rights and eventual citizenship. They would be integrated in the economic system of the countries of asylum and will themselves provide for their own needs and those of their families and contribute to the development of the host countries.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

# Theological and Socio-ethical Perspectives on Migration / Flight

# Theological and ethical Perspectives on Human Mobility

Fabio Baggio

At the beginning of the third millennium migration has become a global phenomenon, permanently and structurally affecting the social, economic, political and religious life of all the countries involved. It is an essential component of the growing interdependence among nation states and it is due to increase in the forthcoming years. According to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations, in 2013 there were about 232 million international migrants worldwide, constituting 3% of the world population. In the same year the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimated 740 million internal migrants worldwide. These simple figures reveal that 1 out of 7 people in the world is directly involved in migration.

Looking at the present scenario, migration is one of the phenomena entailing people's movement worldwide. Seafaring, nomadism, pilgrimage are just some of the other movements, which can be ascribed to the larger concept of "human mobility."

In this contribution the author intends to present some theological and ethical perspectives on human mobility, sourcing from the Catholic tradition and magisterium as well from the recent literature on the topic.

## Theological perspectives

In the eleventh century Anselm of Canterbury defined theology as *fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding).<sup>196</sup> According to such definition, all efforts produced by believers aiming at making intelligible the contents of Christian faith – i.e. God's revelation in human history – constitute the theological exercise. The

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<sup>196</sup> Cf. Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, Proemium, VI.

epistemological comprehension of theology has vastly developed over the centuries, diversifying object and method. In the 1970s Gustavo Gutiérrez argued that theology is the “[...] critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word.”<sup>197</sup> A few years later Karl Rahner claimed that the task of theology is to make intelligible people’s “[...] implicit but true knowledge of God; or better expressed, [...] their] genuine experience of God ultimately rooted in their spiritual existence.”<sup>198</sup>

Despite their different approaches, modern theologians seem to agree on considering human experience as a *locus theologicus*, meaning a source or space for the theological reflection. The reference to the then *loci theologici* defined by Melchior Cano in 1563 is evident, particularly to the tenth source of theology highlighted by the author: human history.<sup>199</sup>

History is the spatial-temporal expression of human experience. In it God is present and continues to reveal himself in order to be intelligible to human beings. Theology has the task of recognizing and interpreting the revelation of God in the historical events, with special focus on those that mark times and periods. To such extent, current time is clearly marked by the phenomenon of human mobility with all its different expressions. Consequently human mobility today constitutes a relevant *locus theologicus* that transcends all historical and philosophical boundaries, claiming a new vision through the “eyes of faith.” The theological reflection on human mobility has been properly defined as “theology of migration,” otherwise called “theology of human mobility.”

Although the theology of migration / human mobility as such cannot claim a long tradition, some roots were planted in the first centuries of the Catholic Church, particularly in the patristic tradition and the Magisterium. Clement of Rome, Lucius Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius, John Chrysostom, and Ambrose of Milan reflected theologically on the Christian duty of hospitality toward pilgrims and foreigners. On the other hand, the anonymous author of the Letter

<sup>197</sup> Gutiérrez, Gustavo, *A Theology of Liberation*, New York 1973, 11.

<sup>198</sup> Rahner, Karl, *Faith In A Wintry Season: Conversations & Interviews with Karl Rahner in the Last Years of His Life*, New York 1989, 15.

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Cano, Melchior, *De locis theologicis*, Libri Duodecim.

to Diognetus and Augustine of Hippo deepened the vision of human existence as a pilgrimage to the true homeland, the Kingdom of God.<sup>200</sup>

As for the magisterium, in the sixteenth century, the Council of Trent was the first to underline the “Christological reason” for Christian hospitality, stating that Jesus Christ himself is present in welcomed guests.<sup>201</sup> The final document of the Third Council of Baltimore (1884) grounded the duty of hospitality in the Holy Scripture. It recalled the explicit commandment of God: “Love the foreigner, for you were a foreigner yourself” (Deut 10:19). And it reaffirmed the Christological reason making reference to the unambiguous words of Jesus Christ: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me!” (Mt 25:35).<sup>202</sup>

Nonetheless, it was only in the aftermath of the Second World War, facing the challenges of the massive migration caused by the destruction brought about by the conflict, that the Catholic Church clearly felt the need for a systematized theological reflection on human mobility. In 1952, Pius XII issued the apostolic constitution, titled *Exsul familia nazarethana* (The Family of Nazareth in Exile). The opening pages of the document propose the exile to Egypt of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus as an “icon” of the contemporary massive forced migration due to different forms of tyranny.<sup>203</sup>

Right after the Second Vatican Council, the instruction *Nemo est* (There is none), issued by the Congregation of Bishops (1969), introduced the human rights of migrants as a relevant topic for theological reflection. A few years later the circular letter of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (1978) to the Episcopal Conferences, titled *Chiesa e mobilità umana* (Church and Human Mobility) added more topics to the reflection: migration as a path to freedom, the ideal of universal brotherhood/sisterhood, the commitment for a balanced world development, the research for the common good.

At the beginning of the third millennium a new magisterial document, dealing *ex professo* (solely and directly) with human

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Baggio, Fabio, *Theology of Migration*, Quezon City 2005.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. Council of Trent, 25<sup>th</sup> Session, *De Reformatione*, VIII.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Pettenà, Maurizio, *The Teaching of the Church on Migration*, Quezon City 2005.

<sup>203</sup> Pius XII., *Apostolic Constitution Exsul Familia Nazarena* 1952.

mobility, marked a turning point in the theoretical systematization of the theological reflection on migration. The instruction promulgated by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (PCMIP, 2004), *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* (The love of God towards migrants), stressed the importance of a sound theology of human mobility that would lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon and the challenges it posed to the Catholic Church.

The instruction sees modern migrations as “signs of the times” and offers an interpretation of the phenomenon from the point of view of faith, as inserted in the dynamic of the History of Salvation. Christ the “foreigner” and Mary are presented as living symbols of the migrant. The document recalls the Church its dimension of “Church of Pentecost” and its ideal of “unity in diversity.” Finally, the instruction proposes a missiological interpretation of the migrant ministry, calling to discover the *semina Verbi* (seeds of the Word), which are planted in different cultures and religions.<sup>204</sup>

As for the theological production, the first attempts toward a migration theology’s formulation date back in the 1960s with some pioneering articles published the *Centro Studi Emigrazioni Roma* (CSER) in its journal titled *Studi Emigrazioni*. At the end of the 1970s the theological reflection on human mobility landed in the US, with a few interesting contributions within the so-mentioned “Hispanic Theology.” The expression “theology of migration” first appeared in 1980 in an article authored by Scalabrinian missionary Giacomo Danesi.<sup>205</sup>

In the late 1980s some theologians were invited by the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (elevated to Pontifical Council in 1988) to contribute to 5 volumes on specific migration-related topics. The volumes were published between 1986 and 1992 in the series titled *Senza Frontiere / Serie Teologico-Pastorale* (Without Borders / Theological-Pastoral Series).<sup>206</sup> From the 1990s there has been a notable increase of theo-

<sup>204</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People (PCMIP), Instruction *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi*, Bonn 2004.

<sup>205</sup> Cf. Campese, Giacomo, “Non sei più straniera, né ospite.”: La teologia delle migrazioni nel XXI secolo, in: *Studi Emigrazione*, No. XLVII (2010) 178, 317–345.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. Congregazione per l’Educazione Cattolica e Pontificia Commissione Migrazioni e Turismo, *Orizzonti pastorali oggi: Studi interdisciplinari*, Città del Vaticano 1986; Danesi, G./Garofalo, S. (Eds.), *Migrazioni e accoglienza nella Sacra Scrittura*, Padova 1987; *Liturgia e mobilità umana*, Padova 1987; *Maria esule, itinerante, pia pellegrina*, Padova

logical production on topics related to human mobility. To such extent, the recently constituted Digital Library on Migration Theology by the Scalabrini International Migration Institute (SIMI) collected more than 2000 specialized publications.<sup>207</sup>

Over the years human mobility became an interesting topic for different theological disciplines, such as biblical theology, missiology, practical theology, canon law and moral theology.<sup>208</sup> A quick consideration of the crosscutting issues proposed by the theology of human mobility would suggest justified engagements with other disciplines like theological anthropology, eschatology, christology, trinitarian theology, ecclesiology and fundamental theology.<sup>209</sup> Such variety of approaches is clearly outlined in the publication titled, *Migrazioni. Dizionario socio-pastorale* (Migrations. Socio-pastoral dictionary), edited by Graziano Battistella.

### Ethical Perspectives

From an ethical perspective, contemporary human mobility phenomena pose new and old challenges to the human community. Several experiences of migration are marked by injustices, abuses, exploitation, violation of human rights and human trafficking. Looking at their political and economic interests, many states tend to consider migration solely as a matter of labor import, competitiveness gain, national security and social cohesion. In such a scenario, migrants are just factors of production and not holders of human rights and potential agents of dialogue among cultures and societies. Over the last years more restrictive immigration policies have revealed worrisome manifestations of xenophobia and racism, raising questions about the international community’s commitment to the building of a “global village” capable of appreciating differences while celebrating the unity of humankind.<sup>210</sup>

1988; *L’epoca patristica e la pastorale della mobilità umana*, Padova 1989; *Migrazioni e diritto ecclesiale: La pastorale della mobilità umana nel nuovo codice di diritto canonico*, Padova 1992.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. <http://www.migratheolibrary.com/site/Default.aspx?idlang=en> (18.09.2017).

<sup>208</sup> Cf. Tassello, Graziano, “Introduzione”, in: *Studi Emigrazione*, No. XLVII (2010) 178, 258–264.

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Campese, Giacomo, “Non sei più straniera, né ospite”, op. cit. 317–345.

<sup>210</sup> Baggio, Fabio, “Reflections on EU Border Policies: Human Mobility and Borders – Ethical Perspectives”, in: van der Velde, Martin/van Naerssen, Ton (Eds.), *Mobility and Migration Choices. Thresholds to Crossing Borders*, Surrey 2014, 167–182.

In the “postmodern” world, which is dominated by economic considerations, human mobility cannot be dealt with in the same way as the import or export of commodities or services and provisions. The fact that ‘people’ and not ‘goods’ are at stake compels the undertaking of a deep ethical reflection that would clarify the frequent confusion between goals and means. Such a reflection began in 1970s and engaged several philosophers in discussions on human rights, justice, national sovereignty, citizenship and cultural pluralism.<sup>211</sup> The different contributions highlighted the need for clear universal principles that would serve as bases for the ethical assessment of situations, policies and practices concerning contemporary human mobility.

Since its foundation the Catholic Church committed in the codification of universal principles intended to shape the rightful behavior of human beings. Sourcing from ancient religious and philosophical traditions, Christian authors developed a structured ethic paradigm, which constituted today the backbone of the Social Doctrine of the Church. On this ground, the author selected six ethical principles, which are relevant in the context of contemporary human mobility, and tried to validate their universality highlighting their coincidence with similar principles belonging to other religious and philosophical traditions.

#### *The Principle of Respect for Human Rights*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved and adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948, can be fairly considered as a global ethic platform. The pertinent ethical principle is the respect for every single right contained in the declaration. All the rights are not “assigned” but “recognized” to every person equally and inalienably. The 1948 declaration was elucidated and codified into two international covenants: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Both documents were approved by the United Nations on 16 December 1966 and entered into force on 23 March 1976. There are other UN conventions aiming at underlining the rights of specific categories of people, like the Convention on the

<sup>211</sup> Cf. Battistella, Graziano, “I contributi dell’etica alla gestione delle migrazioni”, in: Studi Emigrazione, No. XLVII (2010) 178, 346–376.

Rights of the Child (1989). Among those that are more closely dealing with human mobility, one should mention the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990). Declarations, covenants and conventions state the inalienability and inviolability of the rights that belong to every single human being according to the principle of no-discrimination. The application of this ethical principle to the reality of world human mobility would reveal frequent inconsistencies, irregularities and violations in the governance of migration flows and migrants’ treatment as well as the unsustainable asymmetry of the right to migrate.<sup>212</sup>

#### *The Principle of the Promotion of Human Dignity*

Christian philosophy grounds such dignity on the creation of all human being in the ‘image of God’ (see the *Book of Genesis*: 1,27). Samuel von Pufendorf<sup>213</sup> grounded the human dignity on the concept of freedom, which characterizes individually all human beings making them able to choose and self-impose norms that are considered universal. With or without transcendental reference, the promotion of human dignity is translated into the advancement of what constitutes human beings as unique, different and inimitable persons, being the latter either their identity in the image of God or their ability to choose. From a pure ethical perspective, human beings never can be a “mean” for each a “goal” that is different than their own full realization. Everything may dim the divine image or diminish the ability to choose is to be avoided. On the contrary, any action aiming at reaffirming and enhancing the uniqueness, diversity and inimitableness of the human person should be promoted. At the light of this universally recognized principle, how can migrants’ and asylum seekers’ detention camps, human trafficking and smuggling, criminalization of irregular migration, slave labor and massive deportation be tolerated?<sup>214</sup>

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni e diritti umani*, Città del Vaticano 2004.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. von Pufendorf, Samuel, *Two Books of the Elements of Universal Jurisprudence*, Indianapolis 2004.

<sup>214</sup> Cf. Migration and Refugee Services/United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (MRS/USCCB)/Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS), *Unlocking Human Dignity: A Plan to Transform the U.S. Immigrant Detention System*, Washington D.C. 2015; UN Secretary-General, *In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants*, New York 2016.

### *The Principle of the Superiority of the Common Good*

According to the Christian perspective, the “common good” is the sum of conditions that allow the full realization of the society as well as the people who compose it, the ultimate goal of the social action of individuals and institutions. The common good is the reason for the different forms of social grouping, from family to state. Since the relational dimension of human beings is essential to their fulfillment, the latter depends deeply on the fulfillment of others. The principle of the superiority of the common good to the individual good is based on the fact that the good of all is also the good of every person involved. And this principle applies to different social groups, from family to state.<sup>215</sup> Such principle is the foundation of the distributive justice, which regulates the relationship between the individual and society taken as a whole. Distributive justice determines the distribution of the common according to the personal needs, so that each member of the group can be equally fulfilled. Distributive justice is entrusted to the institutions which are supposed to use deep and fair knowledge of the people concerned, clear and wise judgment and selfless foresight in its exercise. Although this principle is recognized by all modern democracies, the extent of its application would depend on the term of reference, meaning the group whose members are considered rightful beneficiaries of the distribution of the common good. From a nation state perspective, are migrants and refugees to be considered as full-right members of the group? And what about the unauthorized migrants? Is the idea of common good extensive to the whole human family?<sup>216</sup> These are just few of the ethical questions driven by the principle of the superiority of the common good. Looking at the international scenario, one can't help but acknowledge the paradox between the celebrated globalization of economies and politics on the one side and the claims for exclusive privileges bound to nationality on the other side.

### *The Principle of the Universal Destination of Goods*

Deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition, the Christian doctrine states the inviolability of private property but understands private wealth as a

<sup>215</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2004.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Peridans, Dominique, Catholics, Immigration, and the Common Good, Washington D.C. 2009.

gift of God to be used for the good of the whole humankind. According to Islam, the whole creation is for the good of humanity. Private wealth is to be considered as a gift for their personal advantage. However, there is a moral duty of solidarity with the less fortunate.<sup>217</sup> Hinduism and Buddhism teach that all goods are distributed to human beings according to a precise cosmic order, which should be acknowledged and respected. Nonetheless, on the basis of the global interdependence, personal happiness is bound to the contentment of the whole human family. To such extent, solidarity and charity are to be considered relevant moral values.<sup>218</sup> Many secular ethics explicitly refer to philanthropy and solidarity as excellent virtues, even if they don't represent generally a moral obligation for individuals. The application of the principle of the universal destination of good to the human mobility reality would raise few ethical questions: are the migrants' deaths in the Mediterranean Sea a sign of the globalized indifference knitted into the fabric of modern societies? Are the growing anti-migrant walls and fences modern tools for the exclusion and marginalization of the poor?<sup>219</sup> Moreover, who is responsible of the maintenance/increase of the world economic and social imbalance that is compelling people to migrate? Is migration, even unauthorized, a rightful exercise of distributive justice where the poor come to take what the rich are not willing to share?<sup>220</sup>

### *The Principle of Global Stewardship*

According to the Jewish-Christian understanding, the task to govern the universe was entrusted to humankind though an explicit divine disposition at the beginning of the world (see the *Book of Genesis*: 1,26-31 and 2,8-17). As God is the maker and true “owner” of the whole creation, human beings are just administrators, accountable to the owner at any time. Being created at the “likeness of God,” every

<sup>217</sup> Cf. Aala Maududi, S. A., The Economic Principles of Islam, <http://www.islam101.com/economy/economicsPrinciples.htm> (23.07.2016).

<sup>218</sup> Cf. Sivananda, Swami, All About Hinduism, Himalayas, Rishikesh 1997; Sivaraksa, S., Religion and Development, Bangkok 1987; Jotika of Parng Loung, The Function of Wealth in Buddhism (no date), <http://www.buddhivihara.org/the-function-of-wealth-in-buddhism-2/> (23.07.2016).

<sup>219</sup> Cf. Groody, Daniel, “Migrants and Refugees: Christian Faith and the Globalization of Solidarity”, in: International Review of Mission, No. 104 (2015) 2, 314–323.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Deck Figueroa, Alan, “A Christian Perspective on the Reality of Illegal Immigration”, in: Social Thought, No. 4 (1978), 39–53.

human being is to adopt towards creation the same loving care that the creator has. Islam proposes a similar vision.

According to the *Qur'an*, Allah is the creator and the undisputed master of all that exists. He entrusted the administration of the creation to humankind, who is accountable directly to Allah.<sup>221</sup> Hinduism and Buddhism claim that there are forces in the natural world that interact with life itself. Stewardship is understood as a global responsibility – and global co-responsibility – with no special task entrusted to the humankind.<sup>222</sup> The processes of globalization led the different secular ethical to consider in their discussions the undeniable reality of the global impact of the local decisions and actions as well as the increasing interdependence of domestic economies. Bound to the principle of global stewardship, the principle of co-responsibility lies on the acceptance of the duty that derives from understanding the global beneficial impact of every humanitarian and ecological choice. As for the application of this principle to the human mobility reality the author would refer directly to the different articles collected in the Spring 1996 issue of the *International Migration Review* titled, *Ethics, Migration and Global Stewardship*.

### *The Principle of Global Citizenship*

Christian faith promotes a sense of belonging that transcends national borders and even those of the immanent world. Such Christian “universalism” is based on two main ideas: (a) the true homeland for Christians is not in this world, but in the world to come, i.e. the Kingdom of Heaven or Paradise; (b) every human being is called to be a universal citizen in the ‘Kingdom of God’ inaugurated by Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>223</sup> Original Muslim traditions point to an Islamic world – *Ummah Islamia* – that exists beyond the boundaries of the nation-states, where freedom of movement is guaranteed to all believers. This freedom of movement has been codified in Article 23

<sup>221</sup> Cf. Denny, Frederick M., “Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust Inviting Balanced Stewardship”, in: *Earth Ethics*, No. 10 (1998) 1, 10–11.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. Dwivedi, O. P., “Dharmic Ecology”, in: Chapple, Christopher Key/Tucker, Mary Evelyn (Eds.), *Hinduism and Ecology: The Study of Intersection of Earth, Sky and Water*, Cambridge 2000, 3–22; Batchelor, Martine/Brown, Kerry (Eds.), *Buddhism and Ecology*, London 1992.

<sup>223</sup> Cf. Tirimanna, Vimal, “La Chiesa ed il superamento delle frontier”, in: *Concilium* 35 (1999) 2, 119–132.

of the *Islamic Declaration of Human Rights* (1981)<sup>224</sup>. According to the Hindu and Buddhist scheme of evolution/involution and the related theory of transmigration of souls, the whole cosmos is the natural theater of human existence. Nation-states are just historical and contingent determinants of one of the possible existences.<sup>225</sup> Many secular ethics insist on the concept of global fraternity, highlighting the fact that the nationality, which can be given and taken away, cannot be a real source of identity. Applied to the reality of contemporary human mobility, the principle of global citizenship would reveal the ethical inconsistencies of most of the existing migration policies, which are mainly grounded on national sovereignty and security of nationals, highlighting the need for a reformulation of the concept of citizenship itself.<sup>226</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The theology of migration / human mobility has noticeably revealed its relevance in the post-modern world scenario, engaging theologians from all the different disciplines in innovative reflections on crosscutting issues. The resulting theological perspectives has entered in dialogue with other religions and secular ethics, aiming at producing universally agreed upon ethical assessments, whose appeal is clearly shown by the recent increase of the literature on the topic.

From an epistemological perspective, theology and ethics are urgently called to contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of human mobility. Before the general tendency to absolutize economicistic approaches, the author is convinced that theological and ethical reflections can help restore a more humane and humanizing face to migration policies and practices.

Apparently, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders of the migration governance don't show much interest in promoting such

<sup>224</sup> Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, <http://www.alhewar.com/ISLAMDECL.html> (23.07.2016).

<sup>225</sup> Cf. Jain, Girilal, *The Hindu Phenomenon*, New Delhi 1994; Kawada, Yuichi, “The Importance of the Buddhist Concept of Karma for World Peace”, in: Paige Glen D./Gilliat, Sarah (Eds.), *Buddhism And Nonviolent Global Problem-Solving*, Honolulu 2001, 103–114.

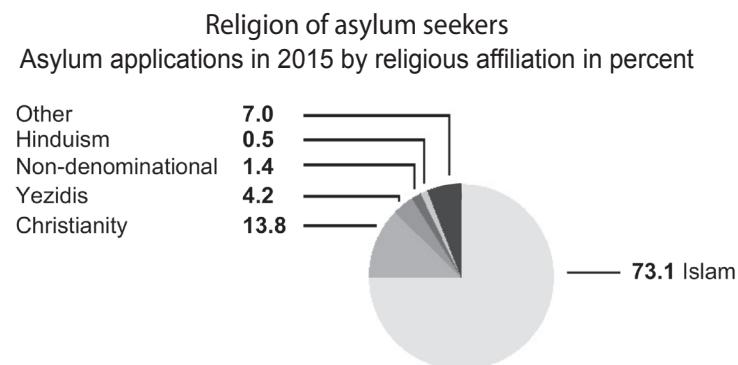
<sup>226</sup> Cf. Ponce, Fernando, “La ciudadanía en tiempos de migración y globalización: Una aproximación desde la ética”, in: *Revista Aportes Andinos*, No. 7 (2003), <http://portal.uasb.edu.ec/UserFiles/369/File/PDF/CentrodeReferencia/Temasdeanálisis2/globalizacionmigracionyderechoshumanos/articulos/fernandoponce.pdf> (30.07.2016).

reflections, which struggle to find space in international arenas, being often classified as utopian or ideological. This should not discourage theologians and philosophers to keep on reflecting on human mobility, which, at the end, reminds all human being of their unquestionably transient existence in this world.

## How much Migration can Theology tolerate? Theological and Socio-ethical Perspectives on Migration

Polykarp Ulin Agan

A look at the religious affiliation of asylum seekers based on registered applications for asylum in 2015 reveals the following percentage distribution:



Source: Bundesamt für Migranten und Flüchtlinge 2016

Increasing religious diversity is becoming a characteristic feature of Germany as a country of immigration.<sup>227</sup> Special account needs to

<sup>227</sup> Increasing religious diversity raises the issue, much discussed in the public arena, of how much religion Germany can tolerate. This question, which is often only framed implicitly, was used as the title of a book written by a Protestant theologian and specialist in civil religion, Rolf Schieder (Frankfurt 2001). In his book Schieder not only provides a readily comprehensible survey of the academic debates on migration, but also deals in detail with the specifically German blend of religion and politics which leads to a kind of "tolerance test". "The book also ventures into virgin territory in terms of religious studies. It detects traces of civil religion where the label "religion" is missing. Schieder shows, for instance, how remembrance of the Shoah, of all things, is surreptitiously used as a symbol to invoke the unity of all Germans and he voices strong criticism of civil religion. He also points to the shortcomings of religious studies both inside and outside the realm of theology which, while turning its attention to individual interpretations of meaning in the wake of the change of direction in media theory and aesthetics, has so far neglected questions relating to public expressions of (civil) religion that are of relevance to the history and systems of culture. There is, in fact, a need to catch up in ritual and symbol theory devoted to both the

be taken of the fact that the current large influx of refugees, primarily from Muslim countries, represents a new phenomenon which runs counter to the increasing secularisation of society in Germany: its religious commitment is being called into question. On the one hand, awareness of history in German society is undergoing a process of gradual secularisation – a process that is bound up with a marked growth in the significance of individual freedom and undetermined personality development which is becoming increasingly prominent in the form of an awareness of changed values. On the other hand, demonstrations of the power of religion, especially Islam, highlight the appearance of a “signal fault” which holds up the much vaunted train of secularisation for an “unknown period of time”.

The fact that Islam is numerically the largest religion in Germany after the two major Christians denominations of Protestants and Catholics (4.6 and 5.2% of the population respectively) obliges politicians, the general public and the other religions, especially Christianity, to register its presence and take it seriously. An earnest approach is the only way to lay the ground for improved community building in the context of social diversity. Taking serious note of the existence of people with an immigration background in this day and age is a task that should not be underestimated, particularly where integration has become a key focus in the social debate. Failure to take seriously the existence of people with an immigration background harbours “the risk of some migrants withdrawing into their own ‘community’, clinging to their own traditions and culture and possibly seeking solace in religious fundamentalism, and of parallel societies developing as a result”<sup>228</sup>.

How can a theological look at the existence of outsiders help to engender a new outlook on their human dignity in the eyes of God and yet avoid any religious glorification of them? How can theology develop postulates in the context of migration as its *locus theologicus*

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architecture of power and the forms of media presentation. That this issue merits critical attention on the part of those with religious competence is illustrated by the new quality reached in the merging of political commemoration and public religious service that was celebrated just recently in Erfurt” (Bahr, Petra, “Wie viel Religion verträgt Deutschland? Eine Rezension”, in: Magazin für Theologie und Ästhetik, No. 17 (2002), from: <http://www.theomag.de/17/pb2.htm>, 18.07.2016).

<sup>228</sup> Schmid, Albert, “Fremde Heimat: Migration – Integration – Religion”, in: Rahner, Johanna et al. (Eds.), *Zwischen Integration und Ausgrenzung: Migration, Religiöse Identität(en) und Bildung – theologisch reflektiert*, Berlin 2011, 7–20, here: 16.

without running the risk of abstract and meaningless definitions of God and mankind? How sensitive to migration does theology need to be for it to perceive in itself the embodiment of a location conducive to theology? How can a socio-ethical perspective on migration be elaborated – one that goes beyond the boundaries of individuality – which paves the way for a theological attitude geared to the central theme of solidarity that is capable of highlighting the recognition of diversity based on mutual respect?

Of the essence here is a theological attitude developed under the umbrella of the recognition of diversity. To engage in theology in this age of diversity<sup>229</sup> means testifying to the universal healing optimism of a God who has not granted salvation to one particular people but to all God’s people in all their diversity. In other words, to engage in theology in this age of diversity involves bearing witness to the fact that “God’s gratuitous mercy is not encapsulated in any institution, that God’s salvation is not the monopoly of any particular religion, but that God’s mercy is conveyed from the depths of his being to every person who is open to God’s offer of salvation, irrespective of their adherence to a certain faith or religion.”<sup>230</sup> In this theological setting and in view of the dynamic development of diversity, there is the prospect of theological and socio-ethical perspectives being opened up which, on the one hand, make it possible to see the phenomenon of migration in connection with a “transparency of transcendence” and, on the other hand, to tap – from a Christian perspective – into the potential for solidarity which brings out the best in every human being and exploits it for the common good.

### Migration as a focus for the application of theology

If theology is a reflection on man’s experience of God – a reflection that is not restricted in any solipsistic way just to the present, but

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<sup>229</sup> Admittedly, the issue of diversity is not a new phenomenon. But in our age it is particularly significant, not because “the present is characterised by a greater degree of social difference than earlier times, but (because) discourses on diversity are ubiquitous in the present era” (Vertovec, Steven, “Diversität’ und die gesellschaftliche Vorstellungswelt”, in: Dahlvik, Julia et al. (Eds.), *Migration und Integration: Wissenschaftliche Perspektiven aus Österreich* [Jahrbuch, No. 2/2013], Göttingen 2014, 21–47, here: 21).

<sup>230</sup> Ulin Agan, Polykarp, “Für eine migrationssensible Kirche unter Berücksichtigung der Heilsdynamik Gottes und des universalen Heilsoptimismus”, in: idem et al. (Eds.), *Migration: Jahrbuch der Philosophisch-Theologischen Hochschule St. Augustin*, 3 (2015), 135–152, here: 141.

also encompasses the traditions and witness of Biblical people and of the fathers from the very beginning – then theology without the human experience of migration is inconceivable. Seen in this light, migration is a *locus theologicus* since, on the one hand, it reflects God's involvement in human history from the outset (migration as a focus for the application of theology) while, on the other hand, it proves “context-sensitive” in that it can immerse itself in the fate of the pilgrim people (migration as a context in which theology can prove itself). As a *locus theologicus*, migration is also a source of learning for theology, which must repeatedly and constantly renew its option for the disadvantaged and the forgotten. If theology acts accordingly, migration can also be regarded as a context in which theology can develop. As a result of its encounters with very varied migration contexts theology must, therefore, constantly redefine itself in order to avoiding losing its sharp sting as the “science of the accompanying God”.<sup>231</sup>

Justification for treating migration as a *locus theologicus* can certainly be found in the Bible. The Old Testament begins with an expulsion and the New Testament with an escape. The first human beings, Adam and Eva, were forced to leave their home, being expelled in dramatic fashion from the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-24). Their desire to be on a par with God, together with their wish to decide for themselves between good and evil, were the reasons for their exodus, i.e. their migration from the green garden of Eden. Abraham, his childless wife Sarah and his nephew Lot departed for an unknown land for a different reason, God having told them to do so. It was “boundless faith” in God and his promise that prompted Abraham to leave his homeland. His faith was grounded in his deep-seated trust in God which did not waver even when he could not grasp what was going on and it was impossible to know in advance how things would end.

The best illustration of the drama of migration is the Biblical narrative of Israel's exodus from Egypt. Leaving aside its interpretation in allegorical terms (as the path of the soul) and in typological

<sup>231</sup> For more on migration as a *locus theologicus* in a different context see: Polak, Regina/Jäggle, Martin, “Gegenwart als locus theologicus: Für eine migrationssensible Theologie im Anschluss an Gaudium et spes”, in: Tück, Jan-Reiner (Eds.), Erinnerung an die Zukunft: Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil, erweiterte und aktualisierte Auflage, Freiburg i.Br. <sup>2</sup>2013, 570–598.

terms (passage through the water as a model or typos of baptism), which is customary in Christianity, the exodus largely accords with a motif that occurs frequently in the Hebrew Bible. This is the misery of the people under heel of a foreign ruler. These people had been forced to fight on the border with the Promised Land of Canaan, to which Moses led the Israelites through the desert, in order to uphold their own culture when confronted with that of the local population.<sup>232</sup>

So how much migration can theology tolerate? The science of an accompanying God, which aims to explain his mercy to modern-day people, should encourage the Church not to define itself so much in terms of stabilising the system but rather of being prepared to dirty its hands through the pursuit of a pastoral concept which provides guidance in real-life situations. This was the plea Pope Francis issued in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013): “I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security. I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures”.<sup>233</sup>

### Theological perspective on migration

#### *Man, where are you? (cf. Gen 3:9) – No to a globalisation of indifference*

An initial theological perspective on migration inevitably leads to a formulation of God's interest in humankind. The God Yahweh had a passionate interest in human beings. This passion was manifested first and foremost in the creation of man, when God decided of his own free will to create man in his own image: “Let us make man in

<sup>232</sup> Cf. Käßmann, Margret, “Migration gab es bereits in der Bibel”, in: Tagesspiegel, 13 January 2011. With regard to the reasons and consequences of migration she points out that: “There are repeated arguments as to whether a people can be said to have deserted their faith if they accept the cult and religion of the local people and become over-assimilated rather than remaining faithful to their differentness. Otherness or adjustment, integration or occupation, disassociation or assimilation, the strange and the familiar – these are issues which are spelled out in a fascinating manner in the Bible. The prisoners in Babylon yearned for Jerusalem, for example, and the prophet Jeremiah advised them in a letter of consolation not to yearn for the past but to found families and build houses where they were. The prophet Elijah, on the other hand, denounced the prophets of Baal and picked an argument with Queen Jezebel” (ibid.).

<sup>233</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World, Vatican City 2013, No. 49.

our own image” (Gen 1:26). In theological terms it is only through God that someone is recognised as a true human being and thus as a person. The reason for this is that, whether he likes it or not, man is simply dependent upon God and this simple dependence on God constitutes his unique existence. Commenting on this Romano Guardini said: “The situation is different with the absolute personality – God. Mortal man cannot exist without this personality. Not only because God created me and I ultimately find the meaning of my life in him alone, but because I only exist with regard to God. My personality is incomplete in the human dimension, so that it places its You in God, although it could also renounce or reject this and still remain a person. My being myself essentially consists rather in God being my You”.<sup>234</sup>

For people who have no orientation in life this quintessential “*You-ness* of God” is, as it were, a source of consolation in the depths of their despair. The fragility of their existence is by no means copied from God, but God can make something out of the fragments of their existence if they give themselves up entirely to him. Of course, a theological statement of this kind can always be interpreted in two different ways. Critics of religion would probably say that this theological statement is nothing but a cheap consolation designed to keep people in a state of dependence. But for a theological perspective – in an awareness of the fragile existence of many people in these times of global migration in which they are often left to their own devices and feel disadvantaged – such a statement could give self-confidence to those affected because it recognises their dignity. They can thus be helped to perceive and grasp a prospect for their future lives which gives them protection and prevents them from sinking into oblivion.

Another theological perspective on migration crystallises out in the name of God the fellow pilgrim – El-Roi, the god who sees me (cf. Gen 16:13b). This name was given to God by Hagar, a slave on the run, who had very few rights but numerous duties to perform. Her situation did not change even when she gave Abraham a son – on the recommendation of the childless Sarah – who was to be regarded as Sarah’s child. Hagar, blessed with the gift of motherhood, was now obliged to stand up to her mistress Sarah, for Sarah now began to treat her harshly. Hagar may have wanted to take up a new position,

<sup>234</sup> Guardini, Romano, *Welt und Person – Versuche von christlicher Lehre vom Menschen*, Mainz/Paderborn 1988, 143.

but of course that was out of the question for a slave. With bitterness in her heart she ran away because she could not take any more, even though she knew very well that by doing so she was risking her life and that of her child. It was God who seized the initiative again. He talked to the fleeing Hagar, the message he passed to her through the angels first sounding a little humiliating: “Go back to your mistress and submit to her” (Gen 16:9). This encounter with God opened Hagar’s eyes, enabling her to recognise how aware God was of all her suffering, her anger and her rebellion. God’s concern for people means that his eyes are never shut. Even when people run away, God always has them in his sights, follows them, finds them and talks to them. It was this experience of God that prompted Hagar to call God El-Roi – you are the God who sees me.

For migrants in our time the divine experience that “God sees me” is the incredible realisation that God recognises their personal dignity. In host countries many negative images are drawn of migrants along the lines that their “origin is their fate”. They are often regarded as uneducated criminals who fleece the state and cause problems by having lots of children. These negative images give rise to anger and a lack of understanding in the societies in which migrants live. How important it is that in such a situation they should be able to sense that God casts his eye upon them, that he sees and appreciates their suffering, their anger and their rebellion. For migrants can develop their personalities and assume responsibility for a common goal if they are recognised as individuals in all their explicitness. The fact that somebody is there for them, who moves with them when “all the world” appears to be indifferent to them, gives them fresh confidence, thereby enabling them to count on new opportunities arising which they can seize in a way that will bring about positive changes in their lives.

This is a distinct possibility because God is “persistent” in demonstrating his love for strangers and outsiders. The despicable Moabite woman, the foreigner Ruth, for example, is gifted by God with a dignity which highlights God’s illogical love. The focus of the little story in the Book of Ruth is on the Moabite woman who, in the eyes of the Jews, must not be allowed into any community of worship and to whom no human compassion must be shown. But God took a look at her, made her the ancestral mother of David and thus put her on par with

Rachel and Lea. “Israel is reminded that God’s plan of salvation is not restricted to Israel but encompasses all nations and that respect for others is, therefore, an irreversible command. The attention of Israel, as God’s chosen people, is drawn to foreign nations which must be perceived and understood. The book aims to counteract the danger of Israel seeing itself as exclusive because of its status as God’s chosen people. This was particularly necessary at a time in which Deuteronomistic historiography and Israel as a nation and people had been destroyed, i.e. after the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (587 v. Chr.).”<sup>235</sup>

Today, a theological perspective on God’s persistent love for others takes the form of belief in a God whose main concern is not to send bolts of lightning from heaven in order to punish the strangers who allegedly do not belong to him. He is not a punitive God who has nothing better to do than to inflict damage and tell others how they should believe in him. Therefore, to believe in the merciful God means to be merciful ourselves, just as our Heavenly Father is merciful, and to love each other in the way that he demonstrated to us through Jesus Christ, his son. The experience of rejection need not mean the end of a journey of belief. But such an experience holds out the prospect of moving in a new direction and of rediscovering both oneself and life. The imperative inherent in this belief is: never give in to the desire for revenge. For Christianity “it is a matter of serving God, not playing God” (Franz Kamphaus). And you do not serve God by sacrificing others. On the contrary, as God instructed us, it is more important to serve others, especially strangers and the needy. For God allows the sun to shine on both the just and the unjust. We must find a way of detecting our own prejudices. For suffering begins with evil thoughts – and that includes the suffering of our own soul.

*The persistence of God’s love for others in the person of Jesus of Nazareth – opposing the segregation of those seeking refuge*

The most plausible theological perspective on migration arises from the fact that Jesus himself was a refugee. His life was marked

<sup>235</sup> Kirchenamt der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland/Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz in Zusammenarbeit mit der Ökumenischen Centrale der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland (Eds.), “... und der Fremdling, der in deinen Toren ist.” – Eine Arbeitshilfe zum Gemeinsamen Wort der Kirchen zu den Herausforderungen durch Migration und Flucht, Bonn/Frankfurt am Main/Hannover 1998, 19.

by persecution and flight. Herod wanted to have all new-born babies in Bethlehem killed and so his parents, Mary and Joseph, were forced to flee. They had to do so in order to escape death and, in a certain way, so as not to jeopardise God’s salvation plan or put it at risk. His life and work were always torn between the “threat of failure” because of man’s sins and the “persistence of God’s love”. This persistent love came to a climax in the crucifixion of his own son, which can be considered the final act of religious persecution. Seen in this light, Jesus’ death on the cross is not an escape from the evil world but rather a divine act of the acceptance of human fate, which is characterised by the “will to migrate” as an expression of man’s nature as “homo migrans”. As such, man has within him the permanent will to be guided by the outside world, even though he is well aware of the consequences, including those that are painful. However, this pain is not enough to halt man’s urge to take his bearings from outside, since without this urge he would remain trapped in his own egotistic solipsism. That might distort his own humanity, however.

For people living today the migration movement is nothing other than the logical consequence of their being “homo migrans”, the original model of whom is Jesus Christ himself who, because of the eternal love of his father, said YES to “emigrating” into the human world. This was so that human beings would not be left alone on their pilgrimage and at the same time to assure them that at the end of their pilgrimage in the world a God would be there to give them a loving welcome. A theological perspective of this kind can bring about a great change in the mindset of both people who are obliged to take in strangers and of those who desperately seek refuge. For those who have to take in strangers, the door to solidarity opens because God manifested himself from the very beginning as a God of solidarity by virtue of his incarnation and the crucifixion of his son. For people who are seeking somewhere to stay, the Elevation of the Cross radiates an optimistic light showing them that their search will not end in nothing, but that there is a life for them true to the motto: “Everyone who believes may have eternal life in him “ (see John 3:14-15).

“The suffering of the Crucified God is not just one form of suffering alongside others.... In sacrificing himself for us all, Christ gave a new meaning to suffering, opening up a new dimension, a new order: the order of love.... The passion of Christ on the Cross gave a radically

new meaning to suffering, transforming it from within.... It is this suffering which burns and consumes evil with the flame of love.... All human suffering, all pain, all infirmity contains within itself a promise of salvation; ... evil is present in the world partly so as to awaken our love, our self-gift in generous and disinterested service to those visited by suffering.... Christ has redeemed the world: 'By his wounds we are healed' (Isaiah 53:5)".<sup>236</sup>

Christ's suffering proves to be a sign of God's overarching love which manifests itself in his life as a programme of life. Some of the stages in this programme of Jesus' life can be summarised as follows:

- Providing care irrespective of ethnic and religious ties: In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-27) the Lord aims to show us by his example that human caring cannot be restricted to family, ethnic or religious entities. Rather, the objective should be that all persons, regardless of their origins or religious views, are granted the right to be cared for by others when they are in need. In God's eyes, transcending the security provided by boundaries is not a dangerous utopia. But boundaries can be only transcended by virtue of the communion in Christ, as Paul says in Galatians 3:28: "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female – for you are all one in Christ Jesus".
- The vision of the Kingdom of God as the reason for tearing down all national barriers: All Jesus' preaching can be transcribed as the "message of the Kingdom of God", which essentially means the same as is conveyed by the Greek expression *basileia tou theou*: God's Kingdom in which all people from East and West, from North and South come together to live in peace and justice. The Acts of the Apostles (2:1-14) provides an impressive description of the Holy Spirit making it possible for very different nations "to hear in their own language the message of the dawn of a new era and thus to come together with others to build unity in diversity

<sup>236</sup> John Paul II, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a New Millennium*, New York 2005; Cf. also John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter Salvifici doloris on the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering*, Bonn 1984, No. 2.

... Since God does not look at individuals but calls people of all nations into His Kingdom (Acts 10:34f.; Romans 2:10f.; Galatians 2:6), a global impetus can radiate from the Christian community, taking in other parts of society and putting an end to narrow, nationalist thoughts and actions"<sup>237</sup>.

- Jesus' identification with others as the final assurance that they belong to God: "I was a stranger and you made me welcome" (Matthew 25:35). Jesus' programme of life with respect to God's transcending love culminates in Jesus' identification with strangers and the homeless. This divine act is precisely the reason why the erection of barriers shutting out people who seek refuge cannot be a part of the Christian view of humankind. A Christian must be able to endure "grim images", especially since the pilgrim nature of humankind is indebted to the life and presence of the Lord. Even if we wish to follow him, we must accept the fact that his treatment of strangers and other people in need constitutes the key criterion for salvation or disaster.

### Socio-ethical perspectives on migration

As far as international migration is concerned, salvation or disaster at the social and political level depend on the answer given to the question of the conditions needed to make co-existence possible.<sup>238</sup> This calls for an ethics of global justice<sup>239</sup>, which should be propelled by the key concepts of the "unity of the human family" and the "communality of goods". Even if for many people the "unity of the human family" will remain an ideal because of the antagonism between the

<sup>237</sup> Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, "... und der Fremdling, der in deinen Toren ist." Eine Arbeitshilfe zum Gemeinsamen Wort der Kirchen zu den Herausforderungen durch Migration und Flucht 1998, [https://www.ekd.de/EKD-Texte/migration\\_1997\\_fremd4.html](https://www.ekd.de/EKD-Texte/migration_1997_fremd4.html) (07.08.2016).

<sup>238</sup> Cf. Lesch, Walter, "Die Ambivalenz von Identitätsdiskursen: Bausteine zu einer kosmopolitischen Ethik in einer Welt von Fremden", in: Becka, Michelle et al. (Eds.), *Ethik und Migration: Gesellschaftliche Herausforderungen und sozioethische Reflexion*, Paderborn 2010, 51–66. Cf. also an ethical commentary on this article by Lesch: Haker, Hille, "Identität und Migration: Ein ethischer Kommentar zu Walter Leschs Beitrag 'Die Ambivalenz von Identitätsdiskursen'", in: *ibid.*, 67–80.

<sup>239</sup> Cf. Bauböck, Rainer, "Global Justice, Freedom of Movement and Democratic Citizenship", in: *European Journal of Sociology/Archives européennes de sociologie*, 50 (2009), 1–31.

individual and society and because of cultural, political and social pluralism, the contours of an ethics of global justice give people hope for the ongoing struggle for the equal dignity of all people under conditions of legal and social equality. This hope is not a utopia, because in an ethics of global justice the equal dignity of all people and the recognition of human rights form part of socio-ethical priority rules, the gradual implementation of which is being advanced step by step by all sides. "Equality in dignity, the fraternal communion of mankind created in the image of God (Gen 1:26) and the right to mutual respect and recognition as "children of the one Father" enjoy ethical priority over all division. Hence the manifold shapes and forms of human life must be seen as having equal status. Differences based on ethnic or gender specificities, sexual orientation, religious persuasion and affiliation or other distinguishing features do not nullify our essentially common humanity."<sup>240</sup>

In addition to recognition of the equal dignity of all people, which is grounded in the principle that "the person has priority over every social institution", the call for co-ownership, co-administration and profit sharing for the whole human family<sup>241</sup> numbers among the socio-ethical principles and perspectives in the field of migration. Included in this socio-ethical perspective is a self-critical examination as to whether many people who have made their way to Europe, in particular, do not after all have the right to seek and find a safe place to live for themselves and their families, because they have suffered exploitation as a result of the EU's neo-colonial policies, for example, and forced into desperate situations. A self-critical reflection on the part of the EU would entail asking the following questions: 1) What consequences do the many free trade agreements the EU has signed with African countries have for the shaping of a fairer world? Are these agreements not a strategy paving the way for a disastrous opening of the markets for European products, while the products of African countries can barely compete internationally because of the loss of trade facilitation with the EU on which they depend? 2) Is the EU's free trade agreement not ultimately aimed at structural adjustment

<sup>240</sup> Heimbach-Steins, Marianne, "Wie gestaltet die Menschheitsfamilie ihr Zusammenleben? Konturen einer Ethik globaler Migration", in: Forum Weltkirche 135 (2016) 5, <http://www.forum-weltkirche.de/de/artikel/23168.wie-gestaltet-die-menschheitsfamilie-ihr-zusammenleben.html> (16.09.2016).

<sup>241</sup> Cf. Mater et magistra, No. 32 with reference to Quadragesimo anno, No. 65.

measures if, for example, land is grabbed by foreign investors in order to cultivate biofuels? The consequences are inevitable: arable land is lost; food needed for the local population is exported; people become impoverished and die of hunger.<sup>242</sup> Is it not then only logical that people should leave their homelands and do all they possibly can to find somewhere safe to live because they cannot eke out an existence for themselves any more in their native countries?

From a socio-ethical point of view, it is inevitable that in this globalised world people are gradually becoming more sensitive to migration and increasingly receptive to the idea of the unity of the human family. For people sensitive to migration this idea of a shared fundamental identity and of equality in common humanity serves as a credo when they review the prospects for their lives. They do not turn their backs on an immigration and integration policy which calls for human recognition, the right to belong and fair participation and justice for all.

#### **Theological and socio-ethical indicative: being in a position to become sensitive to migration**

Experiences of otherness are quintessential to the Bible story and the history of the people of Israel. Israel suffered the experience of being excluded and treated aggressively in a hostile environment. And so did Jesus' family. Mary and Joseph had already been obliged to leave their native town of Nazareth, but then things got even worse. Joseph was told: "Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape into Egypt..." (Matthew 2:13). Their lives and well-being were at risk. But that was no reason for a family to leave home in undue haste. However, sheer fear for their lives forced them to migrate, which meant they required the support of others. "If you have resident aliens in your country, you will not molest them. You will treat resident aliens as though they were native-born and love them as yourself – for you yourselves were once aliens in Egypt" (Leviticus 19:33-34).

That statement from the Bible stands as a monument to humanity in this period of global migration. Time and again we are urged to remember that we ourselves are strangers in this world. "Everything

<sup>242</sup> Cf. Wolf, Julius, "Weshalb fliehen Menschen?", in: der Freitag – Politik (03.09.2015), a blog from <https://www.freitag.de/autoren/julius-wolf/weshalb-fliehen-menschen> (09.09.2016).

is only borrowed here in this wonderful world, everything is only borrowed, all the wealth and all the gold. Everything is only borrowed, every hour full of happiness, for one day you will have to go and leave everything behind” (Heinz Schenk 1979). In theological terms it is, of course, no accident when and where I am born, in what country and in what culture I grow up. But in logical terms there could have millions or billions of other opportunities. With the same or even greater probability, I could have been taken by sheer coincidence to Vanuatu and I would be there now. The greatest probability of all, seen from the point of view of coincidence, is that I wouldn't be here at all.

But, since I do actually exist, I have to accept that all the other possibilities did not materialise. I am the man I am and no other. Speaking theologically I can say that all the other possibilities of who I might also have become were rejected. Since I believe that I was given my life because of God's will, I can also believe that I am a creature of God and so I can therefore say “yes” to myself. I can be loyal to myself. If God has accepted that I am right in this world, then I can also accept myself and say: thank you, God, for my existence. It is my heartfelt wish that this thought should be in everybody's mind.

The question now is whether we are capable of becoming more sensitive to migration. When it comes to the issue of migration we are very quickly tempted to form an image of other people and judge them accordingly. The “others”, the strangers should speak our language, take up our traditions and adapt as far as possible to our social customs. We have in our minds a picture of how they should be and they should then fit this picture. The Swiss writer, Max Frisch, was vehemently opposed to forming an image of other people and judging them accordingly. “‘We form an image. That is heartless, that is treachery’. A person of whom we form an image is ‘ready and finished’ for us. We define him; we cannot stand ‘what is exciting, adventurous and really intriguing’: ‘that we are never finished with the people we love’”<sup>243</sup>.

“You will treat resident aliens as though they were native-born and love them as yourself – for you yourselves were once aliens in Egypt” (Leviticus 19:34). In this sense the theological and ethical indicative should be: Let us have a song of encouragement sung,

<sup>243</sup> Cf. Frisch, Max, Tagebuch 1946–1949, Frankfurt 1985, 27–32.

radiant pictures of a new world painted in which people need not flee from wars and oppression, in which nobody is without a native country and a home and in which we are all part of a new creation. But perhaps there should also be a hint of bitter yearning, as Hilde Domin says in her poem:<sup>244</sup>

*I am homesick for a country,  
to which I have never been,  
where all the trees and flowers know me,  
to which I never go,  
but where the clouds remember me exactly,  
a stranger who has no home in which to weep.*

*And beyond the horizon,  
where at the end of their flight the large birds  
dry their wings in the sun,  
lies a continent  
where they have to take me in –  
without a passport, as a citizen of the clouds.*

<sup>244</sup> Domin, Hilde, Gesammelte Gedichte, Frankfurt am Main 41987, 131.

# Migration and Memory

## An Ethic for Migrants

Peter C. Phan

The haunting images of the three-year old Syrian boy Alan Shenu washed up last year, face down, on a beach in Turkey, in his red shirt, blue shorts and black shoes, and recently, of a one-year old drowned baby cradled, as if peacefully asleep, in the arms of a German rescuer have drawn world-wide attention to the plight of migrants and refugees. One seismic phenomenon in our contemporary world is no doubt migration. Since the Second World War, migration has become a global phenomenon of unimaginable magnitude and complexity. There is virtually no nation on Earth that has not been seriously affected by migration either as country of origin or as country of destination.

According to one statistical report, in 2013, 232 million people – 3.2 per cent of the world’s population – lived outside their countries of origin. It is predicted that the migration rate will continue to increase over time. A 2012 Gallup survey determined that nearly 640 million adults would want to migrate if they had the opportunity to do so.<sup>245</sup> The recent wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and lately, in Syria, as well as the uprisings in various countries in the Middle East during the Arab Spring have dramatically increased the number of migrants and refugees and highlighted their tragedy and sufferings. According to a recent report released by the United Nations Refugees Committee, a record 65.3 million people were displaced as of the end of 2015, compared to 59.5 million just 12 months earlier. Measured against the current world population of 7,349 billion, these numbers mean that 1 in every 113 people globally is now either an asylum-seeker, an

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<sup>245</sup> Boundless Economics, “Dimensionalizing Immigration: Numbers of Immigrants around the World.”, Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015, <https://www.boundless.com/economics/textbooks/boundless-economics-textbook/immigration-economics-38/introduction-to-immigration-economics-138/dimensionalizing-immigration-numbers-of-immigrants-around-the-world-544-12641/> (08.10.2015). There are legions of websites dedicated to the study of migration.

internally displaced person, or a refugee. Whereas at the end of 2005, there were an average of six persons displaced per minute, today the number is 24 per minute. The three countries that account for more than half of the world refugees are: Syria (4.9 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), and Somalia (1.1 million). About half of the world's refugees are children.<sup>246</sup> Beyond and behind these cold numbers lie human faces struck by tragedies of immense proportions, with loss of land and home, family separation, physical sufferings, rape and sexual violence, psychological damage, lack of opportunities for education, uncertain future, and death itself. Global population movements today are so worldwide, frequent, and immense that our time has been dubbed "The Age of Migration."<sup>247</sup>

In response to the migration crisis political organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union have set up agencies to study the problem of migration from various perspectives as well as to provide emergency relief. Religious authorities, especially Pope Francis, have awakened our sense of solidarity with these victims and urged churches and religious communities to welcome them into their midst. On the other hand, anti-immigration rhetoric and policies, especially against Muslims, have been on the rise in recent times, even in countries that have traditionally been hospitable to migrants such as Britain, where the recent vote for Brexit was motivated in part by an anti-immigration attitude, and in the U.S., where Donald Trump has won the contest for the Republican nominee for President (*Ed. note: Trump won the 2016 U.S. presidential elections*) in part on the basis of his vitriolic rantings against Mexican and Muslim immigrants.

<sup>246</sup> Cf. <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2016/6/5763ace54> (31.08.2016).

<sup>247</sup> This is the title of the best one-volume study of international migration, Castles, Stephen/De Haas, Hein/Miller, Mark J., *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, New York 2014. On migration, the historical, sociological, anthropological, and political studies, in addition to specialized journals and websites, are numberless. The following general works are worth consulting: Collier, Paul, *Exodus: How Migration Is Changing Our World*, Oxford 2013; Portes, Alejandro/DeWind, Josh, *Rethinking Migration: New Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, New York 2007; Brettell, Caroline B./Hollifield, James F. (Eds.), *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines*, New York 2008; Gutiérrez, David G./Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierette (Eds.), *Nation and Migration Past and Future*, Baltimore 2009; Faist, Thomas/Fauser, Margit/Reisenauer, Eveline, *Transnational Migration*, Malden 2013; Carens, Joseph H., *The Ethics of Immigration*, Oxford 2013; O'Reilly, Karen, *International Migration and Social Theory*, New York 2012; and Quayson, Ato/Daswani, Girish (Eds.), *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism*, Oxford 2013.

Given its enormity and complexity, contemporary migration has captured the attention of scholars worldwide from a variety of disciplines, especially the social sciences.<sup>248</sup> Unfortunately, to date, migration has not been the object of extensive theological investigation,<sup>249</sup> and when it is, the main focus is ethical. Furthermore, Christian ethical reflections on migration most often start from the biblical injunctions to the Israelites, and then Christians, to extend hospitality toward foreigners, and by extension, to the receiving countries and their governments to welcome migrants and incorporate them into their societies.<sup>250</sup>

### The ethics of migration and memory

Most discussions of the ethics of immigration have emphasized, and rightly so, the duty of the host country and the local church to welcome the strangers and the migrants into their communities. A quick survey of recent works on the ethics of migration shows that the virtue of hospitality has received the lion's share of scholarly attention, which is unsurprising, given the sacred duty of hospitality in ancient societies and in biblical history. Kristin E. Heyer writes eloquently on "inhospitality to immigrants" as a social sin and "civic kinship

<sup>248</sup> Cf. the works mentioned in note 248 above.

<sup>249</sup> Some notable English works on the theology of migration include: Groody, Daniel G., *Border of Death, Valley of Life: An Immigrant Journey of Heart and Spirit*, Lanham 2002; Groody, Daniel G./Campese, Gioacchino (Eds.), *A Promised Land. A Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration*, Notre Dame 2008; Campese, Gioacchino/Ciallella, Pietro (Eds.), *Migration, Religious Experience, and Globalization*, Staten Island 2003; Baggio, Fabio/Brazal, Agnes M. (Eds.), *Faith on the Move: Toward a Theology of Migration in Asia*, Quezon City 2008; Carroll R., M. Daniel./Sanchez M., Leopold A. (Eds.), *Immigrant Neighbor among Us: Immigration across Theological Traditions*, Eugene 2015; vanThanh, Nguyen/Prior, John M. (Eds.), *God's People on the Move: Biblical and Global Perspectives on Migration and Mission*, Eugene 2014; Snyder, Susanna, *Asylum-Seeking, Migration and Church*, Surrey 2012; Cornell, Deirdre, *Jesus Was a Migrant*, Maryknoll 2014; Padilla, Elaine/Phan, Peter C. (Eds.), *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, New York 2013; Padilla, Elaine/Phan, Peter C. (Eds.), *Theology of Migration in the Abrahamic Religions*, New York 2014; and Padilla, Elaine/Phan, Peter C. (Eds.), *Christianities in Migration*, New York 2016.

<sup>250</sup> Some important English works include: Carens, Joseph H., *The Ethics of Immigration*, New York 2013; Kerwin, Donald/Gerschutz, Jill Marie (Eds.), *And You Welcomed Me: Migration and Catholic Teaching*, Lanham 2009; Myers, Ched/Colwell, Matthew, *Our God Is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigrant Justice*, Maryknoll 2012; Soerens, Matthew/Hwang, Jenny, *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion & Truth in the Immigration Debate*, Downers Grove 2009; Heyer, Kristin E., *Kinship across Borders: A Christian Ethic of Immigration*, Washington 2012; Brazal, Agnes M./Dávila, María Teresa (Eds.), *Living with(out) Borders: Catholic Theological Ethics on the Migration of Peoples*, Maryknoll 2016.

and subversive hospitality” as the hallmark of Christian immigration ethics.”<sup>251</sup> The Jesuit ethicist William O’Neill draws on biblical texts to offer rich reflections on Christian hospitality and solidarity with the stranger.<sup>252</sup> As can be seen from the title of O’Neill’s essay, hospitality toward migrants is often paired with solidarity with them. These twin attitudes are examined in one of the most comprehensive text on the theology of migration.<sup>253</sup> In one of the earliest texts on the theology of migration in Asia, hospitality is also twinned with solidarity.<sup>254</sup> A recently published book that deals with migration and mission also has a chapter on hospitality to migrants.<sup>255</sup>

Politically, the practice of hospitality has taken, especially in the U.S., France, and the United Kingdom, the form of sanctuary movement which works to provide asylum to refugees who have a reasonable proof of being likely to be subjected to persecutions in their own countries on account of one of the five protected grounds: race, religion, nationality, political opinion, and social group. Susanna Snyder has written one of the most insightful studies of migration, asylum-seeking, and the role of the church.<sup>256</sup> In the same vein, a huge number of studies have been produced on the various rights of migrants and their families. This is the most common approach in migration studies and it is adopted not only by Christian scholars but also by secular theorists of migration and political, national and international, organizations.

While this approach is legitimate and necessary to defend the right of migrants to a just and fair treatment as dictated by social justice, it runs the risk of presenting migrants mainly as passive recipients, perhaps even as helpless victims, at the mercy of the generosity

<sup>251</sup> Cf. Heyer, Kristin E., op. cit., especially chapters 2 and 5.

<sup>252</sup> Cf. O’Neill, William, “Christian Hospitality and Solidarity with the Stranger”, in: Kerwin, Donald/Gerschutz, Jill M. (Eds.), op. cit., 149–155.

<sup>253</sup> Cf. Groody, Daniel G./Campese, Gioacchino (Eds.), *A Promised Land*, op. cit. The essays that discuss hospitality and solidarity at some length include: Senior, Donald, “Beloved Aliens and Exiles: New Testament Perspectives on Migration”, 20–34 and Phan, Peter C. “Migration in the Patristic Era: History and Theology”, 35–61.

<sup>254</sup> Cf. Rogers, Anthony, “Globalizing Solidarity through Faith Encounters in Asia”, in: Baggio, Fabio/Brazal, Agnes M. (Eds.), *Faith on the Move: Toward a Theology of Migration in Asia*, op. cit., 203–218.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. Lenchak, Timothy A., “Israel’s Ancestors as Gerim: A Lesson of Biblical Hospitality”, in: vanThanh, Nguyen/Prior, John M. (Eds.), op. cit., 18–28.

<sup>256</sup> Cf. Snyder, Susanna, op. cit.

of the citizens of the host countries. To eschew this danger, stress has been placed on the obligation on the part of migrants to be fully incorporated, eventually as citizens, into their host societies, fulfill all their civic duties, and contribute to the common good. Presupposing all these reflections on hospitality and related virtues toward the stranger, my essay takes a somewhat different tack by focusing not on the ethical responsibilities of the citizens and the churches of the host countries but on those of the *migrants* themselves. Of course migrants, and refugees in particular, live in extremely precarious circumstances and need a welcoming home to recover their human dignity, and ample assistance to secure their well-being. But they are not, and must not be treated as, objects of charity. They are primarily agents charged with moral responsibilities. Among the latter, I would argue, is the duty of *remembering*.

My reflections are inspired by a recent TV advertisement running during February, the Black History Month in the U.S. The voice, rich and resonant, tinged with part nostalgia, part pride, rumbled from an old black man, deep furrows in his brow but radiant with hope and strength. The speaker was asked what advice he would like to give to his fellow black Americans. Eyes strained at the camera, the right index finger raised for emphasis, he intoned: “Always remember where you came from.” In this kind of broadcast, however, television trades only in sound bites, and so the old man was not afforded the time to elaborate his pithy counsel. But it was not difficult to conjure up, behind those words “where you came from,” years of unspeakable sufferings and humiliations and violence when black slaves, like cattle, were bought and sold, forced to serve their white masters as their gods, and lynched when they rebelled. In what follows I first explain *why* migrants should remember “where they came from,” to cite the old man’s solemn injunction. Next, I discuss *what* they as migrants should remember of their pasts. Lastly, I examine *how* migrants should remember their past for the sake of the host country, the receiving church, and the migrants themselves.

For the descendants of predominantly white migrants from Europe in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries to the U.S., their ancestors’ experiences of leaving their countries and their loved ones, often never to be seen again, in search of a better life in the U.S., painful as they were, are now but distant and dim memories,

ensconced in long-forgotten family lore or buried in dusty national archives, retrievable perhaps through curiosity-driven programs such as Ancestry.com. By contrast, for recent migrants from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, victims of war and torture, memories of their pains and sufferings are agonizingly fresh, blood-oozing wounds and mutilations branded on their bodies, rape and piracy on the high seas, hunger and thirst in the jungle and the desert, despair and anguish carved into the deep folds of their psyche haunting them on sleepless nights or jerking them awake with screams of terror.

To these migrants and refugees, what does the old black man's eloquent and solemn injunction "Always remember where you come from" mean? Perhaps, for black Americans who are urged to forget the horrors of slavery to bring about a color-blind society, and for descendants of white immigrants who are not aware of their roots due to the passage of time, or because they are now part of the dominant social group, remembering one's past is an urgent ethical imperative lest forgetfulness of where they came from blunts their sense of solidarity with the new immigrants. But for new arrivals after the 1970s, most of whom are refugees escaping from war and violence, does the old man's advice to remember where they came from not wiggle the knife deeper into their physical and psychological wounds? While it is debatable whether such remembering produces a beneficial or harmful effect on the migrants' psychological well-being, it may be asked whether it constitutes a *moral* duty for them, and if so, why.

#### **"Where you came from": Why should I remember?**

At first sight it seems counterintuitive that migrants ought to remember "where they came from." For most migrants, especially those who voluntarily leave their own countries in search of better economic opportunities for themselves and their families, and those who have done well in their adopted countries, "home" is at worst a place plagued by poverty and backwardness, at best a destination for occasional, nostalgic visits, but not a place to remember with pleasure, much less their final resting place. The primary concern of these voluntary migrants is to blend into the so-called melting-pot as quickly and as effectively as possible so as to guarantee acceptance into the new society and professional success. To urge them to remember

where they came from sounds like a tasteless joke. This is true particularly of their children, the one-and-half and second generations, who most often know next to nothing of their parents' country of origin, its history, language, and culture. If ever the migrants' descendants embark upon a journey of discovery of their family roots, it would often take the form of academic research; or if they happen to travel to their ancestors' homeland, the trip is more an imaginative reconstruction of what their migrant parents would have gone through than an actual journey down the memory lane.

By contrast, people who are forced to flee their native countries for physical safety, most of whom do not possess the necessary skills to succeed economically and socially in the new countries, tend to remember their homelands and their former lives there with fondness and longing. Unfortunately, however, because of the extremely painful circumstances that force them to emigrate, often with as much of their material possessions as they literally can carry, and because their flights to safety and freedom are invariably filled with anguish and tragedies, refugees are psychologically conditioned to suppress their memories of their escape. If they remember their former lives at all, their memory is tinged with sadness and nostalgia, and when doing so, their memory is distorted by exaggerating the quality of their standard of living in the old country in contrast to the lowly one they now have.

Because of real or perceived heavy losses, not rarely including the deaths of their family members and friends, refugees often succumb to feelings of bitterness and hatred toward the people whom they deem responsible for their losses and current condition. They do not adapt easily to the culture of the host country, remaining permanent foreigners living in a foreign land. They endlessly plot – mostly in grandiose rhetoric – a revolution against or an overthrow of the – illegitimate in their eyes – government that has caused their exile and robbed them of their freedom, and dream of an eventual return to the old country and of being buried there. This has happened to many of my fellow Vietnamese refugees – including my parents – who fled to the United States after the Communist takeover of South Vietnam in 1975. To these refugees, the injunction to remember where they came from – especially if by this expression is meant the inhuman circumstances forcing their migration – is tantamount to asking them to

descend to hell once again. Thus, to voluntary migrants, this mandate sounds like a tasteless joke; to forced migrants and refugees, a cruel one.

Why then ought migrants to remember where they came from, and indeed, what are the things they must keep in their memory that are subsumed under the expression “where they came from”? We will return to the second question below. As for the first question, the most direct and peremptory answer is that this is a *divine command*. Again and again, Yahweh enjoins the Israelites to remember where they came from: “You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, *for you were aliens in the land of Egypt*” (Ex 22:21). Again: “You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, *for you were aliens in the land of Egypt*” (Ex 23:9). Again: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, *for you were alien in the land of Egypt*” (Lev 19:33-34). The italicized words occur like a refrain throughout the Hebrew Scripture and serve as the ethical foundation for Israel’s various duties to the strangers and aliens among them.

It is true that these words are addressed not to migrants as such but to *former* migrants who have settled in the new land and are now citizens. But arguably the command, “Remember where you came from,” applies to both since most often migrants, both voluntary and forced, eventually become citizens. If anything, the obligation is even more stringent for erstwhile migrants, as they are more tempted to forget their past now that they enjoy all the privileges accruing to them as successful citizens. Furthermore, the Israelites-now-citizens may be psychologically inclined to erase their experiences as aliens and slaves in Egypt because they were painful, experiences that Yahweh does not fail to recall to their memory: “I have observed the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings” (Ex 3:7).

Indeed, it is this memory of past sufferings associated with migration that grounds ethical behaviors to migrants. Yahweh reminds the Israelites that they have a connatural empathy with migrants because “you know the heart of an alien.” But how can one know the depths of “the heart of an alien” if one does not nurture in one’s own heart the memory of oneself as a migrant? It takes one to know

one, as the saying goes. Without this memory of oneself as migrant, how can one identify oneself with other migrants and fulfill the Lord’s command: “You shall love the alien as yourself”? “Yourself” here is a migrant/alien, not a citizen, or a generic human being. It is oneself as *migrant* that is the measure of one’s love toward other migrants, even if legally one is now no longer a migrant. Perhaps the divine command may be paraphrased as: “You shall love the migrant in the measure in which you love yourself as a migrant.” In other words, being migrant is a *permanent* identity and not a phase of life that can eventually be shed as one acquires a better social status. And it can become permanent – an “indelible character” – to use an expression of Catholic sacramental theology – imprinted in the “heart” only if one always and constantly remembers where one came from.

There are thus at least two fundamental reasons why migrants ought to remember where they came from. First, the *theological* reason, namely, to proclaim the great works of God (the *magnalia Dei*) and to rejoice and give thanks to God for the deeds God has done for all migrants – to quote Mary’s words in her *Magnificat*: “My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior ... for the Mighty One has done great things for me” (Luke 1:4-47, 49). Of these mighty deeds Yahweh himself reminds the Israelites before making a covenant with them: “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself” (Ex 19:4). The God of the Hebrews, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is a God who loves and accompanies the migrants with mighty deeds: God is a migrant God (*Deus Migrator*). To remember having been a migrant then is an act of *imitatio Dei*, and to act justly and lovingly toward migrants is nothing less than an act of liturgical worship, glorifying, praising, and thanking God for God’s mighty deeds, carrying on God’s wings the ancient “aliens in Egypt” and migrants of all times and in all places.

Secondly, the *ethical* reason, namely, to do for migrants what God has done for them. There is an intrinsic and indissoluble connection between the theological and the ethical reasons. Note the conjunction “for” in the words that follow the command to love the migrants: “*for* you were aliens in the land of Egypt.” The reason why we must not wrong and oppress the migrants is *because* we were, or more precisely, *are* migrants. The underlying ethical reasoning

seems to be as follows: First, being a migrant enables one to know “the heart of a migrant”; secondly, knowledge of the migrant’s heart is cultivated by remembering one’s own personal experience of being a migrant; and thirdly, remembering one’s past as a migrant provides the ethical grounding for one’s just and loving treatment of migrants. Remembering “where one came from” is therefore a moral imperative in the ethics of migration.

#### **“Where you came from”: *What must migrants remember?***

Granted the moral imperative for migrants to remember where they came from, what exactly does “where they came from” stand for? How much of it should be remembered, or forgotten? Is migration memory always selective? If so, what is the principle of selection? It is common knowledge that we remember clearly things that bring us joy and pleasure; today, thanks to ubiquitous digital cameras we can record them and email photos to friends so that they too can share in these happy moments simultaneously, in real time. It is also a well-known fact that we easily remember life-changing events, be they happy such as marriage and the births of our children, or painful and tragic such as divorce and the deaths of our loved ones, even though in the latter case we may try, albeit rarely with success, to erase them from our memory because they bring renewed pains and sufferings when remembered. Be that as it may, memories, remembered as well as suppressed, are the stuff that makes us who we are – our ever-shifting identity – just as imagination, which lives on hope, is the construction site of our final destiny.

Migrants, like everyone else, remember and forget things that are pleasurable as well things that are painful, and, like everyone else, they tend to suppress the latter, especially those surrounding their flights from their countries. Thus, “where they came from” is not an objective collection of fixed facts and events of their past but a highly selective medley of memories, some embellished, others diminished, some real, others imagined, that make up the psychological and spiritual blocks with which migrants rebuild their lives in the new country. Notwithstanding this amalgamative and partial character of their memories, there are certain realities of where they came from that migrants ought, and indeed should be encouraged and empowered to preserve and promote, in order to maintain their

self-identity and bring their own contributions to the common good of their host country.

The first thing of “where they came from” that migrants must remember is of course their culture and all the things that go under this broad umbrella term. While it is important for migrants to learn the local language and to familiarize themselves with the history and cultural traditions of the host society in order to be able to fulfill the duties of citizenship responsibly, it is their right as well as their duty to preserve and promote their own language, cultural traditions and values, and to transmit them to their children. Happily, today, at least in the United States, this cultural right is by and large respected, in the educational system as well as in the society at large, as the melting-pot paradigm of cultural assimilation has been abandoned in favor of multiculturalism. In general, there is a deep and genuine appreciation for and promotion of cultural diversity, especially in countries with a large presence of migrants.

There are of courses pockets of political resistance and cultural chauvinism, but efforts at imposing a national language and a homogeneous culture are doomed to failure. The reason for this is that migrants’ constant connection with their countries of origin is greatly facilitated by the omnipresent reality of globalization, the widespread use of social media, the rampant accessibility of the Internet, and the ease of international travel. Geographically, “where they came from” can be brought close to migrants with a click of the mouse; culturally, ethnic foods, music, entertainment media, fashion, and newspapers and magazines are available around the corner.

Sadly, however, migrants, and especially their children, are sometimes embarrassed by their cultural customs and practices. In the new country these may appear as quaint, old-fashioned, and even superstitious, subject to misunderstanding and ridicule by their new, modern neighbors, and in a misguided effort at shedding their ethnic background, migrants are tempted to jettison their age-old and rich cultural heritage. Furthermore, migrants may be prevented from celebrating their native customs and feasts by their work schedule and calendar differences (for example, the lunar New Year’s Day celebrations). In view of this very real danger of forgetting where they came from, it is all the more imperative for migrants to find ways to remember and celebrate their cultural traditions in the new country.

Another part of “where they came from” is the migrants’ religious heritage. Unlike earlier immigrants from Europe, migrants to the U.S. since the 1960s bring with them their own, non-Christian religious traditions – typically, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Confucianism from Asia and Islam from Africa and the Middle East. They are not willing to renounce their faiths and convert to Christianity, and in the process are turning America into the most religiously diverse country on earth, to quote the title of Diana Eck’s popular book.<sup>257</sup> Migrants to European countries such as Britain, France and Germany bring with them Islam, and their religious practice is consistently more vibrant than that of Christians of mainline Churches. Of course, for migrants remaining faithful to their non-Christian religions in the new country is challenging. They are under heavy pressure to convert to Christianity, not only from proselytizing Christians but also from life in the pervasive albeit nominal Christian society with its Christian calendar and festivals (or example, Christmas and Easter) and interfaith marriages.

Fortunately, with the proliferation of non-Christian places of worship and religious organizations, non-Christian migrants in the West (though, unfortunately, less so for Christian migrants in non-Christian countries) can continue to practice and propagate their religions. This growing and increasingly vocal presence of non-Christian migrants in the heartlands of Western Christianity constitutes a formidable challenge to the hitherto dominant Christianity. It is here that migrants can make an important contribution to the religious life of their adopted countries, but only on condition that they do not forget their own non-Christian religious faiths. The co-existence of many diverse, at times conflictive, religious traditions makes interreligious dialogue both a real possibility and an urgent need, with enormous benefits to not only the migrants and their new fellow religious believers in the host countries but also to the religious communities in their home countries, where religiously-inspired wars and violence have often caused their migration in the first place.

A third element of the migrants’ past that must be remembered is their own brand of Christianity. Again, as they participate in the life of Western Christian Churches, migrants are unavoidably shaped by

<sup>257</sup> Cf. Eck, Diana, *A New Religious America: How A “Christian Country” Has Now Become the Most Religiously Diverse Nation on Earth*, San Francisco 2001. Cf. also Wuthnow, Robert, *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity*, Princeton 2005.

their worship styles, spiritual practices, and organizational structures which are often governed by result-oriented efficiency, stream-lined bureaucracy, financial solvency, and legal protection. These concerns are of course legitimate and even necessary to assure a smooth functioning of church activities in a complex society. However, the dark side of all this is that Christian “communities” tend to operate like corporations and not like the “family of God.”<sup>258</sup> It is here that Christian migrants from the so-called Third World can bring to the Western churches their experiences of local churches as neighborhood communities or *comunidades de base* where lay leadership, popular devotions, shared prayer, group solidarity, and personal friendship play a large role in church life. It is a fact, albeit not yet widely acknowledged, that the presence of Catholic migrants has “rescued” many dioceses in the West, especially the United States, with their numerous priestly and religious vocations, and revitalized parishes with their regular church attendance and generous financial contributions. It is also a fact, similarly not yet widely recognized, that migrants have transformed the membership, organization, and spiritual life of Christian churches in Asia such as those of Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea.

Finally, for migrants, part of “where they came from” that must be remembered and even publicly honored includes their individual and unique experiences of migration. Of course, these experiences are extremely diverse: migration experiences of voluntary migrants are very different from those of refugees. Voluntary migrants do not normally incur economic losses and physical pains; still they may suffer cultural shock, discrimination, separation from their families, and loneliness. Forced migrants and refugees, by contrast, in addition to the above-mentioned pains, are always subjected to traumatic and life-shattering sufferings. More than other migrants, they are psychologically conditioned to erase from their memory their migration experiences. Though this erasure may sometimes be necessary for their psychological well-being, total forgetfulness will not only be detrimental to their spiritual development but also will deprive them from making one of the most precious contributions to the ethics of

<sup>258</sup> The image of “family/household of God” is used in the New Testament to refer to the church (see, for instance, 1 Tim 3:15). Though this image can be misused to justify patriarchalism and androcentrism, as has often been done in the Christian tradition, it can also convey intimacy and mutuality.

migration. Without this memory it is impossible to form “the heart of an alien” which is the deepest source and motivation for ethical behavior toward migrants, as Yahweh’s command makes it clear: “You shall not oppress a resident alien; *you know the heart of an alien*, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (Ex 23:9; italics added). Consequently, these memories of migration should be recorded, preserved in museums and archives, and celebrated in literature, art, and liturgical celebrations.

If an effective ethics of migration is to be developed, it must not only be based on the abstract principles of human rights and justice but also bathed in the blood and tears, the hunger and thirst, the griefs and pains, the tortures and yes, the deaths of so many migrants on their way to freedom. Perhaps this is “the where they came from” that runs the greatest risk of being erased and forgotten not only by the migrants but also by the now-citizens whose migrant roots have dried up and withered and whose memories of their ancestors’ migration have been lost forever in the mists of the past. If we want an ethics of migration that will propel both citizens and migrants to act justly and lovingly toward strangers and aliens in our midst, we must practice the old black man’s injunction: “Always remember where you came from.”

#### “Where you came from”: How must migrants remember?

Just as there are many “whys” and many “whats” to remember, there are also different ways to remember. *How* must migrants remember where they came from, especially the pains and sufferings inflicted upon them by their political enemies who caused their exile? In recent literature on the spirituality for peacemaking and reconciliation, there is an emphasis on not to “forgive and forget” past acts of injustice and violence but on opening up the space for the victim’s journey toward God, his or her enemies, and the self. This spirituality goes beyond the strategies and methodologies of conflict resolution and applies to reconciliation between both individuals and among groups and nations. Individual reconciliation occurs when two persons, the offender and the victim, are brought together to a new place, the former recognizing his or her guilt, and the latter having his or her dignity restored and forgiving the oppressor. The same dynamics applies, analogously, between groups and nations.

In this spirituality of reconciliation and peacebuilding an important role is given to memory and remembering, and I would like to make use of some of the insights, especially those developed by Miroslav Volf, to answer the question of how migrants should remember where they came from. In his *Exclusion and Embrace* Volf deals with the challenges of reconciliation in contexts of persisting enmity in which the dividing line between victims and perpetrators is thin and in which today’s victims can become tomorrow’s perpetrators.<sup>259</sup> “Embrace,” as a spiritual attitude toward the oppressor, is marked by two key stances: acting with generosity toward the perpetrator of injustice and maintaining flexible identities with porous boundaries. “Embrace,” which is made possible by God’s grace, does not negate the necessity of justice. Rather, it includes justice as a dimension of grace extended toward wrongdoers. Nor is “embrace” opposed to boundary maintenance. On the contrary, it assumes the necessity of establishing and maintaining the self’s boundaries but enables these boundaries to remain porous so that the self, while not being obliterated, can journey with others in reconciliation and mutual enrichment.

As a model of “embrace,” Volf cites the father’s attitude toward his son in the so-called parable of the Prodigal Son in which the father forgives his son and accepts his new identity as “the-father-of-the-prodigal-son.” For him, however, the supreme exemplar of “embrace” is Christ’s action in his death as an “inclusive substitute” for the ungodly. On the cross, Christ forgives and opens his arms to embrace sinners, thus creating a space for them in God. For Volf, “embrace” is ultimately rooted in God’s unconditional love and in God’s trinitarian nature in which there is the mutual indwelling of the three divine persons whose identity boundaries are therefore reciprocally porous. Furthermore, he points out that total “embrace” will be achieved only eschatologically, at the “Last Judgment,” which he interprets as the final reconciliation between God and humanity, in which judgment is not eliminated but is an indispensable element of reconciliation.

One of the central concerns of *Exclusion and Embrace*, which is of great relevance to our question of how migrants should remember where they came from, is truth-telling in the context of enmity and conflict, especially truth-telling about the past, a theme which Volf

<sup>259</sup> Volf, Miroslav, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*, Nashville 1996.

explores in much greater depth in his later work *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*.<sup>260</sup> There is an intended paradox between the title and the subtitle of the book. Volf wants to put an end to one kind of memory and suggests the practice of another, and the operative work is “*rightly*.” The question is not *whether* to remember but *how*. One does of course forget things but not things that leave an indelible mark upon one’s body or psyche or soul. One cannot not remember them, but *how* must they be remembered?

The book was sparked by an event in the author’s life in 1984 when as a conscript in the army of then-communist Yugoslavia, he was considered a security threat simply because he was a son of a pastor, had studied theology abroad, and had an American wife. He was spied on by his comrades and was subjected to interrogations, though not physical torture, especially by a captain, a certain G. The question that kept haunting Volf after he was freed was how he should remember this abuse, especially Captain G. himself, not with hatred and a desire for vengeance, but out of fidelity to Jesus and his God who command us to forgive and love our enemies. The topic of the book then is: “*the memory of wrongdoing suffered by a person who desires neither to hate nor to disregard but to love the wrongdoer.*”<sup>261</sup> Note that the required task is not simply to forgive the victimizer but to love him or her. The problem then becomes: Once remembering of the injury is rooted in the decision to forgive and love the injurer, how is it to remember the wrongdoing *rightly*? For Volf, remembering the wrongdoing rightly involves remembering it and its implications with regard to three realities: the injured, the community out of which the injury arose and to which it may be applied, and the perpetrator himself or herself.

Volf’s structures his argument along three basic questions that make up the three parts of his book: What is involved in remembering past wrongs; how should we remember; and how long should we remember? With regard to the first question, Volf reminds us that memory of wrongs suffered is a Janus-faced organ: as a “shield,” it can help form our identity, bring about healing, produce justice by acknowledging the reality of wrongs, link us with other victims,

<sup>260</sup> Volf, Miroslav, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*, Grand Rapids 2006.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

and protect victims from further violence. Sadly, as a “sword,” it can also wound, breed indifference, reinforce false self-perceptions, and re-injure.

This leads to the question of *how* we as *Christians* should remember. Volf suggests a triple remembering: “remember truthfully,” “remember so as to be healed,” and “remember so as to learn.”<sup>262</sup> In this way, Volf argues, we remember not simply as individuals but also as members of a community which can teach us to remember rightly, that is, “remembering that is truthful and just, that heals individuals without injuring others, that allows the past to motivate a just struggle for justice and the grace-filled work of reconciliation.”<sup>263</sup>

But *how long* should we remember? With the help of Freud, Nietzsche, and Kierkegaard, Vold argues for the possibility of a healthy forgetting or non-remembering. He goes further in asserting that “memories of suffered wrongs will not come to the minds of the citizens of the world to come, for in it they will perfectly enjoy God and one another in God.”<sup>264</sup> Note the important point Volf is making: In heaven, “we will not forget so as to be able to rejoice; we will rejoice and *therefore* let those memories slip out of our minds.”<sup>265</sup> Thus the “end” of memory of which the book speaks is both its *termination* (since we should not remember forever) and its *goal* or *telos*, that is, “the formation of the communion of love between all people, including victims and perpetrators.”<sup>266</sup> To conclude, I will expand Volf’s threefold remembering to find an answer to the question of how migrants should remember where they came from.

## The Concept of Remembering

### *Remembering Truthfully*

As alluded to above, migrants tend to remember their past tentatively, either exaggerating their pains and sufferings, or erasing

<sup>262</sup> Cf. Volf, Miroslav, “Memory of Reconciliation – Reconciliation of Memory”, in: *Proceedings of the Fifty-ninth Annual Convention: The Catholic Theological Society of America*, No. 59 (2004) 1, 1–13.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

the most traumatic ones of them, or embellishing their former lives in the old country. However, in order for them to regain their human dignity, migrants must remember truthfully where they came from. This truthful remembering, which corresponds to Volf's "Remember truthfully," has three aspects: first, establishing the facts of abuses against oneself; second, disclosing the structures of lying and the patterns of violence of the oppressive regime; and third, making public the history of abuses through reports and honoring the memories of the victims.<sup>267</sup> This knowing the truth is absolutely essential for achieving real reconciliation since, as Schreiter has convincingly shown, systematic violence is built upon "a narrative of the lie" intended to destroy and replace the truths that provide the victims with a sense of self-identity and security.<sup>268</sup> This truth-seeking is not only necessary for the possibility of closure for the survivors and the relatives of the victims but also establishes a pattern of truthfulness upon which a new moral order can be built.

#### *Remembering Justly*

Knowing the truth however does not necessarily lead to the migrant's reconciliation with those who inflict pains and sufferings on them. Indeed, it may lead to revenge, hatred, and retribution. To achieve reconciliation, knowing the truth must be followed by doing justice. Without justice, reconciliation is immoral. But what kind of justice? Certainly, not simply punitive justice whereby the wrongdoers are apprehended, tried, convicted, and punished. Punitive justice must also be corrective, providing the wrongdoers with an opportunity for moral conversion; otherwise, punitive justice is not very different from revenge.

There are however three other levels of justice, as Schreiter has pointed out, that need to be attended to. First, restitutive or restorative justice, seeks to make amends by providing reparation or restitution for the victims. In this sense, migrants, and specially

<sup>267</sup> This truth-finding about human rights violations was one of the three tasks assigned to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, the other two being determining reparations for the victims of gross human rights violations and granting amnesty to perpetrators of human rights abuses who have made a full and frank disclosure of their misdeeds.

<sup>268</sup> Cf. Schreiter, Robert, *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order*, Maryknoll 1992, 34–36.

refugees, have the right to recover what they have lost. Even though reparation can only ease and not erase the damages and the pains inflicted on the victims (the dead cannot be brought back to life, health cannot be restored, and the lost years cannot be recovered!), nevertheless it is a necessary and important symbol for the recovery of the dignity of the victims. Secondly, there is structural justice by which inequalities in the society are removed. Thirdly, there is legal justice by which a just and equitable legal system is established and the rule of law maintained.<sup>269</sup> In these two levels of justice, migrants can play an important role by making use of all the means at their disposal in their new countries, including political organizations and economic pressure.

#### *Remembering Forgivingly*

The third and, by common agreement, the hardest part of reconciliation, is forgiveness. This "remembering forgivingly" corresponds to Volf's "Remember so as to be healed." One reason why forgiveness is hard is that at first sight it appears to require forgetting the violent deeds suffered, as the common adage "forgive and forget" seems to indicate. But, of course, most victims of physical torture and political repression find it impossible to forget their wounds as these are indelibly burnt into their flesh and their psyche, and consequently feel that forgiveness is beyond their power. To forgive seems to imply betraying the past, especially the dead. Here it is useful to note that rather than "forgive and forget," we should "remember and forgive."<sup>270</sup> Or, as Schreiter puts it, "*in forgiving, we do not forget; we remember in a different way.*"<sup>271</sup> It is possible to remember *in a different way* because in forgiving the balance of power has shifted from the oppressor to the victim: it is the victim, and the victim alone, who has the power to forgive. In forgiving, the victim breaks loose of the oppressor's hold, becomes free of the power of the past, and is able to live by a story other than that of fear and suffering.

<sup>269</sup> Cf. Schreiter, R., *The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality & Strategies*, Maryknoll 1998, 122–123.

<sup>270</sup> Cf. Shriver, Donald W., *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics*, New York 1995, 6–9.

<sup>271</sup> Schreiter, Robert, *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, op. cit., 66.

There is another reason why forgiveness is hard. Normally, a condition for forgiveness is the offender's acknowledgment of guilt, repentance, and asking forgiveness from the victims. But it is a rare oppressor who sincerely does these things, not even when confronted with his or her evil deeds. More often than not, wrongdoers shamelessly deny any responsibility or flee to another country and there enjoy a comfortable life off their ill-gotten wealth, while their victims are left with a greater sense of injustice. It is here that human forgiveness takes on the characteristics of divine forgiveness.

According to the Christian faith, God forgives humans not because of but *prior* to their repentance, out of God's gratuitous love and mercy. It is God's forgiveness that leads the sinner to repentance and not vice versa. Repentance is not the condition but the *fruit* of God's forgiveness. In imitation of God's gratuitous mercy and love, and by God's grace and power, the victims forgive their torturers and oppressors, *prior* to and not as a consequence of their repentance and asking for forgiveness, with the hope that this forgiveness will lead them to repentance and change. Like God's forgiveness, the victim's forgiveness has a gift-like and miraculous quality. Ultimately, it is this gratuitous forgiveness – beyond truth and justice – that makes real reconciliation between abusers and victims possible. Only then the legal and social processes of amnesty and pardon can be put into action.<sup>272</sup>

### *Remembering Constructively*

The ultimate goal of truth-finding, restoring justice, and forgiveness is to build a society in which all citizens can live in freedom, equality, and harmony, and in which, at the minimum, abuses of human rights will not occur again. This task of social reconstruction corresponds to Volf's "Remember so as to learn." Such praxis for change requires establishing structural justice through various social reforms and legal justice through the reform of law and the judiciary. Moreover, there is the need of a democratic system of government in which all citizens can exercise their civil rights and duties. There

<sup>272</sup> On amnesty and pardon in the process of reconciliation, see Schreier, R., *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, op. cit., 124–126; Appleby, R. Scott, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred. Religion, Violence and Reconciliation*, New York 2000, 167–204; and Bole, William/Christiansen, Drew/Hennemeyer, Robert, *Forgiveness in International Politics: An Alternative Road to Peace*, Washington, DC 2004.

is a need as well of an economic system in which all have an equal opportunity at earning a living wage and in which the basic needs of the poor and the weak are provided for. Last but not least, the cultural and religious dimensions of human life must also be nurtured and developed through education, the mass media, and other means, so that the whole person, and not only certain dimensions of it, can achieve full flourishing. Perhaps the contribution of migrants to this fourth aspect of remembering is often indirect but no less effective, by means of individual and collective activities to promote justice, peace, education, social services, and economic development during their diaspora. Their role is of course vastly expanded if they, or their descendants, can one day return to their old countries to take part in the reconstruction of their homeland.

"Always remember where you came from!" The old black man's words continue to reverberate down the corridors of the history of migrations – old and new. Unless migrants understand *why* they must remember their past, *what* of this past they must remember, and *how* they should remember it, they will fail to meet the challenges and forfeit the unique opportunities the *Deus Migrator* has given them.<sup>273</sup>

<sup>273</sup> Key ideas of this essay have been expressed in my "Always Remember Where You Came From: An Ethic of Migrant Memory", in: Brazal, Agnes M./Dávila, María Teresa (Eds.), *Living With(out) Borders: Catholic Theological Ethics on the Migration of Peoples*, Maryknoll 2016, 173–186.

# Theological and Socio-ethical Perspectives on Migration / Flight

Jaco Beyers

Early human existence was nomadic. Travelling from one location to the next in search for better living conditions was normal human behaviour. Only later in human cultural development did signs of permanent settlements appear. As the amount of settlements increased, so did communities infringe on one another's terrain, at times putting stress on limited food and water resources. When human settlements are in close proximity survival becomes a threat. Migration would be a logical human response when faced with external threats to identity or physical survival.

During the past 25 years however a growing amount of people have participated in mass migrations. The amount of people who have migrated has doubled from 100 million to almost 200 million people in the last two decades. It is estimated by Groody<sup>274</sup> that one out of every 35 people around the world are now living away from their homelands.

With the increase of the phenomenon of migration so has the amount of publications as result of research on the relatedness of migration and theology increased. The publications of Gemma Cruz<sup>275</sup>, Elaine Padilla and Peter Phan<sup>276</sup> and Daniel Groody<sup>277</sup> are the most noteworthy. This is besides the numerous research reports that appear frequently on the matter of migration and refugees. Migration became

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<sup>274</sup> Cf. Groody, Daniel G., "Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of migration and refugees", in: *Theological Studies* 70 (2009), 638–667, here: 638.

<sup>275</sup> Cruz, Gemma Tulud, *An Intercultural Theology of Migration. Pilgrims in the Wilderness*, Leiden 2006; idem., *Toward a Theology of migration: Social Justice and Religious Experience*, New York 2014.

<sup>276</sup> Padilla, Elaine/Phan, Peter C. (Eds.), *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, New York 2013.

<sup>277</sup> Groody, Daniel G., "Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of migration and refugees", op. cit.; Groody, Daniel G., "Theology of migration: A new method for understanding a God on the move", in: *America* 204 (2011) 3, 18–20.

one of the main topics of discussion at the tenth meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan, Korea in 2013 discussing the phenomenon and how the church should respond. The theme of 2013 WCC meeting was “God of Life, lead us to Justice and Peace”, an appropriate endeavour as response to migration.

Migration as the relocation of people functions on many different levels. The relocation of people can refer to (or a combination of) spatial, conceptual, social or functional migrations. There may be various reasons for migration, either due to forceful removal, colonization or seeking refuge. To be human is to expand our borders, whether physically or spiritually.

In this article I want to present theological as well as socio-ethical perspectives on migration. Theological perspectives would imply wisdom from the Word of God. The socio-ethical perspectives are also based on biblical principles. In the biblical world migration was a common phenomenon. People were often displaced either due to natural disasters or through human intervention. Drought, famine, disease, floods, fire, earthquakes all caused people to leave one place behind and search for refuge in a different location. Human interventions through invasion (either military or colonization), enslavement, trading or banishment due to guilt of bloodshed were all reasons why people were displaced, voluntarily or by force.

The biblical stranger, referred to as *geir* in the Hebrew language (compare Exodus 12:19, Deuteronomy 23:8) and *skenos* in Greek (compare Matthew 25:35), had a specific status among the people of Israel. A sojourner would refer to any stranger, someone who was unable to indicate a blood-relation to any of the Israelite people, living in the land of Israel. When becoming a stranger or sojourner in the land of Israel one lost all civic rights; no right to possess property, not permitted to marry or partake in any cultic activity or administration process of justice. A stranger in the land of Israel was dependant for survival on the mercy of the local inhabitants. Israel is constantly reminded of their own history when they were strangers in a foreign land.<sup>278</sup> This forms the base for the command directed at Israel to treat the strangers among them with care.

<sup>278</sup> Cf. Malina, Bruce J., *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Westminster 2001, 192.

The presence of the stranger among people was and still is today a common phenomenon. When migrants enter a new location (either a new country or an urban environment) they not only leave a life behind. Migrants carry “baggage” with them. Migrants transport many different elements with them. Migrants bring with them culture, religion, social and economic potential, trauma and fear, a worldview perhaps different to the local inhabitants’ understanding of reality. The result of any migration is the introduction of diversity. The receiving culture may react in strange ways towards immigrants. Reactions may range from polite disinterest, curiosity, acceptance, abuse, and adversity to the extremity of aggression and violence. Within one community all these reactions may be present at once. What is true of the biblical environment is true of today: the stranger is among us, and we react in many different ways.

## The Status of the stranger

### *The stranger as threat*

Of all the possible reactions as to the presence of a stranger it is human to react with suspicion. Everybody not familiar is viewed as a potential threat. In communities with limited food and water supply, the presence of a stranger is easily viewed as an additional mouth to be fed; someone using up limited resources. In a community of abundance the presence of a stranger is not necessarily viewed as a threat to the limited resources. A stranger may then be regarded as a spy, seeking weaknesses which enemies can exploit. A stranger can even be viewed as potential workforce to be employed by the host.

The presence of a (itinerant) minority within a community may be even more considered a threat. People have victimized and condemned minority groups over centuries. Jews, Christians, witches, heretics – all have been persecuted based on public belief. These persecutions cannot always be justified although there might be many reasons for persecuting others. René Girard<sup>279</sup> provides us with some insight as to the status societies assign to minority groups among them, whether religious or ethnic. Girard tries to find the meaning of violence against others based on the concept of the scapegoat derived from an interpretation of the Book of Leviticus. He however

<sup>279</sup> Cf. Girard, René, *The Scapegoat*, Baltimore 1986, 32.

examines the scapegoat from a typical mythological point of view. Why people commit violence against the scapegoat is defined along the lines of mythology.

The stranger among us may physically look different from us: perhaps facial or physical appearances, characteristics unique to a particular ethnic group. The types of clothes may appear foreign to a local community. Physically the foreigner stands out in the crowd. Besides physical appearance there exist cultural and spiritual differences between cultural groups as well; different language, belief, worldview or cultic activities. The meaning of such customs may be unfamiliar to the local community. Even if the cultural or geographic origin of the foreigner is known, they may still be treated as a stranger. The “well known stranger”<sup>280</sup> among a community may already conjure stereotypes and biases against foreigners.

A foreigner can behave in an unfamiliar, perhaps unacceptable way within the host community. Such behaviour or even innocent gestures might be deemed improper behaviour. Girard<sup>281</sup> argues that there rarely exists differentiation between moral and physical behaviour. Morality is embodied in the body of the perpetrator. The offence is part of the body – the offence is ontologically the essence of an individual.<sup>282</sup> The result is that even upon the most minute offence, a society will rely on its imagination to create a monstrosity.<sup>283</sup> Human imagination prevents us from looking at reality. This leads to a distorted presentation of the stranger as the evil among us who needs to be contained to prevent the threat to what is considered the own identity.

Once the stranger is portrayed as a monster, it becomes easy to blame everything that goes wrong in society on the stranger. The victims – in this case the itinerant minority strangers – become scapegoats.<sup>284</sup> A scapegoat is someone who is in fact innocent, but is presented in society as having committed a grave offence. This results in collective polarization of society against victims. Polarization

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>281</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 34.

<sup>282</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 36.

<sup>283</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 35.

<sup>284</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 39.

prevents victims from proving their innocence.<sup>285</sup> Society can easily be manipulated by prosecutors in condemning the victim.<sup>286</sup> Hatred towards the immigrants is mainly built on caricatures and mythological ideas, creating the impression that the presence of the stranger/migrant is a threat against which action is necessary.

All crimes that persecutors accuse the perpetrator of can be traced back to myths.<sup>287</sup> In inter-cultural animosity it will help to investigate the underlying myths upon which the hatred towards the stranger feeds. This hatred leads to racism and xenophobic reactions, often resulting in calls to violence or acts of violence.

This scenario abounds in the rhetoric on the presence of migrants in the USA as well as certain communities in Europe.

#### *The stranger as asset*

In a social context, the stranger can be viewed as a social and economic asset. The stranger becomes a comfortable source of labour that will do all the work the legitimate members of society do not want to do. As the stranger is dependent on the charity of the members of society, he/she will have to perform all duties expected of him/her as refusal may result in expulsion. This leads to an opportunistic advantage to the host and causes the stranger to have his/her human rights trampled upon.

This is the result of viewing humans in economic terms, either as workforce or as consumers of goods. This is especially true of migrants moving to an urban environment. In a highly industrialised society, formed by the economic principles of capitalism, the minority foreigner who enters such a society can easily step into this trap. Max Weber<sup>288</sup> is known for his accusation directed towards the capitalistic West, formed by Calvinistic principles of the piety of hard work. In such a society the culture may differ so widely from the culture of the migrant that it may be easy to accuse the West of pleasure-seeking, self-focussed consumers of goods.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 40.

<sup>286</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>287</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 31.

<sup>288</sup> Cf. Weber, Max, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Parsons, Talcott, New York 2003 (1958), 43.

In this endeavour to enrich oneself, trampling on the right of fellow human beings can easily be justified in the name of more profit. Migrants can be abused as cheap labour and simultaneously be viewed as a market where cheap surplus goods can be dumped. This is a typical scenario fitting within the colonial context.

### *The stranger as opportunity: A theology of hospitality*

Theologically considered there is an appeal on Christian communities to treat the stranger among them in a certain ethical way.

One of the main social cornerstone institutions is the family. In the biblical world the way people related to one another was through family ties. Without any family relations one was delivered at the hands of others for protection and sustenance. "The stranger" in biblical times referred to someone who could not indicate any family relationship within a community. A stranger would typically be a slave set free, a prisoner of war, a migrant seeking refuge in another community due to famine or danger in his/her own country, a travelling trader, a pilgrim.

A stranger/foreigner/migrant/someone who was unable to indicate blood relation to a family living in Israel had the status of a stranger and therefore no right to own property or participate in cultic events.<sup>289</sup> In this environment the Old Testament comes with a message from God prescribing to the people of Israel to not neglect the orphan, the widow or the stranger (Deuteronomy 27:19; Jeremiah 7:6; Zachariah 7:10). These three groups were perceived as categories of people dependent on the charity of the society for survival. It was not merely a desire to care for the needy in society which would include strangers; in fact, it became a command from God to love the stranger (Deuteronomy 10:19). Social justice for Israel entailed protecting and caring for the stranger.

In the New Testament this command is alluded to in different contexts. Jesus alludes to this command when He depicts Himself as a stranger among Israel who did not care for Him (Matthew 25:35). The implication is the suggested command to care for the stranger, implying the care for widows and orphans as well. The call for hospi-

<sup>289</sup> Cf. Malina, Bruce J., op. cit., 192.

tality is part of the characteristics that Paul and early church leaders implore Christian communities to exercise (compare Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9 and Hebrews 13:2).

In each of these cases the Greek word *filoksenia* is used as a reminder of how Christians conduct themselves and even as a characteristic required of Christian leaders. It is not always clear as to whom this hospitality should be extended to. Merely to say to "all people" may be interpreted as only to fellow-Christians. Hospitality is seen here as an expression of the command to love thy neighbour and can be interpreted as to include all people. Hospitality should be understood in terms of acts of kindness in the way in which Jesus explains to his disciples (compare Matthew 25:34-36) how people should take care of one another within the kingdom of God: giving food and drink, providing clothing, accommodation for the stranger, tending the sick, visiting the prisoners. These are acts of kindness extended to all people in need.

In light of these theological considerations it becomes clear that the presence of the stranger becomes an opportunity for Christians to practice brotherly and sisterly love. The stranger becomes the object of Christian charity and hospitality.

Migration brings strangers to our doorstep. The biblical command to love thy neighbour cannot be interpreted only to refer to love towards those who are similar to us. The parable of the Good Samaritan (compare Luke 10:25-37) illustrates how the borders between love for the familiar and love for the stranger and even enemy, is broken down. The Lucan theology emphasises the inclusive love of God towards all, especially the marginalised (i.e. strangers, women, children, sinners and Samaritans). In the Old Testament there are prescriptions as how to treat the stranger. The stranger should be treated with dignity and respect. The command of God also applies to the stranger. Compare the command that even the stranger is not to be allowed to work on the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5:14).

Goody emphasises that the stranger (foreigner) should be seen as a human being created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), and be treated accordingly.<sup>290</sup> The human dignity of strangers should be

<sup>290</sup> Cf. Goody, Daniel. G., "Crossing the Divide. Foundations of a Theology of migration and refugees", op. cit., 642, 645.

maintained by not referring to migrants in an undignified manner, i.e. as illegal aliens.<sup>291</sup> Christians should take note of the need of strangers (migrants) living among them. Groody suggests Christians migrate closer to the need of the migrant.<sup>292</sup> By expressing Christian love and hospitality we are all in fact migrating closer to God, as God migrated to humanity through his incarnation.<sup>293</sup>

God expects of those who believe in Him to give expression to his command of love towards the neighbour. This requires from Christians to not only acknowledge the presence of the migrant, but also take note of the need of the migrant and act upon the need identified. Christians ought to commit to acts of kindness towards all human beings, irrelevant what their political status may be.

### Conclusion

Migrations are part of human existence. The stranger among us requires a response. The response can either be animosity, ignorance or hospitality. The middle ground is a safe haven as there the existence, the presence and the need of the stranger is ignored. This is much the same way in which the Levite and priest reacted to the presence of the wounded man besides the road (Luke 10:25-37). Animosity is perceived as the appropriate reaction when one feels under threat. Removing the stranger from my presence by whatever means will remove the threat. The stranger can indeed be blamed as the scapegoat for all misfortune to come to a community and, therefore, provide a reason to rid society of the stranger.

The Christian reaction should however be to recognise the need of the stranger as an opportunity to exhibit divine love through acts of kindness. And still by expressing love towards the stranger the human dignity of the stranger should be maintained. This implies that showing acts of kindness to those in need does not become an opportunity to attempt converting people in need. That would be trampling on the human dignity of strangers. Christians have the command to love. Should people through the experience of this love want to know more

<sup>291</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 645.

<sup>292</sup> Cf. Groody, Daniel G., "Theology of migration: A new method for understanding a God on the move", *op. cit.*, 18.

<sup>293</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 19.

about Christianity, it is the grace of God that their hearts and minds are opened up to the gospel. Christians should keep on expressing the love of God to all humans, no matter what their political, economic or social status may be.

# Pastoral Care for Migrants in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe

# Pastoral Care for Refugees and Migrants

Stefan Heße

When people leave their homes and seek new prospects in another country, fears and hopes often mingle with despair and trust. This applies particularly to those fleeing from persecution, wars and other catastrophes. They often have no other choice but to abandon their belongings in order to save their lives. It is frequently the case that they have experienced traumatic events in their countries of origin, such as the death of or separation from relatives, or themselves have been victims of violence and exploitation. These emotional scars also have an impact on their lives in the receiving countries, where they hope to create a more positive future for themselves.

The Second Vatican Council formulated the following tenet in its Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.”<sup>294</sup> What does this statement mean for the life and activities of the Church, especially the local churches in Germany, in the face of the momentous events of migration and flight? With his prophetic words and actions (such as his visit to Lampedusa) Pope Francis urges us to live out the message of the Gospel in the light of the refugees’ plight. Christians are called upon to be “neighbours” of the smallest and the abandoned, and to give them “concrete hope”<sup>295</sup>. The German bishops explain this idea in their *Guiding Principles of Ecclesial Commitment to Refugees*. Recalling the words from the Gospel of St. Matthew: “I was a stranger and you made me welcome” (*Mt* 25:35), the Church’s commitment to refugees and migrants “places a special focus on personal mentoring

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<sup>294</sup> GS 1

<sup>295</sup> Cf. Pope Francis, Angelus on 6 September 2015, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20150906.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20150906.html).

and human encounter”.<sup>296</sup> Pastoral care is consequently at the heart of ecclesial action for those seeking protection and for the suffering and destitute.

This article looks at the provision of pastoral care for refugees and migrants in Germany. These people have either experienced suffering in their countries of origin or have manoeuvred themselves into a situation of new uncertainty as a result of their voluntary migration. In some respects both these groups face similar challenges during the integration process and they present the receiving country and the Church with similar tasks.

### What does pastoral care mean for refugees and migrants?

Pastoral care in a Church context usually involves a range of full-time and voluntary activities which can be subsumed under the common concern to “support people in their specific situations”<sup>297</sup>. “Whether God’s salvation-will is explicitly referred to [...] or is initially present in the fundamental attitude of the pastoral worker” depends on the specific context.<sup>298</sup> Whereas the social dimension of pastoral ministry constitutes the chief focus of diaconal pastoral care, personal pastoral care, or the pastoral conversation, concentrates on interpersonal relationships. A specific form of the same is healing pastoral care, which uses psychological skills to provide support for traumatised individuals. Advocacy for those in need and distress can also be a form of pastoral care, “since an understanding of pastoral care that is directed exclusively at the individual, without ‘bridging the gap’ between social and political practice, can have a negative impact on the individual as well as on society and the Church”<sup>299</sup>.

As a rule, refugees and migrants are reliant on pastoral support in all the aforementioned areas. The attempt “to escape an unendurable fate, only to end up living in makeshift dwellings, still in dire need”<sup>300</sup>,

<sup>296</sup> Cf. Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, Leitsätze des kirchlichen Engagements für Flüchtlinge (Arbeitshilfen, No. 282), Bonn 2016, 6.

<sup>297</sup> Cf. Art. “Seelsorge”, in: Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche 9 (2000), 384.

<sup>298</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 386.

<sup>300</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People/Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons: Pastoral Guidelines, Vatican City 2013, No. 119.

leaves everyone with psychological wounds. In order to give them concrete hope, as urged by Pope Francis, pastoral care can manifest itself in a variety of ways.

On the one hand, it can take the form of support in circumstances of individual hardship, particularly when refugees and migrants find themselves in seemingly hopeless situations. This is especially the case in places where individual freedom is greatly restricted, e.g. in prisons, closed refugee camps, detention facilities and transit zones at airports.<sup>301</sup> Pastoral care can also help people to cope with the death of relatives, the severing of roots with their native countries, memories of war and violence or a family reunification which has failed to materialise. Unaccompanied refugee minors, in particular, require this special type of support.

On the other hand, pastoral care signifies the establishment of genuine relationships and friendships with migrants and refugees. Even apparently insignificant forms of verbal and non-verbal daily communication ensure that they experience encounters as equals and are thus able to place new trust in life.

In its *Guiding Principles of Ecclesial Commitment to Refugees* the German Bishops’ Conference takes as its basis a “broad” definition of the term “pastoral care”, which is characterised as a service administered to all persons on the grounds of the equal dignity that stems from their creation in the image of God. As a result, all persons who find themselves in situations of existential need, irrespective of their gender, age, background, religious affiliation or sexual orientation, can count on the support of Church pastoral workers.<sup>302</sup> In other words, it is about “making oneself a ‘neighbour’ of a migrant”<sup>303</sup> and “regarding the other as a person”<sup>304</sup>. This is in keeping with the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council, according to which the

<sup>301</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, No. 113.

<sup>302</sup> Cf. Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, Leitsätze des kirchlichen Engagements für Flüchtlinge (Arbeitshilfen, No. 282), Bonn 2016, 6.

<sup>303</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi – The Love of Christ Towards Migrants* (Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls, No. 165), published by the Secretariat of the German Bishops’ Conference, Bonn 2004, 23.

<sup>304</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People/Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons: Pastoral Guidelines, Vatican City 2013, No. 82.

Church acts as a saving “sign and tool”<sup>305</sup> of the universal love of God. Hence, pastoral care “can be found in all places where the spirit of Jesus Christ is alive, who cannot be bound to any institution or denomination”<sup>306</sup>.

Notwithstanding the necessary openness of ecclesial activities to all people, a narrower definition of pastoral care sees Christian refugees and migrants as brothers and sisters in faith. They are entitled to the provision of a spiritual home within the Church as well as to spiritual care and access to preaching, church services and sacraments. The local bishops are responsible for ensuring that they are offered the opportunity to attend liturgical feast days and say prayers.<sup>307</sup> Christian refugees and migrants must be treated in a manner that takes due account of the linguistic background they come from and, in particular, of their adherence to rites which, though different, are nonetheless closely connected to the Roman Catholic Church. Members of other churches and church communities which form part of the global ecumenical community can also count on support.<sup>308</sup>

### Pastoral care for Catholic migrants

The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* define pastoral care as follows: “The setting for pastoral action is first and foremost the parish, which can thus live out in a new and fresh way its ancient vocation of being ‘a house where a guest feels at ease’”<sup>309</sup>.

At present, around 3.4 million Catholics of either first or second foreign nationality are registered as Roman Catholics in the 27 German dioceses (as of 30 June 2016). The number of (registered) Catholic foreigners in Germany thus increased by over 100,000 indi-

<sup>305</sup> Cf. Art. “Seelsorge”, in: *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 9 (2000), 386.

<sup>306</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>307</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Instruction Erga migrantes caritas Christi – The Love of Christ Towards Migrants* (Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls, No. 165), published by the Secretariat of the German Bishops’ Conference, Bonn 2004, 22f.

<sup>308</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People/Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, *Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons: Pastoral Guidelines*, Vatican City 2013, No. 86.

<sup>309</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, No. 91.

viduals compared to 2015. The foreign Catholics come from a total of 189 different nationalities.

This cultural and linguistic diversity raises the question of the provision of appropriate pastoral structures for Catholic migrants. At present, the German (arch-)dioceses are attempting to give immigrants in approximately 450 native language communities belonging to 35 different linguistic groups the opportunity to maintain their own religious traditions in their native languages whilst also giving them a spiritual home within the local churches in Germany.<sup>310</sup> Some 500 priests from all over the world are active in this field, a number of them on a part-time basis. The establishment of a large number of native language missions in the German (arch-)dioceses goes back to the recruitment of immigrant workers in the 1950s, when it was assumed that they would remain in Germany on a temporary basis only. In the meantime, however, the framework conditions and perspectives have completely changed. European cohesion and the European Union’s regulations on free movement, in particular, have ensured that people with an immigrant background, be they students, workers, family members, naturalised persons or refugees, have become an integral part of German society as well as of the Church.

It can be assumed that large-scale migratory movements to and from Germany will continue for the foreseeable future. According to the migration statistics issued by the Federal Statistical Office<sup>311</sup> for 2015, 2.14 million people immigrated to Germany while around one million people left the country. Among the immigrants were 890,000 refugees and asylum seekers, the others entering Germany in line with the EU’s freedom of establishment principle or via other viable routes in compliance with the Residence Act (e.g. commencing work or training, family reunification). For the Catholic Church this means that the large influx of people from countries in which the Catholic faith is predominant, such as Poland, Croatia, Italy, Spain and Portugal, continues uninterrupted and that missions have to handle high growth rates.

<sup>310</sup> Cf. Die Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, *Eine Kirche in vielen Sprachen und Völkern: Leitlinien für die Seelsorge an Katholiken anderer Muttersprache* (Arbeitshilfen, No. 171), Bonn 2003.

<sup>311</sup> Cf. Federal Statistical Office (2016): <https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/Bevoelkerung/Wanderungen/Tabellen/WanderungenAlle.html> (20.01.2017).

Realistically, it must be acknowledged that, in the future, the provision of a spiritual home for foreign Catholics in native-speaking communities cannot remain the only pastoral instrument for these groups. All the merits of this pastoral model notwithstanding, there is a danger that native-speaking communities will view themselves as self-contained groups and transform the communities into living environments. There is also the possibility that those responsible for the German territorial parishes, including the groups of sponsors, will be misled into believing that the foreign-language communities comprise marginalised special groups to which little attention need be paid. This results in an occasionally flagrant lack of cooperation between German and foreign pastoral care units and hence a situation which cannot be regarded as acceptable, let alone productive, in either an ecclesiological or a pastoral sense. The solution probably lies in the creation of models that permit a far closer relationship between German and native-speaking worshippers. This connection must be provided with institutional protection so that it cannot be easily overturned or circumvented. For the territorial communities this means the initiation of a phase of internationalisation, which, although it may prove painful at times, can benefit all those involved in the long run.

### Specific challenges in the provision of pastoral care for Christian refugees

Although no precise figures exist, up to 200,000 Christians are estimated to have come to Germany from the Orient during the refugee movements in 2015 alone<sup>312</sup>, the great majority of them members of Orthodox churches. Christian refugees find it consoling to be able to worship in a foreign country in accordance with their accustomed rites and in their native languages.

It is important to realise that diverse churches exist in the Orient, including Byzantine and Oriental churches united with Rome, such as the Chaldeans, the Melkites and the Maronites. Many Roman Catholic believers and communities are unaware of this. The German Bishops' Conference has issued a guideline entitled *Christians from the Orient* in order to draw attention to existing pastoral structures and

<sup>312</sup> Cf. Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, *Christen aus dem Orient: Orientierung über christliche Kirchen im Nahen Osten und Nordafrika und die pastorale Begleitung ihrer Gläubigen in Deutschland* (Arbeitshilfen, No. 283), Bonn 2016, 3.

communities. This guideline provides a brief overview of the Christian churches in the Middle East and North Africa and lists contacts in Germany for members of these churches seeking to make contact with affiliated communities.

In the case of members of the united Eastern churches, canon law states that the respective local Roman Catholic bishop is responsible for providing adequate pastoral care in their native languages as well as for ensuring that they can observe their own religious rites. Members of around half of the 23 local churches united with Rome are present in Germany along with their respective pastoral care workers. All the (arch-) dioceses have been offering additional services and times of prayer for refugee believers since the influx of recent years began. Many volunteer refugee aid workers in the Church communities and those affiliated with the Caritas association assist the refugees as they make initial contact. Several dioceses have published pastoral handouts in the refugees' native languages as a supportive measure to aid understanding.<sup>313</sup>

In consultation with the hierarchs of the Uniate churches the (arch-)dioceses have also assigned several priests to take care of refugees and have established missions for various rites and languages.<sup>314</sup> In January 2017, a delegate from the German Bishops' Conference was appointed for the members of the Eastern churches united with Rome to improve coordination of these efforts. He acts as a contact for the congregations of the Oriental churches, the hierarchs of the Uniate churches and the German dioceses.

### Pastoral care services for non-Christian refugees

The lives of all refugees and migrants are strained by the harsh challenges resulting from their being uprooted from their homelands as well as by their psychological scars and traumatic experiences, even after they have arrived in the receiving countries.<sup>315</sup> People can

<sup>313</sup> These materials are available on the website <http://www.dbk.de/fluechtlingshilfe/home/> under the heading "Pastoral Care".

<sup>314</sup> Cf. Die Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, *Eine Kirche in vielen Sprachen und Völkern*, op. cit.

<sup>315</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People/Pontifical Council Cor Unum, *Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons. Pastoral Guidelines*, Vatican City 2013, No. 83

count on the support of Church pastoral workers wherever they reach their existential limits.<sup>316</sup> Visits by pastoral workers are frequently a sign of hope, particularly when people are being held at migration facilities or are due to be repatriated to their native countries.

As stated above, pastoral care must be understood in a broad sense as a particular form of diaconal commitment. In addition to the professional ecclesial information centres, over 100,000 Catholic Christians perform volunteer work in communities and in conjunction with the Caritas association in Germany. They embody a vibrant culture of acceptance and solidarity by providing help, advice and prayer. In this way they give the refugees and migrants initial access to our language, offer guidance as they move around in a new and unfamiliar environment and provide them with essential supplies. In addition they pave the way for successful long-term integration by fostering social participation within the education system and on the labour market. Those with no prospect of remaining in Germany are given support in finding opportunities in their countries of origin. The key feature of this voluntary commitment is the attention paid to the specific needs of each individual.<sup>317</sup> This all-round pastoral care is given to all people irrespective of their background, social status, religion or world view, gender or sexual orientation. A positive development here is that many Church aid initiatives involve ecumenical and civic cooperation. Several refugee aid projects take the form of interreligious cooperation and, in 2016, they were actively promoted by means of the “Do You Know Who I Am?”<sup>318</sup> initiative.

In addition to the diaconal ministry, pastoral care can naturally also be directed at those with a different or no religious affiliation who wish to find out more about or embrace the Christian faith. In this context pastoral care means “giving Christ, our treasure, to others, as

<sup>316</sup> Cf. Deutsche Bischofskonferenz, Leitsätze des kirchlichen Engagements für Flüchtlinge (Arbeitshilfen, No. 282), Bonn 2016, 11.

<sup>317</sup> In order to support volunteer refugee aid workers the diocese of Magdeburg offered an innovative course aimed at training “volunteer refugee pastoral care workers” which lasted from October 2015 to June 2016. Participants received training in the fields of “intercultural competence”, “conducting conversations” and “crisis management”. They also learned to develop a particular awareness of religious aspects, i.e. conducting conversations on the subject of faith.

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Weißt du, wer ich bin? Das Projekt der drei großen Religionen für friedliches Zusammenleben in Deutschland, <http://www.weisstduwerichbin.de/aktuell/> (11.12.2017).

a respectful and humble proposal”<sup>319</sup>. Requests by Muslim baptismal candidates are handled in the (arch-)dioceses in accordance with the rules for the adult catechumenate. Thereafter, the baptism preparations should, where possible, comprise the witnessing of and participation in the liturgical year, with baptism subsequently taking place during the Easter vigil. In 2009, the German Bishops’ Conference published a guideline entitled *Proclaiming Christ in Love. On the Accompaniment of Baptismal Candidates from Muslim Backgrounds* in order to outline approaches to the pastoral of conversion.

### Outlook

At present some 17 million people with an immigration background live in Germany, i.e. around a fifth of the population. Over half of these people have German nationality, since they have been living in our country for many years or were born here. There is no question that Germany is a country of immigration and that our society is one of cultural and religious diversity.

In the future, therefore, our pastoral ministry must help the faithful to “live their faith authentically in today’s new multicultural and pluri-religious context”<sup>320</sup> even more than it does today. The volunteer work performed by numerous Christians in the field of humanitarian and refugee aid demonstrates very clearly that the “baptised and their charismata [...] constitute the real wealth of the Church”<sup>321</sup>. The German bishops encourage us to “discover and promote these charismata and to recognise and shape the positive space for development and mission they create within the Church and in the secular world”<sup>322</sup>.

As we know, not all members of the Church appreciate the commitment shown to refugees and migrants. As a consequence there is a need for dialogue within the Church on the implications of the discipleship of Christ in order to address and overcome existing fears

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People/Pontifical Council Cor Unum, *Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons*, op. cit.

<sup>320</sup> <sup>27</sup>Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Instruction Erga migrantes caritas Christi – The Love of Christ Towards Migrants* op. cit., 37.

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Die deutschen Bischöfe, *Gemeinsam Kirche sein: Wort der deutschen Bischöfe zur Erneuerung der Pastoral* (Arbeitshilfen, No. 100), Bonn 2015, 19.

<sup>322</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

and concerns. In the process the insight that “the unity of the Church does not stem from its members having a common national or ethnic origin, but from the Pentecostal spirit which makes of all nations a new people, whose goal is the Kingdom of God, whose prerequisite is the freedom of its sons and daughters, and whose statute is the Divine Law of Love”<sup>323</sup> may prove helpful. If we treat refugees and migrants as our neighbours and receive them as our brothers and sisters within our Church communities, we can renew our awareness of the fact that we, as Catholics, belong to a Church which speaks all languages and welcomes all people as its members.

## Witness as Withness

### Pastoral Care of Migrants in Asia

Gemma Tulud Cruz

#### Migration in Asia: A Snapshot

Asia has a long history of temporary, permanent, and cyclical migration due to trade, labor, religion or cultural interchange. In pre-colonial times the Malay peninsula and the Indonesian and Philippine archipelagos were marked by mobility of people of various ethnicities, especially via the sea. Colonization, however, intensified the movement of Asian peoples. First, territorial conquests and regulation of trade by European colonial regimes forced the migration of Asians as indentured laborers. From 1834-1937 alone some 30 million men and women from the Indian subcontinent were brought to Southeast Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific to work in British plantations.<sup>324</sup> The two world wars also propelled significant migration among Asians as the colonizers used or recruited many of their former subjects to be foot soldiers in the war, then lured more by opening their doors to immigrants to help rebuild war-devastated economies. Three major political events, in the meantime, triggered massive migration among Asians from the 1970s well into the 1990s. The West-East Pakistan conflict forcibly displaced around ten million people while the war in Vietnam, which spilled into Laos and Cambodia, saw the exodus of about three million people from the region. Last but not the least, the successive waves of occupation and political crises in Afghanistan – from the Russians to the Taliban – have led to the displacement of millions of people in 71 different countries.

Modern transport and communication technologies, continuing political and economic crises, environmental disasters, and wars and

<sup>323</sup> Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* 9.

<sup>324</sup> Abella, Manolo/Lim, Lin Lean, “The Movement of People in Asia: Internal, Intra-regional and International Migration”, in: Christian Conference of Asia, *Uprooted People in Asia*, Hong Kong 1995, 12.

religio-cultural conflicts in many Asian countries as well as real or fabricated stories of better life in the destination countries, displaced or encouraged many more Asians to migrate – both documented and undocumented – from the 1990s onwards. Since the 1990s, however, Asian migration remarkably changed largely due to the effects of globalization. First, Asian migration considerably changed in terms of volume. A UN report, for example, states that in 2013 Asians represented the largest diaspora group residing outside their major area of birth, accounting for about 19 million migrants living in Europe, some 16 million in Northern America and about 3 million in Oceania. The same report provides evidence of another significant change among Asians on the move, that is, Asians are moving overwhelmingly in search of work.

The report indicates that compared to other regions of destination, Asia saw the largest increase of international migrants since 2000, adding some 20 million migrants in 13 years, and that this growth was mainly fuelled by the increasing demand for foreign labour in the oil-producing countries of Western Asia and in South-Eastern Asian countries with rapidly growing economies, such as Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.<sup>325</sup> In 2012, for example, more than 1 million Filipinos left the country to work in a country of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in Singapore, or in Hong Kong. More than 250,000 workers from Sri Lanka and 100,000 from Thailand have also been leaving their country every year since 2008.<sup>326</sup> Such information gives credence to a new trend in global migration, in general, and Asian migration, in particular, that is, that South-South migration is as common as South-North migration.

Since it is the migrant workers who constitute the vast majority of people on the move in Asia and largely experience some of the most problematic living conditions in the context of migration, they often receive greater attention and pastoral care from the Church. It is for these reasons that this essay will focus on the plight of migrant

<sup>325</sup> Cf. “232 million international migrants living abroad worldwide – new UN global migration statistics reveal”, <http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm> (09.09.2016).

<sup>326</sup> Cf. Asian Development Bank Institute, *Labor Migration, Skills, and Student Mobility in Asia*, Tokyo 2014, 4. The phenomenon of 1 million Filipinos leaving the country annually to be OFWs (Overseas Filipino Workers) have been happening since 2006. Cf. Asis, Maruja, “Philippines”, in: *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 17 (2008) 3–4, 367.

workers, particularly those in unskilled work and who have undocumented status.

### The Plight of Migrant Workers in Asia

The large-scale and multi-directional migration of workers within Asia is attributed to two developments namely the oil boom of the mid 1970s, which induced the immense investment in infrastructures by the Middle Eastern countries, and the emergence of the so-called Asian tiger economies namely South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. These countries' increased economic development coupled with industrialized Japan's needs created a massive demand for foreign or cheap labor which people from the many poor Asian countries readily filled out of dire need. The continuing demand for skilled and unskilled labor in these Asian countries together with affluent western countries' increasing need for replacements for its diminishing pool of workers (due to a high level of ageing population and low level of fertility rates) fuelled the steady increase of labour migration in Asia.

In keeping with the trajectories of international labour migration, particularly as created by the current process of economic globalization, the majority of the Asian migrant workforce are in unskilled work and move on a temporary basis from less developed to industrializing countries. These workers, particularly the undocumented, constitute the underclass among Asian migrants for a couple of reasons. First of all, they have borne the brunt of the three dominant and problematic attitudes toward migrants in key destination countries in Asia: 1) immigrants should not be allowed to settle; 2) foreign residents should not be offered citizenship except in exceptional cases and; 3) national culture and identity should not be modified in response to external influences.<sup>327</sup> As a result there are thousands of stateless children of migrants, especially unskilled and undocumented workers, in countries such as South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Japan. The problem is particularly acute among Filipinos when one factors in the illegitimate Filipino children in the Middle East and other Islamic countries who have no citizenship

<sup>327</sup> Castles, Stephen, “The Myth of the Controllability of Difference: Labor Migration, Transnational Communities and State Strategies in East Asia”, <http://www.unesco.org/most/apmrcast.htm> (04.09.2016).

such that one congressman has pushed for an investigation of the problem.<sup>328</sup>

The abovementioned problematic attitudes are exacerbated by unjust working conditions<sup>329</sup> as well as restrictive and exploitative immigration policies toward these workers, which force those who are documented to go undocumented. Taiwan's undocumented migration, for example, increased starting in the late 1980s due to the limitation to a non-renewable three-year contract, which force people to return to Taiwan with forged documents while others run away from their exploitative jobs and, consequently, become undocumented workers. Hong Kong's case is more problematic primarily because it only gave laid-off workers two weeks to find new work or else be deported. This was insufficient, particularly for foreign domestic workers, who are often pushed to an undocumented situation. In the Middle East, meanwhile, migrant workers are able to enter only through sponsorship by *khafel* and are required to surrender their passports to the *khafel* as soon as they enter the country. The *khafel*<sup>330</sup> must give clearance before the worker can leave the country. In addition, workers are prohibited from changing employers and, therefore, are literally at the mercy of the sponsors. Turning to undocumented employment then often becomes a means of escaping from a situation of bondage, thereby creating an underclass within the underclass, that is, the undocumented unskilled worker.

### Journeying with Migrants: The Asian Church's Response

The Church in Asia recognizes the immense and complex difficulties and challenges that confront migrants in Asia, particularly vulnerable groups such as undocumented workers in unskilled work who embody the poor among Asian migrants by virtue of the stronger

<sup>328</sup> To make matters worse these children are not issued Philippine passports because a birth certificate, which is non-existent in Islamic countries, is required. Cruz, Maricel, "Solon pushes probe of stateless Filipinos", <http://manilastandardtoday.com/news/-main-stories/top-stories/214916/solon-pushes-probe-of-stateless-filipinos.html> (04.09.2016).

<sup>329</sup> Photographer Philippe Chancel, for example, describes migrant construction workers in the United Arab Emirates, who are mostly Indians and Pakistanis, as "the new slaves" of the Gulf. Hume, Tim, "Photographer captures 'new slaves' of the Gulf", <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/11/11/world/meast/emirates-workers-art/index.html> (04.09.2016).

<sup>330</sup> The *khafel* system is a sponsorship system for recruitment, a form of franchise to import foreign labor granted to loyal subjects, which thrives on bringing in ever-increasing numbers of foreign workers willing to pay money for their jobs.

discrimination and exploitation they experience. As such the Asian Church provides pastoral care in two ways.

### Teachings on Migration

The most dominant expression of pastoral care of migrants by the Asian Church is the provision of moral guidance and vision. Even when the Federation of Asian Bishops (FABC) had not yet issued formal statements on migration, for example, the bishops of the Philippines (1988) and Taiwan (1989) released their own statements on migration. It was in its Final Statement for its Fifth Plenary Assembly (1990) that the FABC makes a clear link for the first time between poverty and migration by pointing at how poverty "drives both men and women to become migrant workers, often destroying family life in the process" (2.2.1).<sup>331</sup> In 1993 the Korean Church also addressed the issue of undocumented migrants and their problems through a statement of the Justice and Peace Committee which emphasized the need to look at the issue from a human rights perspective and to go beyond national approach to embrace a "mature citizens' consciousness and conscious solidarity with the global family."<sup>332</sup> Moreover, subsequent plenary assemblies of the FABC after its Fifth Plenary Assembly included discussions or references to migration urging special attention to the displaced, e.g. political and ecological refugees and migrant workers. FABC VI, for example, exhorts the faithful to welcome these marginalized and exploited people for "in welcoming them we expose the cause of their displacement, work toward conditions for a more human living in community, experience the universal dimension of the Kingdom (Gal. 3:28) and appreciate new opportunities for evangelization and intercultural dialogue."<sup>333</sup> These statements are complemented by initiatives such as the FABC Office for Human Development's symposium on Filipino migrant workers in Asia and the Faith Encounters in Social Action's (FEISA)

<sup>331</sup> Rosales, Gaudenico/Arevalo, Catalino (Eds.), *For All The Peoples of Asia: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1970–1991*, New York 1992, 276–277.

<sup>332</sup> As quoted in Battistella, Graziano, "The Poor in Motion: Reflections on Unauthorized Migration", in: *Asian Christian Review*, No. 4 (2010) 2, 76.

<sup>333</sup> Eilers, Franz-Josef (Eds.), *For All The Peoples of Asia Volume 2: Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992-1996*, Quezon City 1997, 11. Cf. also the FABC Sixth Plenary Assembly Background Paper, *Journeying Together in Faith with Migrant Workers in Asia* (FABC Papers, No. 73), Hong Kong 1995.

fifth gathering entitled “From Distrust to Respect...Reject to Welcome: Study Days on Undocumented Migrants and Refugees”<sup>334</sup>

### Religious and Social Services

The Asian Church also responds to the plight of migrants, in general, and vulnerable migrants such as undocumented workers in unskilled work, in particular, through advocacy and moral action. The Church in Asia recognizes the fact that discussions, analyses, and statements on the plight of migrants are not enough. FABC believes that vulnerable people on the move challenge the Asian Church to “evolve life-giving, service-oriented programs of action within the pastoral mission of the Church” (FABC VII, art.5).<sup>335</sup> Hence, FABC’s Colloquium on the Church in Asia in the Twenty-First Century, held in Thailand in 1997, urged dioceses to “more actively take up the cause of migrant workers through the legal process of the host country by providing financial support and lawyers to fight for their rights.”<sup>336</sup> To be sure, such exhortations have not fallen on deaf ears. My years of work on migration have brought me into close encounters with Asians (both clergy and lay as well as migrants themselves) in Asia and around the world where I have seen the manifold ways in which migrants receive pastoral care from a religious and social perspective.

The most common form of care is the provision of a chaplain who has the same cultural background as the migrants. The provision of the Mass in the migrants’ language, regardless of where they come from, are also quite common. For example, the Japanese Church provides Masses in Portuguese for its Brazilian migrants in the same way as many churches offer services in Indonesian, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese.<sup>337</sup> In some cases religious leaders from countries of origin regularly conduct pastoral visits. In the early years, meetings between representatives

<sup>334</sup> For a more comprehensive treatment on FABC and migration see Tan, Jonathan, “An Asian Theology of Migration”, in: Phan, Peter/Padilla, Elaine (Eds.), *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, New York 2014, 121–138.

<sup>335</sup> Eilers, Franz-Josef (Eds.), *For All The Peoples of Asia Volume 3: Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences Documents from 1997–2001*, Quezon City 2002, 11. Hereinafter referred to as FAPA III.

<sup>336</sup> Ebenda, 40.

<sup>337</sup> Cf. Kitani, Kanan, “Brazilian Migrants in Japan: Welcoming New Christian Members to Society and Its Potential Impact on the Japanese Church”, in: *CTC Bulletin* 28 (2012) 1, 90.

of Cambodian Catholic communities in Australia and New Zealand often coincided with the visit of Bishop Ramousse or one of the French priests who had worked in the Cambodian Church before 1975.<sup>338</sup> Then there is the valuable work being done by different religious congregations or FBOs (faith-based organisations) across the Asia-Pacific. For instance, there are three Jesuit centres in receiving countries that provide casework, medical and legal help, social and learning activities as well as accompaniment for migrants: the *Rerum Novarum* Centre in Taiwan, the *Yiutsari* Jesuit Migrant Centre in South Korea and the *Jesuit Social Centre* in Japan. The *Scalabrinians*, in the meantime, run a research centre on migration in the Philippines on top of providing staff or chaplains to Asian migrants or migration-related offices in various parts of Asia such as the *Catholic Tokyo International Centre*.

Many dioceses and episcopal conferences, such as the Philippines, also have offices, commissions or centres that are specifically for migrants and their families. A more detailed discussion on this topic is not possible here but let me mention the Catholic Church of Hong Kong as an example.<sup>339</sup> The diocese of Hong Kong, which is faced with the challenge of caring for the thousands of migrant domestic workers, particularly from the Philippines, has its own pastoral centre for migrant Filipinos which, as I have seen during my visit to the centre, is open to other migrants. The centre offers a variety of services from the more basic needs such as language classes, to the more urgent ones such as hotlines and legal assistance to those in distress, and the more strategic ones such as livelihood and reintegration programs. The centre also provides much-needed space for gatherings where migrant domestic workers not only attend to their needs but also that of their fellow migrants and, to a certain extent, the local community, especially through their volunteer work.

Moreover, the Hong Kong diocese has a *Pastoral Centre for Workers*, which is dedicated to serving all marginal(ised) workers in

<sup>338</sup> Cf. Hamilton, Andrew S.J., “Catholic Cambodian and Laotian Communities in Melbourne”, in: Richmond, Helen/Duk Yang, Myong (Eds.), *Crossing Borders: Shaping Faith: Mission and Identity in Multicultural Australia*, Sydney 2006, 169.

<sup>339</sup> For examples on Protestant churches see Chan, Judy, “Welcoming the Stranger: Christian Hospitality to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Hong Kong”, in: *CTC Bulletin* 28 (2012) 1, 41–61.

Hong Kong through outreach, educational programs, organising for advocacy, research and publications.<sup>340</sup> To be sure, the well-being of migrants is an important concern for the Church regardless of the stage of the migration process a migrant is in. I once participated, for example, at a pre-departure orientation session for Filipina domestic workers bound for the Middle East where the religious sister running the workshop literally told the participants, especially those going to Saudi Arabia, not to bring religious articles such as the rosary or the Bible due to the severe restrictions in religious practice in the kingdom.

Last but not least, it is noteworthy to mention here the various forms of pastoral care provided by migrants for their fellow migrants. The most common form of such pastoral care is helping fellow migrants in distress. Filipino migrant domestic workers in Saudi Arabia who are escaping from problematic working conditions, for example, often come to Batha because they know that many Filipinos frequent the place and will, most likely, get some help.<sup>341</sup> Informal and formal networks such as migrant associations based on ethnicity or occupation are also rich sources and means for dealing with the socio-cultural, political, and economic issues associated with migration.<sup>342</sup> Moreover, the warmth, camaraderie and profound human connection that characterise the meals that often take place in these groups' gatherings, e.g. after the Eucharistic celebration are, in themselves, iconic of the intangibles of pastoral care.<sup>343</sup>

## Conclusion

Without a doubt there are still a number of areas where pastoral care is needed or lacking.<sup>344</sup> What is clear in the preceding discussion,

<sup>340</sup> Cf. the centre's website [http://dpcwkln.hkcccla.org.hk/main\\_ENG.htm](http://dpcwkln.hkcccla.org.hk/main_ENG.htm).

<sup>341</sup> Cf. Johnson, Mark, "Surveillance, Pastoral Power and Embodied Infrastructures of Care among Migrant Filipinos in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia", in: *Surveillance and Society* 13 (2015) 2, 255–256.

<sup>342</sup> Cf. Cruz, Gemma Tulud, *An Intercultural Theology of Migration. Pilgrims in the Wilderness*, Leiden 2010, 82–90 for examples.

<sup>343</sup> Cf. my theological reflections on meals in the context of migration in Cruz, Gemma Tulud, *Toward a Theology of Migration: Social Justice and Religious Experience*, New York 2014, 138–139.

<sup>344</sup> See, for example, Catholic Tokyo International Centre's list of pastoral challenges in Gatpatan, Agnes, "Migrants in Japan", in: *Forum Mission* (2008), 157–159. Cf. also the list of factors to consider for inculturation in the context of migration in Cruz, Gemma Tulud,

however, is that the pastoral care of migrants in Asia is a multifaceted shared mission that is built on incarnational evangelization. It is not just owned and embraced by the clergy, religious, and pastoral agents but also by the migrants themselves. Moreover, it is about witness as *withness*, about accompaniment. It is about a Church of the poor where the poor, in this case the migrants, are not simply passive recipients but also active agents in the transformation of their lives, the Church, and the world.

"A New Way of Being Christian: The Contribution of Migrants to the Church", in: Padilla, Elaine/Phan, Peter (Eds.), *Contemporary Issues of Migration and Theology*, New York 2013, 108–112.

## The Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America

Carmem Lussi

The activities of the Church, described today as the Pastoral of Human Mobility, correlate with the history of the subcontinent's development. Latin America is notable for its countless specific features and regional and national distinctions. As it developed over the past five centuries, the *indígenas*, who originally inhabited these territories, were joined by peoples from all continents following successive waves of immigration and forced displacement, for example the deportation of Africans in the slave trade. Migrants were usually accompanied by missionaries of the Christian churches, who formed communities based on national, cultural or linguistic affiliations.

During the subcontinent's five-hundred-year history the inaugural churches provided pastoral care at the request of the migrants themselves and on the initiative of the local churches absorbing the waves of immigration. The Catholic Church devoted a great deal of time and effort to defining and responding to the challenges arising from this human mobility and it employed a wide range of pastoral strategies to deal with the consequences. On occasion, its activities involved consolidating ad hoc projects designed to assist specific groups of immigrants. As a rule, however, the Church engaged in a concerted series of measures requested or initiated by individuals or groups of migrants, which came together to form a structured ministry in the service of the local communities.

Historically speaking, the actions of the Church constituted a response to the challenges posed by human mobility in the regions with the largest migration flows. They took the form of a service within the local church provided to all worshippers, with the majority frequently being the immigrant population. Consequently, numerous parishes in countries with large migration flows, especially from Europe, only came to be established as such after a period of several years. They started out by providing a specific and specialised form of support for

migrants, although they had not been conceived or structured from the outset as a pastoral of human mobility. Theirs was a local ecclesiastical presence which was encouraged and fostered as a result of migration and frequently developed as the result of cooperation between the inaugural churches and those in the host countries.

### Historical elements

The waves of migration which resulted in a specific church ministry for the migrants mostly took place in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>345</sup> Many churches and religious orders (initially male and subsequently also female) began to accompany the migrants, thus becoming part of the migrant communities themselves and settling in their target countries, where they organised and ensured the provision of services, structures and programmes for them. This was the case particularly in Argentina and Brazil. The pastoral support was complemented by services in the fields of health, education, cultural promotion and, later on, via legal counsel and other responses to needs that arose. In addition to members of the secular clergy, those who undertook this process of ecclesiastical immigration<sup>346</sup> to the continent included the Steyler Missionaries (Divine Word Missionaries), the Redemptorists, the Capuchins and the Don Bosco Missions Association. Special mention must be made of Giovanni Battista Scalabrini<sup>347</sup> and the three institutes founded by him in support of the migrants, namely the Priestly Fraternity of the Missionaries of St. Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinian Missionaries), the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles Borromeo (Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters) and the St. Raphael Society.

The issue of migration consistently influenced the evolution of the Church as it responded to the events and changes which took place in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1937, a national committee was established

<sup>345</sup> Cf. also the information on the letter by Pope Leo XIII written in 1888 to the American bishops on this topic and on other historical data, described in: Gamba Ruiz, Ligia, "La Pastoral América Latina y El Caribe", in: Revista Esperanza V (2013), 4–11.

<sup>346</sup> Cf. Auzo, Nestor Tomás, *El éxodo de los pueblos: Manual de Teología y Pastoral de Movilidad Humana*, Bogotá 1994, 322–325.

<sup>347</sup> The biographical works on Scalabrini describe his deeds in detail, especially the most significant historical work: Francesco, Mario, *Giovanni Battista Scalabrini vescovo di Piacenza e degli emigrati*, Rome 1985. The most important work on the Scalabrinian Missionary Sisters is: Signor, Lice Maria, *Irmãs Missionárias de São Carlos Borromeo – Scalabrinianas 1895–1934*, vol. 1, Brasília 2005.

in Argentina in support of migrants. In 1951, it became the Catholic Argentinian Committee for Immigration, an institution which still exists today. The 1950s were decisive in respect of the Church's activities with regard to human mobility. In 1951, "the Holy Cf. founded an institution known as the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)"<sup>348</sup>. This was intended to function in conjunction with local churches, was recognised by the United Nations and enjoys international scope. It also established links with the Conferences of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean and with the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM).

In 1952, Pope Pius XII promulgated the Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia*, on the basis of which the Church later set up the Superior Council for Emigrants. In the wake of the motu proprio *Pastor Bonus* this body became the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. The same decade saw the consolidation of networking between the Conferences of the Bishops of Latin America, and the First General Assembly of the Latin American Episcopal Conference which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1955. Section 91 of its final document states: "Particular care must be taken to ensure that in all the countries of Latin America the work of spiritual assistance for migrants is performed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Apostolic Constitution *Exsul Familia* as well as the specific provisions decreed in individual cases by the Sacred Consistorial Congregation."<sup>349</sup> The issue of "human mobility" was also addressed in the other General Assemblies of the Latin American Episcopal Conference.<sup>350</sup>

During the 1990s the problem of migration and flight became increasingly important both in Latin America and throughout the

<sup>348</sup> Auzo, Nestor Tomaás, *El éxodo de los pueblos*, op. cit., 386.

<sup>349</sup> CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad – Sección movilidad humana, *La Movilidad Humana en América Latina y El Caribe: Guía Pastoral* (Documentos CELAM, No. 169), Bogotá 2006, 67.

<sup>350</sup> CELAM, *Encuentro Continental Latino Americano de Pastoral de las Migraciones*, Bogotá 2010; *People on the Move*, No. 116 (2012), 213–284, here: 237–239. The final document published by the Fifth General Assembly of the Episcopate of Latin America and the Caribbean in Aparecida in 2007 addresses the issue most comprehensively. Cf. Gonçalves, A. J., *Migraciones en el Documento Final de la V Conferencia del CELAM*; Lussi, Carmem, "Discípulos migrantes e migrantes misionários: Elementos de pastoral da mobilidade humana a partir do Documento de Aparecida", in: *Encontros Teológicos 3* (2008), 135–152.

world. Although not many official statements on human mobility were issued at this time, the local churches in Latin America responded to the emerging challenges in the form of effective pastoral endeavours. The ministry afforded to the parishes lent them succour, gave the ecclesiastical statements, plans and documents substance and raised important new questions. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of people on the move swelled and the questions put to politicians on migration and forced displacement, as well as appeals at the socio-cultural and legal level, grew more assertive. The Second Vatican Council<sup>351</sup> provided fresh impetus on these topics, enabling the subsequent General Assemblies of the Latin American Episcopal Conference and the local churches on the continent to take some important steps. After Argentina (1951), Chile (1955) and Paraguay (1970)<sup>352</sup>, other countries set up different kinds of pastoral bodies and structures with the aim of organising and implementing a Pastoral of Human Mobility, albeit under several different names.

While the focus had initially been on those who had left their countries of origin, the emphasis now broadened to include family members who had been left behind, communities which had lost or integrated a certain number of people, and groups in transitional situations, such as those stranded at borders, and various categories of people on the move. In 1985, a decision by the Conference of the Bishops of Latin America at the 20<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Assembly of the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM) resulted in the establishment of a Secretariat for the Pastoral of Human Mobility (SEPMOV), which has had its own office and employees since 1987. The reorganisation of CELAM from 2003 onwards resulted in the Pastoral of Human Mobility renouncing its status as a secretariat affiliated to the general secretariat of CELAM and becoming “one of the three sections forming the Department of Justice and Solidarity, chaired by a bishop who, together with the bishops heading the other sections, makes up the departmental committee”<sup>353</sup>.

<sup>351</sup> On the subject of immigration at the Second Vatican Council, cf. Lussi, C., *A missão da Igreja no contexto da mobilidade humana*, Petrópolis 2006, 21–30.

<sup>352</sup> Auzo, Nestor Tomás, *El éxodo de los pueblos*, op. cit., 334–337.

<sup>353</sup> Gamba Ruíz, Ligia, “La Pastoral América Latina y El Caribe”, op. cit., 7. During the writing of this article, the circulation of the Declaration of Honduras has resulted in a decision to “found the Latin American and Caribbean Migration Network, Shelter and Human Trafficking (CLAMOR) in order to consolidate the affiliations between the institutions.”

### Certain emerging characteristics

An attempt at an analysis of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America would require large-scale, comprehensive and diachronic research in order to do justice to the immense wealth and diversity of experiences and realities among migrants and within the Church. Within the limits of this article and taking the existing bibliography<sup>354</sup> as a starting point, especially the CELAM sources published since the 1990s, I will now draw attention to certain aspects of ecclesiastical activities in this area which emerge upon further study.

The First Pastoral Conference on Human Mobility, held in 2014, in which all the principal institutions active in the field in Latin America and the Caribbean participated, constituted an important frame of reference for both the form and method of pastoral care in the region. The aim of the conference was to promote the recognition, defence and furtherance of the lives, rights and dignity of people on the move. Taking due account of their suffering and affliction, historical memory, an exchange of experience, evaluation of structures and new human scenarios, the intention was to develop and implement guidelines for action in the various fields of pastoral activity.<sup>355</sup> The conference was a benchmark in the process of strengthening and expanding the scope of action of the Pastoral of Human Mobility on the continent.

The CELAM documents describe and systematise the practical aspects of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in different national contexts within Latin America.<sup>356</sup> They reveal a number of characteristics which

The Declaration of Honduras included the conclusions of the Latin American Seminar on Migration, Flight and Human Trafficking, which was funded by CELAM's Department of Justice and Solidarity (DEJUSOL) and held in Tegucigalpa from 14–17 September 2016. Cf. <http://www.celam.org/detalle.php?id=MTg4OA> (29.11.2016). The CELAM Declaration of Honduras may be accessed at: [http://www.celam.org/noticelam/Images/img\\_noticias/doc1581a48d1bafaf\\_02112016\\_213pm.pdf](http://www.celam.org/noticelam/Images/img_noticias/doc1581a48d1bafaf_02112016_213pm.pdf) (29.11.2016).

<sup>354</sup> Cf. *Manual de Teología y Pastoral de La Movilidad Humana*, 1994; this guide was compiled for the instruction of the clergy; the pastoral guidelines *La movilidad humana en América Latina y El Caribe*, 2006, which were drawn up by CELAM (a new edition is currently being planned), and the volume of documents from the First Pastoral Conference on Human Mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was compiled in 2014: CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad, *I Congreso de Pastorales de Movilidad Humana*. Panamá, 12–16 May 2014, Bogotá 2016.

<sup>355</sup> Cf. CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad, *Documento Final del I Congreso de Pastorales de Movilidad Humana América Latina y el Caribe*. Panamá, 12–16 May 2014.

<sup>356</sup> In 2011 and 2012, CELAM conducted a study into the nature, characteristics and effectiveness of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin American countries. The results

manifest themselves in practical activities such as: concentrating on the lives of the migrants in the fullest sense and on their role as agents; shaping the Pastoral of Human Mobility as a response to everyday situations; and networking between the institutions and the various countries.

The first and most important characteristic that can be gleaned from the Pastoral of Human Mobility activities is the need to plan, organise, conduct and foster them in such a way that they focus on *the lives of the migrants in the fullest sense and their active roles* in all the processes affecting them. The Pastoral of Human Mobility carries out its activities in accordance with the views and approach of Latin American theologians and in keeping with the spirit of Medellín and the following General Assemblies of the Latin American Episcopal Conference. It is acutely aware of the fact that the migrants and other groups of people on the move are bearers of faith and culture and that the Church is obliged to demonstrate a commitment to these people in view of their human dignity, supporting them as they make their own way, enhancing their potential and, where necessary, protecting their lives: “It is essential to maintain an awareness of the rights and the human dignity of those who find themselves in a situation of mobility.” Furthermore, instead of viewing such individuals as problematic, it is important to regard them from a Gospel standpoint, namely as an opportunity for an exchange among peoples, their cultures and their values. As stated in the final document of Aparecida, those treading the paths of exodus are, above all, preachers of the Gospel. (DA 119)<sup>357</sup> The subjects’ active role in the situation of mobility is a priority at the various levels of the Pastoral of Human Mobility. It finds expression in an enhanced ability to listen; in strategies of engaging with and accepting those entering or passing through local communities; in an attitude of openness that acknowledges otherness; in an appreciation of the history, life, belief and uniqueness of each individual; in promoting active involvement and incorporation into everyday local

are available in: CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad – Sección de Movilidad Humana, Información sobre la Pastoral de la Movilidad Humana en América Latina y el Caribe, Informe Instrumento n. 1 de las Conferencias Episcopales, 2011–2012. Several countries have publications at their disposal which contain detailed information about the Pastoral of Human Mobility in its respective contexts. Some of these are listed in the bibliography. In addition to the institutions affiliated directly to the Episcopal Conferences, other stakeholders such as groups of volunteers, associations and religious orders on the continent have made their mark via campaigns, projects and publications on the topic, contributing, in the process, to the spectrum and diversity of responses by the churches on the continent.

<sup>357</sup> CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad, Documento final, op. cit., 3.

life. The Pastoral of Human Mobility recognises and consolidates the active role of individual migrants; this finds official expression in the Episcopal Conferences. Being community-based and supported by community leaders and local parishes, the Pastoral of Mobility can also act from the bottom up. It seeks to “ensure that the Church acts as a mother, venturing forth to meet others, serving as a hospitable house, as a permanent school of missionary community” (DA 384)<sup>358</sup>.

A theological premise provides the background for this characteristic, which takes the perspective of the poor as its point of reference rather than theoretical or institutional standards – a standpoint expressed admirably by Costadoat: “Free action, via which the poor move forward in life, is a spiritual act [...], its aim and substance is a life of dignity, which is deemed feasible and realised in the face of the existing order [...]. First and foremost, this commitment to life by the poor constitutes a continual attempt to move away from death towards life through the power of the Spirit. It is the Spirit which sustains this hunger for life, without which no life could exist. [...] It can be described as a battle which, in the strict sense of the term, represents a form of spiritual action. What we mean by this is that its subject is the Spirit of God.”<sup>359</sup> This is why “it has been understood that the migrants and their relatives must be the first individuals to be integrated, so that they are the self-determining subjects of their own development. [...] The work is intensified if it also takes account of the migrants’ relatives.”<sup>360</sup>

The second characteristic which distinguishes the Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America is its *shaping in accordance with a cycle. It takes reality as its starting point and responds actively and creatively to it*, returning, time and again, to this reality in the sense of a cyclical movement with each evaluation, each new wave of migration and each time the responses to the challenges recognised

<sup>358</sup> Gonçalves, Alfredo J., Migraciones en el Documento Final de la V Conferencia del CELAM, op. cit., 4.

<sup>359</sup> Costadoat, Jorge, “Seguimiento de Cristo en América Latina”, in: Gregorianum 93 (2012), 573–592, here: 577–578.

<sup>360</sup> Gamba Ruiz, Ligia, Pastoral de migrante en Honduras: Trabajo en redes 2009, 4: [http://www.csem.org.br/2009/pastoral\\_del\\_migrante\\_en\\_honduras\\_ligia\\_ruiz.pdf](http://www.csem.org.br/2009/pastoral_del_migrante_en_honduras_ligia_ruiz.pdf). A similar conviction is expressed in the final document of the first conference of the Pastoral on Human Mobility in 2014. Page three of the document states: “It is important to realise that the Pastoral of Human Mobility provides support for those on the move, but also that these individuals are active participants when it comes to their integration within a new society and to the restoration of their dignity.”

and to the subjects of migration require revision and re-planning. It is a pastoral which absorbs the inherent features, modalities and strategies demanded by the reality and needs of the individuals concerned. A holistic view of the individual, which is typical of the pastoral and theological approach in Latin America, together with a commitment rooted in Gospel teachings and advocating justice and solidarity are responsible for the diverse creative strategies and pronounced flexibility in the organisation of programmes and processes, including at the institutional level. Indeed, “the pastoral care of the Church is characterised by the priority given to human beings seen in holistic terms”<sup>361</sup>. In the context of human mobility its efforts are directed towards making migration a phenomenon to learn from as opposed to dismissing it as a limitation, viewing it as an encounter of peoples and cultures and not as a clash of civilisations, as a positive force of development and participation and not of marginalisation.<sup>362</sup> In the words of Pope Francis: “Our faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society’s most neglected members.”<sup>363</sup> As a result, the continual changes and innovations in life and mobility call upon us to demonstrate flexibility and the creative ability to reinvent the Pastoral of Human Mobility as well as ways of believing<sup>364</sup> and of serving the Christian community.

The ability to reinvent and develop by adapting to the circumstances and vagaries of life and to other human beings is as much a question of pastoral skill as it is an aspect of theological fidelity to the missionary logic of the incarnation. In a sense, it continues the “hermeneutic circle which Latin American theologians have formed between the poor’s experience of faith in Christ and its specific manifestation through knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth, as told by the Gospels. This evangelisation has helped the poor members of Christian communities to better comprehend the Christ of their faith.”<sup>365</sup>

<sup>361</sup> Bentoglio, Gabriele, “Linhas de orientação pastoral da Igreja para a realidade migratória atual”, in: *People on the Move* 116 (2012), 111–124, here: 119.

<sup>362</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>363</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World, Vatican City 2013, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html), No. 186.

<sup>364</sup> On the various forms of faith created by human mobility, cf. Lussi, Carmem, *Migrações e alteridade na comunidade crista: Ensaio de teologia da mobilidade humana*, Brasília 2015.

<sup>365</sup> Costadoat, Jorge, “Seguimento de Cristo en América Latina”, *op. cit.*, 574.

A third distinguishing feature of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America is the *constant and primary focus on efforts and activities in networking between the institutions* and between the various countries. This can take various forms, such as the establishment or consolidation of networking activities with related institutions in the ecclesiastical environment; studies, participation, awareness-raising and mobilisation with the aim of gaining political influence; and practical collaboration with government agencies and non-governmental organisations, academies and churches.

The obligations formulated by the Pastoral of Migrants and Refugees at the conclusion of the First Pastoral Conference on Humanity in 2014 highlight this characteristic of the Latin American Pastoral of Mobility: “To further the promotion of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in conjunction with the networks [...]; to promote the active role of migrants, refugees and displaced persons [...]; to influence legislative and political processes [...] and to give vibrancy and strength to encounters and dialogue between the bishops, the Episcopal Conferences and the various stakeholders responsible for shaping the Pastoral of Migrants, Refugees and Displaced Persons.”<sup>366</sup> The main focus is on the defence and fostering of dignified lives for the subjects of human mobility at the various stages of their migration paths. As a result, the Pastoral of Human Mobility is able to reach consensus with the stakeholders as circumstances dictate. It empowers itself and, in so doing, passes that power on to the subjects of human mobility. It exerts an influence on the processes which are conducive to life and the defence of human rights, which consolidate the steps taken towards an identity of faith and culture and support the active role played by these sections of the population and the local societies welcoming the immigration flows. The main focus and motivation for networking and the creation of links between the churches in the places of origin, those en route and those in the places of destination is the “promotion of justice and the indictment of abuses to which the migrants are subjected by courageously defending their human rights [...] in favour of the emigrant families.”<sup>367</sup>

<sup>366</sup> CELAM, Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad, Documento final, *op. cit.*, 4.

<sup>367</sup> Conferencia del episcopado mexicano/US Catholic Bishops, *Juntos en el camino de la esperanza. Ya no somos extranjeros: Carta pastoral 2003*, No. 43f.

Transnational and cross-institutional collaboration ranges from intermittent cooperation in emergencies to the “preparation of catechetical materials culturally suited to the migrant workers” and the training of employees working in the service of the Pastoral of Human Mobility and in the interests of “cross-border cooperation”.<sup>368</sup> The systematic revision of the Pastoral of Human Mobility in Honduras attests to the fact that “the strategic lines which develop and simultaneously consolidate the Pastoral of Human Mobility are the following: raising awareness of the phenomenon of human mobility, supportive attention and the promotion of human rights, research, public relations work, communication and political influence.”<sup>369</sup>

Activities performed in the context of networks, partnerships and collaborations with related institutions and sister churches are vital if the Pastoral of Human Mobility is to achieve its long-term goal: “In the light of the ‘faces of the suffering Jesus Christ’ (cf. Puebla 31–39) of those treading the paths of the world, [the personnel involved in the Pastoral of Human Mobility] felt themselves called upon to perform prophetic acts of increasing effectiveness in order to promote structural change for the good of the itinerant people”<sup>370</sup>, this within the Church and in society, at grassroots level, in local and higher level communities, in drafting legislation and a migration policy, and in the reissuing of the pastoral guidelines for the Pastoral of Human Mobility for Latin America.

### Perennial challenges and unanswered questions

The Pastoral of Human Mobility in Latin America regularly responds to changes in the phenomena of migration, forced displacement and other forms of human mobility and adapts to the processes of adjustment made by the churches at local, national and regional level. It is a ministry regarded in Latin America as “an area of social pastoral care provided by the Catholic Church”. This is also the guise in which it appears in institutional terms, be it at the level of CELAM or in manifold national contexts. At the same time, it is a missionary pastoral performed as a cross-sectional task mainly at grassroots level, such as in the many parishes and the basic Christian communities. This requires catechesis and the liturgy as well as the training of community

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 52f.

<sup>369</sup> Gamba Ruiz, Ligia, *Pastoral de migrante en Honduras*, op. cit., 2.

<sup>370</sup> CELAM – Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad, Documento final, op. cit., 6.

leaders to encourage and support the parishes in the development and coordination of the offices in the Christian communities.

The scope of action and tasks incorporates the advocacy of a comprehensive view, as formulated by the bishops attending the Conference of Bishops of Mexico and the United States of America when they realised that the remit of the Pastoral of Human Mobility “concerned both pastoral responses and issues pertinent to immigration policy”<sup>371</sup>, including the provision of support, religious and spiritual education and the celebration of faith, such as the annual practice of preparing and holding bible study groups on weekly themes affecting the migrants, organised in Brazil by the Pastoral Care Service for Migrants (SPM). “It is a unique, but holistic pastoral, for it also includes prophetic and liturgical aspects.”<sup>372</sup> At present, the Pastoral of Human Mobility is subdivided into four areas at the level of CELAM<sup>373</sup>: the Apostolate of the Sea<sup>374</sup>, the Pastoral of Migrants<sup>375</sup>, the Tourism Pastoral and the Pastoral of Migrant Workers<sup>376</sup>.

<sup>371</sup> Conferencia del episcopado mexicano & US Catholic Bishops, op. cit., No. 40.

<sup>372</sup> Hermanas misioneras de san Carlos Borromeo Scalabrinianas, *Las pastorales de Movilidad Humana: Tomado en base al I Congreso de las pastorales de Movilidad Humana y al trabajo Latinoamericano durante los últimos 30 años*, Bogotá 2015, 15.

<sup>373</sup> In the 2015 report published to mark CELAM’s sixtieth anniversary celebrations it is made clear that the Pastoral of Human Mobility has adhered to CELAM’s pastoral guidelines on this issue since 2003 and is developing a programme which includes the following main strategies: “organisation, training and human promotion (direct social support), the celebration of faith and culture, systematisation and community”. CELAM, Departamento de Justicia y Solidaridad – Sección de Movilidad humana, *Pastoral de Movilidad Humana en el CELAM (1987–2015): 28 años de camino*, Bogotá 2015, 7. The overall plan issued by CELAM for the years 2015–2019 lists just two programmes connected with the Pastoral of Human Mobility: Programme 38: Migrants and Itinerant People: Its specific objective is “to collaborate with the Episcopal Conferences to further a culture of encounter and the support of itinerant people in their personhood, in order to facilitate cooperation, inclusion and integration in a globalised world in the countries of origin, transit and destination.” The second programme is No. 39: Refugees, Displaced Persons and Human Trafficking: The specific goal of this programme is “to encourage the Episcopal Conferences to promote pastoral counselling and humanitarian aid for, and the defence of, the human rights of refugees, those displaced because of social, civic, political or religious conflict and the victims of human trafficking and other forms of slavery”.

<sup>374</sup> This provides assistance for sailors, those working at sea and for fishermen and their families.

<sup>375</sup> This comprises various categories of migrants and immigrants, such as: displaced persons, refugees, relocated persons, those exiled from their native countries, migrants passing through, deported persons, stateless persons, expatriates, cross-border commuters, seasonal workers, victims of human trafficking and their families.

<sup>376</sup> These include onshore transport workers, airline staff, circus performers, coffee pickers and travelling people (“gypsies”).

The specific form the Pastoral of Human Mobility takes in each individual country depends on the respective characteristics and the capacity to put into practice the pastoral responses formulated by the local churches. This ranges from providing help in emergencies via religious and spiritual support to exercising political influence and networking in order to pool forces in action-oriented networks at middle and local levels. Guaranteeing quality and continuity in the face of such wide diversity and exacting requirements is a major challenge which invariably remains unaccomplished. Inadequate immigration policy, which is frequently an anti-immigration policy, shortcomings in respect for human rights in the public sector and threats to the lives and dignity of migrants, refugees and itinerant people are crucial issues which pose a constant challenge to the competence, credibility and effectiveness of the Pastoral of Human Mobility.

Witness to God's love, support for the Christian community which helps to give meaning and comfort to those treading the paths of human mobility, encouragement and solidarity to fortify the steps of faith, transforming local residents and migrants into a single church community, are not just challenges. They also constitute an impassioned plea which triggers just as much unease within the communities and among the leaders of the Pastoral of Human Mobility as it does among the individuals actually on the move. These are challenges which the churches of Latin America must acknowledge and interpret and to which they must tirelessly attempt to provide concrete and suitable responses.

## Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees in Africa

David Holdcroft

Pastoral care, in the context of the asylum seeker, refugee and migrant, can be defined as the practice of welcome and hospitality extended towards *the other* in tending to their spiritual, practical and emotional needs.<sup>377</sup> This emphasis upon initial welcome and hospitality, while having deep historical and biblical roots, also implies an element of risk: it demands change of both the refugee but also, albeit more subtly, the host, whether referring to person, community or country. Deeply held identities are thrown into question in a complex process of negotiation and change. This process is often made still more complex and burdensome when refugees are incarcerated for long periods of time in a camp or in urban settings where there exist formidable barriers to integration. In this chapter I will explore some of the common themes marking the pastoral care of the migrant and refugee on the African continent while arguing that the intractability of many forced displacement scenarios, giving rise to long term incarceration in camps or incarceration-like situations in urban settings, invites new understandings of the needs that such care attempts to address. This in turn asks of us new ways of exercising such ministry aimed at helping to facilitate refugees' full participation – economic, religious, cultural, and so on – in their new societies.

My experience with such material comes almost exclusively from the southern African region and what little contribution I can make, albeit somewhat presumptuously, is in the main based on the situations for forced displacement there.

*Homo sapiens sapiens*, the modern human being, is believed to have evolved in Africa, somewhere between 140,000 and 290,000

<sup>377</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. Cor Unum, Welcoming Christ in Refugees and forcibly Displaced Persons. Pastoral Guidelines, Vatican City, 2013, No. 82.

years ago.<sup>378</sup> By the 100,000 year this group inhabited most parts of Africa while, at the same time, a relatively small group or groups, perhaps comprising as few as fifty individuals, arrived in the Middle East. Sometime before 40,000 years ago, there were *homo sapiens sapiens* inhabiting Europe while, a little later, 35,000 years ago, they were living in Australia, and 30,000 years ago were in China. North America was reached from between 15,000 and 30,000 thousand years ago and South America, the furthest migration point, was reached sometime before 12,000 years ago.

Thus the movement of peoples, whether voluntary or forced, has been a characteristic of all human endeavour, and has its longest history within the African continent. It is less clear, however, as to what kind of movements we are considering using our modern nomenclature. While references to refugee-like movements and the practice of extending help to people taking flight from political regimes have been found in texts written 3,500 years ago, during the early Middle Eastern empires of the Hittites, Babylonians, Assyrians and ancient Egyptians, there is no such known record from within sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>379</sup>

The contemporary understanding of the term refugee, with its political dimension, is, however, distinctly European in origin and relatively recent in its etymology: it was first used in relation to the Huguenots who, in 17<sup>th</sup> century France, were faced with the removal of their right to practice the Protestant religion.<sup>380</sup> Despite government efforts to keep them in the country, between 200,000 and 500,000 people fled, many for England, whose government, seeing the political and economic advantages of having well-educated people of the Protestant religion on their shores, organised land grants and other benefits for them. This arguably marks the first documented, organised political response to a forced migration and demonstrates

<sup>378</sup> Brauer, Gunther, "The evolution of modern human beings: a comparison of the African and non African evidence", quoted in Reader, John, *Africa: a biography of a continent*, London 1998, 91ff.

<sup>379</sup> Cf. Holdcroft, David, "Debunking the myths: Migration in the age of ISIL and Ebola", in: Chiedza: Journal of Arrupe College Jesuit School of Philosophy and Humanities 17 (2015) 2, 204–220, here: 205; see also <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid=1278&HistoryID=ab18&track=pthc> (22.07.2016).

<sup>380</sup> Haddad, Emma, *The Refugee in International Society: Between Sovereigns*, Cambridge 2008, 51, cited in: Holdcroft, David, op. cit., 205–206.

well the complexity of motivations that continue to mark social and political responses to migrations today.<sup>381</sup>

The cause of the 17<sup>th</sup> century flight was the French state's desire to create a political identity for itself, in this instance one based on adherence to a particular religion, Catholicism.<sup>382</sup> Behind much displacement since then, one can see similar attempts by governments and, more recently, non-state actors, to establish a political identity based on a particular ethnicity, religion or culture or, more commonly, a combination of these.

Such forces – here I think of *El Shabaab* and *Boko Haram* – are prevalent in contemporary Africa and form part of the cause of much of its forced displacement. In particular, conflicts that have their basis in ethnicity or, more correctly, the political manipulation of ethnic rivalries, are listed among the causes of more intractable displacements such as that arising out of the Rwandan genocide.

As such, it is only within the last two years that the African continent seen as a region has been surpassed by the Middle East in terms of the numbers of forcibly displaced, with a little over nineteen million persons. However in 2015 six of the top ten refugee producing nations remain within the African continent.<sup>383</sup>

At the same time, there is a sense that, because of the absence of significant geographical barriers to human movement within the continent, with the groupings of language families that enable quick take-up of effective communication, and with the presence of multiple "push factors" as well as, less commonly, "pull factors," migration continues to form a significant part of the African story and identity.

This realisation has important ramifications which in some cases mark as distinct aspects of the various responses to migration on the African continent. While there are undoubted difficulties and tensions, some of which spill over into so-called xenophobic violence such as was seen in South Africa in May 2008 and April 2015, the former of

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, 51ff.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>383</sup> Cf. UNHCR Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2015, Geneva 2016, <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf> (20.08.2019) The actual number was 19,127,663 in all categories with Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, DR Congo, Central African Republic and Eritrea forming six of the ten highest refugee producing countries.

which led to the deaths of 63 people and the short term displacement of some 100,000 others, one can say that it is rare to see the politics of exclusion of the kind familiar in European, North American or Australian contexts as prominent in African politics.

One may put this down to a number of factors cited above but extending to concepts of *umoja* or *ubuntu* and a shared history where migration features prominently. Whatever the reason, attempts to create national identities of the kind witnessed in France in the 1600s seem less familiar in post colonial Africa. What is prevalent, however, is that conflicts due in the main to competition for resources in some cases exploit ethnic, religious and other social fracture lines giving the appearance of ethnic “wars.”

South Africa, home to the second biggest economy on the continent and its most industrialised country, is an interesting case study in its varying attitudes to migration. A long colonial history of utilisation and exploitation of migrant labour in order to retain absolute control over industrial relations and labour costs in the mining sector has led to a deep hostility to the potential of migrant labour to undercut local living and working conditions. The political exploitation of these mostly latent sensibilities was cited as a contributing factor to the sudden nationwide outbreak of xenophobic violence in 2008 and again in 2015.<sup>384</sup>

Notwithstanding, South African migration policy, post-apartheid, has varied between the desire to limit and control the incoming movement of peoples, and the recognition of both the role and the potential positive contribution that current migrants and refugees can play in its economic development as well as that of their countries-of-origin. Such ambivalence is notable also in Tanzania’s history of response towards the Burundian people within its borders, and elsewhere on the continent, and is in marked contrast to much recent European migration history which is dedicated to measures to avoid the invoking of obligations to accept and process asylum seekers by preventing them from reaching national frontiers. The narrative in such situations is framed as having less to do with the potential for economic development and more to do with the exercise of charity

<sup>384</sup> Cf. for example <https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02167/04lv02264/05lv02303/06lv02317/07lv02318/08lv02323.htm> (22.07.2016).

seen as anti-economic development and indeed an inhibition to genuine prosperity.

Moving specifically to pastoral care for migrants and refugees, the *Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People – Cor Unum* counsels that, “the Church [must seek] [...] to be present with and among the refugee community, accompanying them during their flight, their period of exile, and their return to the home community or country of resettlement.”<sup>385</sup> Practically this hospitality involves, “attentive listening and mutual sharing of life stories,” which requires, “an openness of heart, a willingness to make one’s life visible to others and a generous sharing of time and resources”<sup>386</sup>

The document envisions that such tasks will be enacted by the local Church whose concern for people on the move “[...] must be visible in the services of parishes whether territorial or personal [...] religious congregations, charitable organisations, ecclesial movements, associations and new communities” and whose primary geographical locus is the parish.<sup>387</sup>

Countless parishes throughout Africa, both in cities and rural areas, provide ample testimony to this approach, although the lack of resources and competition for existing resources among poorer parishioners can create tensions, with forced migrants tending to congregate in parishes seen as more conducive to their welcome as a result.

Notwithstanding, parish based ministry which seeks to “mainstream” or integrate migrants too quickly into the local geographically defined community risks not apprehending the complexity and length of the migration process, particularly when such asylum seekers or refugees are faced with often years-long waits for processing of their applications which can lead to significant barriers in their obtaining accommodation, medical care, education for their children and, perhaps most importantly, employment. Such people live on the edge of unrecoverable poverty, forced into informal *piece-work*, long term

<sup>385</sup> Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. *Cor Unum, Welcoming Christ in Refugees and forcibly Displaced Persons. Pastoral Guidelines*, op. cit., 47.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, 48–49.

dependence on Church and other charitable organisations, the taking up of inappropriate marriages and other survival strategies, both appropriate and inappropriate. During this protracted time they are constantly reminded of their precarious status in the new country and can be vulnerable to corrupt authorities in almost every aspect of their lives.

In such situations refugees and migrants tend to rely on their own community resources and shared experience, a tendency sometimes difficult to understand for an outsider. In Johannesburg, a significant community of refugees and migrants from the Great Lakes region found themselves excluded by the parish priest when expressing the wish to continue with one French language mass every Sunday offered as an alternative to the English masses. They moved to another church which had lost its demographic base and to this day are bussed in to “their” masses every Sunday.

More positively the community in another parish has begun a meaningful dialogue with members of their congregation who are refugees, listening to their experience of living in the new country and the barriers they face. In this manner, practical measures are being planned but perhaps more importantly, in the mutual listening and dialogue, there is provided a validity for each group’s lived experience and, one hopes, an openness to the changes described in the opening paragraphs.

In Dzaleka Camp in Malawi, a still more complex situation arose as the local parish, struggling to sustain itself within a poor semi-rural area, found itself unable to provide priests more than once a month, on a weekday, to serve the sizeable Catholic refugee community residing in the camp situated eight kilometres away. This (camp) community had split more or less along ethnic lines with Congolese in the main using one Church in camp and Rwandan and Burundian utilising another, which made the task of the parish still more difficult. In this manner the Church community in camp was inadvertently reflecting and continuing the lines of conflict from which its members previously had fled.

While such is understandable, my argument is that in so doing the Church institutionally fails to understand the context of the refugee experience thereby denying such people a primary source of

assistance in eliciting meaning from their displacement. It has in this case failed to be a witness to the resurrection.

Such situations indicate a need for different kinds of pastoral response, ones that are less traditionally parish based – even if only temporarily – and which are aimed at eventual integration into parish life. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), an International Faith-based Organisation registered in Vatican City, has been able to provide priests, religious brothers and sisters, and what might be called teams of chaplains formally attached to its projects, to refugee camps and urban areas throughout Africa.

These arrangements provide essential presence of the Church in difficult places and situations, but are not to be seen as replacing the parish but rather completing its work. They are especially appreciated by people of a specific region or linguistic group, when the church from that originating area or country can mission their own clergy to be part of the JRS team. This provides linguistic and cultural support in what might otherwise be a challenging or even hostile environment and, in the case of Meheba camp in Zambia extended to the priest accompanying the refugees in their repatriation in Katanga Province in DR Congo. At least in sub-Saharan Africa this model of pastoral care is probably unique, however JRS must be careful not to ignore the international dimension of the refugee journey and the call – and objective – eventually to embody a “new kind of intentional pastoral community,” encompassing change on all sides where, “there is no longer Jew or Greek,.... for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”<sup>388</sup>

The model in Dzaleka has been built around such a priest whose linguistic skills encompass the languages of origin of many of the camp residents and whose accountability is at once to the organisation (Faith Based Organisation, in this case JRS) who provides both funding for the position and the necessary authority and permissions for the priest to operate within the camp as well as, at the same time, to the local Ordinary in whose archdiocese the camp lies. The presence is further facilitated by the lay director whose counsel has been able to help facilitate some actions towards the resolution of longstanding conflicts within the congregation, themselves which

<sup>388</sup> The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, London 1989, Paul’s Letter to the Galatians 3:28.

have to be seen in the context of the complex social dynamics of camp life and associated psychology of long term incarceration and displacement.

Importantly, the priest, acting in this manner, has been able to unite the congregations for major feast days and now offers mass in one temporary church in different languages thus blurring the ethnic lines as important steps towards uniting the congregation as one worshipping post conflict community.

The centre around which everything else revolves and which give the remainder orientation are the sacraments in general, and the Eucharist in particular. The genius of the Church is evident in its disposition to inclusion of different groups who may have previously been in the very conflict that gave rise the refugee flight and who now stand before the Eucharist as one community- in –Christ. To realise this vision however requires fidelity and the perseverance of a multi-disciplinary team supporting the priest to work through the numerous issues arising between different vulnerable groups of people worshipping under the one roof.

Pastoral care thus extends to support refugees and migrants who have particular vulnerabilities and who need pastoral counselling or referral to specialist psycho-social care such as counselling for post-traumatic stress. For the very act of forced displacement is itself a source of shock and potential trauma, the effects of which, more often than not, are exacerbated by the daily life of the camp where internecine violence continues, post-traumatic stress is acted out, and depression and other psychological disorders are endemic. These are exacerbated by, or associated with, feelings of bereavement, loneliness, separation, personal disappointments, and the inactivity and unemployment that characterises camp life. All these require skilled and often specialised responses in combination with continued sacramental ministry.

Another face of pastoral ministry happened in Meheba camp, northern Zambia, where the priest and pastoral team brought to the fore the concerns of refugees themselves. At the camp there had been a number of deaths, but there was little if any thought given to the impact of this on the lives of the residents in the camp, and no recording of the deaths. JRS, in this case, organised a simple register

of the dead, and so became known as the agency that looked after the dying, and accompanied their bereaved families. Similarly JRS in Angola registers the births of children to refugees as difficulties in obtaining documentation, combined with the unclear legal status of children born to asylum seekers and refugees, heightens the risk of their children becoming stateless, missing out on education and access to medical care and being extremely vulnerable to trafficking and other crimes.

A fourth dimension to this pastoral care is exercised in a context of advocacy, where a bishops' conference, or a region, can be invited to consider how they themselves are conducting their mission of pastoral care to those displaced. JRS has done this in at least three regions of Africa, suggesting ways in which migrants can be welcomed and incorporated further into the life of parishes and dioceses. Sometimes it has been possible to sponsor pastoral visits by bishops from the countries or areas of origin to visit their exiled flock. In Dzaleka the advocacy work has extended to a particular bishop where refugees and migrants are hosted, inviting him for confirmations and other occasions of celebration, and giving feedback on the pastoral work undertaken on his behalf, including in this context many of the difficulties and even conflicts that exist within the refugee congregation many of whom has been in the camp for periods of up to twenty years.

Another less well documented aspect of pastoral care involves the utilisation of international links within the Church or within FBOs such as JRS or the International Catholic Migration Commission often with cooperation from other actors such as the International Council of the Red Cross, to provide necessary preparation and documentation to marriages and administrative processes. Birth and baptismal certificates are often lost, and cross-border connections were able to complete the paperwork in a satisfactory manner. In at least one case siblings who were thought deceased were found living on the street in a large city through a series of Church parish and NGO networks and eventually reunited with a resettled sibling under a family reunification process.

The last aspect of pastoral work is that extended toward people of other faiths especially, in the African forced displacement context, Islam. John Paul II was specific in speaking of the vision of "human dignity which is based on the truth of the human being created in the

image of God [...] a profoundly religious vision which is shared not only by other Christians but also by many followers of the other great religions of the world [...]” from which one takes an imperative to be open to dialogue with such people in a pastoral care context.<sup>389</sup>

Like other aspects of pastoral work it is an area for much discernment: I have had Catholics come to me in Dzaleka Camp and ask me to explain why I should see Muslims as well as Christians. This question extended to the heart of the mandate of the organisations working in camp – including Faith Based Organisations such as JRS – that it was not given for us to exclude one group of people from our pastoral concern even on the basis of religion, while at the same time sacramental ministry being reserved for Catholics.

The welcome and hospitality of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Africa is a multi-dimensional phenomenon aimed at enabling the participants to negotiate the complex changes their new situation demands of them, while providing a social environment in which they can find safety and new dimensions to their faith. These new dimensions enable them to integrate the experience of movement – both positive and negative – into their current existence as well as opening them to the culture, characteristics and people of their new community. At the same time the host community must be empowered to a similar openness to accept these migrants and to the changes that may come as a result, such openness that may only be possible in faith. In so doing a new community is built, one that hopefully lives past the conflicts that initially gave rise to the refugee flight, and in which people of different cultures and even faiths can flourish together.

## The Response of the Church to the Challenge of Migration

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<sup>389</sup> John Paul II, Address to the Participants in the Assembly of the Council of the ICMC 12 November 2001 quoted in: Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People: *Cor Unum, Welcoming Christ in Refugees and forcibly Displaced Persons: Pastoral Guidelines*, Vatican City, 2013, op. cit., No. 111.

## Pastoral Care for and among Migrants – A Plea for “Catholic Diversity” within the Church

Luigi Sabbarese

Both Latin and Eastern canon law as well as regulations outside those codes recognise foreigners, itinerants, migrants, exiles, refugees, nomads and seafarers as special categories among Christians. Particular attention is given to them in legislation to ensure, above all, that they receive adequate pastoral care. Their special situation, involving constant moving from one place to another, makes it impossible for them to receive ordinary pastoral care. However, they must be able to receive the kind of care that would also be possible without a change of abode. It is essential for those on the move that they should be able to use pastoral ministry structures catering not just for a certain area but also for specific individuals.

Without elaborating on the whole of canon law<sup>390</sup> at this point, I would nonetheless like to look into the meaning and relevance of “catholic diversity” within the Church and to do so in consideration of the rules established by the Council<sup>391</sup>. This emphasis on diversity arises partly from the attention that the Church gives to migrants, which it has attempted to translate into the language of normative regulations.

A person-focused organisational structure is essential to guarantee pastoral care for migrants and to protect their legal status.

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<sup>390</sup> Cf. also Sabbarese, Luigi, *Girovoghi, migranti, forestieri e naviganti nella legislazione ecclesiastica*, Vatican City 2006. In this article I will refer summarily to the ideas I put forward in “La ‘cattolica diversità’ della Chiesa nella cura pastorale tra i migranti”, in: *Eastern Canon Law*, 1 (2012), 225–248.

<sup>391</sup> One of the most important documents here is undoubtedly Decree CD 18. For more detailed information I would refer readers to the drafting of CD 18 and to Council teachings on pastoral care for migrants, in: De Paolis, Velasio, “La pastorale dei migranti nei documenti conciliari”, in: *idem*, *Chiesa e migrazioni*, edited by Luigi Sabbarese, Vatican City 2005, 39–59; Ortiz, Miguel Angel, “La ‘especial solicitud por algunos grupos de fieles’ – El n. 18 del decreto ‘Christus dominus’ y la pastoral de la movilidad humana”, in: Erdő, Peter/Szabó, Peter (Eds.), *Territorialità e personalità nel diritto canonico ed ecclesiastico – il diritto canonico di fronte al terzo millennio*, Budapest 2002, 137–155.

This principle finds comprehensive application both in the provisions of canon law (e.g. the person-focused organisation of local churches<sup>392</sup> for migrants according to linguistic areas, nationalities and rites) and in other provisions outside the codes (e.g. Latin ordinariates for Eastern Church members in the diaspora<sup>393</sup>). What must be emphasised far more than structures, however, is the personal criterion. This is the foundation for the provision of special pastoral care in the ecclesiological context of *catholica varietas* as reflected in the relevant structures.

“More than any other theological discipline, canon law has systematically examined the phenomenon of migration. The scholars in this discipline provide the most specific interpretations and guidelines. They analyse the teachings of the Magisterium and emphasise the diversity of the pastoral care methods proposed. Moreover, considerable attention is paid to the phenomenon of mobility in the new codes of canon law initiated by the Second Vatican Council.”<sup>394</sup>

Canon law legislators have looked at the issue of pastoral care for migrants and pursued a variety of approaches in their research. They include, firstly, the approach taken by the Magisterium<sup>395</sup>, which has highlighted the progress, methods and structures that are mentioned in a variety of ecclesiastical documents – or at least in the most important ones – for the organisation of pastoral care for migrants. Secondly, there is the approach dealing primarily with formalised and non-formalised organisational structures, i.e. the right of migrants to special pastoral care, which is regularly confirmed by the Magisterium but has never been included in any special principles except in the instruction *Erga migrantes caritas Christi* (The Love of Christ towards Migrants, 2004).<sup>396</sup> Thirdly, there is the approach offering a thematic

<sup>392</sup> Cf. De Paolis, Velasio, “Parrocchia personale”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni: Dizionario socio-pastorale*, Cinisello Balsamo 2010, 783–789.

<sup>393</sup> Cf. Kaptijn, Astrid, “Gli Ordinariati per i fedeli cattolici orientali privi di gerarchia propria”, in: Gefaell, Pablo (Eds.), *Cristiani orientali e pastori latini*, Milan 2012, 233–267.

<sup>394</sup> Tassello, Giovanni/Deponti, Luisa/Proserpio, Felicina (Eds.), *Migrazioni e scienze teologiche: Rassegna bibliografica (1980-2007)*, Basel 2009, 19–20.

<sup>395</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the papal Magisterium concerning migrants see the outstanding study by Prencipe, Lorenzo, “I Papi e le migrazioni”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni: Dizionario socio-pastorale*, op. cit., 746–783.

<sup>396</sup> Schreiter, Robert, “Cattolicità”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni: Dizionario socio-pastorale*, op. cit., 106–107. “[...] The instruction gave considerable space to the structures and pastoral care practices that need to be in place in order to provide efficient

analysis which emphasises the origins, changes and current organisational structures governing special pastoral care for migrants.

With a view to broadening the paths taken by research so far,<sup>397</sup> I will focus primarily on the importance of individuals for the development of an alternative Church. In doing so I will also refer to the structures, but from the perspective of individuals. Furthermore I will look into the principle of personality which, along with the principle of territoriality, has been incorporated into organisational church structures, especially under Latin canon law.

### The ecclesiological foundation of an “alternative” church

If we are to focus on migrants as individuals who make up the “alternative” church it is only appropriate to take the path of ecclesiology.

In organising pastoral care for migrants it is advisable to look at the issue from an ecclesiological perspective, whereby both the code of canon law and the code of principles followed by Eastern churches can be suitably understood within an accurate concept of church. This makes it necessary to proceed not only on the basis of the sources, but also from the perspective of the migrants and of the special pastoral care that is due to them as Christians within a particular regional church – a church in which they themselves are a legitimate manifestation of the Church’s catholicity.

Neither pastoral care nor an organisational structure can make any real sense unless they are rooted in an understanding of the Church to which they seek to refer. In the context of such a conviction the first aspect which cannot be ignored concerns precisely the eccle-

pastoral care to migrants. Yet again we can see that such considerations are not merely functional or pragmatic, but that they embody a theology or spirituality of community that is geared especially to unity in diversity and expresses catholicity.” On the problematic nature of this instruction see De Paolis, Velasio, “L’Istruzione Erga migrantes caritas Christi: Aspetti canonici”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *La missione viene a noi: In margine all’Istruzione Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, Vatican City 2005, 111–138. On the novelty and the boundaries of the normative aspect of this instruction see Sabbarese, Luigi, “L’Ordinamento giuridico-pastorale dell’Istruzione Erga migrantes”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *La missione viene a noi: In margine all’Istruzione Erga migrantes caritas Christi*, op. cit., 139–169.

<sup>397</sup> An overview can be found in: Sabbarese, Luigi, “L’organizzazione della Chiesa nella cura pastorale per i migranti”, in: Tassello, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni e teologia: Sviluppi recenti*, “Studi emigrazione” 47 (2010), 409–443.

biological foundations and assumptions that justify the organisation of the Church in its pastoral care for migrants.<sup>398</sup> “The Church’s new self-perception is reflected in the migrant pastoral care it practises, especially with regard to the ecclesiological aspect. The regional church is called upon to embrace catholicity to an even greater extent. The new ecclesiological position, as emphasised in the writings of the Second Vatican Council, has had a great impact on the perception and practice of the Church in relation to pastoral care for migrants.”<sup>399</sup>

In the literature on canon law there has always been an attempt to focus on migrant pastoral care as a “subject for discussion” by referring to its theological and ecclesiological foundations.<sup>400</sup>

Every act of pastoral care takes place in an ecclesial and missionary context. Pastoral care for migrants also has its origins in the mystery of the Church. Pastoral care for them must be grounded in *communio* (i.e. fellowship) as its natural binding element precisely because they are uprooted and there is a danger that care for them might cease to be available. The special organisational structure providing this pastoral care makes it flexible. It is provisional and therefore continually being renewed.<sup>401</sup> However, this structure can only provide this within the community if it is based on it and remains focused on it.

Due to their specific nature, regional churches can become places where migrants can experience the profound unity of the

<sup>398</sup> For an in-depth treatment of this issue see Sabbarese, Luigi, “La cura pastorale per i migranti: alla ricerca di presupposti e fondamenti”, in: “Euntes Docete” 58 (2005), 269–284; Sabbarese, Luigi, “Per una pastorale dei migranti: Presupposti e fondamenti”, in: idem./Conn, James J. (Eds.), *Iustitia in caritate: Miscellanea in onore di Velasio De Paolis*, Vatican City 2005, 333–354.

<sup>399</sup> De Paolis, Velasio, “La cura pastorale dei migranti nella Chiesa: Una rassegna dei principali documenti”, in: *Quaderni di Diritto Ecclesiale* 21 (2008), 11–28.

<sup>400</sup> A similar focus to that adopted by De Paolis can be found in Beyer, Jean, “Fondamento ecclesiale della pastorale dell’emigrazione”, in: Direzione Generale dei Missionari Scalabriniani (Eds.), *Per una pastorale dei migranti: Contributi in occasione del 75° della morte di mons. G.B. Scalabrini*, Rome 1980, 128–148, and in: Beyer, Jean/Semeraro, Marcello (Eds.), *Migrazioni: Studi interdisciplinari*, vol. II, Rome 1985, 9–34. Other authors have recently shown an interest in the organisation of migrant pastoral care and they rightly emphasise the ecclesiological conditions or requirements for the rights of Christian migrants, e.g. Baura, Eduardo, “Movimientos migratorios y derechos de los fieles en la Iglesia”, in: *Ius Canonicum* 43 (2003), 51–86 and Coronelli, Renato, “La cura pastorale dei migranti nella Chiesa particolare”, in: *Quaderni di Diritto Ecclesiale* (2008), 29–59.

<sup>401</sup> Cf. De Paolis, Velasio, “La Chiesa e le migrazioni nei secoli XIX e XX”, in: *Ius Canonicum* 43 (2003), 32–36.

Church, preserve their cultural identity and use their own expression of faith, albeit with ethnic/linguistic, religious and devotional elements that are necessarily different from the ones which characterise the regional churches in their host country. The cultural elements form part of the economy of creation. As such, they are protected in their existence and self-understanding and are, where necessary, evangelised. This also applies to migrants. After all, they are the ones in whom the Church’s commission manifests itself as something which is the prerogative of the church alone: the evangelisation of their culture.

### Migrants in regional churches: a plea for “catholic diversity”

The presence of migrants in the regional churches is an important appeal to the Church to see itself increasingly as an instrument for increased diversity if it wishes to lead a life of authentic universality: “Universality must not be understood as uniformity, but as something that unites people as a *communio* (fellowship) of diverse people, respecting each individual as special and doing so by seeking their well-being.”<sup>402</sup>

The church is united and catholic by its very nature. Each regional church is catholic because it represents the one and only Church of Christ. This is why migrants who exercise their faith in a given country never feel like strangers wherever the Church of Christ celebrates the Eucharist as the source of unity. On the contrary, they create an awareness within the regional church that its members must be open to the Church’s universality and make its catholic nature more visible as something special.

As the focus of the Church’s pastoral ministry, human migration raises the question of renewal of life within the Church. It is not merely a question of the relationship between regional churches, the churches in the countries of origin and those in the receiving countries; it is a fundamental ecclesiological issue.<sup>403</sup>

<sup>402</sup> Vasil’, Cyril, “Alcune considerazioni sull’Istruzione EMCC dal punto di vista del diritto delle Chiese Orientali Cattoliche”, in: Pontificio Consiglio della Pastorale per i Migranti e gli Itineranti (Eds.), *La sollecitudine della Chiesa verso i migranti*, Vatican City 2005, 89.

<sup>403</sup> Cf. Beyer, Jaen, “Fondamento ecclesiale della pastorale dell’emigrazione”, in: Beyer, Jean/Semeraro Marcello (Eds.), op. cit., 9.

According to this view, migration proves to be an “issue that arises from what is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable discontinuities with which migrants – by dint of their very presence – confront the continuity of a regional church.”<sup>404</sup> All Christians have a cultural *background* that is closely associated with the way in which they themselves perceive and experience the faith and the sacraments at both the communal and personal level. This makes it necessary for the regional church to *integrate* migrants in both pastoral and liturgical terms while preserving their background and avoiding the temptation to assimilate their discontinuity within the *continuum* of the church’s specific ecclesiality.<sup>405</sup>

### Pastoral care for migrants and the “primacy” of migrants

Church means community and it has its origins, role model and goal in the Trinitarian communion. The incorporation and reevaluation of migration within the regional church must be understood in the light of *communio* (fellowship). This helps us to understand the true nature of church, while the concept of assimilation is critical if it is merely understood as recognising different expressions of faith compared with local forms of expression. And even if such forms are reevaluated, it is particularly important to avoid the danger of “protecting the differences in churchmanship.”<sup>406</sup>

It is *communio* that must be protected. The central issue is not the need to defend cultural expression, but the need to develop the catholicity of the Church within the regional churches. It is, after all, this catholicity that must characterise every church, irrespective of the phenomenon of migration.

Migrants pose a Church “issue” which raises the question and the difficulty of how we can let such Christians live out their own faith outside their cultural context without either assimilating or rejecting their special characteristics. From a pastoral care perspective,

<sup>404</sup> Bonnet, Piero Antonio, “Comunione ecclesiale, migranti e diritti fondamentali”, in: Pontificio Consiglio della Pastorale per i Migranti e gli Itineranti (Eds.), *Migrazioni e diritto ecclesiale: La pastorale della mobilità umana nel nuovo Codice di Diritto Canonico*, Padua 1992, 35.

<sup>405</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 36.

<sup>406</sup> Bonnet, Piero Antonio, “Comunione ecclesiale, migranti e diritti fondamentali”, *op. cit.*, 37.

therefore, mobility is “an issue of the Christian way of life”<sup>407</sup>, which must be protected and defended.

### Advocating a formal policy towards migrants within the church constitution

Canon law does not contain any explicit formalisation of the right of migrants to special pastoral care<sup>408</sup>. However, the various codes formulate several rights and duties which apply to Christians in general. These can be read in a way that permits the derivation and inclusion of specific aspects and thus the formulation of a policy on rights and duties.

As all Christians within the church enjoy the same dignity and the same status, they have certain basic rights to receive spiritual support from the church. Like other Christians, and indeed more so, migrants have the right to receive spiritual benefits, to hold and conduct church services under their own rites and to receive a Christian education in their own language and culture, which includes special pastoral care.<sup>409</sup>

The situation of migrants encompasses their fundamental, legitimate needs as Christians, because it concerns their relationship with God. Christian migrants have “the right and the duty to draw on God and to be saved without having to deny or renounce their own individual or communal church identity.”<sup>410</sup> To ensure that this can happen within the special communal context of which they are now a part, canon law must provide migrants with all the conditions that allow them to manifest their own special form of unity. After all, this

<sup>407</sup> This expression was coined by Jean Beyer, cf. Beyer, Jean, “Fondamento ecclesiale della pastorale dell’emigrazione”, in: Direzione Generale dei Missionari Scalabriniani (Eds.), *op. cit.*, 138, and in: Beyer, Jean/Semeraro, Marcello (Eds.), *op. cit.*, 19.

<sup>408</sup> Cf. Baura, Eduardo, “Emigrante”, in: Instituto Martín de Azpilcueta, Facultad de Derecho Canónico Universidad de Navarra, *Diccionario General de Derecho Canónico*, Navarra 2005, 589–592; Bonnet, Piero Antonio, “Diritti dei migranti nella Chiesa”, in: Battistella, Graziano (Eds.), *Migrazioni: Dizionario socio-pastorale*, *op. cit.*, 390–396.

<sup>409</sup> Cf. Ferrandis Sanchis, Josemaria, “La pastorale dovuta ai migranti ed agli itineranti (aspetti giuridici fondamentali)”, in: *Fidelium Jura* 3 (1993), 460–467. Cf. also Sabbarese, Luigi, “Girovaghi, migranti, forestieri e naviganti nella legislazione ecclesiastica”, *op. cit.*, 71–82.

<sup>410</sup> Bonnet, Piero Antonio, “I diritti-doveri fondamentali del fedele non formalizzati nella positività canonica umana”, in: Author unnamed, *I diritti fondamentali del fedele: A venti anni dalla promulgazione del Codice*, Vatican City 2004, 152.

unity is inalienably shared by all the people of God, even if there is a certain discontinuity compared with the continuity displayed by the specific *portio populi Dei* of which they are now a part.<sup>411</sup>

The fundamental equality of all Christians and the right of every individual to live within the church on his or her own terms, requires recognition of personal differences, including those of migrants, and hence entails the right to acceptance by the regional church and the duty of the regional church to accept them. It is an inevitable and profound necessity for a church to put this into practice, as a church comes into being, is shaped and then develops in relation to its congregation. This communal relationship principle lays the ground for the right and duty of non-discriminatory integration and church participation. Hence membership of a regional church, in which the universal and catholic dimension is of the essence, is subject to no other requirement than baptism alone. To make the integration of a migrant's specific differences into the continuity of a regional church increasingly comprehensive and visible the migrant must be given the right and duty to receive special pastoral care.<sup>412</sup>

<sup>411</sup> Bonnet, Piero Antonio, "Comunione ecclesiale, migranti e diritti fondamentali", op. cit., 48.

<sup>412</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 49–51.

## The Response of the church to the Challenge of Migration

### A Philippine experience

Sr. Mary John Mananzan

#### Historical Background

Migration in the Philippines is not a new phenomenon. There are at least four phases of migration in Philippine History. The Center of Migrant Advocacy records the first wave of migration:

The first ever recorded Philippine migration occurred in the year 1417 when Sultan Paduka Batara initiated a mission to improve trade relations with the Chinese emperor, consisting of Sulu Royalties and their families. Under Spanish rule in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Manila maintained trade relations with Acapulco which started migration of Filipino seafarers to Mexico. Following the migration to Mexico, Filipino seafarers started settlements in Louisiana while other Filipino migrants were working as fruit pickers in California. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Filipino students, professionals and exiles migrated to Europe.<sup>413</sup>

The second wave of Migration was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century until about 1940 mainly to the United States in plantations in Hawaii and fisheries in Alaska. The third wave of migration shifted to Asia, due to the immigration restrictions of the US; more Filipinos started migrating to Asian countries in the 1950 in logging camps in Sabah and Sarawak serving five year contracts. Some were employed on American army bases in Vietnam, Thailand and Guam during the Indochina war. At the start of the 1970s Filipinos also migrated to Iran and Iraq to work as engineers and technicians

In the 1970s former President Ferdinand Marcos initiated a policy to encourage emigration to stimulate the economy. While

<sup>413</sup> Center for Migrant Adocacy: [centerformigrantadvocacy.com](http://centerformigrantadvocacy.com) (26.08.2017).

these policies were meant to be of a temporary nature, labor migration has been steadily increasing ever since. High unemployment and poor living standards combined with a government policy of migration has encouraged thousands of Filipinos to seek employment overseas. This policy has been continued by succeeding administrations and now we have about 10 million Filipinos working all over the world.

### Factors in the development of migration culture in the Philippines

Although there are various factors that contribute to the migration culture like political repression, sense of adventure, marriage to foreign nationals, etc., the main factor in the development of migration culture in the Philippines is politico-economic. And this main factor in the case of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who is my main focus in this paper. These politico-economic factors are well delineated in the following:

The lack of long-term stability, the heavy toll of a long dictatorship until the 1986 People Power Revolution and the high level of corruption, had left the country lagging behind its peers in Asia. In addition, the failure to pursue structural reforms and generate a vibrant manufacturing and agricultural sector, owing to persistent serious infrastructural inadequacies, have contributed to chronic development imbalances. The economy was unable to promote the expansion of the middle class, manufacturing and employment. As a result, the Philippines missed the opportunity of capitalizing on important resources, such as a broad educational base and a young population. Overseas employment, which was launched in an organized system during the oil crisis of the early 1970s, has become for many the most promising venue out of dismal local alternatives.<sup>414</sup>

Not to be underestimated is the huge contribution of the remittances of the OFWs which form an artificial but substantial prop to the country's economy. That is why the government considers OFWs as "bayani" or heroes.

<sup>414</sup> Scalabrini Migration Center with International Organization of Migration, Government of the Philippines, Country Migration Report, published by IOM, 2013, 2.

### The social cost of migration

This aspect of migration has not yet been thoroughly studied and evaluated but one can observe obvious problems both of the OFWs and their relatives who remain at home.

#### *Problems faced by OFWs*

In surveys the top problems of OFWs concern marital and family problems. They are worried about the welfare of their children and worried as well if their spouses are having extra-marital affairs. They themselves have problems with loneliness and therefore tend to get into short-term relationships which break up their family.

From the time OFWs apply for a job, they encounter many problems. They can be victims of fake agencies who extort money from them and disappear into the night. This means that their selling of their farm or *curacao* or their loan come to nothing and they are poorer than when they started. There are also high placement fees. When they arrive in their country of destination, they might find out that all their documents are fake. Contracts also change. They get another but lower job than that which they signed for. They receive lower wages than was written in the contract. They may have cruel employers who abuse them. For women there is the real danger of being raped.

In some countries in the Middle East the house helpers go hungry because there is no budget for their food. Some find out that instead of just serving one family, they are required to clean the houses of the relatives of their employers. There have been cases of suicide. Some go home as cadavers. Some are victims of racial discrimination. When they are forced to escape from their abusive employers, they fall into the hands of the police and if they are women they could be raped. Even in the Philippine consulate, there are abusive officials who exploit them instead of helping them. Some have been jailed unjustly. Some women who fight back their employer rapists and happen to kill them are sentenced to death or life imprisonment or to lashes.

There is also the problem of sudden lay-offs when countries decide to send home all contract workers.

I have myself met and helped four women domestic helpers who worked in Riyadh. There are different details in their stories but the common elements were: They were raped by their male employers, starved and shut up in a room by their female employers, then escaped but fell into the hands of the police who raped them. When they finally got to the Philippine consulate, an officer promised to get them a return ticket to the Philippines in return for sexual services. When they came home they denounced these abuses, became whistle blowers during the investigation by the Senate blue-ribbon committee. But afterwards, they were left to their fate – jobless, left by their husbands and worried about supporting their children. It was good that a project proposal I made to MISSIO Aachen was approved which gave the four women capital to start their own small stores.

#### ***Problems of the Families of OFWs***

As has been said there is a great temptation for spouses to have illicit marital affairs in the absence of their respective spouses. In cases where both parents are abroad and children are left to the care of grandparents, there is usually a repercussion on the psychological development of the children. Lacking proper guidance and discipline, they fail in school, get into the wrong company, get into drugs and other forms of juvenile delinquency. In our eleven schools throughout the country the majority of our students needing psychological counselling have one or both parents abroad as OFWs.

Relatives staying at home are ignorant of the extreme sacrifices of their relatives abroad and spend the money sent to them in superfluous gadgets instead of in actual necessities, or as down payment for a lot or a house. When the OFWs go home, sometimes they have no savings or have even gotten into debt which they cannot pay.

#### ***Human trafficking – A Corollary problem***

Although not all migration involves human trafficking, the recent laws favoring migration and overseas work has intensified human trafficking. Human trafficking may be defined as the act of forcefully transporting or recruiting persons for the purpose of exploitation which may include: prostitution sexual exploitation (pornography, forced marriage, mail order brides), forced labor exploitation in begging or warfare, debt bondage, domestic slavery, trafficking in organ

transplant. According to the UN protocol, the consent of the trafficked person is irrelevant if the other conditions are present.

The same causes and conditions at play in migration are also true of human trafficking, namely: poverty, low wages, unemployment, the wish for a better life, and displacement due to war or natural calamities. And added factor includes the socialization of women toward victimhood and sexual abuse. It is a multi-billion dollar industry and is usually controlled by syndicates and is tied to the arms industry. It is the second largest criminal industry second to the drug industry. The United Nations GIFT(Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking) estimates that about 2.5 million people, mostly women and children from 27 countries are trafficked all over the world.

The effects of human trafficking are staggering. There are the various violations of human rights: 1) sexual abuse (violations of right to sexual integrity, right to freedom from discrimination), 2) physical harms (violations of right to freedom of movement, right to physical, psychological and mental health, to be free from torture, cruel and degrading treatment, to security, to life. Some mechanisms of control exerted over the women include withholding of food and money, physical and psychological violence, threats, isolation, and punishment for the slightest mistakes, verbal abuse, deprivation of food, sequestration, and so forth. Women and children are also infected with venereal diseases or AIDS. The accompanying emotional depression can lead even some of them to suicide.

#### **The response of the church to the challenge of migration**

##### ***Pope Francis and the issue of migration***

Before I go to the response of the Philippine Church to migration, it is good to recall the many compassionate statements of Pope Francis on migrants and refugees. I will just cite a few:

Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all, for being more. The sheer number of people migrating from one continent to another, or shifting places within their own countries and geographical areas, is striking. Contemporary movements

of migration represent the largest movement of individuals, if not of peoples, in history. As the Church accompanies migrants and refugees on their journey, she seeks to understand the causes of migration, but she also works to overcome its negative effects, and to maximize its positive influence on the communities of origin, transit and destination.<sup>415</sup>

It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation, in such a way as to make the conditions of migrants more humane. At the same time, greater efforts are needed to guarantee the easing of conditions, often brought about by war or famine, which compel whole peoples to leave their native countries.<sup>416</sup>

Above all I ask leaders and legislators and the entire international community above all to confront the reality of those who have been displaced by force, with effective projects and new approaches in order to protect their dignity, to improve the quality of their life and to face the challenges that are emerging from modern forms of persecution, oppression and slavery.<sup>417</sup>

### The response of the Philippine Church to the issue of migration

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), cognizant of the problems of OFW's and their families, established an Episcopal Commission on Migrants in January, 1967. However, the beginnings of the Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI) may be traced back to the year 1955, when the Episcopal Commission-Committee on Emigration reported on the situation of Filipinos in USA, Hawaii, and Guam, and the corresponding actions taken by the Church. In the early 60s the body of Bishops established the Apostleship of the Sea to meet the needs of the seafarers nationwide.

<sup>415</sup> Pope Francis, World Day of Migration homily 2014, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130805\\_world-migrants-day.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20130805_world-migrants-day.html) (26.08.2017).

<sup>416</sup> Pope Francis, World Day of Migration, 2015, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_20140903\\_world-migrants-day-2015.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_20140903_world-migrants-day-2015.html) (26.08.2017).

<sup>417</sup> Pope Francis [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/speeches/2013/may/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130524\\_migranti-itineranti.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/speeches/2013/may/documents/papa-francesco_20130524_migranti-itineranti.html) (26.08.2017).

Thus in January 1967, two Episcopal Commissions were created under the Article XXV of the CBCP Constitutions: Commission on Immigration and Tourism and, Commission on the Apostolates of the Sea and Air. In 1972, the Bishops merged these two Commissions into one body called Episcopal Commission on Migration and Tourism (ECMT). It then became the Episcopal Commission on Migration and Itinerant People (ECMI) in 1995 during the Bishops' Conference. As a result of the Conference, ECMI opened three Regional Migration Desks (RMD): RMD Luzon; RMD Isaias; and, RMD Mindanao to better cater to the needs of people on the move.

The year 1997 (February 3) marked the opening of the Asian Migration Desk, tasked to coordinate the ministry for migrants in Asia. The year 2000 marks the consolidation of the Filipino ministry overseas. From their website, we glean their mission –vision:

The ECMI envisions a church and society where everyone has sufficient means to a decent life and where strangers feel welcomed and cared for. Our mission is: to promote in the church and in the society a special care (pastoral/social/legal/cultural) for the migrants and their families; to promote the dignity of the human person, and respect for the rights of migrants; to promote and support in the church and society the special care for migrants and their families and to guide migrants to be evangelizers.<sup>418</sup>

The programs and services of the ECMI are: (from ECMI website)

1. Education and Formation – Leadership Training
  - to the clergy and religious
  - to teachers (private and catholic schools)
  - to students: 4<sup>th</sup> year high school, college
  - to church leaders and church based organizations
  - to departing land based and sea based workers
  - to missionaries going to minister to Filipino overseas
2. Linkages and Networking
  - local and international
  - newsletter
  - publications

<sup>418</sup> ECMI, <http://www.cbconline.net/ecmi/> (26.08.2017).

3. Pastoral and Social Programs – Services
  - community building
  - encouraging income generating projects among migrants' families (parish level)
  - religious and sacramental care / services
  - support to chaplains and chaplaincies overseas
  - counselling and orientation
  - legal advice, lobbying and advocacy
4. Structure Building
  - Regional Migration Desk – RMD
  - Diocesan Migration Desk – DMD
  - Parish-based Migrants' Ministry

#### *Migrant advocacy of religious congregations*

My personal involvement with migrants advocacy as a Missionary Benedictine Sister began way back in 1984 when there were no state or church agencies caring for migrant workers. Then our Congregation was given the opportunity to establish the first Migrant Worker Center abroad. I was then in Spain doing research for a book I wanted to write on the History of the Church under Spain from a peoples' perspective. I lived with a Benedictine Missionary Congregation who wanted to merge with our congregation because they had few Sisters left.

When I arrived in Spain I wrote down the names and telephone numbers of the Filipinos I would meet in the park, in Chinese restaurants, at the train station, in Churches. When I started researching in the Archivo General de Indias in Sevilla, I shared an apartment with the Filipino migrant workers there. They would only come during their days off on Thursdays and Sundays. I learned a lot about their conditions, their trials, their sufferings when they spontaneously shared stories at table. I realized then that there was a need to have a Center for them. So when our Mother General wrote to me to look for a possible apostolate in Spain, I immediately suggested service to the 50,000 Filipino migrant workers there who were mostly domestic helpers.

I was fortunate to meet Fr. Carmelo from the IEPALA (Istituto Ecumenico Para America Latina, Africa, and y Asia) who suggested that I make a project proposal for a center for Filipino Migrants in Spain which he would submit to the Department of Labor. This was

granted, giving us a one year's budget. We also obtained a rent-free apartment from the Congregation of the Auxiliadoras de Purgatorio who have actually reinterpreted their name into Helpers of the Third World which would be the actual purgatory today.

I immediately phoned all my contacts and we cleaned our apartment, solicited donations for equipment and furniture and on April, 1984, we opened our Center which we called TIPANAN (Meeting Place) in Calle Villalar no.5 in the center of Madrid, 5 minutes away from Cibeles, the post office and in front of the French Embassy. The main purpose of Tipanan was as a meeting place for Filipino Migrant Workers during their free days – Thursdays and Sundays. There they could cook, eat, share stories with each other. We showed Filipino movies for them to watch their favourite actors.

We also provided Bible sharing and psychological and spiritual counselling. According to them their greatest problem was loneliness and because of this, they would get into irregular relationships resulting in unwed mothers, for example. Sometimes we rescued those who were being abused by their bosses. For example, we sheltered two domestic helpers who were accused by their Arab masters of having stolen \$300 dollars in the plane that had brought the whole family to Mallorca for vacation. They were afraid that they would get the customary punishment for thieves: having a hand cut off. We had also to look for employment for them. We also accompanied some to claim their wages which were sometimes not paid for months and months. We brought to them to the hospital in case of emergencies like the 16 year old girl who was slapped by her boss and whose face remained turned sideways and could not move it back to the center until she was helped by the doctor overcome her trauma.

We formed a small choir which sang during Sunday masses in nearby parishes. We had a theatre group which showed social-ly-oriented skits accompanied by Filipino songs. Since all the Chinese restaurants were run mostly by Filipino waiters, cashiers, cooks, and others, we organized basketball teams in each restaurant and we regularly held basketball tournaments.

After a year, a parish put up their own center which they called TAHANAN and so we moved our Center to Barcelona where we added apostolate to sailors because Barcelona was a port city. The

most important achievement of the Center was the organization of the migrant workers themselves. When they grew in number and ability to help themselves, we gave over the Center which is now called Tuluyan San Benito. They are now a recognized body and receive subsidy both from the state and from the parish. It still exists 2016. To my knowledge more religious congregations have opened their own Centers for Migrant Workers in many countries all over the world.

### *The Scalabrini Migration Center*

One of the most organized Migration Centers based in the Philippines run by Religious, is the Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC). Established in Manila in 1987, by the Scalabrini Fathers, the Scalabrini Migration Center is dedicated to the promotion of the interdisciplinary study of international migration focusing mainly on migration questions in the Asia-Pacific region.

SMC is a member of the Scalabrini International Migration Network which has a permanent observer status in the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and is accredited by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Its main program is research which has the following goals:

- to encourage the interdisciplinary study of migration in Asia;
- to contribute to the development of informed policies that will ensure respect for the rights and dignity of migrants; and
- To promote greater solidarity with migrants and with institutions and individuals working for migrants' welfare.

Among its recent research projects are a three-year study on migration and development, the effectiveness of the reform on Filipino workers, and the pre-departure programs of the Philippines, Indonesia and Nepal.

In 1992, the SMC started publishing the Asian And Pacific Migration Journal (APMJ) devoted to migration issues in the Asia-Pacific. It features articles that study human mobility in this region from an interdisciplinary perspective. It also occasionally publishes books, monographs and papers on Asian migration. The Center maintains a library with an extensive collection of books, periodicals, documents and other important resources for research, advocacy and

policy making. It has over 6,000 volumes and more than 100 journals and is open to the public.

Periodically, the SMC organizes local and international conferences on migration which provide opportunities to discuss migration issues, draw action plans and policies, and facilitate networking.

### *Campaign against human trafficking*

The Church, especially religious women, are very active in the campaign against human trafficking. The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) has joined the Talitha Kum Campaign initiated by the UISG, the international association of Superior Generals in Rome. In 2009, during the first global meeting of networks arising from some training sessions, a proposal was made to create Talitha Kum as the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking with a representative at the UISG. The first official coordinator of Talitha Kum was Sr. Estrella Castalone, FMA, a Filipino Salesian Sister who occupied the post from 2010 to 2014. From 2015 the coordinator has been Sr. Gabriella Bottani, SMC.

Since its foundation Talitha Kum has spread to 70 countries in all continents and has continued to promote courses for the training of new local networks and to encourage networking and collaboration with other organizations working against trafficking in persons. The activities of Talitha Kum include gender consciousness training, para-legal training, and shelter for victims of human trafficking, counselling, medical and legal assistance, conferences and fora, public protests and rallies against human trafficking issues, theological discussions, writing and publication and liturgical celebrations and women rituals.

### *Partnership with NGO's*

One of the effective strategies in the Church with regard to the issue of migration is partnership with non-governmental organizations devoted to migration issues. I am affiliated as member of the advisory board to one of the widest and most effective of these organizations, the Migrante International. This organization was founded in December 1996 after Flor Contemplation's death. Contemplation

was a Filipina domestic helper who was executed in Singapore for allegedly murdering a fellow Filipina domestic worker in 1995. Contemplacion's case aroused wide indignation over the failure of the government to save her life. The whole nation became aware of the life and death situation of OFWs. So some concerned individuals formed the Migrante International.

Migrante International actively defends the rights and welfare of OFWs. It raises public awareness on the plight of OFWs and analyses the government's labor expert policy program and the lack of employment as the primary factors for the commodification of Filipino workers abroad. Migrante International has handled and assisted thousands of rights and welfare cases of OFWs. It has also fought for cases of stranded, detained and mysterious deaths, rape and sex-trafficking, wage cuts and maltreatment, anti-migrant policies and laws, evacuation in times of war, the plunder and corruption of OFW funds. It continues the clamor for genuine public service and good governance for OFWs. After two decades since its establishment, Migrante International now has 90 member-organizations in over 22 countries, making it the biggest organization of OFWs all over the world.

The latest campaign of the Migrante International supported by many NGO's including Church groups, is the struggle to save Mary Jane Veloso, a victim of trafficking who was condemned to death because of the drugs placed at the bottom of her suitcase by her recruiter without her knowledge and which was discovered on her arrival at the Indonesian International Airport. In one of the most dramatic turn of events, the Indonesian government granted a reprieve to the execution of Mary Jane even while her 9 other condemned companions were executed. This gave a chance to prove that Mary Jane is a victim of human trafficking and as such should not be penalized. However up to the present, she is still on death row, and the campaign goes on to have her sentence commuted and, if possible, to completely acquit her.

## Conclusion

Migration will remain a reality even in the future. However, this brain and muscle drain can be substantially diminished if the government would provide jobs in the country that are justly paid,

and if the measures counteracting human trafficking could be more effective. The Church and its institutions should take part in a massive education program to conscientize the people about the social cost of overseas work. Women should be given special consciousness raising seminars against prostitution and every kind of commodification. They should be empowered economically, psychologically and spiritually. A more vigorous family apostolate should be undertaken to strengthen values that could keep the family together.

The last words of the Pope in his address on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees of 2016 is a fitting conclusion:

"Dear brothers and sisters, migrants and refugees! At the heart of the Gospel of mercy the encounter and acceptance by others are intertwined with the encounter and acceptance of God himself. Welcoming others means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey! I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Mother of migrants and refugees, and to Saint Joseph, who experienced the bitterness of emigration to Egypt. To their intercession I also commend those who invest so much energy, time and resources to the pastoral and social care of migrants. To all I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing."<sup>419</sup>

<sup>419</sup> Pope Francis, World Day of Migration 2016, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papafrancesco\\_20150912\\_world-migrants-day-2016.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/messages/migration/documents/papafrancesco_20150912_world-migrants-day-2016.html) (26.08.2017).

# The Responses of the Church to the Challenge of Immigration

Gioacchino Campese

In this article I will provide a brief critical review of the Catholic Church's responses to the challenges posed by migration<sup>420</sup>, with particular reference to the current situation, in the light of the fact that our present era is termed "the age of migration"<sup>421</sup>. Before I examine the various ways in which the Church has encountered the phenomenon of migration flows, I wish to make a few remarks which are designed to define with greater precision both the progressive activities undertaken and the context of my observations. Firstly, the Church is undoubtedly the non-governmental organisation which has done the most work in this field and has gathered the greatest experience. In many cases it has even assumed obligations and taken on tasks which should officially be performed by government institutions. However, these have often not been in a position to act and have occasionally lacked the political will to attend to the migrants and refugees in their respective countries.

Secondly, in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Church began to publish a series of documents and official statements on this matter, which taken together can be classified as the social teachings of the Church on migration<sup>422</sup>. In addition, in conjunction with official doctrine there has been profound and extensive theological reflection on human mobility. This has attempted to interpret the complexity of the phenomenon, which elicits a diverse, antithetical range of reactions

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<sup>420</sup> In the present article the terms "migration", "human mobility" and "migration phenomena" are used synonymously. At the same time, the expression "migrants" also comprises refugees.

<sup>421</sup> Castles, Stephen/de Haas, Hein/Miller, Mark J., *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world*, New York 2013.

<sup>422</sup> An analysis of these "teachings" can be found in: Castillo Guerra, Jorge, "Defensa de los derechos de los/as migrantes y doctrina social de la iglesia. De una 'cultura de rechazo' a una 'cultura del encuentro'", in: *Forum Mission* 10 (2014), 45–71.

within societies and within the Christian churches themselves, from the perspective of the Christian faith and Christian traditions<sup>423</sup>.

Thirdly, the issue of “migration” touches the very roots of Christianity itself, from its beginnings to its dissemination across the whole world. Biblical narratives are mainly about people and nations on the move. This begins as early as our forebears in faith such as Abraham and Sarah (Gen 18), continues with Moses and the People of Israel in Egypt and their exodus to the Promised Land (Exodus), and goes right on up to the Son of God and the evangelist Jesus of Nazareth (Lk 9:58) and his disciples, who set out to proclaim the Gospel to all peoples (Acts; Pauline epistles). In other words, migrants have always been the protagonists of the Christian mission and the life of the Church (1 Peter)<sup>424</sup>. Fourthly, although this article will focus on evangelisation and the pastoral care provided by the Catholic Church, it is important not to lose sight of the mission work performed by our Protestant, Orthodox, Evangelical and Pentecostal fraternal churches among the migrants and refugees. There are countless examples of this work; in Europe two researchers have prepared a map detailing ecclesial responses to the needs of migrants and refugees<sup>425</sup>. Ecumenical cooperation in this field is also plentiful, expressed specifically at an official level by the joint visit of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, his holiness Bartholomew I, the Orthodox Archbishop

<sup>423</sup> For a theological approach to the phenomenon of migration see: Ares, Alberto, “Cuando te vimos forastero, y te acogimos? Transitando una teología de las migraciones”, in: *Corintios XIII*, 157 (2017), 68–83; Campese, Gioacchino, “The irruption of the migrants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A challenge for contemporary theology”, in: *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 14 (2017), 9–27; Castillo Guerra, Jorge, “Teología de la migración: Movilidad humana y transformaciones teológicas”, in: *Theologica Xaveriana* 63 (2013), 367–401; Cruz, Gemma Tulud, “Brothers and sisters across borders. Theological perspectives on Catholic transnationalism”, in: Pasura, Dominic/Erdal, Marta Bivand (Eds.), *Migration, Transnationalism and Catholicism*, New York 2017, 23–50; Nagy, Dorottya, “Theology-missiology on the move: Loving one another, back to the basics”, in: *Exchange* 45 (2016), 364–381; Phan, Peter C., “Deus migrator – God the migrant: Migration of theology and theology of migration”, in: *Theological Studies* 77 (2016), 845–868; Polak, Regina, “Flight and migration: Signs of the times and loci theologici – a European perspective”, in: *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 14 (2017), 105–121.

<sup>424</sup> From the vast bibliography on the subject of migration in the Bible I list the following by way of example: Bovati, Pietro, “Mio padre era un forestiero: L'insegnamento biblico sui migranti”, in: *Civiltà Cattolica* 167 (2016), 548–562; Cervantes Gabarrón, José, “Identidad religiosa de un pueblo en camino”, in: *Revista Interdisciplinar de Mobilidade Humana* 34 (2010), 185–215; Van Thanh, Nguyen/Prior, John M., (Eds.), *God's people on the move. Biblical and global perspectives on migration and mission*, Pickwick 2014.

<sup>425</sup> Jackson, Darrel/Passarelli, Alessia, *Mapping migration: Mapping churches' responses in Europe*, Geneva 2016.

leronimos II of Athens and Pope Francis to refugees on the island of Lesbos (Greece) in April 2016<sup>426</sup>.

Fifthly, the objective of undertaking a critical review of the Church's responses to the challenges posed by migration in our times can only be achieved on the premise of an “honest desire to perceive reality”<sup>427</sup>. The results of this honest assessment of the Church's pastoral care for migrants cannot consist merely in acknowledgement of the existence of friendliness towards, or love for, outsiders and of hostility towards, or fear of, outsiders both within the Church and in society in general, as established by Luis Rivera-Pagán<sup>428</sup>, or a differentiation between an “ecology of fear” and an “ecology of faith”, as Susanna Snyder asserts<sup>429</sup>. One of the most interesting aspects of the work of these theologians consists precisely in their critical and realistic evaluation of the ways in which the phenomenon of human mobility is encountered both in the Bible itself and in the Christian churches, and their refusal to omit or underestimate the negative and controversial aspects. Finally, although I will make every effort to consider the Church in general, it goes without saying that these observations are dependent on experience and are also contextual, developed as they are on the basis of my own pastoral experiences and the current context in which I work, i.e. the European continent and, in particular, Italy.

The points I have mentioned constitute the framework within which I will seek to present the Church's responses to migration. In doing so, I will take into account the most problematic and worrying elements and the positive aspects in equal measure.

### Problematic responses

If I begin this review with a discussion of the negative aspects of the Church's stance towards the migrants, it could be interpreted as

<sup>426</sup> The addresses given on this occasion by the three gentlemen named above can be viewed at: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/speeches/2016/april/documents/papa-francesco\\_20160416\\_lesvos-rifugiati.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/es/speeches/2016/april/documents/papa-francesco_20160416_lesvos-rifugiati.html) (31.10.2019)

<sup>427</sup> Sobrino, Jon, *Geist, der befreit. Lateinamerikanische Spiritualität*, Freiburg i. Br. 1989, 28.

<sup>428</sup> Rivera-Pagán, Luis N., “Xenophilia or xenophobia: Towards a theology of migration”, in: *Ecumenical Review* 64 (2012), 575–589.

<sup>429</sup> Snyder, Susanna, *Asylum-seeking, migration, and church*, Ashgate 2012.

signalling a “catastrophic” approach to the issue. However, in truth, I only wish to describe the reality as it appears in our local churches in societies in which hostile reactions to migrants and refugees are increasing and intensifying with alarming rapidity as the result of prejudiced propaganda published in the media and on social networks as well as of that peddled by alleged “experts” on this matter and by those seeking to make political capital from the misfortunes of millions of people. In these contexts – and were are talking here about countries on all continents in which large numbers of migrants and refugees arrive – the prejudices to be found among the general public often also contaminate the community of the Church. It is important to emphasise that the problem does not consist solely of fear triggered by the prospect of thousands of people invading a society with its diverse customs, cultures and religions.

Fear is simply a completely normal reaction to the strange and unfamiliar. Problems arise when this fear is not met in a constructive manner so as to overcome it but is instead nurtured by fantasy images such as an “invasion of barbarians”, by an inability to communicate, enter into relationships with and integrate certain migrants and refugees, and by cultural and religious terrorism. This results in a sometimes subliminal and, at other times, very open climate of rejection and hostility towards migrants, a climate which can be discerned both in everyday topics of conversation among the faithful who participate regularly in the life of the Church and in public statements issued by leading figures within the Church such as priests and bishops, who have not only expressed their understandable concerns regarding migration, but have also displayed outright rejection and discrimination towards migrants. It is undoubtedly the case that the question of Muslim migrants in Europe, whose presence some bishops regard as “impossible and dangerous”<sup>430</sup>, is the critical issue here.

The divisions within the Church as far as the issue of “human mobility” is concerned are now much more apparent than used to be the case. On the one hand, we have a pope in Jorge Mario

<sup>430</sup> Cf. the statements made by the Italian cardinal Giacomo Biffi in 2000, <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/7283> and by Bishop László Kiss-Rigo (Hungary) in 2015, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/hungarian-bishop-says-pope-is-wrong-about-refugees/2015/09/07/fcba72e6-558a-11e5-9f54-1ea23f6e02f3\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/hungarian-bishop-says-pope-is-wrong-about-refugees/2015/09/07/fcba72e6-558a-11e5-9f54-1ea23f6e02f3_story.html) (27.08.2017).

Bergoglio who proudly emphasises that he is himself a migrant and calls upon the Church with impressive tenacity to be open to migrants and refugees and to welcome them with warmth and hospitality<sup>431</sup>. On the other hand, we have bishops whose views accord with those of many Catholic believers and who consider the stance taken by Pope Francis to be naïve and extremely risky<sup>432</sup>. During his historic journey to the small Italian island of Lampedusa on the borders of the Mediterranean between Europe and Africa, where thousands of migrants have perished en route for the old continent, Pope Francis himself emphatically demanded a different response from society and the Church to the question of human mobility, which hitherto has essentially been a “non-response”. He also condemned the “globalisation of indifference”: “In this globalised world, we have fallen into globalised indifference. We have become used to the suffering of others. It doesn’t affect me. It doesn’t interest me. It’s none of my business!”<sup>433</sup>. The words of Pope Francis constitute harsh criticism of a Church which closes its eyes and shuts its ears to the suffering of those who seek shelter in a country where they can live in dignity and peace. It is of fundamental importance to state that the problematic responses given by the Church are not final and that the words of Pope Francis are not an irrevocable condemnatory judgement. On the contrary, the fact that he underlines the Church’s errors in this field constitutes a true call for repentance, increased sensitivity and action by the entire community of the Church in support of migrants and refugees.

<sup>431</sup> Two anthologies containing statements made by Pope Francis on human mobility have been published in Italy: Coco, Lucio (Eds.), *Papa Francesco, Ero straniero e mi avete accolto: L'accoglienza come opera di misericordia*, Vatican 2016; Papa Francesco, *La sfida dei migranti: Scritti, discorsi, omelie*, 2017. Analyses of Pope Francis’ teachings on migration are available in: Ares, Alberto, “El papa Francisco: una mirada a las migraciones”, in: *Corintios XIII* 152 (2014), 184–201; Campese, Gioacchino, “You are close to the church’s heart: Pope Francis and migrants”, in: Snyder, Susanna/Ralston, Joshua/Brazal, Agnes M. (Eds.), *Church in an age of global migration: A moving body*, New York 2016, 23–34; Castillo Guerra, Jorge, “A church without boundaries: A new ecclesial identity emerging from a mission of welcome. Reflections on the social magisterium of Pope Francis as related to migration”, in: *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 14 (2017), 43–61.

<sup>432</sup> Numico, Sarah, “Ero straniero ... Le posizioni divise degli episcopati del vecchio continente”, in: *Regno Attualità* 8 (2016), 197–198.

<sup>433</sup> Pope Francis, address given on 8 July 2013 in Lampedusa: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130708\\_omelia-lampedusa](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/de/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa) (27.08.2017).

### Positive responses: qualities and shortcomings

I will now examine three models of positive responses by the Church to the challenges posed by human mobility and endeavour in the process to draw attention to the strengths and weaknesses of each individual model<sup>434</sup>. The first model is the mission *for* the migrants. This refers primarily to the prodigious amount of pastoral work performed in the hundreds of reception and information centres, parishes and other ecclesial establishments. It is important to stress that during this work, the fundamental elements of which are hospitality, material support and assistance of all kinds (legal advice, healthcare, etc.), the Church does not simply expect the migrants to come to their centres and places of worship, but goes out of its way to seek out, in turn, the most needy and vulnerable migrants. The approach adopted in many local churches is a ministry of charity or social pastoral care. This is particularly necessary when migrants and refugees find themselves in emergency situations and lack the basic prerequisites for a life of dignity. This type of pastoral care is of great significance for people on the move from one place to another, for those crossing borders or those who are beginning to gain a foothold in their target countries, because it facilitates the continuation of a migration project or the beginning of a process of settling in and adjusting to a new country.

It goes without saying that the mission for migrants is necessary, but it is not sufficient for the all-round assistance of people on the move or for their integration in the countries where they live. There are two main risks in this model. The first consists in the temptation to behave in a paternalistic manner or to adopt an attitude of superiority when dealing with people assisted by the Church. It is easy to fall into patterns of thought and action displayed by those who know everything without asking, and who are only able to give because they are not required to receive anything from those who are “poor” in both a material and anthropological sense. In other words, this mindset results in vulnerable migrants and refugees becoming even more “impoverished”. The model’s second shortfall consists in “assistentialism” or helper syndrome, the most harmful consequence of which

<sup>434</sup> The chief aspects of these three models have been expounded in different ways in: Campese, Gioacchino, “Non di solo pane ...’ (Mt 4,4). Missione della chiesa dei e con i migranti”, in: Mazzolini, Silvestro (Eds.), *Evangelizzare il sociale: Prospettive per una scelta missionaria*, Vatican 2015, 77–104.

is that it makes the migrants into people dependent on church organisations. This occurs when pastoral care is unable to move on from an inner stance of support and the provision of initial humanitarian aid in emergency situations to embrace an attitude of daily coexistence with people and groups in a multicultural and multireligious society and in a multicultural church, which encounters all individuals in a manner open to dialogue and cooperation<sup>435</sup>.

The second model is that of the mission *of* the migrants, which is based primarily on the concept of the reverse mission or mission in reverse, which originated in English-language missiology. This concept presupposes a shift in the centre of gravity of global Christianity from the West to the global South and thus a geographical and human change in direction of the Christian mission. The missiologist Andrew Walls proposes that this shift be interpreted from the perspective of migration<sup>436</sup>. The most notable Christian missionary movement in the history of humankind began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, which saw the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world from its starting point in the West. This missionary movement followed the ground prepared by the “great European exodus” or the “great Australasian exodus”. Without embarking on a detailed discussion of the most important dimensions and problematic aspects of this missionary epoch, peppered as it was with colonial sins, it is sufficient to observe that this period is now drawing to a close and that, since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, another fundamental missionary movement has begun, which treads the path of the “great migration in the opposite direction”, namely from the South to the West. This is a missionary movement that is currently evolving. In contrast to the earlier movement it is spontaneous as opposed to organised and its dimensions and characteristics have yet to be precisely determined.

One of the several undisputed aspects of this “reverse mission” is the fact that its protagonists are the migrants of the global South, whose Christianity differs from that of their European counterparts in practical, ritual and theological terms. This is the Christianity one

<sup>435</sup> The sociologist Maurizio Ambrosini underlines this in an interview: Gandolfi, Maria Elisabetta, “C’è un’indifferenza cattolica? La pastorale dopo Lampedusa: intervista a Maurizio Ambrosini”, in: *Regno Attualità* 18 (2013), 557–559.

<sup>436</sup> Walls, Andrew F., “Afterword: Christian Mission in a Five-hundred-year context”, in: Walls, Andrew F./Ross, Cathy (Eds.), *Mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, London 2008, 193–204.

encounters in many European and North American parishes and places of worship, where the Catholic migrants become key players in the life of the Church by establishing their communities and religious associations, proudly and openly revering their saints and thus bearing witness to a deep, specific faith. In these contexts, the migrants are referred to as the subjects of the mission, as preachers of the Gospel<sup>437</sup>, particularly in countries in which Christians constitute a minority group, and in the Western countries in which the impact of secularisation is more powerfully felt.

The main shortcoming of this model consists in the fact that parallel church communities and pastoral ghettos tend to form in the parishes in which the migrants are key players yet are simultaneously alienated and separated from the life of the local church. Members of these churches frequently find it difficult to establish profound, dynamic relationships with the migrants and initially they sometimes do not wish to do so at all. Many people prefer to remain “amongst themselves”, simply because it is easier and more natural, because conflicts occur almost of their own accord and it is difficult to establish relationships and arduous to attempt to celebrate and work together, forming a community in the context of diversity<sup>438</sup>.

The third model I would like to analyse and also present as the way forward, which the Church in the age of migration would be advised to pursue, is the mission *with* the migrants. This model takes as its basis a Church which acknowledges that its mission cannot merely consist of the provision of services for migrants or of simply allowing migrants to be stakeholders in the life and activity of the Church. In other words, notwithstanding the importance of the mission *for* the migrants and the mission *of* the migrants, they are themselves unable to effectively convey all the ecclesial responses to the challenges of human mobility, lacking as they do fundamental elements, namely the symmetrical relationships – those of equality, cooperation and

<sup>437</sup> Deck, Allan F., “Pastoral perspectives on migration: Immigrants as new evangelizers”, in: Scribner, Todd/Appleby, J. Kevin (Eds.), On “Strangers no longer”: Perspectives on the historic U.S.-Mexican Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter on migration, New York 2013, 36–62.

<sup>438</sup> In this context the idea of the “joint parishes” developed in the USA in recent years is extremely instructive, e.g. the parishes in which two or more ethno-cultural groups are required to share the same structures. Cf. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, Best practices for shared parishes: So that they may all be one, Washington D.C. 2014.

solidarity – which characterise us as individuals, as Christians and as missionary disciples, as the final document published by the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops’ Conferences in Aparecida (2007)<sup>439</sup> proposes, and on which Pope Francis also insists in his encyclical *Evangelii Gaudium*.

It follows that the response of the Church cannot be limited to “doing something for the migrants and refugees” but must, instead, be to engage in a fully-fledged “being with them”, in human relations among equals, in deep, healing friendships. The field of philosophy had this in mind when discussing the need for an anthropology of hospitality and coexistence in order to find solutions to the challenges of migration in a globalised world in perpetual motion<sup>440</sup>. In line with this insight it has been possible to observe a so-called “relational turning point” in the field of theological and pastoral reflection on human mobility, i.e. many theologians and pastoral workers agree that intercultural and interreligious relationships are essential in order to express the nature and the evangelising mission of the Church<sup>441</sup>. The theological foundation of this reflection is the relationship *par excellence* between Father, Son and Holy Spirit – the Holy Trinity – which constitutes the very essence of human relationships in its image and likeness and gives rise to the Church as a Catholic community which accepts human diversity with open arms and dedicates itself to creating the conditions necessary for an inclusive present and future for all humanity in which alienation has no place<sup>442</sup>.

Human relationships, friendship, coexistence, inclusion, integration and intercultural and interreligious dialogue constitute the fundamental terminology and practices of a Church which seeks to “be with people”, which walks together with those on the move who, in turn, encourage it to rediscover a vital dimension, namely its status

<sup>439</sup> Aparecida 2007, Final Document of the 5<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops’ Conferences (Stimmen der Weltkirche, No. 41), Bonn 2007

<sup>440</sup> Fomet Betancourt, Raúl, “La inmigración en contexto de globalización como diálogo intercultural”, in: Campese, Gioacchino/Ciallella, Pietro (Eds.), Migration, religious experience, and globalization, New York 2003, 29–48.

<sup>441</sup> Several aspects of this “relational turning point” have been described in: Campese, Gioacchino, “Non di solo pane ...”, op. cit., 94–101; Campese, Gioacchino, The irruption of the migrants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, op. cit., 19–21.

<sup>442</sup> Cf. video statement by Pope Francis in Vancouver, 26 April 2017: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco\\_20170426\\_videomessaggio-ted-2017.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco_20170426_videomessaggio-ted-2017.html) (27.08.2017).

as an itinerant pilgrim defining itself in accordance with its missionary nature in a Trinitarian manner, as the council decree *Ad gentes* states: “The pilgrim Church is missionary (i.e. a travelling envoy) by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father” (*Ad Gentes*, 2). *Evangelii Gaudium*, on the other hand, states: “Evangelisation is the task of the Church. The Church, as the agent of evangelisation, is more than an organic and hierarchical institution; she is first and foremost a people advancing on its pilgrim way towards God. She is certainly a mystery rooted in the Trinity, yet she exists concretely in history as a people of pilgrims and evangelisers, transcending any institutional expression, however necessary.” (EG 111).

Those who tread the path of mission with the migrants and refugees are well aware that this is the stoniest road. It requires a marked ability to listen and to engage in dialogue; patience and flexible resilience; a persistent openness towards all people; and an unswerving hope which cannot be defeated by problems encountered en route and never tires of proclaiming: “With God’s help we can succeed.” Above all, however, it requires the faith that this is the direction in which the Church should proceed according to God’s will in order to provide concrete signs and witnesses of peace, harmony and coexistence in a globalised, multicultural and multireligious world peopled by many individuals who believe and work to ensure that the divisions and conflicts between people of different cultures and religions, between migrants and local citizens, endure. In this context, the mission *with* the migrants constitutes the response of a Church truly faithful to the Gospel, a Church which is a disciple of Jesus Christ and has proclaimed the Good News of God’s love and closeness for all humanity, particularly for those who are most vulnerable.

## The Response of the Church in Africa to Human Migration and Refugees

Muthuphei Albert Mutavhatsindi and Maniraj Sukdaven

A comprehensive study on migration has been completed which was undertaken by the World Council of Churches and published in 2016 under the title: *Mapping migration, mapping churches’ responses in Europe*.<sup>443</sup> This project was championed by authors Darrell Jackson and Alessia Passarelli with the mandate of examining the “challenges and changes of the ecclesial landscape in view of international migration”.

At the expense of duplicating the work done by these authors, we have decided to focus on the position in Africa as this is the *sitz im leben* of the authors of this chapter. In focusing on the position in Africa, the statement of Adogame<sup>444</sup> expresses the importance and relevance that religion plays in the “... spiritual capital among immigrants”. This is an indication of the rich spirituality that exists in Africa and its people. The result of which is that the belief systems of the African is transferred with them in this migration which in turn results in, more often than not, the establishment of migrant religious gatherings rather than assimilation into the religious society of the local community in which they find themselves.

This chapter therefore deals with discipleship and human migration within the African context and understanding where human migration is a fact of history. The reality that one cannot deny is that African countries have experienced this movement in the past and are presently still experiencing this resilient movement of human migration more than ever before. In the continent of Africa, this strong movement is bringing together people of different religions, cultures,

<sup>443</sup> Jackson, Darrel/Passarelli, Alessia, *Mapping migration: Mapping churches’ responses in Europe*, Geneva 2016.

<sup>444</sup> Adogame, Afe, *The African Christian Diaspora: New Currents and Emerging Trends in World Christianity*, London 2013, 101.

tribes, ages, and colours. Two vital questions that will be dealt with in this chapter are: what are the forces that influence human migration to be stronger during this era than before and how should the church respond to the migrant people?

### The causes of human migration

Everything that happens within the planet has a cause.<sup>445</sup> People are migrating every day from rural to urban areas because of some factors which are described by Shorter as “push and pull factors”<sup>446</sup>. Verster says that “push factors are very important and often lead to situations in which life in the rural situation becomes unacceptable”<sup>447</sup>. For Shorter<sup>448</sup>, the pull factors are usually stronger than the push factors. Here I will illustrate these two forces (Push-Pull) within five factors of human migration which rarely act in isolation, and the interaction of the five human migration drivers determines the details of movement.

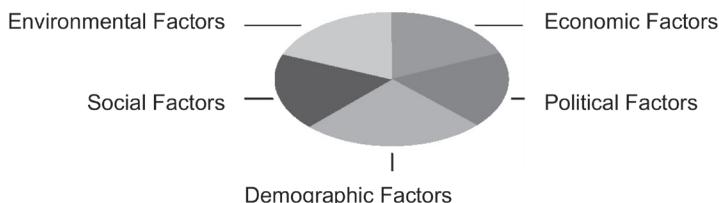


Figure 1: Diagram illustrating the five factors of human migration

### Economic factors of human migration

The allocation of work permits as presented in Figure 3.5 was less widespread than relatives' permits among the 2014 recipients. Hence the top ten countries received 91.2% of the 18184 work permits leaving only 8.8% to be shared among the remaining countries. Moreover nationals from only three countries (China, Zimbabwe and

<sup>445</sup> Cf. Mutavahdsindi, Mutupe Albert, Church planting in the South African urban context, with special reference to the Reformed Church Tshiawelo, PhD dissertation, Department of Science of Religion and Missiology, University of Pretoria 2008, 100.

<sup>446</sup> Shorter, Aylward, The church in the African city, London 1991, 29.

<sup>447</sup> Verster, Pieter, Good News for the City in Africa (with reference to the “Apartheid City” Botshabelo), Pretoria 2000, 23.

<sup>448</sup> Cf. Shorter, Aylward, op. cit., 17.

India) got almost 60% of the permits. Four of the ten countries were from the Asia sub-region whereas UK was the only country from Europe. Zimbabwe, DRC and Angola were from SADC; Nigeria from West Africa and Cameroon from East and Central Africa.

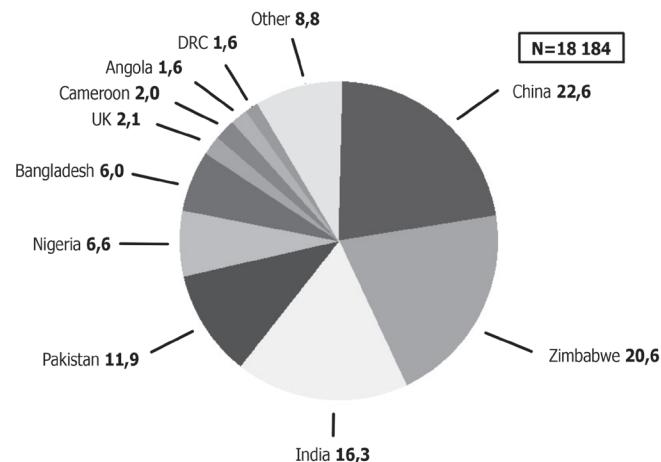


Figure 2: Diagram illustrating percentage distribution of recipients of all work permits by nationality, highlighting ten leading countries, 2014 (Statistics South Africa, Documented immigration in South Africa, 2014, Statistical release P0351.4 15 December 2015, Pretoria 2015, 26)

Economic problems in certain areas lead to situations in which people are forced to leave those areas and go to the cities to start anew.<sup>449</sup> People primarily migrate to the cities for economic reasons – to earn a living.<sup>450</sup> The reality that one cannot deny is that there are jobs in the city and the salaries they offer are generally better than the income one could receive in rural areas either by farming or by working for others<sup>451</sup> and buy more things<sup>452</sup>. The town offers better prospects, more opportunities for improving the family income.<sup>453</sup> Among all other factors which bring people from rural areas to the

<sup>449</sup> Cf. Verster, Pieter, op. cit., 2.

<sup>450</sup> Cf. Aghamkar, Atul Y., “Family coherence and evangelization in urban India”, in: Van Engen, Charles/Tiersma, Jude (eds), God so loves the City: Seeking a Theology for Urban Mission, OR 1994, 143–162, 147.

<sup>451</sup> Cf. Hanna, William John/Hanna, Judith Lynne, Urban Dynamics in Black Africa: An Interdisciplinary Approach, Chicago 1971, 39–41; Aghamkar, Atul Y., op. cit., 147.

<sup>452</sup> Cf. McGavran, Donald A., Understanding Church Growth, Grand Rapids 1982, 315.

<sup>453</sup> Cf. Shorter, Aylward, op. cit., 17.

cities, however, industrialization is probably the most important “pull” factor that attracts thousands of people to the city. At least it is the most crucial reason for the growth of urban population in the Two-Thirds World. Some developing countries like Korea have used the term industrialization in parallel with urbanization.<sup>454</sup> Mining is a specialized form of industry which has also encouraged urbanization. For example, Johannesburg is associated with gold and diamond mines. Cities offer numerous options for employment, primarily in industry.

#### Political factors of human migration

Astride Zolberg states that political drivers have a number of direct effects on migration. Most obviously, the breakdown of governance can lead to the emergence of forms of conflict beyond acceptable levels, trigger a decision to move or lead to displacement.<sup>455</sup> By 2009, every African state had sent or received political refugees, while in the Middle East 2.2 million refugees were recorded.<sup>456</sup> Verster states that for many young men and women, the desire for freedom from social constraints in close-knit rural communities is the primary motive for migration.<sup>457</sup> Furthermore, people hope to enjoy political freedom in the cities. Viv Grigg also confirmed that throughout the centuries, men and women have needed permanence, security, community and achievement.<sup>458</sup> The city, good in her reflections of the creativity, and creation of order; and evil in her infiltration, and arrogant rejection of God has always been the mecca for such aspirations.

Escalating unemployment in rural areas due to changes in the traditional caste system and government policies related to land, labour, and minimum wages also push rural people to the city<sup>459</sup> to look for employment<sup>460</sup>. According to J. Andrew Kirk, the lack of access to sufficient land of employment to sustain life drives people to the cities.<sup>461</sup>

<sup>454</sup> Cf. Greenway, Roger S./Monsma, Timothy M., *Cities. Mission's new frontier*, Grand Rapids 1989, xiii.

<sup>455</sup> Zolberg, Astride R., *Escape from violence. Conflict and the refugee crisis in the developing world*, New York 1992.

<sup>456</sup> Cf. *ibid.*

<sup>457</sup> Cf. Verster, Pieter, *op. cit.*, 38.

<sup>458</sup> Grigg, Viv, *Cry of the Urban Poor*, Monrovia 1992, 30.

<sup>459</sup> Cf. Aghamkar, Atul Y., *op. cit.*, 147f.; Johnstone, Patrick/Mandryk, Jason/Johnstone, Robyn, *Operation world 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Cumbria, UK 2001, 579.

<sup>460</sup> Cf. Shorter, Aylward, *op. cit.*, 17.

<sup>461</sup> Cf. Kirk, J. Andrew, *What is mission? Theological Explorations*, London 1999, 99.

#### Demographic factors of human migration

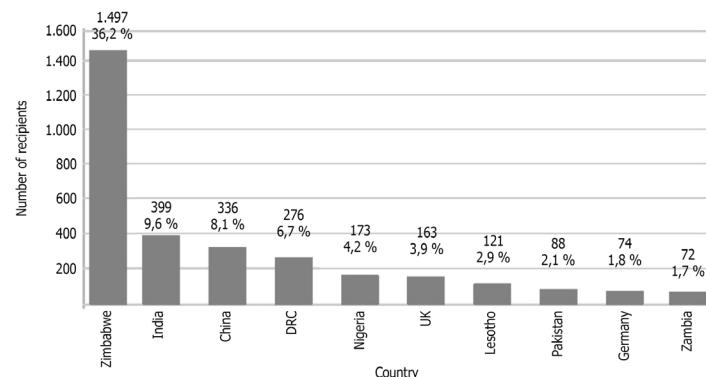


Figure 3: Diagram illustrating a distribution of recipients of permanent residence permits from the ten leading countries from all regions, 2014 (Statistics South Africa, *Documented immigration in South Africa, 2014, Statistical release P0351.4 15 December 2015, Pretoria 2015, 38*)

As observed from Figure 3, the top ten countries for the 2014 PRP (permanent residence permits) were: Zimbabwe (36.2%), India (9.6%), China (8.1%), DRC (6.7%), Nigeria (4.2%), UK (3.9%), Lesotho (2.9%), Pakistan (2.1%), Germany (1.8%) and Zambia (1.7%). Nationals from these countries made up around three quarters (77.4%) of the 4136 recipients.

The effect of demographic factors on migration is most likely to be seen through interaction with other drivers, particularly economic. The propensity to migrate is also generally higher among younger people, so the demographic characteristics of a source region will influence who moves in response to economic drivers. These demographic characteristics may be affected not only by birth and death rates, but also the burden of disease and ill-health within a community. The worldwide increase in population “with the increased birth rate in rural areas”<sup>462</sup> is an underlying cause of migration to the cities. Shorter<sup>463</sup> indicated that one of the factors that push the migrant away from the village is rural overcrowding, “mechanization, or lack of opportunity”<sup>464</sup>.

<sup>462</sup> Grigg, Viv *op. cit.*, 31.

<sup>463</sup> Shorter, Aylward, *op. cit.*, 16.

<sup>464</sup> Monsma, Timothy M., *An Urban Strategy for Africa*, Pasadena, California 1979, 12.

Most of the African families in rural areas are extended families. In this type of families, for instance, one family is composed of a man, his father, and mother, his brothers and sisters, his wife, his sons and daughters, his daughters in law, his grandchildren and so on.<sup>465</sup> People today generally live longer; infant mortality has decreased; and medicines keep people alive who, years ago, would have died. The need for more jobs comes with the increase in population. This forces millions to leave their traditional rural homes and move to cities in search of employment.<sup>466</sup>

### Social factors of human migration

#### Education:

Studies of rural to urban migrants consistently show a positive association between education and the propensity to migrate.

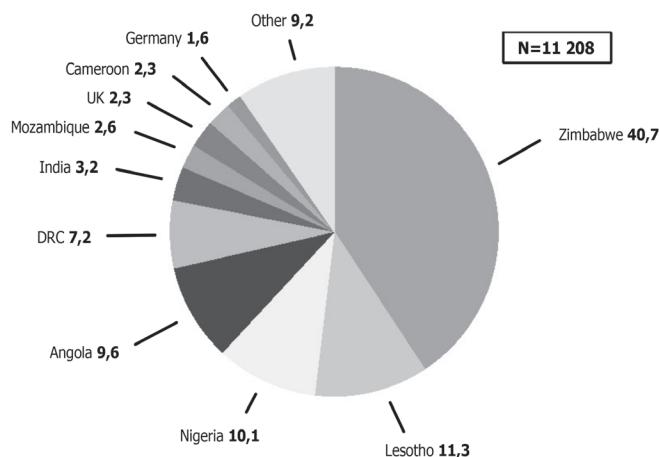


Figure 4.1: Diagram illustrating percentage distribution of recipients of all study permits by nationality, highlighting the ten leading countries, 2014 (Statistics South Africa, Documented immigration in South Africa, 2014, Statistical release P0351.4 15 December 2015, Pretoria 2015, 28)

<sup>465</sup> Cf. Mutavahdsindi, Muthupei Albert, op. cit., 103.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. Greenway, Roger S., Go and make disciples! An Introduction to Christian Missions, New Jersey 1999, 116.

As presented in Figure 4.1, all the ten leading countries for study permits were African countries except India, UK and Germany from overseas. Nationals from these ten countries were issued with 90.8% of the 11208 study permits. Zimbabwe nationals alone received 40.7% of all the study permits. The Zimbabweans were followed by Lesotho, Nigeria, Angola and DRC nationals that were issued with 11.3%, 10.1%, 9.6% and 7.2% study permits, respectively.

In many cases, children are sent to school in urban areas by rural parents, because it is believed – probably rightly – that urban educational standards are higher “better”<sup>467</sup> and job prospects are better at the schools and tertiary institutions in cities, (For example, the universities, technikons, technical colleges, in Gauteng, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, Cape Town, etc. are occupied by students who mostly come from different rural areas<sup>468</sup>). It is quite clear that those institutions in urban areas offer the best degrees, diplomas, or certificates that prepare those students for professions. The availability of better educational facilities, the allure of the mass media, and increasing freedom attract thousands to the city.<sup>469</sup> Cities offer educational opportunities that are not available in small towns and villages.<sup>470</sup> Most schools of higher education in cities, offer libraries, part-time work for students, and easy access from the surrounding area.<sup>471</sup> Rural schools often prepare people not for rural lives, but for the modernizing influence of the city.<sup>472</sup>

#### Health care:

Cities offer hospitals and health centres for people with special medical needs.<sup>473</sup> While some medical care may be available in rural areas, more – specialized care, especially surgical procedures, can be obtained only in large-city hospitals.<sup>474</sup>

<sup>467</sup> Verster, Pieter, op. cit., 137.

<sup>468</sup> Cf. Mutavahdsindi, Muthupei Albert, op. cit., 106.

<sup>469</sup> Cf. Aghamkar, Atul Y., op. cit. 147–148.

<sup>470</sup> Cf. Greenway, Roger S., op. cit., 116.

<sup>471</sup> Cf. Monsma, Timothy M., An Urban Strategy for Africa, op. cit., 109; Shorter, Aylward, op. cit., 17.

<sup>472</sup> Cf. Grigg, Viv, op. cit., 30.

<sup>473</sup> Cf. Greenway, Roger S., op. cit., 116.

<sup>474</sup> Cf. Monsma, Timothy M., An Urban Strategy for Africa, op. cit., 109.

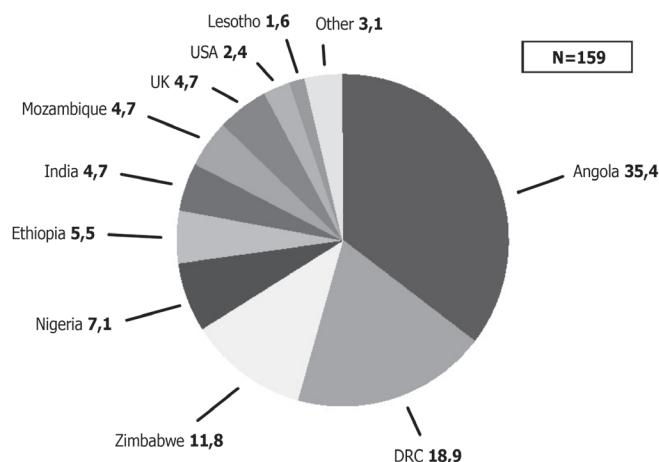


Figure 4.2: Diagram illustrating percentage distribution of recipients of all medical permits by nationality, highlighting the ten leading countries, 2014 (Statistics South Africa, Documented immigration in South Africa, 2014, Statistical release P0351.4 15 December 2015, Pretoria 2015, 32)

The diagram reveals that, with the exception of India, UK and USA, the ten leading countries for the 159 medical permits were all from the Africa region. Nationals from the ten countries received 96.9% of the permits leaving only 3.1% for nationals from other countries. Nationals from Angola alone got 35.4% of the permits. They were followed by nationals from DRC (18.9%) and Zimbabwe (11.8%). India, UK and USA nationals received 4.7%; 4.7% and 2.4% permits respectively.

#### **Environmental factors of human migration**

The fundamental fact is that the environmental characteristics at a place affect both a population's exposure to hazard and the availability of ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are those parts of the environment and ecosystems that are utilised to produce human well-being, through the functions of provisioning (e.g. providing food and water), regulating (e.g. erosion protection) and cultural services (e.g. having emotional or spiritual value).<sup>475</sup> According to Aghamkar, disasters such as famine, flooding, and community unrest force

<sup>475</sup> Cf. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005.

people to migrate to urban areas.<sup>476</sup> For instance, in 2001, 2007 and 2008 heavy rains caused flooding along the Zambezi River in central Mozambique. These floods affected approximately 1 million people living in the Zambezi River valley. The floods of 2007 alone displaced over 100,000 people, half of whom were evacuated to temporary 'accommodation centres'. In 2007 another tropical cyclone, Cyclone Favio, increased the number of homeless people in Mozambique following the flooding of the Zambezi River. During repeated catastrophic flooding, affected people lost their homes and livelihoods including their harvest and access to medical facilities, sanitation and safe drinking water.

#### **The church's responsibility of discipling the migrants people**

In looking at the words and teaching of Christ to His followers in the latter part of His earthly ministry and following His resurrection, His emphasis becomes so obvious. The one thing that is recorded in the Scriptures, not once but on five occasions is 'the Great Commission' (Matt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15, Lk. 24:47-48, Jn. 20:21 and Ac 1:8).<sup>477</sup> Migrant people are part of the nations to be reached with the Gospel.

When one speaks of migrants, we speak about two groups of people. The first group is composed of the Christians and the second group is composed of the non-Christians. When we read the bible we find that the refugee theme also recurs in the New Testament. Not only was Jesus, in his flight to Egypt, himself a refugee, but Peter reminds the believers that followers of Christ are "foreigners and strangers" on earth since their real home is in heaven (Phil. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:11).

#### **Refugees as Disciple Makers (Missionaries)**

Moreover, the Great Commission suggests that God's people become refugees. Our Lord expects his followers to scatter over the face of the earth, discipling, baptizing and teaching the nations (Mt. 28:19, 20). In this process they can expect to be like "sheep among wolves" (Mt. 10:16-20). But in their vulnerable position, God the Holy Spirit, will provide authority and power. The refugees of Acts

<sup>476</sup> Cf. Aghamkar, Atul Y., op. cit., 147.

<sup>477</sup> Cf. Harris, Trevor, The Great Omission: A call to restore 'mission' to the local church, New York 2005, 24-25.

8:1, 4 scattered from Jerusalem by persecution, carried the gospel everywhere they went. Refugees Aquila and Priscilla became Paul's trusted and valuable co-workers in Corinth, Ephesus and Rome (Acts 18:1, 2, 18, 19; Romans 16:3-5). The unprecedented expansion of the Christian Church in the first centuries came about through unnamed followers of Christ dispersed, and often fleeing, throughout the Roman Empire.

The majority of migrant Christians come from a context where discipleship-making as a life-transforming encounter is intrinsically interrelated to evangelism and is part of the missional identity of every local church. This strong link between evangelism and discipleship has been the central idea of mission right from the beginning, when Jesus, in the great commission, commanded his followers to make disciples of all nations.

“Authentic Christian witness is not only in what we do in mission but how we live our mission. The church in mission can only be sustained by spirituality deeply rooted in the Trinity's communion of love. Spirituality gives our lives their deepest meaning; it stimulates, motivates, and gives dynamism to life's journey.”<sup>478</sup>

The local church can partner with the migrant Christians or their churches in order to make people disciples of Christ. This partnership only will emerge after a strong relationship between the local church and the missionaries or the migrant church has been built. Through the relationship, the two partners can scrutinize each other in order to see if they can partner together in making people disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. The main issue that should be taken into account in the process of scrutinization should be the issue of doctrine and also how the two interpret the Bible (hermeneutical issue). The issue of hermeneutics is very important as it deals with the way people interpret the Word of God (Bible) and also deals with how they are going to apply it to day to day life.

Biblical narratives and the history of the Christian Church reveal that the evil intentionally brought by some human beings upon others has become, in the providence of God, the occasion for good to result. The sale of Joseph into slavery by his brothers, the betrayal of Jesus

<sup>478</sup> World Council of Churches, Resource Book, WCC 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Geneva 2013, 57.

by one of his disciples, and even the persecution of peoples today by those of the same ethnic group have, in remarkable ways, been used by God to bring people to himself and life and healing to many others. One may rightly acknowledge the way in which God “makes the wrath of men to praise him.” But, it is abundantly clear on the basis of the Scriptures that the evil acts themselves stand under God's condemnation, that those who perform them are guilty before him and that we are called by God to speak out against such violations of his law and to do everything in our power by ethical means to limit such evils (Acts 2:23).

### *Migrants (Refugees) as Mission Field*

The church as the salt and light to the world: Now salt is salt and light is light, they can be no other. In whatever environment they find themselves, they cannot be other than what they are and from the text we see that the church is to be the salt of ‘the earth’ and the light of ‘the world’. We are called upon to be no more than salt and light, but equally we are called to be no less. The question then is: “Where is the church of Jesus Christ?” In posing such a question John Scott goes on to remark:

“Why are the salt and light of Jesus not permeating and changing our society? It is sheer hypocrisy on our part to raise our eyebrows, shrug our shoulders or wring our hands. The Lord Jesus told us to be the world's salt and light. If therefore darkness and rottenness abound, it is our fault and we must accept the blame.”<sup>479</sup>

Trevor Harris states that, the church has been placed under an inescapable and compelling obligation and she has been allowed by God to be entrusted with the Gospel.<sup>480</sup> In writing to the Thessalonian church the apostle Paul expressed the truth in this way: “[...] we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel (1Thes 2:4).

### *The church's ministry to the refugees must be holistic*

The ministry to refugees should be a holistic one. This implies that our ministry embraces the whole person – physical, emotional, mental and spiritual. God calls us to “share his concern for justice and [...]

<sup>479</sup> Scott, John R. W., Issues Facing Christians Today, Marshall Pickering 1990, 67.

<sup>480</sup> Cf. Harris, Trevor, op. cit., 87.

the liberation of people from every kind of oppression” (Lausanne Covenant).

Maniraj Sukdaven concurs when he alludes that the church should turn itself outward to its local community in evangelistic witness and compassionate service<sup>481</sup> but cautions at the same time that governments, religious bodies and NGO will continue to be involved with social responsibilities, but that if the church fails in her mandate to preach the gospel then no other body will do so. Therefore ministry to refugees illustrates the whole missionary enterprise in microcosm, body and soul.

Refugee work is holistic as all ministries should be, including a call to those who have not known Christ as Savior and Lord to repent and believe in the gospel. It underlines the need for one’s own repentance for involvement in systems of injustice. Such a ministry compels us on the one hand to minister to the total needs of the refugees, and on the other, to struggle against those systems of oppression which cause people to become refugees. Christians have sometimes been criticized for taking advantage of and even exploiting refugees for evangelistic purposes.

The idea of neglecting the physical and social needs of refugees, or of using them as leverage, for religious ends is deplorable. On the other hand, refugees have spiritual needs during each phase of their traumatic pilgrimage, and insensitivity to those needs would be equally irresponsible for concerned Christians. Sensitive, timely sharing of the gospel alone can meet the deepest needs of refugees. As refugees come to Christ, they need help to grow in their faith and to reach out to others (2 Tim. 2:2). From the beginning, they should be given spiritual leadership responsibilities, thus becoming bridges for reaching their own group. In learning to obey those things commanded and modelled by Christ, they also learn their privilege and responsibility to pray and work for the evangelization of all peoples (Matt. 28:18-20).

The greatest challenge to the church today is how to bring unchanging Good News of the new life in Jesus Christ to a world that has not only seen dramatic and accelerating change in recent

<sup>481</sup> Sukdaven, Maniraj, “The Laudium Declaration: a Missiological Statement reaffirming the Reformed Evangelical Character of the Reformed Church in Africa”, in: *Journal for Christian Scholarship* 45 (2009) Special Edition 1, 9.

decades, but continues in its restless and often catastrophic quest for happiness. David Jackman states that, “We must remember that the church’s mission is not to influence, or to impress, but to see all nations discipled. This is Christ’s concern – to call out a universal family of God’s children from every kindred and tongue, those whom He has made His disciples.”<sup>482</sup>

## Conclusion

The reality is that human migration is a process that will not come to an end. This means that refugee situations will always be with us. Until the end of time we have to expect persecution, war, famine and disease. Growing world population and increasing pressure on the earth’s resources confirm this trend. However, this situation must not discourage the Church, but rather be a challenge to reach out to refugees, to the uprooted and needy, following the teaching and example that Christ has given us. Christ’s work and message of love are timeless. He calls his people to spread the Good News by word and deed to every corner of the world. There is an urgency because of the magnitude of the situation to reach out with the whole gospel in love, in simplicity of life and selfless service to all people who are fleeing toward hope, freedom, and ultimate purpose.

In order to develop contextual evangelistic approaches that take the changing landscapes and paradigm shifts of our time into account, we need to build relationships of interdependency that promote mutual recognition and learning between local and migrant churches. Migrant Christians bring a new dimension to the understanding, response and evangelism in Africa.

The response of the church therefore is twofold within its multiplicity of approaches to migrants and refugees: the provision for their physical well-being and the development and growth in their spiritual well-being, the latter which only the church can provide.

<sup>482</sup> Jackman, David, *Understanding the Church*, Mentor 1996, 22.

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