"Included, Excluded, In-between, or all of the above?" Being defined as a 'Person with Immigrant Background' in Austria and Germany

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Submitted to

Central European University

Department of International Relations

In partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts

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Vienna, Austria

2022

Abstract

In Austria and Germany, the term Person with Immigrant Background (Person mit Migrationshintergrund, PwIB) refers to people with a migration history. Its everyday understanding has developed ethnicizing dynamics, resulting in the alienation of citizens and non-citizens with 'Non-Western' appearance. The issue has not been explored through the perspective of 'the categorized' yet, which would reveal the power dynamics underlying top-down terminologies. This thesis seeks to identify moments in which PwIBs' top-down definition is being implemented and resisted by the categorized.

Interviews with people with a 'visible' and 'invisible' immigrant background were conducted to incorporate their voices in the scholarly discourse. While the participants identify as hybrids, society emphasises their foreignness.

Job interviews or border crossings are moments in which their legal status collides with their visual appearance and a different treatment between them as citizen and 'white-looking' citizen is noticeable.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Erzsebet Strausz, for always patiently supporting me with my topic, especially in my moments of great confusion. And Robin Bellers for giving me the most productive and entertaining feedback throughout my writing process.

My parents deserve special recognition for their unconditional support in every decision I've taken, from studying Art History to International Relations (and everything in between). To Leo, my brother, who is still writing his MA thesis and motivated me to stay productive. To Ammachi and Appachan for teaching me the importance of education.

And a "Hey, we've finally made it. The thesis is done" to Belma, David, and Alessandro.

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Introduction

"Included, Excluded, In-between, or all of the above?" – Which of the following conditions would describe the situation of a so-called Person with Immigrant Background (PwIB, Personen mit Migrationshintergrund)[1] in Austria and Germany the best? The answer is: "it's complicated".

According to latest statistics, around 25% of Austria's population[2] and 27% of Germany's population[3] are defined as PwIBs - including second and third generations – due to the individual's or their parents' foreign citizenship and birthplace. With their local citizenship but 'foreign' appearance, PwIBs are occupying a hybrid space of being a 'citizen' and 'non-citizen,' a 'local' and 'foreigner'. While Austrian and German societies are changing, the definition remained stagnant and cannot accurately describe the complex pool of social realities anymore consisting of multiple generations of citizen and non-citizen.

The term Person with Immigrant Background' plays an important role in public discourses, often used synonymously with 'foreigner' by right-wing politicians who see an increase in PwIBs as a threat to a 'native' homogenous community,[4] and is often being criticised by the categorized for its ethnicizing and stigmatizing character.[5] This dissonance between the original juristic purpose of the term, its

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[1] I have created the abbreviation 'PwIB' for 'Person with Immigrant Background' which will be used for this paper.

[2] Statistik Austria, "Bevölkerung Nach Migrationshintergrund," accessed April 28, 2022, https://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/menschen_und_gesellschaft/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungsstruktur/bevoelkerung_nach_migrationshintergrund/index.html.

[3] Statistisches Bundesamt, "Gut Jede Vierte Person in Deutschland Hatte 2021 Einen Migrationshintergrund," accessed April 28, 2022, https://www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2022/04/PD22_162_125.html.

[4] Christoph Bitzl and Michael Kurze, "Rechtsextreme Muslimhetze: Die Instrumentalisierung Von Religion Als Vote-Seeking-Strategie Der AfD," *Zeitschrift für Religion, Gesellschaft und Politik* 5, no. 2 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1007/s41682-021-00076-y.

[5] Riem Spielhaus, "Zwischen Migrantisierung von Muslimen und Islamisierung von Migranten," in Foroutan; Karakayalı; Spielhaus, *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*.

problematic generalizing understanding in the everyday, and the effect on the self-identification of individuals necessitates a re-evaluation of the definition, particularly of the hidden power dynamics that are manipulating self-identification processes of those being pushed into this category.

While qualitative scholarship on immigrant communities for the American context does exist (e.g., the U.S.),[6] work focusing on Germany is mostly quantitative or theoretical due to the complexities of documenting a highly heterogenous group. Research on the Austrian context is limited and predominantly focuses on statistic representations of immigrant communities.[7] Thus, this paper puts great emphasis on qualitative methods to add to the existing research on immigrant communities in Austria and Germany and particularly focuses on second and third generation generations of immigrants. This thesis will examine the question how so-called PwIBs negotiate the concepts of citizenship, ethnicity, and identity in everyday situations in Austria and Germany and how strongly it is influenced by top-down definitions.

It will be shown that ethnicized understandings of Persons with Immigrant Background have been reproduced by the public and internalized by the categorized from a young age without noticing the underlying power relations of top-down terminologies. As such they represent an outdated understanding of how a nation (Austria, Germany) should look like which emphasizes a homogenous native culture with little space for 'new citizen'. Both countries do not represent themselves as multicultural countries with overlapping social groups but as a multinational one that differentiate between a local society and isolated (im)migrant communities.[8]

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[6] Nina G. Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," in *Transnationale Migration* (Baden-Baden, 1997).

[7] Statistik Austria, "Bevölkerung nach Migrationshintergrund."

[8] Cf. Rainer Bauböck, "How Migration Transforms Citizenship: International, Multinational and Transnational Perspectives," *IWE - Working Paper Series*, no. 24 (2002): 9–10.

While IR-related scholars such as Michel Foucault or Stuart Hall have addressed how power is constituted and has an impact on the freedom of self-realization and identity formulation, it is missing the link to contemporary case studies – especially to Central Europe and the terminologies used in German-speaking countries. Because of this, this paper will mostly rely on German-speaking scholarship on Postmigrant Theory which will be the framework of this thesis and will be completed with IR scholarship focusing on Critical Citizenship and Migration Studies. Through this combination and the use of interviews it will be argued that so-called PwIBs are aware of the category they are placed in and continue using it due to the lack in alternatives.

Furthermore, PwIBs see their appearance rather than their migration history as the main factor for PwIB identification in everyday situations and believe that even future generations will be affected by the ethnicizing understanding of it – no matter if one owns an Austrian or German citizenship. Another, less discussed aspect is the question of privilege among the categorized PwIBs as those with an 'invisible' immigrant background realize that they can hide being a PwIB contrary to those with a visible background.

This paper begins with an introduction of guiding literature from International Relation-related scholarship, Critical Citizenship and Migration Studies, as well as German-speaking Postmigrant Theory. The first chapter explains the power dynamics within top-down categorization systems and how the ethnicized perception by others and the state impacts the self-identification of PwIBs. The theoretical contextualization of identity formulation based on scholars such as Foucault or Hall will be followed by personal experiences of the categorized to identify real-life implications for the affected. Chapter two examines the issue from a bottom-up perspective and documents ways in which agency can be reclaimed and problematic

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definitions transformed by PwIBs. It also identifies particular moments and places in which the differentiation between regular citizen and others takes place and how resistance and contestation are being performed. It pays attention to the hybrid nature of the individuals that change their self-identification depending on the social environment they are in (e.g., at work, among other PwIBs).

> *The City of Vienna cares for integration, we make sure that children with an immigrant background integrate well and Austrian children show them how." […] Lisa and I, we were both born in Austria. I was furious, how come blonde Lisa was supposed to teach me integration? My father always made it clear to us: "I don't speak Persian with you, I don't want you to grow up as a foreigner." A child deprived of their second mother tongue, who is nevertheless constantly reminded that they are not "really from here". I will never forget how I thought I was beautiful, only to understand shortly afterwards that I wasn't Lisa enough to be "from here" either. I was the child who was held up for migration in the calendar of the city of Vienna, although I wanted nothing more than to be like Lisa and, strictly speaking, I was. Born in Austria. This country has never failed to make me understand that I am no Lisa. -* Madeleine Darya Alizadeh (@dariadaria) 2021, translated from German.[9]

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[9] Translated from an Instagram posting by @dariadaria (Madeleine Darya Alizadeh) 2021, URL: https://www.instagram.com/p/COXbrmynUg7/.

The current state of research

"[Those that have been categorized] can understand better that categories won't work […] top-down approaches of governments and research don't have this insight." – B

It is not possible to conduct research on minority communities without including their personal experiences. While top-down examinations of migration processes and demographic developments might be able to detect general developments, qualitative examinations are necessary to understand the social realities of the categorized, sense the emotional intensity of the issue, and uncovers hidden inequities – starting with the choice of definitions to describe them. This literature review will begin with a short glimpse into IR-related theories that have dealt with the concept of identity construction and power dynamics within it but will put greater emphasis on German-speaking scholarship on Postmigrant Theories. While scholars such as Michel Foucault,[10] Stuart Hall[11] or Engin Isin[12] expose uneven power dynamics within systems of categorizing people (e.g. social structures within democracies) and suggest ways to counter static definitions, German-speaking scholarship is needed to understand the existing controversies within the Person with Immigrant Background debate. To understand and explore the circumstances in German-speaking countries it is therefore necessary for IR scholarship focusing on Critical Citizenship Studies to include and use Postmigrant Theory as the guiding tool for further research.

Bridging the gap between IR scholarship and Postmigrant Theory

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[10] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982).
[11] Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. Paul Du Gay and Stuart Hall (London: Sage, 2013).
[12] Engin Isin, "Performative Citizenship," in *The Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, ed. Ayelet Shachar et al. (Oxford University Press, 2020).

Even if this paper emphasizes on the importance of local knowledge on Postmigrant Theory, traditional scholars related to power distribution cannot be disregarded for this research and help in understanding the different power dynamics within greater systems of categorization. Michel Foucault has questioned the normative assumptions of a top-down power hierarchy controlled by the state(e.g., the state, the 'regular' and 'irregular' citizen, and the 'disrupting' individuals such as undocumented people or refugees) by returning power to the resisting individual.[13] Similar to Foucault but used to expose Gender as a discursive construct, Judith Butler described the process of continuous repetition of rituals as the naturalising process of taken-for-granted concepts.[14]

Identity, gender, and social categorizations such as PwIB are therefore not a priori, objective concepts representing factual social realities but such that were socialized and constructed over time through interactions, repetitions and transformations. Applied to a system of categorization as used by democratic governments (e.g., defining a 'regular' citizen, foreigner, refugee) these processes of naturalization and generalizations are further systemized, minimising the self-identifying possibilities of individuals that are pushed into categories with their birth.

One possible way of resistance and regaining political subjectivity over one's own identity is 'performative citizenship' as described by Engin Isin.[15] Performative citizenship is used as a tool by both citizen and non-citizen to (re)claim their rights to be treated as equal citizen and ignoring the fact that they are not seen as citizen by the government. Techniques to reclaim agency are creating discomfort among the majority community to spread awareness and promote change (e.g., social

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[13] Foucault, "The Subject and Power."
[14] Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (1988), https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893.
[15] Isin, "Performative Citizenship."

campaigns),[16] resistance (e.g., protests, artistic interventions),[17] and other means to oppose discriminatory practices. The mentioned scholars raise the importance of everyday acts of protest to push for a transformation of static interpretations and the promotion of more fluid understandings.

Because of this, and the examination of dissonance between problematic, static definition and lived experiences,[18] this scholarship assists in bridging the gap between IR research and such focusing on Postmigrant Theory. The following section will summarize guiding literature on Postmigrant Theory and introduces the discussion with an examination of PwIB's etymology. As Foucault and Hall have done with historicizing the subject,[19] I will be viewing the term Person with Immigrant Background as the result of a decades-long discursive process to identify the underlying power dynamics and potential transformative moments.

Etymology of the definition 'Person with Immigrant Background' (PwIB)

The term 'Person with Immigrant Background' (Person mit Migrationshintergrund) is used similarly in Austria and Germany. As a juristic term for statistical purposes and inspired by the UN Economic Commission for Europe recommendations on population statistics,[20] Austria defines a PwIB as an individual born abroad (first generation) or having parents who were born abroad (second generation).[21] Germany puts greater importance on citizenship rather than the country of birth and describes a PwIB as someone not born with a German citizenship or who was born in

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[16] Maurice Stierl, "'No One Is Illegal!' Resistance and the Politics of Discomfort," *Globalizations* 9, no. 3 (2012), https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2012.680738.
[17] Holloway Sparks, "Dissident Citizenship: Democratic Theory, Political Courage, and Activist Women," *Hypatia* 12, no. 4 (1997), http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810734.
[18] Cf. Megan Daigle, *From Cuba with Love*: *Sex and Money in the Twenty-First Century* (Oakland, Calif.: Univ. of California Press, 2015).
[19] Foucault 1979, xiv, cited in: Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?," 10.
[20] UNECE, *Conference of European Statisticians: Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing* (2015), accessed April 28, 2022, https://unece.org/DAM/stats/publications/2015/ECECES41_EN.pdf, 136.
[21] Statistik Austria, "Bevölkerung nach Migrationshintergrund."

Germany having one or both parents with foreign citizenship.[22] This statistical purpose originated in 2005 in Germany and was introduced in Austria shortly afterwards. It is used to document the social mobility of immigrants and their descendants.[23] Interestingly, a German report from 2021 does mention growing statistical difficulties of identifying individuals for the PwIB category as they are confronted with multiple generations of people originating from immigrant backgrounds (e.g., second and third generations) who often have German citizenship.[24]

Here it must be noted that German-speaking literature sometimes switches between using the terms 'Person with Immigrant Background' and 'migrant' and uses them as synonyms while the term 'immigrant' does not exist in German. However, the popular understanding of being a 'migrant' is understood as having a direct migration history (e.g., first generation migrants), while the former associates a vague historic connection to migration (e.g., second or third generations).

Years of transforming demographics, however, turned 'the' PwIB category into a multigenerational phenomenon of people with and without local citizenship or immanent migration experience, reducing the intersection between those that should and should not be identified as PwIB (e.g., third generations).[25] With these flaws, statistical work risks of not being able to detect the social reality of people in this

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[22] Statistisches Bundesamt, "Bevölkerung Mit Migrationshintergrund & Ausländer in Deutschland," accessed April 19, 2022, https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/_inhalt.html.

[23] Judith Kohlenberg, "Migrationshintergrund – Ein Überholter Begriff," *DER STANDARD*, January 24, 2021, accessed April 19, 2022, https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000123540531/migrationshintergrund-ein-ueberholter-begriff.

[24] Statistisches Bundesamt, *Bevölkerung Und Erwerbstätigkeit: Bevölkerung Mit Migrationshintergrund. Ergebnisse Des Mikrozensis 2021. Fachserie 1 Reihe 2.2* (Germany, 2021), accessed April 28, 2022, https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Publikationen/Downloads-Migration/migrationshintergrund-2010220217004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile, p. 9-10.

[25] Kenneth Horvath, "Migrationshintergrund," in *Bildung und Teilhabe: Zwischen Inklusionsforderung und Exklusionsdrohung*, ed. Ingrid Miethe, Anja Tervooren and Norbert Ricken (Wiesbaden, 2017), 212.

category, such as discrimination or their socioeconomic circumstances, and does not differentiate between people afflicted by trauma,[26] war, and those being born in the country, among many other aspects.[27] Furthermore, the start of the timeline to identify PwIBs for Germany was set at 1949 to avoid turning German refugees/returnees of WWII ("Volksdeutsche")[28] into PwIBs in German statistics.[29] It can therefore be argued that ethnicizing filters have already shaped the formulation of the statistic definition.

These significant biases in the statistical use of PwIB are worsened by the everyday understanding of it, which links the term to ethnicity, religion, and socio-economically disadvantaged minorities with 'recognizable immigrant background'[30] such as People of Colour (PoC).[31] The differences between PwIB and 'ethnicity' are being blurred, with PwIB even taken synonymously as 'foreigner' by some (e.g., right-wing politicians).[32] Comparing the statistical and everyday use of PwIB in both countries reveals that the definition has little connection to migration as most second or later generations were born in the country with Austrian or German citizenship.[33]

High levels of criticism are also raised by the categorized as the everyday understanding connects them with social stigmas such as not wanting to integrate

[26] Vanessa Vu, "Herkunft: Keine Antwort Schuldig," *ZEIT Campus*, February 27, 2019, accessed April 28, 2022.685Z, https://www.zeit.de/campus/2019-02/herkunft-identitaet-diskriminierung-rassismus-selbstbestimmung.

[27] Horvath, "Migrationshintergrund," 213.

[28] Horvath, 205.

[29] Yuriy Nesterko and Heide Glaesmer, "Warum Fragen Wir Nicht Direkt Nach?," *Psychologische Rundschau* 70, no. 2 (2019): 101, https://doi.org/10.1026/0033-3042/a000399.

[30] Ferda Ataman, ""Wo Kommst Du Her?": Der Ethnische Ordnungsfimmel," *DER SPIEGEL*, February 23, 2019, accessed April 28, 2022.758Z, https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/herkunft-und-die-frage-wo-kommst-du-her-ethnischer-ordnungsfimmel-a-1254602.html.

[31] Rainer Hawlik, "Ist "Migrationshintergrund" Ein Hintergründiger Begriff?," in *Ankommen, Bleiben, Zukunft Gestalten*, https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/service/studien/bildung/Ankommen_Bleiben_Zukunft_gestalten_Band_2.pdf, 2:92.

[32] Nesterko and Glaesmer, "Warum fragen wir nicht direkt nach?," 101–8.

[33] Mediendienst Integration, "Alternativen Zum "Migrationshintergrund"," accessed April 19, 2022, https://mediendienst-integration.de/artikel/alternativen-zum-migrationshintergrund.html.

into the local society.[34] The issue of stigmatization and old-fashioned interpretations of migration-related topics in Austria and Germany have been criticized by scholars of postmigrant scholarship, demanding more efforts to tackle naturalized biases.[35] One of the few existing qualitative surveys dedicated to the self-identification of PwIBs and the perception of them by others in Germany has been conducted by Yuriy Nesterko and Heide Glaesmer in 2019.[36] Their results show that two thirds of PwIBs – mostly second generations with German citizenship - do not self-identify as PwIBs as defined by Germany's demographic statistics and about fifty percent do not think they are seen as immigrants by others. Fifty percent argue that they are not seen as immigrants by others is a surprisingly high percentage, however, no further explanations are given on alternative self-perceptions and how the interviewed believe they are seen by others.

Nonetheless, their research on self-identification by the categorized remains one of the few for the German-speaking region and focuses on the positionality of later generations in Germany. As such they advocate for the need for more qualitative surveys on this heterogenous group and emphasize examining characteristics such as discrimination based on skin colour. While efforts in Germany can be sensed to tackle the issue, research in Austria is still lacking behind.

Of 'transmigrants' and a 'postmigrant society'

While qualitative scholarly work such as the survey by Nesterko and Glaesmer have solely focused on one country, I do believe that due to the similar understanding of Persons with Immigrant Background in Austria and Germany, a transnational

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[34] Ilse Lenz, "Ungleichheiten nach Migration und Geschlecht in der postmigrantischen Gesellschaft," in Foroutan; Karakayalı; Spielhaus, *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*, 11.

[35] Manuela Bojadžijev and Regina Römhild, "Was kommt nach dem »transnational turn«? Perspektiven für eine kritische Migrationsforschung," *Berliner Blätter. Ethnographische und ethnologische Beiträge* 65, Vom Rand ins Zentrum. Perspektiven einer kritischen Migrationsforschung (2014): 14, https://zeitgeschichte-digital.de/doks/frontdoor/index/index/docId/437.

[36] Nesterko and Glaesmer, "Warum fragen wir nicht direkt nach?."

examination can be beneficial to understand cross-border similarities and developments. In addition to that, it would also allow viewing the debate around (im)migrants as a societal phenomenon concerning the whole public and not just one about alienated margins between social groups. A first step in this alternative approach requires the historicization of the term as an ethnic category of differentiation that is partially discursively constituted by the everyday[37] and promoted by social power hierarchies and official rhetoric (juristic identifiers).[38]

Two concepts destabilizing migration-related topics are the 'transmigrant' and the 'postmigrant society' within Critical Migration Studies. The 'transmigration' concept was first coined in the 1940s by the Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz.[39] His description of 'transculturation' describes the phenomenon of transitioning from one to another culture, the uprooting of cultures, and the creation of a hybrid culture different from the home and host country. Scholars such as Schiller,[40] Jones,[41] and Basch have continued these efforts and have defined transmigrants as a proletarian migrant group consisting of individuals with multiple social roles depending on the situation/context, and transmigration as continuous migration flows (host country A is not viewed as the 'final' destination).[42] Furthermore, they suggest a reconceptualization of definitions such as nationalism, ethnicity, race, and everyday

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[37] Horvath, "Migrationshintergrund," 198.

[38] Paul Mecheril, "Diversity. Differenzordnungen Und Ihre Verknüpfungen," *Dossier Politics of Diversity*, 2008, 63.

[39] Nina G. Schiller, ed., *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*: *Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered; [Proceedings of a Workshop … Held on May 3 - 4, 1990 at the New York Academy of Sciences,* Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 645 (New York, NY: Academy, 1992), 8–9.

[40] Schiller, *Towards a transnational perspective on migration*.

[41] Delmos Jones, "Which Migrants? Temporary or Permanent?," in Schiller, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, 217.

[42] Schiller, *Towards a transnational perspective on migration*, 5–13.

acts of resistance "that usually do not challenge or [..] recognize the basic premises of the systems that surround them and dictate the terms of their existence."[43]

Being a transmigrant sometimes involves a rejection by the country of origin[44] which however contradicts their assumption that transmigrants are active members of the country of origin.[45] While it does question the timeless assumptions about migration, their focus on transmigration as a global phenomenon and case studies for the U.S. are not suitable to understand immigrant communities and their following generations in Austria and Germany which remain in the host country, most often accept the local citizenship or are born with it.

For my research, it is therefore more beneficial to examine German scholarship on 'postmigrant societies' and how a country's population could be viewed differently.[46] The concept criticizes German-language migration studies for turning (im)migrants into marginalized counterparts of a white, domestic majority community.[47] The concept was coined in the contemporary Berlin theatre scene by Sherming Langhoff ('postmigrant theatre'/postmigrantisches Theater) as a tool of resistance against stigmatization by those defined as PwIBs though having no 'traditional' immigrant background (e.g. being second generations).[48] It is a resistance against viewing

[43] Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration," in Schiller, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, 11.

[44] Johanna Lessinger, "Investing or Going Home? A Transnational Strategy Among Indian Immigrants in the United States," in Schiller, *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration*, 71–73.

[45] Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration."

[46] Cf. Erol Yıldız, "Ideen zum Postmigrantischen," in Foroutan; Karakayalı; Spielhaus, *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*.

[47] Daniel Männlein, "Paradigmenwechsel. Nach Dem Ende Der Geschichte Ist Vor Dem Anfang Der Geschichte," *Soziologiemagazin* 13 (2020): 23, https://doi.org/10.3224/soz.v13i1.03.

[48] Bojadžijev and Römhild, "Was kommt nach dem »transnational turn«? Perspektiven für eine kritische Migrationsforschung," 18.

migration as an abnormality and instead interprets it as part of a society's development.[49]

Naika Foroutan suggests explanations freed from ancestral-centred perspectives for socio-political conflicts to achieve equal opportunities and participation in a pluralistic democracy.[50] By blurring the boundaries between isolated groups of people (e.g., host society – 'foreign' inhabitants, majority – minority)[51] the importance of ethnicity should to be exchanged for a greater emphasis on universal human rights and the inclusion of (im)migrants in the historic narrative of the Austrian or German society.[52] Currently, as will be proven by the interview material, not even the German-Turk community is considered part of German history even though their 'arrival' dates back over fifty years ago and left significant impressions on Germany's development.

The proposed aim of critical postmigrant theory is finding a middle ground between two opposing positions on social inclusion - the idea of complete assimilation into a 'homogenous' host country/culture versus the idea of multiculturalism, which completely rejects the idea of integration as it is believed to be perpetuating unequal power dynamics through the mere assumption of someone being forced to integrate into something -[53] to enable a pluralistic, open understanding of 'integration'. According to Ronald Taft, this 'multicultural integration' allows a person to maintain aspects of their identity, values, and other elements of their personality while on the other hand an 'interactionist assimilation' would allow a collective negotiation of

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[49] Männlein, "Paradigmenwechsel. Nach dem Ende der Geschichte ist vor dem Anfang der Geschichte," 22–23.

[50] Naika Foroutan, "Was will eine postmigrantische Gesellschaftsanalyse?," in Foroutan; Karakayalı; Spielhaus, *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*.

[51] Andreas Wimmer, "Elementary Strategies of Ethnic Boundary Making," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (2008): 1044, https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870801905612.

[52] Männlein, "Paradigmenwechsel. Nach dem Ende der Geschichte ist vor dem Anfang der Geschichte," 25-26, 34-35.

[53] Ludger Pries, "Teilhabe in Der Migratiosgesellschaft: Zwischen Assimilation Und Abschaffung Des Integrationsbegriffs," 47 (2015).

mutual values[54] which does not require a traditional forced assimilation of 'new' citizen and non-citizen[55] as propagated by conservative political parties or integration courses for refugees or applicants for Austrian citizenship.[56]

It should be noted that while the topic affects both Germany and Austria, most postmigrant scholarly work focuses on Germany. Less qualitative scholarly work can be found for Austria, though both countries are using the same interpretations of PwIB which affects those labelled as such similarly. The resistance against stigmatization by the categorized is visible in the discussions presented but there is still a lack in research on identifying moments in the everyday (on the personal, professional, and public level) in which the identity of a so-called PwIB is being reproduced, contested, and transformed for both countries – especially Austria.

My research aims at providing the missing link between quantitative official statistics on PwIBs, the everyday ethnicizing understanding, and subjective impressions of those being categorized. Since it is a phenomenon existing in Austria and Germany, I will be interviewing individuals from both countries to highlight the transnational nature of this issue and the importance of filling theoretical gaps through bottom-up approaches. It should demonstrate how disconnected the term is from the immigrant communities it is supposed to represent and what this can reveal about the naturalized power hierarchies within these two democratic states.

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[54] Ronald Taft, cited in: Pries, "Teilhabe in der Migratiosgesellschaft," 24.

[55] Hartmut Esser, "Pluralisierung Oder Assimilation? / Pluralization or Assimilation?," *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 38, no. 5 (2009), https://doi.org/10.1515/zfsoz-2009-0502.

[56] Cf.: "Criticism of the 'arrogant undertone' of the course content is voiced by a German trainer. The [integration]course is 'characterised by the assumption that we are the civilised ones who have to teach the uncultured ones what respect and cleanliness are'. It is a 'whitewashed image of Austria' that is conveyed here: 'It is pretended that all Austrians are tolerant towards homosexuals and that women are not disadvantaged here.", in: Maria Sterkl, "Integrationskurse: Saufen, Schmusen Und Andere Werte," *DER STANDARD*, June 26, 2017, accessed May 15, 2022, https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000059776699/integrationskurse-saufen-schmusen-und-andere-werte.

Methodology

"State authorities are trying to cure the symptoms [of 'failed' integration systems] without understanding the realities of the people." – B

Besides the use of scholarship on identity formulation, critical ways of (re)claiming agency over citizenship, and German-speaking scholarship on Postmigrant Theory, an essential source for this thesis are interviews conducted with individuals traditionally categorized as Persons with Immigrant Background.

In spring 2021, nine online interviews were conducted within my personal and academic network to answer the given research objectives. The interviewees are second and third generation PwIBs from the working and 'new' middle classes,[57] and all but two are first generation university students. Six of them believe they have a 'recognizable' immigrant background because of their non-Western features[58] while three believe they have an 'invisible'[59] immigrant background.[60] They have been interviewed individually for 30 to 45 minutes and were asked about their opinion on existing German and English terminologies, everyday experiences of 'feeling' identity, belonging, and alienation, and were asked to describe their identity. The interviews were then transcribed and analysed for reoccurring topics and differences in experiencing particular moments (e.g., border crossings). Particularly attention was given to the comparison of those participants who would identify themselves as having a 'visible' or 'invisible' immigrant background to see how much visibility affects one's own self-perception.

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[57] The term 'new middle class' is chosen to point towards the economic change their parents have gone through, from arriving as working-class individuals and now being identified as middle class individuals.

[58] Cf. Ataman, ""Wo kommst du her?": Der ethnische Ordnungsfimmel."

[59] Cf. Nesterko and Glaesmer, "Warum fragen wir nicht direkt nach?," 103.

[60] It hast to be noted that the use of 'XY immigrant background' must be taken with a grain of salt as it oversimplifies the actual self-identification of the individuals who define themselves as being more complex than this limiting definition.

Due to the regional focus on two German-speaking countries and most interviewees being Austrian or German citizens, the interviews have been conducted in German. Therefore, the mentioned quotes of the interviewees have been translated into English for the sake of clarity. The names of the individuals have been reduced to letters to anonymize their identity and gender.

The focus group was selected on the premise of examining the experiences of those most affected by ethnicized understandings of PwIB (e.g., because of their religious practice/visibility or skin colour) and those who are able to disguise their immigrant background because of their 'Western-looking appearance'. This comparison of two different perspectives that are both placed in the PwIB category highlights the heterogenous social nature that is summarized by the term. Nonetheless, this particular selection has flaws on its own as it can only give a glimpse into the complexity of the construct and should never be generalized for every person defined as PwIB.

While physical and psychological discrimination and violence unfortunately shape the Lebensrealitäten of many PwIB, it must be noted that the interviewed have been victims of vocal but no physical attacks though they mention physical attacks happening to other PwIB friends with similar backgrounds (e.g., Islamophobic attacks on German-Turks). The intensity of racist experiences varies within this group but have been limited. Black Austrians and Black Germans have not been interviewed in the scope of this research, but their experiences would have been an essential element to present different intensities of discrimination within both countries.[61] Looking back at my research I do regret not interviewing Black citizen.

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[61] Cf. Vanessa Spanbauer, "Die Sabotage Der Ungerechtigkeit - Schwarz Sein Heißt Politisch Sein." Initiative Minderheiten, accessed May 20, 2022, https://initiative.minderheiten.at/wordpress/index.php/2020/03/schwarze-minderheit/.

My own positionality cannot be ignored in the process of writing about alienating moments against Persons with Immigrant Background. As a so-called second generation PwIB who knows the interviewees personally, I had to be aware of my own biases which were attempted to be put aside during the process of the interviews. Having experienced similar situations, I had to stop myself from saying "I know wat you are taking about" to be able to listen to the details and sometimes varying opinions on specific moments in the everyday. Taken-for-granted assumptions within conversations between PwIBs are not necessarily visible for 'non-PwiBs': Common experiences and comments known by those categorized such as "once I introduce myself as Austrian there is always the annoying follow-up questions where I was *really* from" (O) have gone unnoticed by me at first as it is a regular encounter by PwIBs and thus not considered ground-breaking while conducting the interviews.

Only rewatching the interviews made me realize how some confrontations and emotions have been internalized by myself as well and were part of my own identity and everyday life. Therefore, it has been a challenging task to analyse the situation of PwIBs as a PwIB myself, distancing myself from the topic to see broader connections or identifying stereotypical assumptions, and using an academic framework to discover everyday experiences and highlight their political significance for critical and inclusive studies of demographic developments and social inclusion.

The categorization fever to make sense of the state, the foreigner, and everything in between

"Wenn man als Österreicher*in mit Migrationshintergrund geboren wird und schon immer in diesem Konstrukt war, vergisst man irgendwann, es wahrzunehmen, und man muss aktiv durch die Welt gehen und schauen, ob man gleichbehandelt wird. Weil es zu einer Gewohnheit wurde." – N

"If you are born as an Austrian with immigrant background and have always been in this construct, you forget to notice it at some point and have to actively go through the world and see if you are treated equally. Because it became a trait." – N

Identity as the most personal element of an individual will be deconstructed in this chapter, exposing its politicized status in the ordering of a state's demographic. Categories such as the citizen, migrant, stateless person are interpreted as universal, objective descriptions of social realities that are taken-for-granted and hardly questioned by the government in its official rhetoric and the majority-community. These categorizations create clearly defined and isolated groups with generalized characteristics. While socialized norms and habits based on local routines are essential parts of our psychological development and integration into a community, it can – in the case of the identity formulation of minorities – expose the segregating tendencies within official top-down labelling in which the experiences of the categorized are not included.

Social systems of order rely on social categories created by decades if not centuries of repeating habits, assumptions, and rituals from a "cultural archive"[62] everyone unconsciously agreed upon.[63] The act of erasing the personal history of a person to fit into an abstract, generalizing social collective, however, disregards contemporary complexities of multicultural societies,[64] in which social categories overlap between

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[62] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, 1994), 52.
[63] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory."
[64] Cf. Juliane Karakayalı and Paul Mecheril, "Umkämpfte Krisen: Migrationsregime als Analyseperspektive migrationsgesellschaftlicher Gegenwart," in Foroutan; Karakayalı; Spielhaus, *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*.

groups and within individuals and with demographic compositions which have grown more fluid. The definitions were shaped by a period which interpreted Central European nation-states as homogenous societies in which (im)migration was not a collective phenomenon but an aberration from the norm,[65] and segregated citizen and non-citizen with immigrant background based on ethnic indicators.

It is less the statistical nature of the term PwIB that is causing segregating effects on the group but its popular understanding. With the term having two contesting natures it therefore must be argued that the popular understanding has developed a different historical etymology and narrative which was shaped by ethnic discourses. PwIBs' everyday understanding in Austria and Germany are closely connected to the public perception of previous 'Gastarbeiter/Gastarbeiterinnen' (migrant worker) generations and later of refugees of former Yugoslavia who would not stay as temporary 'guests' – and hence as foreigners – anymore but as settled residents.[66] As such many acquired the Austrian or German citizenship and thus had to receive equal rights and treatment as 'local' citizens. However, the public perception of them was still shaped by racial visual identifiers.

The phenomenon of isolation and contestation through the lens of the categorized

The given theoretical and historical contextualization of the term Person with Immigrant Background proves it being deeply intertwined with ethnicized assumptions of non-western foreigners. The interviews conducted for this paper echo similar internalized perceptions by the categorized who are familiar and identify with the popular foreign image of PwIBs and less as legal citizens. The intensity of internalization of the category and identity is visible by the introductory quote made

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[65] Oliver Tewes and Garabet Gül, eds., *Der soziale Raum der postmigrantischen Gesellschaft,* Edition Soziologie (Weinheim, 2018).

[66] Hawlik, "Ist "Migrationshintergrund" ein hintergründiger Begriff?," 2:92.

by N who is a second-generation Austrian with immigrant background. Their argument, however, shows an important but oftentimes ignored element of power dynamics within minority identification: Being unaware of the category that a person is being pushed into since they were born into it and it becoming an unconscious, naturalized trait which makes the awareness of different treatment more difficult.

- **The lack of empowering definitions in German**

The first theoretical controversy that was discussed with the participants were German definitions related to people with any particular type of migration history in research, official state rhetoric, and popular culture. Because of the lack in empowering alternatives in German, additional questions were asked about popular English terms such as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Colour) to document the emotional connotation to local and international terms.

The term Person with Immigrant Background is used by every interviewee: while some accept it as long as it is chosen by the individual itself (L, M), others see it as a permanent reminder of not being a "full citizen" (P) but continue to use it due to the lack in empowering alternatives. The interviewed German citizens were able to point out existing alternatives particular for Germany such as 'Deutschtürke/Deutschtürkin' (German-Turks), 'Afrodeutsche/Afrodeutscher' (Afro-Germans) and two less commonly used alternatives for describing a migration background 'Migrationsgeschichte' (migration history) and 'Migrationsvordergrund' (migration foreground). Austrian citizens could not think of existing alternatives for the Austrian context.

To compare the sparely existing German definitions to English terminologies for immigrant communities and the emotional affiliations connected to them, the participants were asked about their opinion on the concept of 'hyphenated identities'

(e.g., Asian-Americans). [67] While they were unfamiliar with the term itself, it was still taken more positively than PwIB as it "respected both sides of a person" (K) and signalled a "sense of belonging and acknowledgment by the state" (P), even if it contrasted with the real-life marginalisation of immigrant communities (e.g., discrimination of Afro-Americans in the U.S.). The German participants compared it with the concept of Afro-Germans and German-Turks in Germany, but wonder why similar terms do not exist for other groups. As someone with Eastern European background, B criticized the arbitrariness of the definitions that do not take modern border transformations of newly founded states into account and which suddenly changed the identity of an individual into one of being a minority or immigrant.

- **Mask on, Mask off - Having an (in)visible immigrant background**

Throughout the interviews it is noticeable that the interviewees saw their appearance as the key factor for their identification by others and not their legal citizenship, raising the question when an immigrant background would begin and how long it would follow a person/family/community (J, M). Because of the fixation on visual signifiers, everyone – including third generation citizens – pessimistically believe that the definition will continue to affect future generations because of ethnic signifiers such as skin colour or their religion (religious garments etc.).

Criticising the lacking accuracy in German terminologies turned the discussion for people with and without a 'visible' immigrant background towards analysing visual signifiers and unveiled great and surprising differences between these two groups. Especially the accounts of three participants who identified themselves as having an

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[67] "A label applied to those categorized as belonging to more than one sociocultural group, in terms of culture and ethnicity," in: Daniel Chandler and Rod Munday, eds., *A Dictionary of Media and Communication*, 2. ed., Oxford reference,
https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780191800986.001.0001/acref-9780191800986-e-3201.

invisible immigrant background[68] explored in detail the idea of privilege within the category of Persons with Immigrant Background. According to them, they were able to escape othering situations more than people with 'visible' immigrant background since they looked 'Western': "I can hide the fact that I'm a minority and this is something a visible minority can't just say […] if I really need to, I can pretend I'm not [a minority] to be safer, for example during encounters with the police. But the name on my ID card would expose me" (D). Besides increasing one's safety, avoiding the effects of social stigmas was raised by J. Having a mixed German-Iranian background, their Iranian mother decided to give them a German name and the family name of their German father for the sake of guaranteeing them an easier future (e.g., job and apartment search) without being exposed to discrimination based on having a Muslim-sounding name. Because of J looking "very German" (J) and having a German-sounding name, J never experienced discriminatory situations and was only confronted with the term PwiB when applying for a scholarship. Here they ticked the PwIB box because of having an Iranian mother. This "privilege" (J) of having the possibility to "be mistaken for a generic German citizen" (J) and avoiding discrimination made them stay away from being active participants during PwIB discussions since "it isn't something [they were] entitled to […] or appropriate" (J) coming from a position of privilege. Therefore, they would follow critical discussions by PwIBs as an "external listener because [they] have had no racist experiences because [they weren't] seen as an immigrant by the public. (J)"

Comparing the situation of traveling as someone with a visible or invisible immigrant background within Europe, B argues that they "can go through Europe and wouldn't get side-eyes even though we [the person with visible and invisible immigrant

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[68] Because of their mixed background or having roots in other European countries.

background] have a similar migration story […] You [would] have to get so deep into it to see what the difference is between us. But we would probably have a different type of experience." This realization is no longer connected to the debate of the PwIB terminology but addresses the broader controversy around the stereotypical 'Western-looking European'.

Religious garments such as the hijab were also regarded as reasons for a different treatment. The interviewed German-Turks recall that even though their grandparents migrated to Germany more than fifty years ago and accepted German citizenship, they were still being othered because of their religion or traditional garments: "It has been more than fifty years since Germans have seen Turks and Muslims with Hijab. It shouldn't be foreign anymore. (K)" Job interviews, apartment searches, and the work environment are believed to be moments in which their self-identification is being questioned by others (K, P, N) mainly because of their foreign-sounding name, appearance, or even fluent use of their mother tongue, German.

- **Language to (dis)connect**

The Austrian and German interviewees explain that they are having two mother tongues – German and the language connecting them to their ancestors. The assumption of not being able to speak German and the disbelief of elderly people hearing them speak fluent German without an accent was interpreted as irritating ("It's always the same", O), suggesting another layer of discrimination. L ('visible' PwIB) and J ('invisible' PwIB) both say that even with German being one of their mother tongues they feel the pressure of having to have an even more refined rhetoric since mistakes would be "more noticeable" (L), forcing them "to perform two to three times more [….] [and] even then it's not enough. (L)"

Concluding this chapter, it must be mentioned that the interviewees do not face a singular alienation by their Western home country. Asking the participants about 'belonging' and the place they would consider 'home', they do not believe that they are seen as 'full' or "authentic" (P) citizens by both countries. Especially participants with a non-European background describe a double push-back and stigmatization from both sides. Being viewed as "migrants" (O) or "foreigners" (P) in their European home country, they are viewed as "Westerners" (M) in the country of their ancestors: "It's difficult to feel a sense of belonging when you're being pushed away from both sides. So, you'll have to come up with something on your own. (M)"

As hybrids, they are occupying a space in between citizen and foreigner within Austria and Germany and simultaneously between 'Westerners' and 'Non-Westerners' in a global perspective, resembling the concept of a 'transmigrant' (see state of research).[69] Residing in the country of their ancestors have also revealed aspects of their hybrid existence to them that they described as stereotypically Austrian or German: Studying at an university in Turkey made K realize that they were not "that Turkish" (K) as they believed to be, while J's stay in Iran and people calling them 'haregi' (foreigner) because of their appearance and some behavioural traits made them realize that "sometimes I was behaving like an Alman[70] myself" (J).

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[69] Cf. Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, "From immigrant to transmigrant."
[70] "Sometimes ethnic Germans who have become aware of the privileges they have as a German living in Germany use "Alman" as a sarcastic self-descriptor to distance themselves from its implied stereotypes and show solidarity with their non-ethnically German peers." Urban Dictionary, "Alman," accessed May 27, 2022, https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Alman.

I've (?) got the power (?) – Reclaiming agency through alternative public spaces

The previous analysis of personal experiences has revealed a predominantly ethnicized understanding of Persons with Immigrant Background by the categorized, describing alienation based on their appearance and religious beliefs, and has exposed issues of top-down description used in official rhetoric and the everyday. The following chapter identifies means of reclaiming agency over one's self-identification by the interviewed through subtle forms of resistance. Based on the interviews, particular moments are described in which the categorized are resisting and transforming existing top-down categorizations "against the privileges of knowledge […] secrecy, deformation, and mystifying representations imposed on people […]".[71]

An important historic point of reference related to the PwIB discourse are 'defensive collective identities' formulated during the civil rights movements in which, for instance, Black Caribbean British women and men challenged and destabilized the normative assumption of British citizen being white by including their own narrative into the discourse.[72] Just as the historic example, a similar movement is noticeable in the growing resistance of later generations of former (im)migrants in Germany and Austria (e.g., postmigrant theatre) and within the growing discourse and popularity of postmigrant theories in the German-speaking region.[73]

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[71] Foucault, "The Subject and Power," 781.
[72] Stuart Hall, *Essential Essays, Volume 2*: *Identity and Diaspora*, with the assistance of David Morley (Duke University Press, 2019), http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv11smnnj, 76.
[73] Cf. Naika Foroutan, Juliane Karakayalı and Riem Spielhaus, eds., *Postmigrantische Perspektiven*: *Ordnungssysteme, Repräsentationen, Kritik* (Frankfurt, New York, 2018).

Several techniques have been described in Critical Migration and Citizenship Studies from vocal (protests, activist interventions)[74] to subtle actions (e.g., non-conforming to category expectations)[75] performing discomfort,[76] dissent[77] or creative ways to destabilize normative assumptions.

Contestation and transformation of normative roles happen in places which mark and visualize the boarders between citizen and other groups and where the differentiation is being reproduced and strengthened by generalizations and administrative routines (e.g. detailed identity checks).[78] The isolating nature of these places can be used by the categorized to destabilize the differentiating categories: known as Foucault's "heterotopia"[79] or Sparks' "alternative public places",[80] these systemizing environments promoting static top-down categorizations can be destabilized by the individual through non-confirming acts of resistance to regain agency over their own identity.

It also is an attempt to blur the traditional boundaries between state-level and everyday politics, raising the importance of everyday activities – especially of minorities reclaiming their self-identification. For the PwIB discourse, examining the moments of contestation would increase the importance of their daily experiences in understanding inclusion and exclusion of (non)-citizen originating from immigrant families, and unveiling hidden power dynamics shaping the ability to practice political agency within domestic politics and state representation.

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[74] Cf. Chris Rossdale, "Anarchy Is What Anarchists Make of It: Reclaiming the Concept of Agency in IR and Security Studies," *Millennium* 39, no. 2 (2010): 493–94, https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829810384006.
[75] Cf. Isin, "Performative Citizenship."
[76] Cf. Stierl, "'No One Is Illegal!' Resistance and the Politics of Discomfort."
[77] Cf. Sparks, "Dissident Citizenship: Democratic Theory, Political Courage, and Activist Women."
[78] Stierl, "'No One Is Illegal!' Resistance and the Politics of Discomfort."
[79] Foucault 1986, 20, in: Stierl, "'No One Is Illegal!' Resistance and the Politics of Discomfort," 430.
[80] Sparks, "Dissident Citizenship: Democratic Theory, Political Courage, and Activist Women," 75.

A different treatment because of one's visual appearance can expose a state – here Austria and Germany – as one identifying itself as a homogenous multinational nation ('native' population and immigrants do not overlap) rather than a multicultural one (with various overlapping groups of ethnic, linguistic, religious groups).[81] As such, PwIBs do not fully fit into the 'local' or 'foreign' category.

- **Border controls**

A common but unsurprising place of contestation mentioned by several participants are European border controls in which the legal identification of them as Austrian or German citizen collide with their appearance, which does not resemble a typical white citizen. For participants such as N, who had to travel between both countries on a regular basis, border controls of buses became a source of extreme discomfort and unfounded anxiety. A sense of alienation, being illegal, and doing something forbidden shaped the feeling of the participants: "Why is it always the brown person who is selected for the random check?" (N) . This stereotypical confrontation of the legal European citizen traveling across borders and the illegal foreigner narrative that has been pushed through conservative politics has been internalized by many non-Western looking travellers (be it citizen or non-citizen).

While P argues that "you have to accept it" to avoid any uncomfortable situations and "get it over with", N sees it as a "disrespectful" and "racist" act of stigmatization. However, those moments before and during situations of othering were contested and transformed by N through their passport. The act of showing their red passport and examining the reaction of the police was used to demonstrate resistance against

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[81] Bauböck, "How migration transforms citizenship: international, multinational and transnational perspectives," 9–10.

the stereotyping act of the border police and claiming their rights to travel as any other white citizen.

- **First introductions**

Other transformative moments that challenged ethnicized understandings of being a PwIBs were first introductions in everyday, academic and professional settings. Participants such as P, N, and M answered questions of nationality with being Austrian. Sensing the confusion and sometimes irritation of the conversation partner they would either insist on their Austrian identity without mentioning their cultural origins in uncomfortable social situations in which they are "reduced to their skin colour" (P) or would elaborate their family and immigrant history if they felt comfortable with the way they were asked about it. Especially the question "Where are you *really* from?" as a follow-up question was seen as provocative by most participants (M, O, P, N, L, K, J) which made them insist on being viewed as local citizen even more as the inquiry made them feel alienated: "Being confused about your identity will never end […] they will always see us as brown people even though no one sees that I do not identify myself that way" (P).

Even with their experiences of alienation or rejections of their self-identification by others, the entire group believes in the importance and benefits of having multiple cultures as it helped them improve their cultural sensibility and empathy for people in similar situations. Being able to create an own set of moral values, ethics, and traditions was seen as a great opportunity. The interviewed participants have accepted their nature of being a hybrid that is either German or something else but something in between, at least for the self-identification. While self-identification as a hybrid is less of a concern, the bigger issues raised by the experiences of the

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interviewed is the ethnicized perception by the public and state rhetoric which alienates more than a quarter of their citizens based on racial signifiers.

B connected the issue of alienation and having to fit in or not being able to fit in because of visual signifiers to the effects on domestic politics such as failing integration policies. Those that are being categorized "can understand better that categories won't work" (B) and need to be included in government policies to avoid further alienating processes through counter-productive top-down integration concepts formulated by the majority-community which erase the multiculturality of modern societies and demand an integration into a homogenous understanding of national culture. "Integration into what?", asks J since German culture is constantly changing while K points towards German and Austrian culture and language being transformed by so-called foreign cultures.

Conclusion

"Wenn ich sage, dass ich Deutsche*r bin, glaubt mir niemand wegen meinem Aussehen und meiner Religion. Du kannst ihnen alle Beweise vorlegen, aber du wirst trotzdem nicht als Deutsche*r identifiziert. Daher nenne ich mich selbst Deutschtürk*in"[82] – K

"If I say that I'm German, no one believes me because of my appearance and my religion. You can show them all your evidence, but you will still not be identified as German. So, I call myself Deutschtürke/Deutschtürkin." – K

The presented research has proven that the self-identification as Persons with Immigrant Background and identification as such by others heavily relies on ethnicizing stereotypes of 'non-Western foreignness'. Statistically, this issue affects more than a quarter of Austria's and Germany's population who are placed between being 'legal citizens' and 'ethnic foreigners'.

The statistic use of PwIB focusing on citizenship and birthplace has not been a topic a great discussion in research and the interviews, but it is nonetheless not flawless. As pointed out by a German report, it is difficult to determine who belongs to the category, making the documentation less reliable.[83] It currently describes a multigenerational construct of citizen and non-citizen with different Lebensrealitäten (former refugees, people born as citizen etc.) which are described by the same category. Documenting social mobility thus becomes a complex attempt. With every additional generation that is included, the categorized individual continues to move away from the initial understanding of immanent migration experiences, which is another factor why the term itself is growing less useful.

While the statistic issue is causing problems to state authorities attempting to document social mobility and other characteristics of a particular minority, the everyday ethnicizing use of PwIB has negative effects on the categorized individuals. Many interviewees have criticized the term PwIB for segregating them from 'local'

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[82] The German terms for 'German' and 'German-Turk' have been gendered to anonymize the gender of the participant.
[83] Statistisches Bundesamt, *Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit*.

citizen and not interpreting them as 'full citizen'. Because of the lack in empowering self-identifications in German, all participants continue to use the term since it is understood by everyone as long as it is chosen by the individual itself and not applied from the outside. Exceptions exist in Germany where the terms Deutschtürken and Afrodeutsche exist to describe Germans with Turkish or African background. Austria does not have these types of options.

The internalization of the ethnicized understanding of PwIB happens early, with N even arguing that they were born into it, making it difficult to notice. While the statistic understanding of PwIB sees a historic end of the categorization once the citizenship and birthplace of a person and its future generations becomes 'local', this does not apply to the everyday use. Participants wonder how long the term will follow them and future generations and claim that it will last as long as they will look different to the majority community.

Situations in which the difference between them as citizen and 'white-looking' citizen is noticeable for them are occasions such as job interviews or border crossings in which their legal status collides with their visual appearance. Feelings of illegality, foreignness, and insecurities question their understanding of their self, othering themselves. Especially the question "Where are you *really* from?" after introducing oneself as Austrian/German is irritating for many individuals such as K or P which further promoted the image of them not being 'authentic' citizen.

Unexpected results concerned the firm understanding of their hybrid self-identification. It is less the problem that the categorized individuals do not know *who* they are but *what* they are / how they are seen in society. The interviewed see themselves as hybrids taking the most relatable and suitable aspects of both countries matching their personality in which a nationalist sense of belonging is of no concern. Some call their identity a "mix-and-match" (M), "the best of both world" (B),

or as "living either in one world or the other but in a grey area […] which takes the best of both" (K). It is the perception by others which is causing the bigger issue as it questions their own interpretation of identity. While the interviewees see themselves as hybrids, society is emphasizing their foreignness. B also wondered why having to be described by one's migrant history – especially if it dates back generations – is even necessary or useful in current times in which social mobility has increased.

Another interesting aspect has been the perception and positionality of individuals that identify themselves as having an 'invisible immigrant background' because of their mixed origins or being from other European countries. The German-Iranian participant did not experience racist encounters because of their German-looking appearance and therefore thought it was inappropriate to participate in PwIB discussions from their privileged position. Another aspect is the possibility of hiding their immigrant background to protect themselves from possibly discriminatory experiences.

This research proves the importance of continuing critical qualitative analyses of the demographics of societies and how they are defining minorities and 'modern' citizen having a multicultural background. It questions our static understanding of how a society and a citizen is supposed to look and behave like since current societies do not represent states with homogenous communities or cultures anymore. In a further step, it also forces us to reconsider how we view the concepts of integration and inclusion and the arbitrary nature of assimilation: "Integration into what?" (J). Otherwise, we will proceed to think in ethnical terms about how a state is supposed to be interpreted.

As has been mentioned by postmigrant scholars such as Männlein or Foroutan, research on Persons with Immigrant Background in Austrian and Germany is still in its early beginnings. While literature can be found on Germany, Austria is still far

behind. More qualitative research on everyday experiences of other PwIBs such as Black citizen or those originating from other European countries are needed and comparisons between the groups are necessary to identify varying experiences and similarities. Comparing the development of terminologies for immigrant-communities-turned-citizen of other countries would be interesting to see how different societies have responded to demographic changes and how terminologies shape the understanding of one's society, its borders, and the Lebensrealitäten of its citizen.

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