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An Interdisciplinary Approach to Complexity: Migratory Decisions of Iranians in Vienna

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Key words: migration; Iranians; Vienna; decision making; interview analysis; sociology; anthropology; Austria

Abstract: Iranians have come to Austria for a multitude of stated reasons. Within this paper the two authors follow their Iranian migrant interviewees' reasoning with two very different styles of analysis, each steaming from a particular scientific background. While Sociologist FLIEGENSCHNEE emphasizes schematic groupings with reference to push and pull factors, for Cultural Anthropologist CZARNOWSKI the interwovenness/interaction of these factors is more important. Together both develop a specific methodology of how to approach interview analysis with regard to migratory decision-making.

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1. Introduction[1]

This paper addresses the multilayeredness of researchers' dealings with persons' stated motives to migrate. It focuses on the question of what we gain analytically when we ask interviewees to talk about their former decision to migrate. We exemplify this issue by referring to persons of Iranian heritage who now live in Vienna. However, we are aware that the issues at stake are just as relevant for any other immigrant group in other settings. Our readers may interpret our paper on three different levels. [1]

First, this paper contributes to the research on Iranian migrants in general and to the migratory decisions of Iranian migrants in particular. We will fan out the stated migration motives of the interviewees and highlight concomitant circumstances of individual migration processes. [2]

Second, this paper has been realized in a process of constant discussion on the part of us authors. Hence, it bears testimony to the difference in research traditions with regard to anthropology and sociology also within the Austrian social science department. Working on this paper has been an interesting interdisciplinary challenge for the two of us. Analyzing the data and composing this paper made us more aware of and more sensitive to the various foundations of our disciplines. Even though we both come from the social science department, we faced difficulties in harmonizing our sociological and anthropological approaches in presenting the data. Whereas sociology tends to focus on precise analysis and categories, anthropology emphasizes context and multilayeredness of meaning (CHARMAZ & MITCHEL, 2001). We finally decided to limit category descriptions to the basic arguments, thereby referring back to the push and pull factors theoretical framework, while presenting the internal connections and complexity of the material in additional discussion chapters. The concept of push and pull factors consistency is used because both factors repeatedly appeared when we analyzed the data. When we started to compare our developed categories with the existing literature and theoretical frameworks we realized that the theoretical framework of push and pull factors fitted our concept even though it did not suffice to explain our findings. So we decided to interpret our findings with reference to this theoretical framework (cf. STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996; CHARMAZ, 2006). Furthermore, never minding sound criticism on its tendency to universalize and simplify complex meanings of migration (CASTLES & MILLER, 1998; JONES, 1999; PAPASTERGIADIS, 2000; SETTLES, 2001), it is still frequently deployed by many social researchers (e.g. by ZIMMERMANN, 1995; HARE, 1999; OIGENBLICK & KIRSCHENBAUM, 2002; KLINE, 2004; DATTA, 2004). Grounded theory encourages the creative synthesis of a number of models and here, push-pull forces also were in accordance with many categories that emerged from our interview data. Moreover, the theoretical framework of push and pull factors was the choice of sociologist Katrin FLIEGENSCHNEE for it corresponded with her academic training aimed at clearly structuring and dissecting the data. Thus, in this paper we initially use the

1 Julia CZARNOWSKI wishes to thank the "Jubiläumsfonds der Stadt Wien" and the FWF for their support of her research.

theoretical framework of push and pull factors for persons' decision-making process that led to their migration to Austria, to structure our findings. This corresponds clearly to what we have found in our data. We then deconstruct its rather static classification-system by highlighting the limitations of this framework. Additional facets of analysis were brought into the discussion by Cultural Anthropologist Julia CZARNOWSKI, who put a specific emphasis on the multilayered character of the information she had gathered in interviews. Thus, our reflections rely upon both a quantitative sociological approach and qualitative cultural anthropology perspective. This tension constitutes the "complexity" that this paper tried to illustrate. [3]

Thirdly, by adding alternative modes of analysis of our data, we level criticism at our prior deployment of push and pull factors. Our reflections about additional facets of research on migratory decisions open up complementary perspectives on how future research can sensitively deal with similar issues. Here, we make the case for a multilayered approach that considers the heterogeneity of reasons for migration; the interwovenness of influential factors and the inconsistency of a person's effective decision-making process; the subjectivity and constructiveness of interviewees' statements; and the way in which personal migration stories may impact on migrants' lives. We attempt to explore our interviewees' narratives about their decisions to migrate as sources for a consideration of the methodological and interpretive issues raised by oral-history collection. [4]

This paper is subdivided into five parts. Our introduction (Section 1) and our methodology (Section 2) are followed by our presentation and discussion of push and pull factors as they apply to Iranians' decisions about migrating (Section 3). We also present background information on Iranians' migration. The next section (Section 4) depicts additional analytic avenues that an exclusive focus on push-pull factors would likely neglect. Subsequent to a discussion of the varying factors' interwovenness (4.1), we discuss retrospective argumentations and their implications for interviewees' practice of talking about migratory decisions (4.2). After that, we focus on the impacts of migratory decisions upon migrants' identities, and vice versa (4.3). Here JENKINS' (2004) differentiation of categorization and identification practices, albeit tightly interwoven, opens up a discussion of how far persons' stated reasons for migration impact on their effective migration projects. The individual identities of migrants are often influenced by the kind of story they have created with regard to the circumstances influencing the departure from their home countries. In the conclusion (Section 5), we discuss our findings and finish this paper with some continuative reflections about our topic. [5]

2. Method

The decision of migrants to leave their home country and to start over again somewhere new is based on manifold reasons. Migratory decisions are thus the outcome of a complex evaluation process that has been investigated throughout several interviews. Here, a qualitative approach proved most suitable for the research on Iranians' process of decision-making with regard to their migration. [6]

The data pool of Julia CZARNOWSKI, consisting of 62 interviews, transcripts of various other participant observations and informal talks conducted in Vienna between 2005 and 2008 constituted the basis of our analysis. Overall, the sampling was guided by the snowball principle and theoretical sampling proceedings. Starting in 2005, Julia CZARNOWSKI conducted interviews with several Iranians, among whom were Baha'is, Sunnites, Shiites, Armenian Christians, Kurds, members of first, 1.5, second and third generations, as well as members of varying age groups. Some of those interviewed had just arrived from Iran to begin their studies, to start a new life or in the course of family reunions, whereas others had been living in Austria for over 30 years. The gender of the interviewees was balanced (30 women and 31 men). Interview partners were of Iranian descent and belonged to varying ethnic and religious groups, and migrant cohorts (they arrived in Vienna before the Islamic Revolution 1979 and much later), and reflect the heterogeneity of decisions about migration. Although the available data also encompass accounts of members of second and third generation Iranians, conversations with members of Iranians' first and 1.5 generations—of those who have actually migrated to Austria—constitute the basis of our analysis. In all other cases, the individuals' decisions about migration tended to fade into the background of conversations. However, the majority of the interviewees were recruited via an online announcement entitled: "Shoma Irani hastid?" ("Are you Iranian?"). First published on January 10th 2005 on the Student Union's Job Search website, this ad drew an astonishing amount of attention. Within only a few days, this ad had received an enormous amount of inquiries. Originally, this announcement was thought of as being a supplementary addition to other contacts, e.g. via personal contacts (snowball principle), via websites of Iranian associations and via Iranian businesses and addresses listed in the locally-distributed Iranian magazine "Seidenstraße." But quickly, this ad had circled via email, and there were many inquiries from people who had absolutely no connection to the university. Even though, initially, Julia CZARNOWSKI had doubts about such a "commercial" way of recruiting interviewees, this method turned out to be extremely useful, as she suddenly gained access to people from diverse communities, whereas snowball recruiting would have only provided her with people from the same type of groups. People's positive response to this ad also meant that, sometimes, up to three interviews a day were conducted and that most of the interviews were accomplished within a very short range of time between January and April 2005. All further interviews in the subsequent years served to clarify specific questions (theoretical sampling) that appeared while working with the data (coding, memo-writing, etc.). [7]

Many interviews surprised us by the unconditional honesty Julia CZARNOWSKI encountered. In this context, she must rely on her own "gut feeling" that usually told her if people's records were congruent and sincere or if people just fed her "stories" or did not dive beneath the surface of the issues being discussed. Of course, it was always made clear that all interviews would be made fully anonymous—within the texts, interviewees are only indicated by a number and with little additional information. [8]

Julia CZARNOWSKI conducted informal, semi-structured interviews and casual conversations that usually took place in Viennese coffeehouses. During the conversations, four main subjects were usually addressed: the interviewees' life histories, their personal developments, their perceptions of the Iranian community in Vienna and their "messages." The "message" was the main topic of the interviewee at the time of the conversation. This could have been a recent divorce, professional success or quarrels with parents. The "message" tended to highlight the particular perspective of the interviewee and thus added to our general understanding of the individual context of what had been said. During conversations, Julia CZARNOWSKI thoroughly depended on peoples' accounts in German or English. Concerning this project's methodical emphasis on face-to-face conversations, it must be said that during the eight years of her research interest in Iran, performance was investigated, too. Here, she is able to look back on various get-togethers with persons of Iranian descent during her stay in Iran for social occasions, in the meeting of friends and groups of friends, during artistic events and in the course of various events organized by Iranian associations in Vienna. During conversations, and this asset may outweigh the lack of proficiency in Persian, Julia CZARNOWSKI was granted access to many different people who were able to talk noticeably uninhibitingly about Austrians and Iranians alike, due to the fact that their own categorization of Julia as a "German" made her "neutral" nationality-wise. The proficiency of interviewees in Persian was also clearly discussed within conversations with members of the second generation. We are inclined to believe that her expertise in this regard would have inhibited these interviewees. Apart from the fact that most interviewees spoke German fluently or as a native language, interviewees apparently did not expect her to talk to them in Persian (cf. HIGGINS, 2004), but some made appreciative remarks on her familiarity with language-bound concepts, such as *Ta'arof*, which refers to Persian polite formal address in social interactions. [9]

In the course of interviews, topics and research perspective continuously shifted in line with the information that had been gathered in earlier conversations. Flexibility remained Julia CZARNOWSKI's first principle; it also governed her decision when it came to the selecting documentation. Sometimes—albeit very rarely—she felt confident in using a digital voice recorder if interviewees agreed to it. However, she much more frequently fell back on pad and pen to occasionally note down information, especially wordings. In all cases, the conversation transcriptions were completed within 24 hours. If a second or a third conversation followed the same day, detailed conversation protocols were produced immediately after the talk. These conversation protocols (an excerpt from this kind of data is marked as "excerpt from conversation protocol" in this text) contained a description of each conversation' s contents and dynamics as well as the transcript of some original wordings. Hence, her typing on her laptop keys became a familiar sight and sound for many Viennese coffeehouse waiters, who occasionally joked about it. Taking notes proved to promote more relaxed conversations and within a short period of time she also learned to render very detailed descriptions. Only once did one of the interviewees refused to let her take any notes because of mistrust about the Iranian embassy. To test the

accuracy of her notes, Julia CZARNOWSKI decided to hand in two protocols back to interviewees for cross-checking. Their extremely positive feedback, ranging from "accurate" to a joking "where did you hide the recording device?" encouraged her to continue with this documentation/recording/transcribing method. [10]

Even though—and maybe due to—the personal nature of the conversations, the offers of many interviewees to provide further contacts through friends or family members stayed vague and could therefore not be followed upon. Thus, further contacts were only very seldom established through the interviewees themselves. However, she sometimes talked to members of the same family by chance and without them knowing of each others' involvement with her. But, if people could be taken up on their earlier promise to introduce others, these follow up conversations were usually quickly established and uncomplicated. [11]

Throughout her work on this project, Julia CZARNOWSKI also kept a field diary in which she wrote down events and questions concerning the research process or observations in conjunction with research subjects. And apart from everyday observances, Julia CZARNOWSKI visited several local Iranian associations and events as, for example, the Persian school' s Nowruz (Persian New Year) celebration, events organized by the second-generation of Iranians, the Association of Independent Iranian Women in Austria, Persian themed Clubbings, and the Association of Iranian Engineers in Austria. [12]

For this paper, we confined our analysis to making use of only those mentions of the rich material that proved relevant for persons' process of migratory decision-making and later evaluation. Exemplifying insertions are either translated citations from transcribed interviews or translated excerpts from conversation protocols. [13]

Throughout our analysis process, the coding principles of the grounded theory methodology (following the approach of STRAUSS and CORBIN) served us as a methodological anchorage. Here, categories are developed based on transcribed conversations. We have used open coding and axial coding (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996; FLICK, 2002) to specify our categories. Via coding, text sequences are compared with other text sequences and already developed categories. While open coding is opening up the inquiry (STRAUSS, 1987), during the axial coding, data is grouped together in a new fashion and the connection between categories and their subcategories moves into focus (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996). Coding is thus used to conceptualize the relations between different phenomena (FLICK, 2002). Over the course of time, categories become more abstract—more theoretical—conveying an idea of how phenomena are structured and how categories are interconnected. With grounded theory, new ideas are encouraged while standard ways of thinking ought to be overcome (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996). But categories and hypotheses do not just "emerge" from the material; instead, they stand at the end of a long process characterized by constant search, comparison and (re)evaluation. Hence, the constant interplay between category development and category evaluation constitutes the core of grounded theory (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996). After

much analysis, we also started to take into account other authors' findings and previously-developed theoretical frameworks. We then started to focus on variables and achieved a clearer grip on their inter-connections (STRAUSS & CORBIN, 1996). Relevant elements of the theoretical framework of push and pull factors eventually helped us to focus our analysis and to develop our own theoretical concept. Only those categories that prove stable in the face of constant comparison with further data and are also able to encompass discrepancies and variations are considered "important" categories. Such categories subsume several more related codes and minor categories. With grounded theory, not only categories themselves, but also their specific interconnections, are part of the main result. Likewise, we present our categories and their interconnections. Grounded theory methodology and anthropology's classic ethnographic approach mutually benefit from each other (CHARMAZ & MITCHELL, 2001). Ethnography somewhat lessens the objectified presentation of data typical for most grounded theory works, for it encourages researchers to locate themselves in their narratives. It also emphasizes the importance of data's context and raises awareness of tacit meanings and a multilayeredness of meanings/relations. In grounded theory data coding and analysis are usually alternated with intervals of more specific data collection (theoretical sampling). In our case, however, data collection had already been accomplished by Julia CZARNOWSKI and therefore we have concentrated on grounded theory's coding principles. [14]

In the beginning, we knew that we wanted to work together because both of us were working with the methodology of grounded theory in different contexts and we wanted to test how a conjoint analysis would work out. During a first meeting we screened some of Julia CZARNOWSKI's interview transcripts and settled on the topic of Iranians' migratory decisions because they were a recurrent topic in accounts of first- and 1.5-generation immigrants to Austria, and because they had not been analyzed before with regard to Iranian immigrants to Austria. From then on, we worked together for several months, meeting frequently at one of our offices, and starting with some basic line-by-line open coding of the data. At this point, we started to realize how different our two approaches in theorizing the data effectively were. More and more did our coding sessions end in heated discussions that were not only fueled by our differing disciplines standard vocabularies (e.g. with regard to identity concepts), but also by our different scholarly training. Katrin FLIEGENSCHNEE learned that additional data, as gained by participant observation and as recorded in conversation protocols, may convey important supplementary information that must be considered in the analysis. And Julia CZARNOWSKI also learned to be theoretically more precise —to focus on categories instead of constantly taking into account the entirety of her up to then collected material. This paper could only be accomplished by facing each others' differences stemming from differences in academic training and personalities. [15]

3. Migratory Decisions

Writing about migratory decisions opens up a broad field which requires some introductory remarks on the terminology we use. RICHMOND (1993) argues that "… migratory decisions, even those taken under conditions of extreme stress, do not differ from other kind of decisions governing social behaviour" (ibid. in LUCASSEN & LUCASSEN, 1997, p17) which places migratory decision-making within the more general area of decision-making processes. Nevertheless, the actual "migratory decision" that may trigger the act of changing locations across national boundaries must not be confused with the entirety of people's migration projects, which are more complex, full of hopes, imaginings and down-to-earth interests (cf. WAGNER, 2008). Both, migratory-decisions as well as migration projects encompass internal and external aspects. As Richard JENKINS (2004) has exemplified, all human action is guided by the dynamic dialectic of identification and categorization. Accordingly, the realizations of migration projects also encompass elements of "own anticipations" (e.g. hopes, wishes, interests) and "other's anticipations" (e.g.: other's approvals, later justifications, juridical legitimation). In dealing with migratory decisions, we will therefore also consider underlying migration projects that are usually not clearly stated in interviews (e.g. liberty as opposed to security) and their implications. [16]

The more practical elements of a migration—the planning, the transition, and people' s coping with the effective outcome—are in most cases preceded by a decision-making process. What motivates individuals to migrate shall now be discussed with reference to the theoretical framework of push and pull forces (LEE, 1972; FEITHEN, 1985; TREIBEL, 1999). In the classic theory of push-pull forces, push factors involve a certain force which acts to drive people away from a place, whereas pull factors are forces and interests that draw migrants to a new location. This force is most often located within the meso-level of society, e.g. labor markets, politics, etc. But apart from outer forces, as stressed in the classic theory of push and pull factors, another important factor must be considered: personal motives (CORBETT, 2005). Corresponding with the push-pull forces are Iranian migrants' motives for leaving Iran and motives for choosing Austria as their destination country. As we will show, these motives may or may not coincide with socio-economic forces that we have identified. Here, personal priorities sometimes also differ to a great extent of what persons would expect judging by the socio-economic situation in the country of origin. According to Rosemarie FEITHEN (1985), no universal model is ever able to consider the multiplicity of contexts in which decisions are made. We agree with her proposal and will continuously stress the interdependence of push and pull forces that, in our understanding, cannot be presented independently from each other. [17]

In the light of our paper's special emphasis on Iranians, some background historical information on Iranian migration peaking in the early 1980s and continuing today seems appropriate. Even though Iranians have migrated from Iran throughout the 19th century, and especially during Reza Pahlavi Shah's reign (1941-1979), which installed an atmosphere of fear and terror among political dissidents, the major wave of Iranian migration occurred in the last decades of

the 20th century, when the 1979 Islamic Revolution toppled the Shah of Iran and when Ayatollah Khomeini was installed as the new leader. The Islamic Revolution in Iran was accompanied by violence against all those accused of being connected with the former Shah's regime. Later, the Islamic clergy banned various leftist groups (FATHI, 1991), and an oppressive atmosphere was prevailing in the country. The foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, thus marked the beginning of a major exodus of Iranian exiles who were using legal or illegal routes to escape to any country that would receive them. Furthermore, the eight-year war with Iraq, which began in 1980, killed thousands, displaced many families and devoured the country's resources and caused a significant loss of capital. With regard to Austria, according to the public census, some 6,500 Iranian nationals lived in Austria in 2001. Part of this overall number of documented persons living in Austria may also be constituted by Iranians who already possess Austrian citizenship, yet numbers vary and are not very reliable (cf. CZARNOWSKI, 2008). For the period 1992-2003, for which local and national statistical data is equally available, it can be said that 4,678 Iranian nationals became naturalized Austrians. This data stems from the statistics of the city of Vienna and the public censuses. With its political neutrality, Austria has a long tradition of Iranians coming to study, which is reflected by the fact that the local Iranian community is in constant expansion (CZARNOWSKI, 2008). [18]

3.1 Pull factors

We define pull factors as mechanisms that motivate individuals to move from one place to another. While push factors involve a force which drives people away from a place, the pull factor is what draws them to a new location. Pull factors thus constitute the driving force behind people's wishes and initiatives. Pull factors make migration and migration destinations appear desirable. We have thus divided pull factors into two groups: those that focus on people's motivation to leave Iran and those that are responsible for choosing Austria as a destination country. [19]

3.1.1 Pull factors for leaving Iran

3.1.1.1 Pull factor I—Role models

Because we live in social settings (e.g. families, groups, and organizations), our ideas and assessments are not singular but embedded in social environments. WASSERMAN and FAUST (1994) point out that individuals should not be seen as independent from other individuals, because they are embedded in social networks. Therefore, by referring to the term "role model," we refer to individuals whose behavior is emulated by others. In the case of Iran, going abroad, and especially "studying abroad," is nothing new for individuals of a higher social status, e.g.:

> "M. whose family was rich, left Iran after her father's death … she did what many of her peers had already done: studying and traveling abroad." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.20) [20]

It specify correlates with an educational ideal that has been responsible for generations of Iranians who traveled abroad to bring back home their insights and experiences. Not only have sciences and the economy in Persia/Iran profited from this transfer of knowledge, university studies that Iranians completed outside Iran also added to their personal social capital (LIN, 2003; BOURDIEU, 1977). The gain of prestige in Iran is thus a correlated pull factor that should not be disregarded in Iranian migration. Yet, migration becomes less prestigious if it is not a temporary matter but a permanent condition. We would like to argue here that because of its established tradition, moving to another country can be seen as an investment in future careers, e.g.:

> "… it was my long term goal—and my parents agreed to this—to broaden my knowledge by studying abroad, like innumerable Iranians had done before me and will be doing after me—and afterward built up a secure existence in Iran." (Excerpt from interview transcript with interviewee no.53) [21]

Apart from conducting university studies and gaining *savoir vivre*, living abroad is also seen as a means to become fluent in another language, which is considered an asset in Iran, where competition for jobs is high. [22]

Because past generations have left Iran, this behavior is not new and people nowadays have adequate role models to follow upon. Our thesis is that migrating to another country is easier when people can fall back on role models for this practice. We are confident to speak of a "general trend" with regard to Iranians leaving Iran for educational reasons, which is also reflected in our interview data, e.g.:

> "Z. left Iran to study abroad because many others did so and followed this trend." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.31) [23]

Also, other researches (e.g. of SADEGI-NIYAKY, 1993) yield the conclusion that Iranians in Austria have often followed a trend in leaving Iran. Moreover, the importance of social networks "back home" for the migratory decision has been emphasized in several works (PORTES & RUMBAUT, 1990; FAIST, 1997; HILLMANN, 1996). Our empirical findings add to this well-established finding. [24]

Many of the interviewees referred to their parents, who had already been abroad to study; this also holds true for siblings or friends. SADEGI-NIYAKY (1993) found that migration of Iranian refugees to Vienna was often presented as something very desirable and accompanied with a rise in the socio-economic standing of the person in question, thereby creating a success myth that often did not align itself with the refugees' reality, but stimulated those left behind to follow their example. Role models, whose example migrants want to follow, thus stimulate the migratory decision. [25]

Choosing a certain destination is for some a conscious decision based on supplementary information about former target countries. Information about other possible target destinations for Iranian migrants circulate within the personal networks of many Iranians and migrants are thereby enabled to compare certain aspects of

their lives in Austria with the experiences of other Iranians elsewhere. In literature this has been termed "migrant-stock variable" (TREIBEL, 1999, p.40), e.g.:

> "After deciding that he wanted to leave Iran, M started to put much effort into applying for university studies in various countries. One by one he revaluated his first choices corresponding to additional information he received from friends. Romania suddenly seemed dangerous, for one friend had become a drug addict while studying there. Russia—so he heard—was cheap for living but expensive for studying. So he settled on Austria, where his mother had also studied when she was younger." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.23) [26]

In the conversation protocol excerpt above, the interviewee's reevaluation is also related to a negative role model. Thus, role models can also shape views and dissuade persons from migrating to certain countries or from migrating altogether. If the outcome of migration is evaluated negatively, individuals may be reluctant to make the same perceived "mistake." However, unsuccessful migration outcomes may not always be as clearly assessed as in the example above. What SADEGI-NIYAKY (1993) had found with his interviews with Iranians in Vienna, namely that an illusionary image of life in the destination country was often kept alive by interviewees despite the de-facto experiences of these immigrants there. [27]

Until the Islamic Revolution 1979, Iranians have temporarily migrated to study in another country in order to gain knowledge and to enhance their prestige when returning to Iran with a foreign graduation certificate. Since then, however, the situation has changed since a return to Iran is no longer an option for many Iranian migrants, but studying abroad is still considered valuable and prestigious. Because the parents, siblings and friends of many Iranians have established this tradition, young persons are encouraged to follow these role models' examples. The migratory decision is thus also affected by the availability of role models for such a practice. Moreover, role models provide a code of conduct and constitute migration "bridges" (from one place to another), which facilitates migratory decisions and their subsequent justifications. [28]

3.1.1.2 Pull factor II—Liberty and independence

Leaving Iran opens up for many young Iranians a substantial opportunity to increase autonomy and start making independent decisions, often for the first time in their lives. For young Iranians in Iran, it is still unusual and unaffordable to move out of their parents' places before marriage. But just as everywhere else, people tend to get married at a much later age than their own parents and grandparents. ABBASI-SHAVAZI (2002) showed that the average age of first marriage for women rose from age 14.4 in 1970 to age 20.3 in the year 2000. Also the average marriage age for men has risen but not as dramatically as for women: in 1970 men got married at average age 23.3, in the year 2000 marriage average age was 24.9. The prospect of living under the same roof as their parents up to age 22 and older is understandably unappealing for many young Iranians. Young people want to have their own experiences and make their own

decisions as they mature into adulthood. Because self-determination, peoples' freedom to decide how they want to live their private lives without external coercion, is more difficult to implement in Iran, and because studies abroad are accepted and favored by society, many young people leave Iran to escape strict rules and become more "adult-like," e.g.:

> "R. wanted to leave Iran before his 16th birthday because life there lacked the liberties he wanted to have: saying what he thought, wearing whatever he wanted to wear and getting away from his mother's 'dictatorship'." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.41) [29]

Because of the Austrian government's formal classification of Iran as a Third World or third world country, Iranians who decide to study outside Iran are entitled to some kind of support or scholarship by various First World countries. Studying outside Iran may therefore end up being cheaper than studying in Iran. Because of this, because of the high esteem of university studies accomplished outside Iran, and because of the continuous tradition of Iranians studying abroad, it is also an acceptable idea for Iranian parents, who are well aware that "studies" might only be one among other things their offspring wants to enjoy in Austria. [30]

Since politics and religion are so interwoven in Iran, it is also hard to clearly differentiate between an individual's claims for social/personal liberties and claims for ideological/political liberties. Whereas, in the citation above, the respondent explicitly focused on personal freedom/liberties, the motives of other interviewees are far more ambiguous, e.g.:

> "I did not want to live the rest of my life like this … I did not want to live any longer without a future, without freedom … I expected at least to be able to study in my country—or to wear the clothes I decided on and this stuff. I did not want to marry at some time and be arrested with my wife and be treated without any respect as I have witnessed happening to others—and my wife too—and then also my children." (Excerpt from interview transcript with interviewee no.49) [31]

With some interviewees, we found that political motives were more important in deciding to leave Iran. This seems to be particularly true for Iranians who had been actively involved in the anti-Shah-movement and who then left Iran disappointed around 1979 because of dissident political views. Here, going abroad also held out a possibility for ongoing political activities for many of these individuals and thus also added to their personal liberties, e.g.:

> "O's father left Iran before the Islamic Revolution because of ideological differences. He came to Austria to engage in the opposition movement and to pursue his studies." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.34) [32]

Yet, some parents suggest their children study outside Iran because they have realized that young people need the freedom the Islamic Republic is not willing to provide them. Thus, pull factors may be overlapping: young people seeking

independence, adventure and freedom, and liberal parents being happy to grant them "a good time," e.g.:

> "M. belonged to a family from the academic upper class in Iran. They finally encouraged her to leave Iran. It is a matter of fleeing restrictions in the Islamic Republic, so she said." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.35) [33]

We also include in this category individual prospects of working in a job and living a life of their choice. Some interviewees stated that their parents had realized that apart from personal liberties career chances and life necessities must also be considered with their children. In addition, attractive job prospects made some Iranians move to Austria. What had been intended as a limited stay sometimes turned into a permanent settlement, e.g.:

> "E. was sent to Austria as a rotational worker by her company. After she had lived for some years in Vienna she met her future husband—an Austrian—married, started a family and decided to stay on." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.8) [34]

Restrictions in Iran are multifaceted (cf. CZARNOWSKI, 2001). Young people seek their own experiences and independence. In Iran, this is possible only to a limited extent, because family and society watch the behavior of their members closely and each offence is sanctioned. The liberty of choosing how to behave in private or ideological matters may be a great impulse to settle for migration. [35]

3.1.1.3 Pull factor III—Safety

Whereas the lack of safety is often counted as a push factor, safety should also be considered a pull factor. In the face of experienced, witnessed or anticipated prosecution, choosing between risking one's life in staying on and leaving one' s home country for good is nevertheless not an easy task. In exchange for personal safety, refugees move into an unknown future, sometimes leaving behind family they may never see again. In addition, by escaping Iran, migrants often make a prospective return impossible, e.g.:

> "A. left Iran after witnessing friends and family members being executed by local authorities because of their political affiliation with communism. A. also held dissident political views and was imprisoned a few times. When the situation became too dangerous he escaped Iran and was granted refugee status in Austria, which was the first country he was able to reach." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.38) [36]

That their children may leave Iran was for some parents a more serious demand. Here, the parents of children with an allegedly "rebellious character" often worried about their children's integrity, e.g.:

> "K. said he always used to be rebellious and so he frequently clashed with local authorities in Iran. His parents had to buy him out of prison on several occasions…

> His parents feared that he might be getting into serious trouble if he stayed on in Iran. Therefore they supported him in leaving Iran to go wherever he would decide to go." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.26) [37]

In conjunction with the Iran-Iraq war, military service age was stated as another important reason for leaving Iran. Accordingly, many interviewees referred to their threatened recruitment as the last straw that made them/their parents decide in favor of migration, e.g.:

> "S. left Iran after finishing state schooling at age 19. His father dreaded the Iran-Iraq war that was soon to come and wanted his son to leave the country as soon as possible." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.37) [38]

Also GRITSCH (2002) documented in her research that many minors were sent away because their parents were scared they might be recruited by the Iranian army or enlist voluntarily through ideological indoctrination. [39]

The prospect of living safely and less restricted lives may also motivate persons to migrate. Hence, the situation in Iran during the 1980s in particular prompted many Iranians to leave the country. The "safety" category discussed above is strongly connected with the pull factor of "fear" that will be described further below. [40]

3.1.1.4 Pull factor IV—Bonds

Around the year 1979, many male Iranians fled Iran because their lives were threatened, either because of the Islamic Revolution and its political consequences, or because of the Iran-Iraq war. In the initial phase of Iranians' migration in particular, men that left sometimes left women who loved them behind and who decided to join them at a later stage, wherever they have gone. Chain migration was the consequence. But not only did women follow their husbands, also children joined both or one parent in family reunions later in life, e.g.:

> "A. accompanied her mother to Austria. They went because her father had left Iran for personal and political reasons." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.12) [41]

Another pull factor may be the wish to be together with another person. Some interviewees—as seen above—say that they have followed their husbands, who were forced to or wanted to leave Iran. Some followed their parents or other relatives to foreign destinations. This was their motivation to go. Pull factors are people' s wishes to stay together with someone else. Needless to say that push factors may have also contributed to their decisions. Thus, between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s, the vast majority of incoming Iranians were the wives and children of the refugees and pioneers and of those who had joined them in the process of chain migration to Austria. Since then, the pattern has changed (BRETTELL & SIMON, 1986; PHIZACKLEA, 1998). Today, Iranian men

also follow their wives and girlfriends to foreign countries, just like elderly parents may join their children, who migrated earlier in life. [42]

3.1.2 Pull factors for coming to Austria

We have identified three pull factors for persons' choice of Austria as a target destination: Austria's geographical proximity to Iran, structural supportive factors based on Austria' s treatment of Iranian refugees and migrants, and social networks as a socially supportive factor. [43]

3.1.2.1 Pull factor V—Geographical proximity of Austria

For Iranians, coming to Austria was often considered a pragmatic decision since it was the first western country that could be reached on the other side of the former Iron Curtain. Thus, Austria's proximity to Iran made it a favorable gateway to the West. Many interviewees stated that they never intended to stay in Austria for long. Some wanted to work to be able to afford the journey to Germany or France, whereas others intended to apply for a U.S. visa. The reasons why their initial plans changed and their temporary stays were prolonged are found among other push-pull factors (cf. CZARNOWSKI, 2008), e.g.:

> "T. initially wanted to go to the U.S.—just like so many others did. In the end he lingered in Austria which he had thought of as a transit country. He stayed on because he had already learned German well and because he had found a job there." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.15) [44]

3.1.2.2 Pull factor VI—Structural supportive factors

Other reasons for Iranians coming to Austria were favorable visa requirements and attractive study conditions. Iranian students studying in Austria follow a long student tradition starting way before the Islamic Revolution occurred. According to BOZORGMEHR and SABAGH (1991), the Iranians who emigrated before the Revolution were mostly students. Some of these migrants were high-profile Iranian intellectuals who were forced to leave the country as a result of their agitation for reform during the period leading to Iran's Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 (HAKIMZADEH, 2006). In the 1960s, the industrialization drives of the Shah created a need for educated and skilled labor in Iran. BOZORGMEHR (1996) notes, that because Iranian universities could not absorb the large number of high school graduates, it became one of the world' s premier exporters of college and university students, most of whom pursued higher education in the advanced industrial countries of Europe and North America. According to HAKIMZADEH (2006), in 1977/1978, about 100,000 Iranians were studying outside Iran, of whom in 1979/1980, a total of 51,310 Iranian students were enrolled in the United States; the rest were mainly in the United Kingdom, West Germany, France, Italy, and also in Austria. Over the years, the continuous flow of immigrants from Iran resulted in the creation of linked networks of relatives in both Iran and Austria. The transnational migration bridge (cf. GURAK & CACES, 1992) that was formed as a result now serves a primarily one-way flow of Iranian

long-term migration. Here, various local Iranian associations cater to the needs of those who newly arrive from Iran. Moreover, both countries—Iran and Austria—had an agreement that allowed Iranian students to visit Austrian Universities without having to pay any university fees, as many interviewees recalled. Consequently, being a student in Austria was rather "cheap," especially when compared to studying in the United States, e.g.:

> "M. wanted to study in Austria because studies were free." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.35) [45]

Furthermore, Austrian universities had a good reputation in Iran, especially with regard to subjects such as architecture, medicine and music. Other people decided on Austria for pragmatic reasons. Studies were an easy way to go abroad, and some arrived simply because they were accepted at certain universities, e.g.:

> "K. was accepted at Vienna University so he traveled to Austria." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.26) [46]

Hence, structural factors in the target country must not be underestimated when discussing migration projects. Financial issues such as regulation and access to the education system can be an important reason in deciding for or against a suitable destination-country. [47]

3.1.2.3 Pull factor VII—Social networks as socially supportive factors

Even if parents supported their children's decision to move and live abroad, they usually wanted to be sure that people they thought responsible would keep an eye on them once there. Therefore, many Iranians have come to Vienna because they already had an existing network of family members or friends. Such networks prove useful upon arrival, when new migrants feel vulnerable, need help in administrative and bureaucratic affairs and need a place to live. The choice of a destination for migration depends greatly on the availability of such networks (TREIBEL, 1999), e.g.:

> "M. choose Vienna also because his mother had studied there when she was young and she still knew some people there." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.23) [48]

Usually, the initial network Iranians rely on becomes obsolete after a while. As people start to build their own networks according to their own preferences and aims, they come to distance themselves from their parents' trustees and gain additional autonomy. But at the beginning these networks are a great help to re-orientate in the new setting, e.g.:

> "R. decided to go to Vienna because his brother was living there. He could stay with his brother and was supported by him in the beginning." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.41) [49]

Therefore, one very important sub-category in the context of migratory decisions is "support" which shaped up being an important pull factor especially for Iranian migrants' decisions to the choice of country they eventually went. But the family members of Iranian migrants were not the only source of support, even though, interestingly enough, in our interview data it was mainly this one source of support that was mentioned. Here, the interviewees seemed to avoid talking about received assistance, either because they took it for granted or because they did not feel comfortable admitting having been helped by others (RACKETSEDER, 2005). However, we do not know the real reasons for this behavior and we can only guess about the motives. In our opinion, this would be an interesting topic to study in more detail. [50]

3.2 Push factors

We define push factors as conditions in people' home areas that motivate them to leave. Push factors describe forces that prompt people to move away as they perceive their situations as no longer bearable. While pull factors are more connected with dreams, wishes and ideas of a better life somewhere else, push factors are more related to fears with regard to the outcomes of staying. Thus, push factors make the idea of remaining in Iran undesirable. [51]

As far as push motives are concerned, the lap of time people left Iran appeared to be an important factor. The decision to leave Iran could have been triggered by either a timely life-event that often involved a sudden rupture and friction in people' lives, or the outcome of an ongoing process that gave an opportunity for mental and organizational preparations in the run-up to departure. [52]

People's assessments of their departure understandably depend on whether sudden or slow developing migratory reasons existed. An unexpected departure may result in an overly nostalgic image of what has been left behind and therefore activate the filter applied on past decisions and events. Because of the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war, several traumatic experiences have occurred in the lives of some interviewees and were mentioned in the interviews, e.g. the deaths of beloved persons, conflicts with authorities or participation in the war. [53]

3.2.1 Push factor I—Fear

As mentioned earlier, the "fear" category is interconnected with the "safety" one. Peoples' fear of being harmed or of becoming further dependent on others may fuel their desire for safety. Fear is a major push factor, driving persons towards safety and stability. Fear can develop suddenly in correlation with a certain life-event or it surfaces slowly, developing into a perpetual fear. Very often its cause cannot be identified easily since varying factors add up to the perception of some kind of threat. [54]

In combination with Iranians' migratory decisions, four push factors concerning perceived threats and correlated fears can be accounted for. The "fear of

arbitrariness" of the Islamic Government after the Islamic Revolution encompasses feelings of uncertainty and distrust:

> "N. left Iran during the Islamic Revolution because of threatening religious prosecution." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.48) [55]

The "fear of incompatible values" presents another aspect of this push factor. The implementation of an Islamic Republic that strictly-enforced Islamic law posed a serious threat for many liberal and Westernized Iranians and the values they held, e.g.:

> "M's family left Iran because they were politically dissident with the Islamic Republic and did not want to comply with Islamic rules." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.44) [56]

Some Iranians also quoted the "fear of consequences" if their stayed in Iran. One undesirable consequence of this option was envisioned by interviewees as personal resignation and acceptance of the "regime" and its norms. However, imagined future scenarios posed different kinds of threats:

> "R. clashed with local authorities and was arrested several times. Over time he developed the strong belief that he would die if he had to stay in Iran." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.41) [57]

Additionally, family members feared that their loved ones might be harmed in the Iran-Iraq war or other violent clashes with representatives of the Islamic Republic. These anxieties are characterized as the "fear concerning other" loved ones—not centering on oneself:

> "L left Iran together with her family. The deciding factor was the threat of military service for her brothers. During the Iran-Iraq war chances that all her brothers would get killed was possible." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.46) [58]

As we have discussed above, people' consideration for others (e.g. family members, friends) and their concern to know they would be living in a safe place already appeared as a pull factor. Thus, issues of security and fear turned out to be very important with regard to the migratory decision making of Iranians in Vienna. [59]

Eventually, all four facets of the "fear" push factor are somewhat interconnected. People's fear for others may involve certain considerations and anxieties with regard to consequences. It may be triggered by an anticipated clash of allegedly incompatible values or may be a result of arbitrary actions, be they witnessed or experienced. Fearing for one's own life or the life of others may be a powerful decision facilitator for migration. [60]

3.2.2 Push factor II—Feeling pressured

The "pressure" category, too, entails different characteristics. Pressure can be applied onto a person by varying sources, e.g. family-members, other persons, state officials, etc. Whoever the actors may be, the feeling of pressure is unpleasant and individuals will seek to diminish it. One possibility to reduce pressure is to create distance between varying sources of pressure and oneself by leaving the country. [61]

"Family pressure" constitutes an important push factor in the decision to leave Iran, at least temporarily, for studies or other kind of activities, e.g.:

> "For S., leaving Iran implied leaving the bosom of his family that he experienced as being omnipresent and having his own, independent experiences." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.37) [62]

Here, the push factor is constituted by persons' deprivation of personal freedom in Iran. Those who, quite naturally, hope to enjoy their lives and want to be able to make their own decisions, are likewise pushed away from circumstances where these options will be denied. This mechanism can be explained in recurring to both pull and push factors. On the one hand, people long for freedom and independence; on the other hand they also try to escape pressure in their home country. In many interviews, pressure experienced because of family control has been mentioned so that it seems to be a great pushing force for migration. Many interviewees mentioned several times the pressure they experienced because of family control. Our conclusion on this point is therefore that pressure appears to be a great pushing force that leads to migration. One of the causes is, as we have already explained, for most Iranians, leaving the family home before marriage is neither affordable nor acceptable. In Tehran, some students—usually from outside the city—may share an apartment and will find themselves under constant watch by neighbors. Family pressure may be subtle or direct, depending on the families' norms and traditions and furthermore depending on the family members' relationships with each other. For many, the apparent lack of possible retreats leaves no option other than leaving the country altogether if wishing to leave the family environment. [63]

"Social pressure," deriving from other members of the society and materializing in everyday interactions, constitutes another characteristic of our category "pressure." Life under Islamic rule can be very restrictive and hazardous for those not accustomed or unwilling to comply with the strict code of public conduct. Also AGHA (2000) argues that most members of the political and economical elites of Iran were dethroned during the Islamic Revolution. In the aftermath of this revolution, a re-Islamization took place and the middle class's lifestyle was criminalized and prosecuted. Thus several members of the middle- and upper social strata subsequently fled from the social pressure exerted by Iran. [64]

Pressure applied indirectly by the Iranian government and directly by its official or self- announced representatives we have opted to call "political pressure", e.g.:

> "A. left Iran after witnessing friends and family members being executed by local authorities because of their political affiliation with communism. He also held dissident political views and was imprisoned a few times." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.38) [65]

Iranians who were involved in the anti-Shah movement but had lost their power struggle against the Islamists left Iran in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution (AGHA, 2000). If they stayed, they ran the serious risk of marginalization or imprisonment—the latter implying psychological and ideological stress, physical torture and maybe even death. The Iran-Iraq war of 1980-1988 posed another political pressure pull factor, forcing young men of suitable military service age outside the country and increasing others' political awareness, e.g.:

> "S. was sent to do his military service in the north-western provinces of Iran were he had to fight against the Iranian Kurds. The whole situation was terrible and he said it made him open his eyes to see the injustice that was being done. So he refused to obey his superiors and was thus forced to escape Iran." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.11) [66]

AGHA (2000) documents that especially in the last phase of the Iran-Iraq war, it was predominantly young men who escaped from Iran. [67]

As we have illustrated, pressure is an important category when talking about migratory projects and migratory decisions alike. Sources of pressure may vary: family, society influencing general atmosphere and outcomes of interaction, as well as politics in institutionalizing pressure by assigning rights and duties to individual persons (JENKINS, 2004). In any case, the experience of and suffering under pressure may lead to the realization of a migration project. [68]

3.2.3 Push III—Lack of chances

After the Islamic Revolution and the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war, Iran's economy underwent great turbulences—not least because of Iran's high percentage of young persons that are constantly flooding the tight labor market unable to get adequate jobs. Also, after the Islamic Revolution, the educational establishments underwent large-scale changes that limited young people's prospects of studying or—during the revolutionary period—of even visiting schools and universities at all. Since that lack of prospects was in some cases enormous, we have decided to add "lack of chances" as a stand-alone category to our collection of relevant push factors. [69]

One push factor causing Iranians to leave, therefore, is the difficulty of studying in Iran, since chances to enter university were radically limited after the Islamic Revolution because all of a sudden universities started to select students according to their degree of religiosity. In the Islamic Republic's annual university entry examination, a set quota is reserved for descendants of war martyrs, which amplifies access competition among "regular students." Within the Iranian middle class, academic diplomas are valued and facilitate social advancement. Hence,

the restricted university access deprived many young persons of a hope for a future perspective. Many Iranians decided to leave Iran for this reason (GRITSCH, 2002). [70]

Apart from the problems that students face when wishing to enter university, for a period of time most universities closed down altogether. The impossibility to study, as well as the drain of university teachers, compromises another educational push factor with regard to "chances" for leaving Iran, e.g.:

> "M. and at least 100 other Iranians he knows of came to Austria because the universities in Iran were shut for three years after the Islamic Revolution." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.55) [71]

With the universities closing for a few years and so many university teachers leaving Iran, the students who wanted to continue their studies followed their teachers abroad. Nowadays, some subjects are only limited or not at all available for study in Iran, which also forces some students to leave, e.g.:

> "S. and her sister wanted to study music. They considered that studying music in Vienna would open up more chances later on than studying this very limited subject in Iran." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.13) [72]

Studying abroad also posed a chance after restrictions were eased in 1983/84 to leave the country without violating the law. According to GRITSCH (2002), many who could afford it secured a university admission outside Iran to study and follow the developments in Iran from a safe distance. [73]

A second push factor with regard to chances concerns job options that are increasingly rare in Iran, e.g.:

> "A. had limited career options in Iran and decided to leave when his professional situation worsened because of personal differences with superiors." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.33) [74]

After the Islamic Revolution, many branches of trade were nationalized, causing the civil service to become a major employer in Iran. But like the national universities, the civil service also prefers to employ devoted believers and descendents of martyrs of the war and revolution. And apart from the civil service, employment options are scarce. The private economic sector is limited to trade and services which predominantly rely on family businesses that preferably employ family workers (GRITSCH, 2002). [75]

Thus, a substantial "lack of chances" triggers some people' s decisions to migrate. While some interview partners stated that it was their own idea, others referred to their parents who made them leave the country in order to maximize options and future prospects. Faced with a tight labor market and an overall declining economy in Iran sometimes migration may appear to be the lesser evil. [76]

3.2.4 Push IV—Self-discovery

As in the case of "(lack of) chances" category, a "self-discovery" category may also be denied its affiliation to push factors in favor of subsuming it within pull factors. However, we would like to stress that, for some interviewees, the feeling that in Iran self discovery (i.e. finding oneself) was not possible was so strong that it was really perceived as a push factor. Many interviewees stated that the impossibility of autonomous, unwatched and spontaneous decision making—as has been discussed in the context of Islamic conduct, family and economic pressure in Iran—in the end adds to young people's longing for freedom and in their search for more space for self discovery, e.g.:

> "M. left Iran after her father's death. She had already finished some studies in Iran and needed a little distance to clear her mind again. Therefore she did what many of her peers had already done: studying and traveling abroad." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.20) [77]

Since self discovery cannot always take place in the original setting, it also constitutes a push factor even though it surfaces predominantly in the context of freedom as a pull factor. [78]

4. Additions to the Theoretical Framework of Push-Pull Forces

What we intended to exemplify in this paper up to this point are the varying mechanisms that can be identified with regard to the stated migratory decisions of Iranian migrants. We will now add some reflections that qualify the analytical conclusiveness of the previously-established categories, corresponding with either push or pull forces. In doing so, we would like to stress the analytical value of deploying three additional frameworks for the analysis of persons' migratory decisions and the related issues therein. [79]

4.1 First addition: Interwovenness

What we have done so far is to present and discuss important categories that resulted from a thorough analysis of various interviews with Iranian immigrants and Austrians of Iranian descent in Vienna. We have already stressed connections and interactions among, and furthermore within, categories. Now, in this part of our paper, we would like to exemplify the interwoven and multilayered characteristics of migratory decision making processes by sketching five migratory projects and all those categories that act together within each of them. [80]

Most of the literature with regard to migratory decisions has focused on either forced migration or labor migration, thereby neglecting other migratory decisions that often bring forward somewhat less dependent migrants. Many Iranians who have left Iran before and shortly after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 are part of a "privileged stratum" of migrants. For them, pulling forces motivations were more influential than pushing forces and motives. The dominance of pulling over pushing factors in general has also been advocated by some authors in the past

(PETERSEN, 1972; HAMILTON, 1985). The picture would be only half drawn, however, if the push factors were ignored since push and pull factors that matter for one person will always be interconnected with and amplify each other.

> Case I
>
> "Even though A's main reason to migrate were career considerations, he nevertheless emphasizes that 'going abroad' is a common trend among young Iranians and also among his peers. Several of his friends had gone to the US and elsewhere and just like those young adventurers he was looking forward to this experience. Also, he added, leaving Iran presented an opportunity to make decisions independent from his family." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.28) [81]

Thus apart from the correspondence with the job-vacancy hypothesis (TREIBEL, 1999) varying other influential motives for migrating coexists in this case example, e.g. following a "trend," longing for adventure, and becoming independent. Referring back to our formulated categories, the elements of role model, freedom and chances can be identified in this interview.

> Case II
>
> "R. wanted to leave Iran before his 16th birthday because life in Iran lacked the liberties he wanted to have: saying what he thought, wearing whatever he wanted to wear and getting away from his mother's 'dictatorship'. Time and again he clashed with local authorities and was arrested several times. Over time he developed the strong belief that he would die if he had to stay on in Iran. But R did not want to die—less because of personal considerations, and more because he believes he will eventually bring about important changes to Iran. Leaving before his 16th birthday was decided on because of his obligation to serve his time doing military service." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.41) [82]

In this example, R. was pushed into migration by family pressures, fear of consequences of staying in Iran, social pressures and fear of being killed while doing his military service. On the other hand, he was also pulled towards migration by his longing for personal and social freedom and the prospect of entering a space where ongoing opposition engagement could be enacted. The official migratory decision is given by him as reaching the age for military service and thus being sent abroad by his family. Their reasoning overlaps only partly with R's own considerations. The "fear" category concerning others together with fear of consequences is mainly interplaying with the category of' "independence" and "safety." The category "family pressure" and also "political pressure" can be identified in this quotation. We can see here that several categories are important in making the decision to leave.

> Case III
>
> "Uhm—well—the main reason [for coming to Austria] was—I mean there were many reasons—but one reason was that I did not want to live the rest of my life like this. My father was against it. He said millions of others do live like that and you are one of

> them. I said: one cannot live like everyone else. Everyone decides for himself and I did not want to live any longer without a future, without freedom (…) I expected at least to be able to study in my country—or to wear the clothes I decided on and this stuff. I did not want to marry at some time and be arrested with my wife and be treated without any respect as I have witnessed happening to others—and my wife too—and then also my children. Either you get out [from Iran] or you stay forever because you reach a point where you say: OK now it is too late for me to get out." (Excerpt from interview transcript with interviewee no.49) [83]

This third example displays a whole variety of social push-pull forces. Against the wishes and initial support of his father, A. reasoned that leaving Iran must be an option for anyone who seeks personal freedom. Pulling factors are an increase in personal freedom and the prospects of receiving a university education, whereas corresponding pushing factors are a lack of educational chances and also chances for the future generally, great social pressure and the fear of consequences of staying on in Iran. However, the conglomerate "main reason" for migration seemed to be that A wanted to live differently and the freedom to live like one wants is limited in Iran.

> Case IV
>
> "L's mother had already lived and studied abroad, sent by her family. She had suffered on being separated from her family and thus postponed leaving Iran after the Islamic Revolution for several years. But the situation worsened until leaving Iran seemed the only option. Apart from other factors, such as the declining career of L's father and the increase in ideological and social pressure in public, the deciding factor was the threatened military service of L's brothers. During the Iran-Iraq war chances that all her brothers would get killed were high. In the end the family decided to leave Iran together." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.46) [84]

Here, family history plays a major role in the way migration took place. L's mother had succumbed to family expectations concerning an education abroad. She was forced to follow a trend thereby adding to this trend and creating a role model for later generations. The family pressure was high in the past and so was the social pressure to study abroad. Her traumatic experience led to the decision to later leave Iran as a family, rather than just sending the sons abroad. Several pushing factors were recounted, such as the lack of job opportunities and social pressure. In the end, it was the pushing factor "fear of consequences" and especially "fear about others" that turned the balance and forged the migratory decision. When her brother reached military service age, the family left Iran.

> Case V
>
> "S. left Iran after finishing state schooling at age 19. His father dreaded the Iran-Iraq war that was soon to come and wanted his son to leave the country as soon as possible. S. left on one of the last official buses via the land route; he traveled to Austria where he was granted refugee status and started his studies. Whereas for his father his safety was most important, leaving Iran was also most welcomed by S himself. For him, it implied leaving the bosom of his family that he had felt was

> omnipresent and having his own, independent experiences. Up until this occasion he had never done anything without his family being around." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.37) [85]

Again, in this last example, multiple motives for migration surface. This interviewee left Iran because his father dreaded his son's military service. The fear of others again plays an important role also in this report. He therefore agreed to his departure from Iran. Once more, S's motives for leaving Iran were quite different. He was pushed away by family pressure and a lack of space for finding himself (self discovery) towards an increase of personal freedom and the structural supportive factor of receiving a free university education as a refugee in Austria, thus increasing his career chances for the future. [86]

As we have shown, our categories are interconnected and determine each other in very consequential ways. [87]

4.2 Second addition: Subjectivity and context

While the actual migratory decision is usually triggered by a few singular life-events, e.g. reaching the age of military service, encounters with Pasdaran (Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps), the death of a parent, acceptance at university, etc., migratory projects—as has been discussed earlier—are more complex. They encompass a whole "mental preparation phase," the weighing up of pros and cons for migration, imaginings and hopes concerning life somewhere else, as well as anticipated outcomes of the migration. Within the migration project, the duration of the stay abroad is also envisaged: may it be temporary or permanent? Yet, the act of "talking about" migration projects as well as migratory decisions must be placed within the context of the interview situation that has a bearing on the way past events are remembered and presented to the interviewer (VANSINA, 1980; THOMPSON, 1988; MILES & CRUSH, 1993). Here, the personal narratives of interviewees can be analyzed performatively (LANGELLIER, 1989), whereas our emphasis on the performative element suggests that the interviewees' identifications as migrants occur and are accomplished during social interaction. So, at the time of the data collection, interviewees were already able to look back on a) their lives in Iran before their transitions, b) their migration processes, and c) on their lives nowadays. That is, our interviewees must necessarily adopt retrospective arguments to explain what their migration projects had looked like at sometime in the past. According to this are interviewees' presentations of push-pull forces and their individual interplay not an account of what really mattered to them at that time but about what retrospectively viewed, from their current standpoint, has mattered to them back then. Thus, our interviewees present past events from the vantage point of their present realities and values. It is important to keep this in mind. [88]

From our interview data, we have identified four major retrospective trends, or as we call it "memory filters," them being: "pragmatism filter," "trend filter," "rose-tinted glasses filter," and "reflection filter." The orientations of those "memory filters" strongly depend on the experiences of interviewees after the act of

migration and proved to be dependent on the amount of time spent abroad by these persons, the quality of their family-ties, the degree of their nominal and virtual (JENKINS, 2004) integration into Austrian society, their professional success, and so on and so forth. Hence, the shape of memory filters is influenced by peoples' realization of expectations (both for themselves and others) connected with their earlier migration project. There seems to be a tendency to rearrange former migratory projects in order to minimize the gap between earlier imaginings/expectations and later outcome/achievements (MILES & CRUSH, 1993). Not only does this help to prevent negative external categorizations (e.g. "looser"), it furthermore stabilizes one's self-perception by preventing considerable frustration and disappointment (GOFFMAN, 1969, 1981). This retrospective assessment is not static. It may change depending on the current frame of mind of interviewees and in accordance with further experiences and life events. Moreover, our information was mainly obtained in interview settings where roles were often clearly subdivided into "interviewer" and "interviewee." Recapitulated migratory decisions were thus not only filtered through the experiences of the subsequent years, but moreover bound to a certain setting that influenced the way in which persons' earlier decision making was presented (LASLETT, 1999). Since migratory biographies, however, did not play center stage within the conversations but were mere by-products of the gathering of biographical information, we were able to evaluate these accounts within substantial contexts that inform our discussion. [89]

Interviewees who revealed a "pragmatism filter" assessed their migration as being of no further relevance or at least of nothing to muse about. Questions of "what-if-when" with regard to their migration allegedly never crossed their minds. Interviewees that exhibited a pragmatism filter wanted to let bygones be bygones and concentrate on the here and now of the migration outcome. [90]

Interviewees exhibiting the "trend filter" concentrated within their argumentation concerning personal reasons for migration on "simply having followed a common trend." By following this argumentation scheme, persons imply three things. Firstly, they de-individualize their specific biography by referring to a mass-phenomenon, a "trend." Secondly, they refuse to take on significant responsibility for their former decision making since "being carried along into migration" does not necessitate innate considerations. Arguing with a trend filter may thus be a means of avoiding giving more intimate information in an interview setting. Moreover, it may be yet another means of flinching from confronting grueling "what-if-when" questions such as: "would life have been better if I had stayed in Iran?," "would I have been more successful if I had chosen the USA as a target destination?" etc. Thirdly, in referring to a "trend," interviewees broach the issue of Iranians being no labor-migrants but adventurous, wealthy students. In positing a trend and assigning themselves to this trend, people dispose in a positive image what was implicitly presented to the interviewer. [91]

The "rose-tinted glasses filter" involves the assessment of individuals of everything (e.g. networks, living standard, partnerships and friendships) before migration as "good" and "better" while life after migration is considered "worse"

and "bad." Here, their past lives, and sometimes also Iran itself, is sketched and perceived in a distorted and overly positive manner: "what is bad in my life now used to be good in the past" and "what is bad here is good there." Interviewees tended to adopt such a "rose-tinted glasses filter" in assessing their migration if they were either torn from their regular lives and forced into migration or exile or if the conversation with them occurred during a difficult phase of their lives (e.g. dealing with losses, suffering setbacks or separations). Memories of one's own "better life" at some past time and a "better place" somewhere constitute a source of hope and strength. Interviewees exhibiting such rose-tinted glasses with regard to imaginings of "home" usually put much effort into going back to visit Iran, keeping contacts and gathering information about Iranian history and the like. [92]

Last but not least, we have identified the "reflection filter," which also draws on the "rose-tinted glasses filter." Here, the emphasis is on an intensive preoccupation with the former migratory project and the final migratory decision. Interviewees exhibiting the "reflection filter" tended to recurrently ask themselves all kinds of "what if" questions and weighed their earlier hopes/interests against their actual achievements. Through the reflection filter, migration is assessed as an over towering fraction in people' lives, held responsible for several things. This poses the major danger of individuals capitulating because of the past decision to migrate. But the reflection filter is not necessarily linked with the "rose-tinted glasses filter." It can also mean that life outside Iran is especially valued and assessed as much better than life in Iran, or that having migrated is thought of as having been the "right" or a "good" decision. Be that as it may, a reflection filter stresses the importance of a person's migration either way: as being a "rescue" or a "catastrophe." [93]

The filters have a high relevance for the push-pull forces discussed initially. According to our analyses, we want to hypothesize that interviewees with a "rose-tinted glasses filter" are more likely to recall push factors that have been responsible for their migratory decisions while downplaying according pull factors. Likewise, interviewees with a "trend filter" tend to focus more on supra-individual reasons for migration, while simultaneously disregarding their former multilayered migratory decisions. Interviewees exhibiting a "reflection filter" tend to recall varying push-pull forces in great detail because they had thought them over and over again. Then again, interviewees with a "pragmatism filter" seem to recollect rather factual migration assets, shying away from giving a more emotional account of their past decision-making. Here, it is easier to analyze the changing meanings of events for the persons involved than to verify any "facts" with regard to their migration. As the PERSONAL NARRATIVE GROUP (1989) articulates, "truths" rather than "the truth" of personal narratives, is the meaningful semantic distinction. [94]

4.3 Third addition: Impact

Within this third part of our critique on the singular deployment of push-pull forces for analysis, we conclude our discussion about the complexity of stated migratory decisions by introducing one last facet of this topic: migrants' self-images/ foreign-images with regard to their past migratory decisions. Here, depending on the whole migration context and apart from important recollected push and pull factors and the applied memory filters, individuals also develop certain identifications as migrants, thereby also bringing up characterizations of other Iranians that are being distinguished from oneself in consequential ways. We argue that only the consideration of all these elements allows for a thorough understanding of migratory decisions. [95]

Identity negotiation and migratory decisions may be interlinked in a very clear-cut way. For some interviewees, for example, it was very important that their migratory decision should also be reflected in their residence permit status and, thus, be publicly acknowledged, e.g.:

> "For M. it was important to arrive in Austria as a student and not a dependent asylum seeker. He did not see himself in such a way. For him his legal status in Austria should reflect his personal motivation to come, which is to enjoy independence, liberty and modernity. He had to wait for five years until he received the student visa." (Excerpt from conversation protocol with interviewee no.23) [96]

But before we turn to the various "images" with regard to persons' migration that were brought up within the interviews, a short theoretical introduction shall serve as a basis for investigation. [97]

With regard to identity, we align our understanding of identity with Richard JENKINS (1994). According to him, all identities (such as "migrant identities") must be understood as social identities. These social identities are constructed in dialectic between self-image and public image. JENKINS defines public image as how others picture us. These public images are not necessarily compatible with our own self-images. He believes that external categorization is of vital significance for how, for example, migrant identities are being constructed (JENKINS, 1994). The ascription and self-ascription of identities do not happen in a vacuum, but in a particular social and political context (JENKINS, 1994; HALL & DU GAY, 1996; BUCHIGNANI, 1980). Also the process of self-positioning is from an ego-view, always temporary and situational: a person is not something or someone all the time. Identities are not fixed. Instead, aspects of membership are being celebrated in certain contexts: for example, becoming a migrant within interview situations (ZIMMERMAN, 1998; RIESSMAN, 2001). [98]

However, identifications also always have their source in stereotypical assumptions. Now, in everyday use the analytical concept of "stereotypes" refers to members of some kind of collective. The less we know about the other, the more we use stereotypical generalizations. Stereotypes can concern one's own group or that of the other. These are commonly called "auto"- and "hetero-

stereotypes" respectively (JENKINS, 1994). Hence, where self-positioning takes place, "othering" is not far away. The self is being reflected in the image of the others—others that may be just alike, or, more importantly, others that are quite the opposite. Othering is thus a way of defining one' s own identity through the characterization of the "other." Often this is the basis for a self-affirmation which depends upon the stigmatization and denigration of the other group. On the other hand, members of a given group may also share common conceptions about the other party's stereotypical assumptions about themselves. Due to the fact that the persons, in this case, are projecting their own prejudices onto the group of others, this type of stereotyping is called "projected stereotype" (JENKINS, 1994). Stereotypical notions about the characteristics of the members of the other party determine a person's emotional reactions to the other group. [99]

We have adopted the categories of "auto-stereotypes" and "hetero-stereotypes" as umbrella categories. Following this approximate concept, we have developed our own categories, which we will introduce in the next two sections. [100]

4.3.1 Self-perception of oneself as a migrant

With regard to auto-stereotypes, three types of self-images—what interviewees' thought about themselves—have surfaced from our interview-data: "knightly," "penitent," and "special." Those three main self-images are supplemented by three more projected auto-stereotypes—what interviewees believed others would think of them—namely: "rebellious," "valuable," and "enviable." Hence, six self-characterizations have been delineated that refer to persons' migration projects, to their migratory-decisions, and the migration procedure respectively. [101]

Concerning the self-Image of "knightly," interviewees presented their migratory decision as being of a "noble" kind. Here, the emphasis was not on any physical confrontation or fighting (e.g. for others or for rights) but on uprightness and moral protest. With "knightly," migratory decisions need a moral trigger, and moral/value-considerations are recalled as having been most influential for the interviewees' decisions to leave Iran. Our interviewees here either witnessed unfairness or experienced injustice (e.g.: expropriation, defraud) that marked an important disappointment, initiating the interviewees' departure. In migrating, persons leave behind what they consider to be unfair/unjust/morally unbearable: the nation state of Iran and its official representatives. Likewise, the migratory-decision is presented here as something "noble" and not anchored in profane, egoistic and materialistic motives. Interviewees thus whitewash the image regarding their reasons for coming to Vienna. [102]

The "penitent" is an identification that we have encountered especially with regard to members of a 1.5 generation. Whereas first-generation migrants are those immigrants who have more or less decided to migrate on their own account, members of the 1.5 (one and a half) generation encompass children and teenagers who were brought along by family members and did not have a say in the timing or destination (HERZOG-PUNZENBERGER, 2003). Here, the impossibility of some interviewees deciding for themselves—especially in

connection with "rose-tinted glasses filter"—sometimes led to their perception of being basically victimized by their parents' former decision, now having to suffer the consequences, e.g. being separated from the larger family in Iran. [103]

Being "special" turned out to be quite a complex category. The category encompasses mostly positive self-characterizations that center on the interviewees' perception of being "not mainstream," especially in the context of the migration outcome and life in Vienna. Here, many of the interviewees stressed their high professional, academic and social status in Austria—setting themselves apart from other immigrants who had arrived as labor-migrants for instance. Interviewees' "trend filter" also belongs in this category, since following a trend can barely be considered to produce "anti-modern" and dependent "petitioners." We also consider "special" interviewees' statements that stress the characteristic of being different, that is only implicitly connected to migration and the migratory decision. Persons who claim they always used to do/like different things from their peers, e.g. studying something special, having special interests, being peculiar in other persons' eyes etc., do not say they have decided to migrate because of their being different, nevertheless this "specialness" is clearly implied. [104]

The perception of "being rebellious" is usually put forward by a family who fears for the concerned family member, or government officials that deal with the "troublemaker." Here, interviewees stated that others in Iran had treated them in a certain way because of their perception of them being "rebellious." We have already depicted the case of parents who agreed on sending their children abroad because of their alleged rebellious nature. Other interviewees claimed they were labeled as a "troublemaker" by the Iranian authorities even though they had never really caused any "trouble," according to their accounts. [105]

The projected image (projected auto-stereotype) of being "valuable" has been recurrently recapitulated in the context of potential pull forces to Iran (which we have not further discussed in this paper) and are, for example, persons who take an interest in preventing interviewees migrating or pulling them back to the country later on. Those persons may be former employers that do not want to lose highly valued employees or friends and family that do not want to live without this person. [106]

With some interviewees, we found that they thought others back in Iran considered them to be "enviable" because of their migrations' outcomes. As has been mentioned before, academic certifications and titles may add to peoples' symbolic social capital, especially in Iran. Here, the migration outcome—e.g. academic or professional success—may add to individual assumptions that they would be admired, which would cast a positive light on their former decision to migrate. [107]

4.3.2 Perception of others as migrants

With regard to hetero-stereotypes—what interviewees think about others—six major types of foreign images could be detected from our interview data: others were thought to be "committed," "hostile," "martyred," "victimized," "adapted," or "inferior." Here again one projected hetero-stereotype—what interviewees thought others would think about themselves—could be detected: "liberal westernized." [108]

Others that were considered "committed" are characterized as being forced into exile because of their socio-political engagement. This commitment was very esteemed by interviewees who talked about others being "committed" with admiration. This is in accordance with the self-image of "knightly." [109]

Other Iranians were characterized as "hostile" if they were considered "culprits," that is, if they posed a serious threat to the interviewee at some time before migration. Such "threats" could either be physical harm, intimidation and slander or—more abstract—other perceived dangers that may lack the fundamentals of personal experience. By migrating, interviewees likewise tried to get away from these "culprits" that may still be present in Iran, still posing potential threats and thus influencing peoples' political assessments of Iran. Important in this respect were often prevailing important disappointments of the interviewees with their fellow-countrymen. Such a perceived "letdown" may continue to have an effect on the way fellow Iranians in Vienna are assessed and treated. Interviewees have also mentioned hostile others with regard to those whom they have perceived as "enviers," who sometimes turned into "culprits," and who often made life generally more difficult for them, e.g. by gossiping about the migratory decisions of our interviewees, making it seem an allegedly voluntary migration appear as forced; or by insinuating that interviewees wanted to leave Iran because of this or that unfavorable reason. Here, persons' stated ("official") migratory reasons are challenged by persons who are thus perceived as "enemies." [110]

"Martyred" are implicitly considered to be those persons who substantially helped interviewees to migrate (effectively "flee"), thereby risking their own necks, e.g. by vouching for their staying in Iran; by providing documents that official representatives would repress, or by keeping silent about an interviewee's current address in face of government pressure. Moreover, relatives, and especially elderly parents, were also sometimes portrayed as "martyred" because of their selfless support of their children's decision to migrate. Some of the interviewees often felt indebted to others characterized as "martyred," thinking they had accomplished something they wanted for themselves at the cost of other peoples' well-being. Here, presentations of migration projects were accompanied by a mixture of bad consciousness and gratitude. [111]

The hetero-stereotype of "victimized" is closely connected with the self-image of "knightly." Here, one's standing up for one's own ideas and for the sake of others implies that these others are likewise too weak to stand up for themselves. Furthermore, other people/individuals in Iran were depicted as "victimized" if

interviewees stressed their own migration as being some kind of rescue from adverse living conditions in Iran. Logically consistent, those who stayed in Iran were perceived as having to suffer what respondents had successfully left behind. [112]

Interviewees repeatedly referred to other Iranians as having "adapted" if they wanted to emphasize their own difference. In this respect, "adapted" could mean either "committed to the ideals of the Islamic Republic" or "cushy follower." Our interviewees, by characterizing others as "adapted," presented their own migration project as something (positive) "outstanding" and "out of the usual." Likewise, those who had "adapted" were sometimes also perceived as being jealous about the interviewees' own bravery and refusal to conform to social norms in Iran. [113]

The foreign image of others being "inferior" was occasionally brought forward by interviewees with regard to fellow Iranian immigrants' decisions to migrate. Here, others motives for leaving Iran were usually regarded as "not well thought out" or "for all the wrong reasons." And again, by depicting other's migratory projects as inferior, the interviewees thereby imply that they themselves considered all those things carefully before deciding to migrate. Typical reproaches were, for instance, "other Iranians would leave Iran only because women could not go unveiled in public" or "other Iranians only left Iran because of economic reasons," etc. Implicitly, such allegations transported the interviewees' self-characterizations to "being nobler than just coming for the money" and "being more considerate than leaving all that was good in Iran behind for not having to wear a scarf." [114]

One projected hetero-stereotype mentioned by interviewees was that of other people believing themselves to be "westernized" and "liberal." Usually, this was brought forward with some amusement or a raised eyebrow since interviewees would not always agree to this alleged self-image of other Iranian immigrants. What often followed was an account of some Iranians' traditional attitudes or their being rooted' in "Iranian culture." Here, our interviewees' depiction of others once again emphasized their own capacity to judge what "being truly westernized and liberal" implies. [115]

5. Conclusions

The writing about migratory decisions is preceded by the talking about migration decision-making. From our conversations, we have identified four facets that should be taken into consideration when the migratory decisions of any group are presented: the appearance and heterogeneity of push and pull factors, the interwovenness of these factors in peoples' effective migration projects, the impact of memory filters for the recapitulation and weighing up of either push or pull factors and its impact on the shaping of Iranians' identification as migrants vis-à-vis fellow countrymen. [116]

We found that the migratory decisions of Iranians coming to Vienna were triggered by a multitude of different push and pull forces. Iranians that have come

to Austria reflect a multitude of migratory decisions. They are part of an international diaspora community that used to be and still is, to a great extent independent from the flow of labor migrants and recruited guest-workers. The body of the Iranian diaspora community is constituted of a social and ideological stratum that encompasses many individuals with deviant political convictions or a "taste" for western and liberal standards of living that oppose the values of the Islamic Republic of Iran. [117]

Pull factors we have defined as the forces that attract people to leaving their home country in order to settle somewhere else. Pull factors may be an anticipated increase in prestige because of highly valued foreign study certificates and the experiences (e.g. supplementary languages, etc.) migrants bring back to Iran. The long tradition of temporary migration of upper-class academics has established role-models in this respect. Iranians may follow others' examples in migrating. Since freedom and independence are rather limited for young Iranians living in the family home and being watched by local authorities, going abroad offers a whole range of assets with regard to personal freedom. Considerations of one's personal safety in the future could also become an important reason to migrate. This was especially true during the decade of the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. People also left Iran because they wanted to stay together with loved ones who had decided to leave. In some cases it seems that the disappearance of former pull factors for staying in Iran (e.g. family bonds, status) are responsible for peoples' main motivation to migrate. Moreover, we have identified three major reasons for Iranians' choosing Austria as a destination country for migration. First, Austria used to be the most easily-reached Western country and was often chosen solely for pragmatic reasons. Many who stayed there did not intend to do so from the very beginning. Structural conditions (favorable study and visa arrangements) within Austria also influenced the immigrants' decisions to go there in the first place and to stay. Furthermore, some individuals have decided to come to Vienna because of the local existence of social networks which help people get started and settle abroad. One of our hypotheses is that those individuals who left Iran without real "necessity" have been more likely to stress pull factors in their migration projects. They also tended to put great effort into explaining why they left Iran and what they were missing about Iran. [118]

Push factors we have defined as those mechanisms which are perceived by migrants as making a situation somewhere unbearable and thus trigger their decision to leave. Fear can be a powerful push factor. Here, we have differentiated the fear of arbitrariness, the fear of conflicting values, the fear of consequences, and the fear concerning others (the fear something may happen to other beloved ones). Another push factor is constituted by the "feeling pressured" category. Here, we have identified family pressure, social pressure and political pressure that often work together in constituting an important push factor for Iranian migrants. Another push factor is the category "lack of chances" that depicted scenarios in which migration appears as an alternative to putting up with worsening academic and job competition in Iran. Last but not least, "self-discovery," or more precisely the lack of space for people to find themselves in

terms of their own personalities, beliefs etc., turned out to constitute an important push factor for many (especially younger) Iranian interviewees. [119]

These identified forces are interrelated and interwoven in consequential ways, whereas only the complexity of their interplay constitutes the realization of individual migration projects. For most interviewees, it was understood that different factors worked together in their decision-making process. Hence, for every migration project and its accompanying migratory decision, several factors will be relevant—affecting, enforcing or balancing each other. Furthermore, because of the establishment of an Islamic Republic, Iranians were also able to get refugee status for a multitude of different reasons that will each cement their official migratory decision, e.g. political prosecution, religious prosecution, etc. On the other hand, Iranians also come as adventurers, temporary students, family members and rotational workers. Therefore, apart from the official reason for migration, in many cases, supplementary reasons also surfaced in our interviews. Here, we would like to stress that migratory decisions are part of a complex process and require that the different facets involved be taken into account when talking about them. [120]

Furthermore, peoples' migratory decisions that led to their migration in the past are communicated to the researcher at a (usually) much later time and hence entail retrospective assessments. With regard to peoples' retrospective assessment of their earlier migratory projects and migratory decisions, we have identified four "memory filters" that, according to our hypothesis, have a bearing on the types of pull and push factors interviewees emphasize: "rose-tinted glasses filter," "trend filter," "reflection filter," and "pragmatism filter." Each bias has its own effect on what interviewees recall as being most important in their migratory decisions. In addition, we found that such biases were also triggered within conversations for varying reasons, e.g. to cast a positive light on the interviewee. [121]

Ultimately, we also found that individuals developed identity schemes based on their former migratory decisions. Such identity schemes affect peoples' everyday assessments of themselves and of others, thereby tending to influence peoples' choices of certain memory filters and, subsequently, their recollection of push and pull factors that proved important in their specific cases. All four facets together, however, play a significant role for making sense of migratory decisions and their presentation in research settings. Our interviewees' assessment of themselves and of others turned out to be closely connected with their migratory decisions and was therefore very important for our analysis. Here, their identification as "migrants" was often based on their individual biographies and the specific circumstances that have led to their personal migratory decisions. Here, we have analyzed our Iranian interviewees' self and foreign images with recourse to the concept of auto- and hetero-stereotypes. With regard to Iranian migrants' self-images, we have categorized interviewees' self-characterization (auto-stereotypes) as "knightly," "penitent," and "special." We categorized characterizations that were adopted by interviewees because they thought others considered them to be that way (projected auto-stereotypes) as "rebellious,"

"valuable" and "enviable." Our interviewees, by delineating their own identities as "migrants" often conveyed a characterization of other Iranians on the basis of their migration-related experiences. Here, other Iranians and Iranian migrants were presented as "committed," "hostile," "martyred," "victimized," "adapted" or "inferior," while other Iranians migrants' self-image of being "westernized/liberal" was also questioned by some interviewees. [122]

Parts of our interviewees' current self and foreign images are rooted in past events that are interlinked with their migratory procedures. These events (e.g. betrayals or experiences of support) often continue to affect Iranian migrants' current assessment of other Iranians in Austria and Iran. We have reasons to believe that migratory identities impact individual lives in Austria and also influence integration processes. For example, if our interviewees assessed other Iranian co-migrants positively, they were much more prepared to get involved in Iranian associations in Vienna. On the other hand, if Iranian co-migrants were assessed more negatively, the interviewees often avoided socializing with other Iranians in Austria altogether. As a result, some interviewees felt a severe lack of ethnic intimacy (cf. ERIKSEN, 1993) in Austria. [123]

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that migratory decisions are only part and parcel of complex processes and consequently should not be reduced to push and pull factors. The interconnection of all the facets described above seems particularly important. Thus, future research should continue to focus on the inherent complexity of migratory decisions. The interplay of several factors for migration—such as those depicted within this paper—offers a new perspective on already well-researched issues that may bring forward new insights with regard to the multilayered nature of peoples' migratory decision-making and the subsequent presentation of these decisions. Hence, our findings ask for a more sensitive deployment of the theoretical framework of push and pull factors in future migration research. Moreover, we would like to point out that our different academic backgrounds were inspirational during the many hours we spent discussing our findings and influenced our various approaches to analysis. We came to realize that our interdisciplinary approach—bringing together Katrin FLIEGENSCHNEE's sociological training and Julia CZARNOWSKi's cultural anthropological training—was extremely productive for identifying, acknowledging, and making sense of the multi-layered character of this paper's topic. [124]

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