

## Collier workshop 19.1.17 – Introduction/Øyvind Jaer

Welcome to workshop on Exodus with the author himself as key contributor and participant. My name is Øyvind Jaer - senior advisor from the Department of Immigration, Ministry of Justice and leader of the Norwegian contact point for the European Migration Network who is responsible for this workshop.

Here Info on media and filming. Filming and reciting only the key speakers.

For the participants the Chatam house rule of anonymity applies in order to encourage free thinking, openness and sharing of information without, in any way, necessarily representing the viewpoints of your institutions.

A special welcome to Oxford based professor Sir Paul Collier. Sir Paul is professor of economics and public policy, specializing in development economics and African economies – in short the bottom billion which was at the outset Collier's main concern when entering into the field of international migration with his work Exodus – our text today. Collier is not only a debated academic, but also a highly influential advisor in policy and strategy for institutions and for politicians. Indeed, one of the special values of Exodus is that it draws out political implications and provides policy advice.

A special welcome also to our Minister of immigration and integration Ms. Sylvi Listhaug. Sylvi's interest for Paul Colliers thinking and policy advice on migration is an important reason for this workshop.

I should also like to welcome our two other contributors: Jørgen Carling from Peace Research Institute and Jan-Paul Brekke from Institute of Social Research. In my view they are both among the most profiled migration researchers in Norway.

Finally, a hearty welcome to all the other participants as well. We have made our best to select a highly competent and varied group of persons for this workshop. Among them:

- One from the Ministry of Finance,
- Four from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- Four from the Department of Integration and nine from the Department of Immigration in the Ministry of justice and public security:

Finally, we have Lillian Baltzrud from the Research Council, Pål Nesse from Norwegian Refugee Council and last, but not least, professor Grete Brochmann from UIO, another top Norwegian migration researcher. Grete is currently chairing the *Norwegian Government's Committee on the **long term consequences of high immigration***, more or less the same challenging topic as Exodus.

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Exodus has received a lot of praise and a lot of criticism. Robert Putnam, a well-renowned Harvard political scientist, who is extensively referred to by Collier himself in Exodus, states as follows:

"Collier offers a comprehensive and well-written balance sheet of the pros and cons of immigration for receiving societies, sending societies, and migrants themselves. For everyone on every side of this contentious issue, Exodus is a must-read."

Robert Zoellick, Former President of the World Bank Group and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State is also very positive to the Exodus project: "Collier's framework for thinking about the topic is valuable and his agenda for further studies displays his aptitude for considering big topics

while pressing for detailed research. Moreover, he courageously interconnects different fields of scholarship - addressing problems that don't fit neatly into academic categories.”

On the other side we find for example a review in the magazine Foreign Affair by Clemens and Sandefur criticising the academic quality of Exodus and stating: “..many of Collier's conclusions are unsupported by research, ...Collier has written a text mortally wounded by incoherence, error, and overconfident leaps to baseless conclusions.”

And finally Dilip Ratha, lead economist at the World Bank, who is in my opinion close to being parodical in his critique - stating "Collier .....will be noted for a lazy, selective, self-serving citation of the literature and reckless policy recommendations." Dilip Ratha instead recommends the removal of border controls to increase migration.

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As I read Exodus, the book does not advocate a clearly restrictive or migration sceptic attitude. To use Collier's metaphor: Migration is neither good or bad, but like eating - so to speak “a natural fact” of which there can be too little or too much – and then also too much or too little of more or less healthy composition. Whether migration should be more restricted or borders more open is an empirical question depending on the given situation. Whatever the case, migration should always be carefully managed. That is a clear message in Exodus.

Critiques of Exodus academic quality like the review in Foreign Affair, have - I dear say - not caught the core objectives of Exodus, neither its mode of exposition. More seriously, and again I dare say, they appear not to have understood the limits of social science.

Social science do not belong to the predictive sciences. All social sciences, even economics, are on shaky grounds when they try to infer tendencies and future scenarios from the present. Still, if social science shall have any relevance, attempts to infer hypotheses about possible future outcomes of interventions or events, is a part of the game.

One of Exodus' fundamental questions is: **If** migration accelerates, what then? Exodus' concern here is the possible impact of acceleration sometime in the future. Accordingly, the book's significant messages are so to speak, rolled out in the hypothetical mode.

The model developed in Exodus researched and formulated 4-5 years ago, leads us to expect reduced social harmony as the outcome of events like the acceleration of migration in Europe 2015. Has the expectation materialised? *Migration Policy Institute* published its list of top ten Migration issues 2016 recently. Issue no five is titled as follows: *As Publics Fear Loss of National Identity, Far-Right Populist Movements Gain Strength.*

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Paul Collier's **Exodus** (2013) is, in his own words, an attempt to:

- “...generate a unified analysis of ....specialist research, across social science and **moral philosophy**” (p.6)
- “....provide the building blocks for an overall evaluation of migration.” (p.24).
- “...open popular discussion of migration policy beyond views which are theatrically polarized,..” (p.7).

In my opinion, Collier succeeds well in his attempts to conceive migration as a systemic whole and to link the various processes of migration from the country of origin to integration processes in the host country. **Exodus** building blocks of systemic interlinked perspectives, structures and processes appear highly relevant as a platform towards the more academic and I would say needed undertaking of building a general theory of migration.

**Exodus** also attempts to infer policy implications and provide policy advice informed by questions like *which levels and compositions of* i) emigration from countries of origin and ii) *immigration* to host countries, are healthy/sustainable?

The purpose of this workshop is to approach these challenges by using **Exodus** as a platform *Towards a General Theory of Migration* and as an input to policy developments contributing to:

**SDG target 10.7**

*Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies”*