



### **Iradj Esmailpour Ghouchani**

Identities (national, religious, racial,...) are just some installations of information without any “transcendental truth” behind them! Changing the installation and arrangement of information will lead to a new mindset and identity. Knowing this simple fact is very crucial for those who are interested in the issue of integration. This anthropological “knowledge” is an elixir or philosopher’s stone that turns our narrowed mindset - as a spatial structure of learned “information”- into “wisdom” as a wide and all-inclusive perspective of life.

Hence, a true, persistent and reliable integration is just achievable through empathy and empathy itself is a continuous process of swinging between “far” and “near” experiences. In short, integration is not a process of changing one identity into another but a two-band highway that develops a new link between two far identities and in this “way” yields to a much wider, richer and versatile identity.

“Echo-Narciss” is a project that I am dedicatedly working on it since 2012 and is specially focused on the issue of integration between two Western and Eastern Identities by doing and suggesting “Concrete Poetry” as any kind of blend between “images” and “words”. It is supposed that this will foster integration between two visual systems that one of them (West or Narciss) is deeply flourished in visual reproduction of images (e.g. painting) while the other one (East or Echo) is flourished in visual manifestation of voices (e.g. Arabic calligraphy). Aimed for widening the scope of these two different visual systems, Echo-Narciss as a method has developed a set of workshops and pedagogical toolkits tailored for the children and young adults who are living in Germany with a conscious religious identity (mostly Islamic) and immigration background from Middle East.

Today and due to ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, many people are hoping to seek asylum in Germany. This wave of immigration has the natural potential to bring us a much happier life if it just finds its way into an authentic way of integration. I hope that Echo-Narciss as a project be a part of this future-making process.

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