Accommodating African Students in Higher Education – a Southern African perspective

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This paper will consider an including as opposed to excluding approach to accommodating students from African countries at a South African University – with a view to the comparative positions it may give in reflecting on the position of foreigners of African heritage studying in and relocating to other countries. First, it will refer to Maharaj (2009) who discusses the rights of migrants in an urban setting, in the eThekwini municipality (Durban) in South Africa, and who has remarked that provisions for protection of human rights operate at the rhetorical level, but that there appears to be lack of political will to translate them into tangible benefits. Second, the paper will refer to the experiences of African students at two Southern African Universities, as institutions of civil society that invite registration of foreign African students, but seem limitedly to provide for their non-academic needs. Finally, it will invoke the notion of 'linguistic citizenship' (cf. Stroud 2001) in reflecting on one recently introduced programme aimed at developing a more collaborative and integrative approach than has been the norm in the last 10 years, namely the Pangea programme introduced in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University.

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