

1. Introduction

This lecture will introduce the context in which I would like to present the problem of ethnic relations in the Czech Republic, both from contemporary and historical perspective. Current social science operates with specific terms, such as *race*, *ethnicity* and *multiculturalism*, which public language takes over without deeper analysis. I believe it is vital for our understanding of this phenomenon to understand the context in which these terms emerge and the precise meaning they carry. Could that be, that the theories of race, racism and ethnicity are based on myths? If so, is multiculturalism a nonsense? This lecture will examine these terms from the perspective of social anthropology.

Assigned reading:

- Wolf, E.R.: 1982, 1997, *Europe and the People without History*, chapter 1