

Final Exam

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3. Discuss immigrant integration using the concepts of 'cultural armature' and 'city scale'.

The economic aspect of migration and of the integration of immigrants into the wider society is an important one with no doubt. Incorporation of the migrant into the labor market is one of the important markers of the level of the whole integration process. It is, however, not enough. There are other aspects that can facilitate the process and that are as important as those economics. Besides the economy it is important to follow the variations of cultural resources which are characteristic for the locality where migrants live. "Taking into consideration what we call a city's cultural armature may supplement economic and demographic arguments by contributing more thorough explanation of why certain places integrate immigrants with greater ease than others" (Jaworsky & Levitt & Cadge et al., 2012: 78). So called cultural armature, its preservation and variation can render the integration easier or more effective as they influence how migrants will be accepted by the host society. Jaworsky, Levitt et al. think of a city's cultural armature as a combination of its history, cultural geography, urban self-presentation, cultural responses to demography, and prevailing ethos toward immigrants (Jaworsky & Levitt & Cadge et al., 2012: 80). Cultural armature is though a broad context comprising the history, policies, demography, diversity management as well as the cultural structures of the locality or city. All these factors highly influence the level of migrants' inclusion. Historical context predetermines the level of openness and the way how migrants will be treated. If migration makes the integral part of city's history, it is possible that newcomers will be accepted with less difficulties. Policies institutionalize the attitude towards these people, they set concrete measures and they also set the status to foreigners. All these factors ascribe certain roles to migrants and they ascribe them also social meaning. Diversity management goes hand in hand with two previous elements as well as the cultural structures. If the conditions are advantageous for migrants, I mean if the acceptance of different cultures is high and so if foreigners can preserve and practice their traditions and culture on daily basis, it is possible to conclude that the environment is inclusive. Cultural armature and the openness towards migrants are connected to the position of concrete cities' geopolitical hierarchy. There is a relationship between the varying positionings of cities within global fields of power and the different roles migrants play within the reconstitution of specific cities (Glick Schiller & Caglar, 2009: 178). Branding of cities is important for authorities as well as for the tourists. Migration and well set cultural armature can be the significant elements of this branding. Well managed diversity can be attractive and it can re-define the position of the city within the scale; in other words it can re-scale the city in the hierarchy just by the level of multiculturalism as one of the possibilities. There is than a relationship between the cultural armature and its importance as described above and the position of concrete city within the scale on regional, national but also on the global level.

References:

Glick Schiller, N., Caglar, A. (2009). Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (2), pp. 177-202.

Jaworski, N. B. et al. (2012). New Perspectives on Immigrant Contexts of Reception: The Cultural Armature of Cities. *Nordic Journal of Migration Studies* 2 (1), pp. 78-88.

5. “Methodological nationalism is a tendency to accept the nation-state and its boundaries as a given.” What are the consequences of this tendency in migration research? Provide examples.

By methodological nationalism we can mean an ideological orientation that approaches the study of social and historical processes as if they were contained within the borders of individual nation-states. Members of those states are assumed to share a common history and set of values, norms, social customs, and institutions (Beck 2000). Methodological nationalism, with no doubt, limits the knowledge and it strengthens the approach to the understanding of diversity. In metaphorical sense it dismisses the transnational perspective. “Taking state borders as societal boundaries creates a mode of logic that makes immigrants the fundamental threat to social solidarity”, states Glick Schiller (Glick Schiller, 2010: 4). If natives are assumed to uniformly share common social norms, the newcomers can be automatically seen as aliens who erode social cohesion and cultural homogeneity. Erosion of these leads to the securitization of migration. Migrants are under these circumstances pictured as carriers of distinctive national norms (Glick Schiller 2010). Then, in the practice, methodological nationalism applied to the perception of the social solidarity has really negative consequences in the case of the integration process. Methodological nationalism as an approach affects negatively not only general attitudes of the public and the authorities, but the research as well. Several negative impacts can be identified if the methodological nationalism is present in the research. To mention some of those I consider the most serious are the essentialism, shallow understanding of the diversity, the isolation of the analysis from wider perspective; and the ignorance of migration as a global power in social processes. Certainly, the presence of the essentialism in the approach might distort the conclusions. According to Boccagni, transnationalism as an optic moving beyond methodological nationalism has accelerated theory building, methodological elaboration and field research with a view to achieving a simultaneous understanding of immigration and emigration processes. In this sense we are talking about the deeper understanding of migration processes, of the concrete motivations for migration; of the relationships with people in the country of origin; and the ways how they are kept. These questions are missing in the approach of methodological nationalism. Research might be affected by the shallow one-sided conclusions. Accepting this kind of bounded thinking and employing a container approach to society, the relationship to migration debates end up by unquestioningly accepting the underlying premises of a politics and public policy of exclusion (Glick Schiller 2010). Such an approach is neither constructive nor appropriate for the explanation of the phenomenon. Bounding the unit of study along the lines of national or ethnic identities that generally isolate the analysis of migrant local and transborder connections it results in limiting of unit of analysis and further in limitation of the whole perspective and of the research itself.

References:

Beck, U. (2000). The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity, *British Journal of Sociology*, 51(1), 79–105.

Boccagni, P. 2012. "Rethinking transnational studies: Transnationalities and the transnationalism of everyday life." *European Journal of Social Theory* (2012) 15: 117.

Glick-Schiller, N. (2010). A global perspective on transnational migration: theorizing migration without methodological nationalism. In: R Bauboöck and T Faist (eds) *Diaspora and Transnationalism*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

6. Design a research project with these keywords: 'transnational families' and 'Central and Eastern Europe'. Formulate research question(s) and justify your methodology. (8 points)

Comparative research on how does intergenerational relationships vary within post-communist countries.

Slovakia and Ukraine are both countries that have been going through the post-communist transition for the last decade. Slovakia within the formation of Czechoslovakia declared independence in 1989 while Ukraine did so several years after in 1991 shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union. In both countries the opening of the borders led to the increase of migration. In Ukraine more emigrants have been counted in the last year than immigrants, according to the International Organization for Migration more than 14,4% of the population lives outside the country. Migratory flows from Ukraine direct towards the East as well as towards the West. Lots of Slovaks tend to migrate to the Czech Republic as well as the Ukrainians do. In 2011 Ukrainian immigrants in the Czech Republic represented 27 percent of the whole number of the immigrants in the country while Slovak citizens represented 19 percent. The profile of the immigrants from these countries differ. While Slovaks in the country are mainly young people after the graduation, students or young families, Ukrainian immigrants are from the major part male heads of families in their middle-ages who left their families in the country of origin and who send back remittances to their families. Under these conditions transnational families emerge. According to the definition, transnational families are families in which one or more members of the nuclear family live in another country or region (Mazzucato, 2013: 1).

The aim of the research is to analyse the differences between the transnational migration from Slovakia and from the Ukraine. The analysis will occur on two levels. The first one is to analyse the general characteristic of the transnationalism from these countries to the Czech Republic. The focus will be on the characteristics of the migrants, on their motivations to migrate to the country and on their relationships with the rest of the family

members in the country of origin. The second level of the analysis will be the characteristic of the family relationships among the second generation.

Research questions:

What are the characteristic of the transnational migrants from Ukraine and Slovakia in the Czech Republic?

What are the motivations of these migrants to migrate to the country?

Do they keep their relations with the family in the country of origin? If they do so, in what way and on what level?

How does the second generation perceive the transnational character of the family in case of Slovak and Ukrainian immigrants?

Is it different in comparison with the first generation of the family?

How do the intergenerational relations look like in both cases?

Methodology:

In the research multiple methods will be applied. The key research method will be the *in-depth interviews*. This method will be crucial because of its effectiveness in the sense of the amount and the quality of the information gathered. As these are as openended interviews, they allow more fluid interaction between the researcher and the respondent. The advantage of the in-depth interviewing is that they are founded on the notion that delving into the subject's 'deeper self' produces more authentic data (Marvasti). The understanding of the deeper self in this context means seeing the world from the respondent's point of view, or gaining an empathic appreciation of the his or her world. In-depth interviewers aim to gain access into the hidden perceptions of their subjects. Respondents will be the members of at least 6 families from both countries who are characterised also by the existence of the second generation living the transnational experience. The use of this ethnographic method provides the huge amount of the information; and also the better understanding of the context of the migration and experience of transnationalism.

Another method used will be *analysis of the secondary literature, the existing analysis and reports* on the migration from these two countries in the Czech Republic. This method will be useful mainly on the first level of the research – the general characteristic of the transnationalism from these countries to the Czech Republic.

To conclude the triangulation of the methods I will use also *quantitative data* on the structure of migration in the Czech Republic and two countries. Numeric and statistical data regarding the concrete numbers of immigrants or remittances will illustrate the picture of migration in these countries and it will support the conclusions mainly in the connection with the first level of the research.

References:

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<http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/activities/countries/docs/Ukraine/Migration-in-Ukraine-Facts-and-Figures.pdf>.

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Marvasti, A. B. (2004). *Qualitative Research in Sociology: An Introduction*. London: SAGE Publications.

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http://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci.nsf/datove_udaje/ciz_nelegalni_migrace#rok.

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