

SOC 585 MIGRATION, TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE CITY

Fall 2015

Radka Klvaňová

Office hours: Tuesday 4-5 p.m., office 3.48

E-mail: klvanova@fss.muni.cz

Bernadette Nadya Jaworsky

Office hours: Thursday 10-11 a.m., office 3.59

E-mail: jaworsky@fss.muni.cz

Brainstorming

- Creating a mental map on '**transnational migration**'
 - Work in groups for 10-15 minutes
 - Write anything that comes to your mind (keywords, phrases)
 - Try to make connections between them
 - You can create clusters of words/ideas
 - Comment on the connections

Course sessions

- **Session 1** (29.9.) *TRANSNATIONAL THEORIES AND METHODOLOGY* (RK)

Group Project: Design a research project on migration and transnationalism

- **Session 2** (13.10.) *IMMIGRANTS IN THE CITY – THE CASE OF EXPATS IN BRNO* (RK, Brno Expat Centre)

Group Project (in-class): How to communicate about immigration to the public in Brno? Prepare a municipal PR campaign to increase the public recognition of immigration.

- **Session 3** (3.11.) *CITIES AS A CONTEXT OF RECEPTION OF IMMIGRANTS* (NJ)

Group Project: What is the nature of the cultural armature in the city where you live? What would you do to make it more conducive to immigration integration?

- **Session 4** (10.11.) *LABOUR MIGRANTS ON THE BORDERS: WHOSE INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE? PERSPECTIVES OF THE STATE, EMPLOYERS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND MIGRANTS* (MKC Prague)

Group Project: Simulation game on migration policy making

- **Session 5** (5.11.) *TRANSNATIONALISM, BORDERS AND CITIZENSHIP* (RK, Nesehnutí)

Group Project: How to deal with current “migration crisis”? Create policies to address the current migration situation in Europe.

- **Session 6** (8.12.) *RESEARCH DESIGN WORKSHOP & CONCLUSION* (RK, NJ)

Conditions for Passing the Course

- 1. Participation in class (discussions, group projects, simulation game) (30 %)
 - 5 points for each class (2 points for attendance, 3 points for participation)
- 2. Assignments (25 %)
 - 5 points for each home assignment (reading responses, paper draft and peer-to-peer feedback) (check deadlines!)
- 3. Final paper (3,000 – 5,000 words) (45 %)

Evaluation is based upon these principles:

90-100 points - A, 80-89 points - B, 70-79 points - C, 60-69 points - D, 50-59 points - E, 0-49 points - F

Study Materials and Instructions

- IS Learning Materials – in electronic form
- Reading Response Instructions
- Instructions for the draft of the final paper as well as final essay will be available in the IS Study Materials folder in the course of the semester.
- Please, **check the study materials folder regularly** for actual readings and study instructions.
- IS - Homework Vaults

Reading response guidelines

- Available in IS – Study Instructions
- +- 300 words
- Deadline usually **Sunday** before the class (except for the 1st one)
- Should contain:
 - The main argument of the text (2-3 sentences)
 - Discussion questions
 - Best quote
 - Links to the external world
- 1-3 points

Final paper

- Length: 3,000 – 5,000 words
- Group or individual
- A topic of individual choice based on course literature, interesting case study etc.
- Form: academic paper
 - more information will follow...
- Draft of the paper will be discussed by colleagues on research design workshop on 8 December
 - to be delivered by **30.11.** (to IS Homework Vaults)
- **Deadline: 20.11.2016**

The formation of transnational approaches to migration

Anthropologists' discovery of a new phenomena?

- 1990s – new form of migration: transnational migration
 - Critical to conventional theories of immigration
 - Focus on cross-border processes and identities
- Basch, Glick Schiller, Szanton Blanc (1994):
Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States
 - “By living their lives across borders, transmigrants find themselves confronted with and engaged in the nation building processes of two or more nation-states. Their identities and practices are configured by hegemonic categories, such as race and ethnicity, that are deeply embedded in the nation building processes of these nation states.” (p. 22)
- Transnationalism as a form of resistance

Conventional immigration theories

- The problem of assimilation (Americanization)
- Chicago School of Sociology
 - Assimilation as an inevitable historical process
 - „Problem of maintaining political order...in a community that has no common culture“
 - Migrants: „peoples who have abandoned the political allegiance of the old country, and are gradually acquiring the culture of the new (Park and Burgess 1969)
- Melting pot
- Cultural pluralism (Glazer, Moynihan)
 - ethnic groups and their culture (=roots, not vital links)

Americanization project

- “There can be no divided allegiance here. We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding-house; and we have room for but one soul loyalty, and that is loyalty to the American people.” (Theodore Roosevelt, 1919)

SECOND EDITION

The Uprooted

THE EPIC STORY OF THE
GREAT MIGRATIONS THAT MADE
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



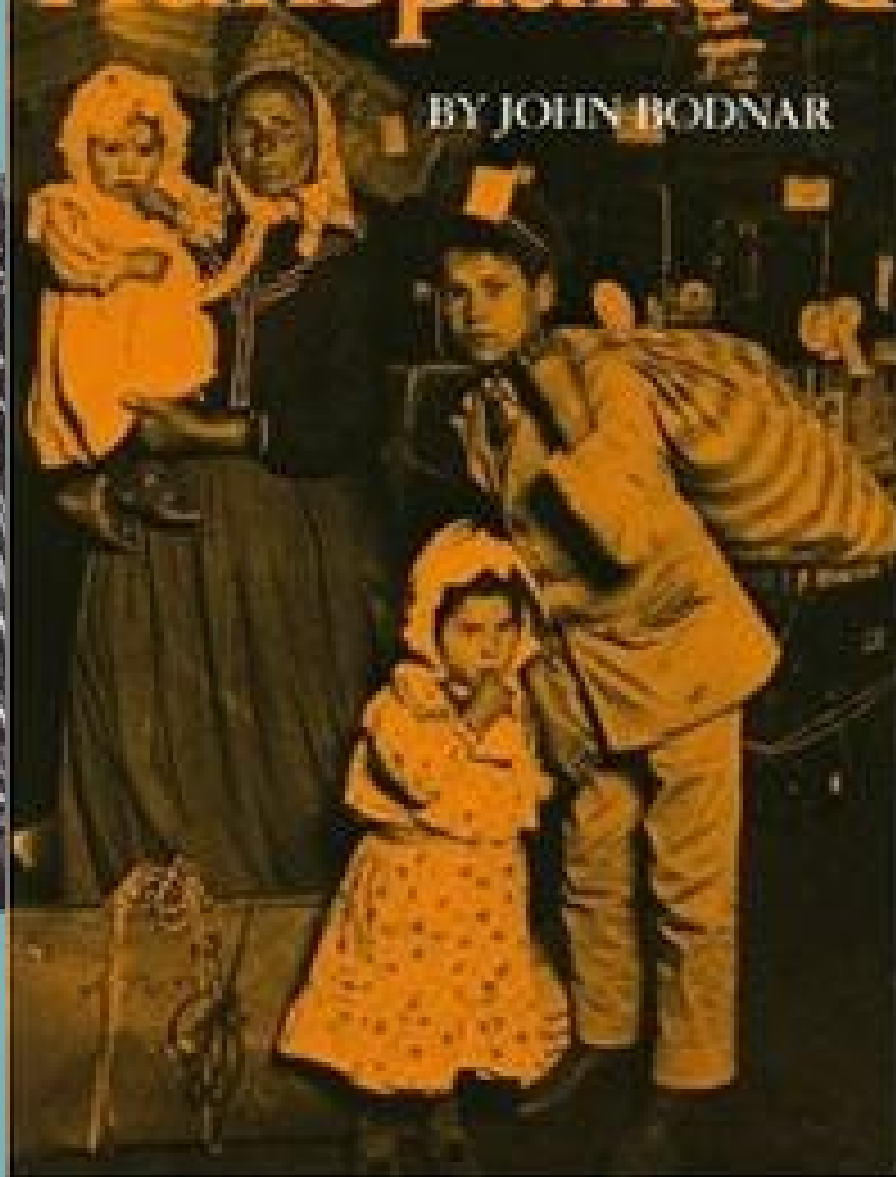
Oscar Handlin

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE
FOR HISTORY

*A History of Immigrants
in Urban America*

The Transplanted

BY JOHN BODNAR



THE
MELTING POT

THE
GREAT AMERICAN DRAMA

BY
ISRAEL ZANGWILL



**What is methodological
nationalism and how does
it influence research?**

Methodological nationalism

- Naturalization of ethnicity/nationality - culture
- Container view on society
- Overemphasis on ethnic/national background
- Ethnic lens (Glick Schiller, Caglar)
- Groupism (Brubaker)



When people meet me, they want to know what culture I come from or where my family is from. They want to put me in a box or assign me a label. So the question of ‘what are you’ has always made me feel defensive of who I am and how I’m presented in the world. — Shirley Acuna, 22, Peruvian-American

http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/09/21/opinion/sunday/exposures-children-immigrant.html?_r=0

The critique of methodological nationalism

- Methodological nationalism – the tendency to accept nation state as a given unit of social analysis, society = nation state
- Critique of bounded concepts of ethnicity, race, culture – social constructs that reflect power relations
- BOTH/AND instead of EITHER/OR logic
- New phenomena requires new conceptual tools: transmigrant, transnational migration, deterritorialized nation state, transnational social field
- Wimmer, Glick Schiller. 2002. *Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation state building, migration and the social sciences.*

**A new phenomena or a new
perspective?**

A new phenomena or a new perspective?

- Transnationalism in History studies
- David Gerber – transnational activity of personal correspondence of 19th century immigrants to America
 - Letters as sites of construction of identity, reflection of in-betweenes
 - Negotiation of personal relationships
 - Exchange of social intelligence



„Let us do our American and Czech duty.“

„Fight for our independence.“

(Branch of Czech National Society in Hallettsville, Texas, around 1917)

A transnational turn in migration studies

- Critical perspective: critique of methodological nationalism
- Shift in the focus on cross-border processes, flows, movement
- Social networks, links b/n. new homes and original homes
- Formation of migrant identities, hybridity
- Transnationalism vs. Globalization?

Transnational Studies Methodology

Transnational Studies (Khagram, Levitt)

- Global vs. Local vs. National?
- Transnational perspective
 - No assumptions about what level of analysis is the most important for concrete research problem – only empirical exploration can reveal it
- Rejection of methodological nationalism: naturalization of nation state and ethnic belonging
- But continuing relevance of nation state!

Transnational methodology

- Methodological transnationalism/cosmopolitanism
- Focus on:
 - Ambivalence of multiple identities
 - Other than ethnic attributes of the migrants, intersectionality
 - Transnational social networks and other links of the migrants to their homeland

Units of analysis

- Migrants' (transnational) families
- Migrants' religious communities
- Migrants' social movements
- Labour migrants in particular industry
- Migrant online networks

Scales – layers of relevance

- Global
- Regional
- National
- **City scale**
- Postcolonial context
- Transnational social field/space

Methods and techniques

- Multi-sited research
- Mobile ethnography
- Deteritorialized empirical field – migrants' online communities
- Longitudinal research

Group project

- Prepare a research proposal on migration using a transnational lens, try to avoid methodological nationalism
- Narrow down the focus of your research – what will be the **layers of relevance**? what will be the **research unit**?
- Formulate a research question – what will be the **main subject** of your research? What do you want to find out?
- Design a research methodology – what **methods** will you use to collect your data?
- What are the possible limitations of the research methodology?

Final reflection

- Free writing on the topic: **What is transnationalism?**
 - Write a text in full sentences, not just words
 - Don't go back to what you have written, do not correct or delete
 - Write all the time – even when you don't know what – you can write e.g.: „How can I continue...” and try to go back to the topic