



Migrants' integration and participation – Theoretical and empirical questions. Göttingen: Dominik Bohl, Institute for Sociology, Göttingen University; In-Sook Choi, Institut des Sciences Sociales du Politique, ENS Cachan; Annemarie Duscha, DFG-GK 1474 "Transnational Social Support", Mainz/Hildesheim; Stefan Kroll, MPI for European Legal History, 04.12.2009-05.12.2009.

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Migrants' integration and participation – Theoretical and empirical questions

To date, historical and social science research on (im)migration often draws either on the classical paradigm of assimilation theory or on the more recent paradigm of transnational migration. Many pundits of assimilation theory as well as many proponents of transnationalism see these paradigms as antipodal. Whereas assimilation theory focuses on immigrants' adaptation to the institutions and culture of their country of residence, transnationalism rather concentrates on the links immigrants maintain with their country of origin and the impact these may have on both the sending and the receiving countries. Yet, upon closer scrutiny, at the heart of both approaches is the question of how and where migrants position themselves socially, culturally, and politically and how their positions depend on structural contexts within which they act. Questions of whom immigrants identify with, where they spend their money, what language they use in their everyday lives etc. are relevant to both students of immigrant assimilation and migrant transnationalism. But although both approaches ask how migrants' lives relate both to their country of origin and to their country of residence, paradigmatic closure leaves many questions not only unanswered, but unasked. To put it simply, theories of integration and assimilation tend to overlook the ongoing relevance of the links that migrants maintain with their countries of origin, while proponents of transnationalism tend to neglect the nation-state as an important actor as well as a

continuing frame of reference relevant to (im-)migrant participation and integration.

Taking these insights as a starting point, the workshop "Migrants' integration and participation – Theoretical and empirical questions" hosted by the University of Göttingen and funded by the KMU network of the Göttingen Graduate School of Social Sciences and the Universitätsbund Göttingen aimed at exploring the possibilities to try and bridge the gap between the paradigms of assimilation and transnationalism. The workshop brought together renowned scholars as well as young researchers from various institutional and disciplinary backgrounds who presented recent insights from empirical research projects and theoretical debates.

CLAUDIA DIEHL (Göttingen) started with the presentation of a new international research project within the Norface Programme on migration which draws on classical assimilation theory, but puts a special focus on the relation between social and cultural integration of newly arrived immigrants. This new panel survey will gather data in Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain and Ireland, thus filling a gap in European quantitative migration research where comparative and longitudinal data often are lacking. Controversial discussion arose about the expectation that two survey waves scheduled within the first year after arrival in the new country of residence would allow to observe changes in identifica-

tions of migrants.

In a more conceptual presentation, GABRIELE CAPPAL (Bayreuth) explored the possibilities of a general theoretical framework which incorporates cultural and social aspects of migration and integration processes by focusing on the way migrants themselves compare their situation in the country of origin to their situation in the country of residence. Cappai suggested integrating different elements of phenomenological and analytical theories into a holistic model of action in order to explain migrants' interpretation of their situation and the actions which result from it. Although, as some discussants criticized, Cappai did not present empirical data to support his theoretical approach, he successfully sketched possibilities to try and overcome paradigmatic closure in migration theory. In the discussion, possible future avenues for research were highlighted which would focus on both the structural conditions within which migrants' individual and collective agency is embedded and on the interpretation of these conditions by migrants themselves in their continuous comparison between 'here' and 'there', 'before' and 'after'.

Compared to these rather theory-oriented contributions, the presentations by Zeynep Sezgin, Margit Fauser and Karen SchÄnwald drew on preliminary or final results of recent projects. The first two of these focused on the transnational activities of migrant organisations and thereby drew the attention to a field of research which, so far, has been explored only rarely. ZEYNEP SEZGIN (Bochum) showed how transnational activities of migrants such as the transfer of remittances from Germany to Turkey are linked to the structural characteristics of migrants' organisations. MARGIT FAUSER (Bielefeld) analysed migrant organisations in Spain which were strongly concerned with the incorporation of migrants into Spanish society while at the same time becoming increasingly transnational in their actions. Both presentations impressively demonstrated that a transnational perspective on migrant organizations can be very fruitful when it comes to understanding integration processes. KAREN SCHÄNWÄLDER (GÄttingen), reporting on her research on politicians of migrant origin in German parliaments, emphasized the need to look closely at the historical configurations in which different political institutions and processes are embedded. Presenting several relevant factors which could explain the political participation and representation of immigrants and post-migration minorities in Germany, she concluded on a sceptical note concerning over-generalized models of the integration process.

The particular and persistent relevance of the nation-state as an actor in processes of migrant integration as well as transnationalism was forcefully emphasized by another set of papers. Thus, RIVA KASTORYANO (Paris) elaborated a new typology of nationalisms based on her empirical studies on the Turkish Diaspora in Europe. She distinguished the concept of transnational nationalism from diasporic or minority nationalism in order to characterize the transformation of the relation between citizenship, nation and nationalism. According to this typology of nationalism, the nation-state remains an independent and sovereign actor with an explicit territorial dimension. It manifests itself through nationalist policies of the state beyond its borders or through the 'return' to the country of origin of identities which have been re-appropriated or newly invented in the country of immigration.

In her analysis of historically set state-society relations and political systems, ELISABETH MUSCH (Münster) also demonstrated the continuing role of the nation-state in integration policies. Her comparison of national consultation structures in the Netherlands and Germany showed how processes of government-initiated dialogue between the state and migrant associations to negotiate integration policies differed from one country to the other in spite of similar aims and contents of the negotiations. Thus, Musch's study illustrated how political processes often depend on political structures shaped by the history and traditions of the respective nation-states.

The ongoing relevance of established state structures was also stressed by RUUD KOOPMANS (Berlin) in his evening lecture on the development of citizenship rights for immigrants in Western Europe. Koopmans, who excelled in demonstrating how to construct theory-driven research, derived hypotheses from three major theories concerned with citizenship in the Western context: theories of post-nationalism and policy convergence, theories of national path dependence and theories focusing on conjunctural political factors. Drawing on new data which he and his team had collected on ten Western European countries he was able to show how hypotheses derived from these theories were going in the right or wrong direction. The results clearly supported the thesis of national path dependence of citizenship regimes, although a common tendency towards liberal models could be observed and some impact of political constellations within the respective states.

In his conclusion, MATTHIAS KOENIG (GÄttingen)

again stressed the need to break up simplifying juxtapositions of different disciplines and theoretical or methodical approaches. Migration and integration processes should not be thought of as isolated issues, but should be contextualised in broader frameworks which integrate the construction of national *and* transnational social spaces within general social theory. Migrants' integration, participation and (self-)organisation need to be analysed not only in relation to individual biographies, but also to the historically contingent processes of nation-building, of the formation of collective identities and of state-minority relations.

EWA MORAWSKA (Essex) plea for an intensification of the exchange between scholars from all parts of the world could never have been fulfilled by a small workshop like this; not least because the participants were Europeans only. Also, for a short event like this, it would have been impossible to try and draw a comprehensive picture of migration research in general. However, with its four panels and two lectures, the workshop gave an overview over current research on migrant participation and integration in Europe, and Germany in particular, and drew the attention both to ongoing problems and to possible avenues for future research. Most importantly perhaps, the workshop highlighted that contextual factors are more than mere opportunities and restrictions remaining fairly stable over time, but that migration and migrants themselves may as social actors transform national and transnational spaces alike.

Conference overview:

Welcome and introduction

Stefan Kroll (Max Planck Institute for European Legal History, Frankfurt am Main)

Keynote speech

Ewa Morawska (University of Essex): Agendas and challenges of immigration research: a cross-regional assessment

Panel 1: Transforming theories into research programmes

Chair: Dominik Bohl (University of Göttingen)

Claudia Diehl (University of Göttingen): The Nor-face Project SCIP (socio-cultural integration patterns of

new immigrants in Europe) – tackling open questions of integration research

Gabriele Cappai (University of Bayreuth): Considering migrants' integration from the point of view of action-theory. A holistic approach

Panel 2: Empirical research on migrants' civic and political participation

Chair: Miriam Schader (University of Göttingen)

Karen Schönlender (Max Planck Institute for the Study of Ethnic and Religious Diversity, Göttingen): Immigrant political participation in Germany: the regional level

Public evening lecture

Ruud Koopmans (WZB Social Science Research Center Berlin): Citizenship rights for immigrants: national paths and cross-national convergence in Western Europe, 1980-2008

Panel 3: Empirical research on migrants' organisations

Chair: Annemarie Duscha (DFG-Research Training Group 1474 – Transnational Social Support, Mainz/Hildesheim)

Zeynep Sezgin (University of Bochum): Turkish migrants' organizations in Germany and their role in transferring remittances to Turkey

Margit Fauser (University of Bielefeld): Migrant organisations in Spanish metropolises. Empirical insights into local and transnational action

Panel 4: Empirical research on immigration and integration policies

Chair: In-Sook Choi (École Normale Supérieure de Cachan)

Elisabeth Musch (DFG-Research Training Group 1410 – Zivilgesellschaftliche Verbandsbildungsprozesse, Münster): Political integration of immigrant associations: A comparison of Germany and the Netherlands

Riva Kastoryano (Centre d'études et de recherches internationales, Sciences Po Paris): Transnationalism, diaspora and the state

Final discussions and conclusion

Matthias Koenig (University of Göttingen)

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