

70. Social capital, migration and transnational families

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Traditional understandings of social capital are often associated with cohesive communities based on face-to-face relations that are little affected by change. These communities are usually seen as ethnically homogeneous and largely harmonious. However, this understanding of social capital does not accurately reflect the reality of contemporary society, particularly in light of globalisation and growing individualism. In recent years societies have witnessed a dynamic process of social change. Migration, for example, within and between the north and the south has led to new forms of familial relationships no longer confined to national and ethnic boundaries. An outcome of this process of change is the need to understand transnational families and dual identities, as central for the constitution and organisation of households and social relationships in multi-cultural societies.

The aim of this panel is to explore the interrelationship between the dynamics of family change and processes of social capital in a transnational context. Themes that we aim to cover in this panel's discussions include: Diaspora and the intersubjective experience of dual identities, selves and others; transnationalism and family life, changing ethnicities, household and family rituals and family care and provision in a transnational world. We welcome theoretically informed, empirically based papers that critically reflect on the above and other relevant issues. Papers could relate to a variety of social and geographical contexts of 'distance and proximity'. In keeping with the methodological concerns of this year's conference, we are particularly interested in papers that explore the relevant issues from a broad ethnographic perspective.

Children and young people in transnational families

Families, Social Capital and Caribbean Young People's Diasporic Identities in Britain

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'Caribbean Families, and Youth Diasporic Identities in Britain' is an in-depth study exploring how Caribbean young people utilise family/ kinship structures and wider networks, as important social and material resources of social capital, to develop an ethnic identity. The paper will reveal that for Caribbean young people in the UK there are complex patterns emerging concerning ethnic identity formation. On the one hand, they utilise Caribbean trans-atlantic family and kinship networks to develop and reproduce notions of ethnic solidarity and identity that are not confined to national borders or nation-states. Yet, at the same time these young people are actively engaged in processes and relationships that lead them to develop familial and social

networks that are increasingly detached from, and less rooted in, a Caribbean identity. Notions of cultural hybridity and cultural syncretism underpin these new models of ethnicities. *'Caribbean Families, and Youth Diasporic Identities in Britain'* will explore some of these tensions in order to further understanding of the way in which family, ethnicity and social capital influence Caribbean young people's understanding of ethnic identity formation. The study will also draw on related themes of family and household rituals; and also family care and provision in a transnational context from the perspective of young people.

Identity dilemmas and identity strategies: Children of inter-ethnic marriages in Poland
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Transnational mobility became one of the most important processes in recent years in Poland. It leads to intensification of intercultural contacts and, in consequence, to transnational marriages. The problem that drew my attention is: how people who are the offspring of transnational marriages interpret their social situation, how they use that fact of different national origin of their parents while constructing their identity? I want to know how a diverse national affiliation of their parents influence their children's identity. This article is based on research carried out in Poland (mainly in Warsaw) among a group of 55 adults who were the offspring of transnational marriages. I distinguish four types of identity strategies in the researched group: 1) Polish identification associated with a rejection of foreign parent identity; 2) foreign parent identification associated with Polish identification; 3) double identity; 4) rejection of any national identity (beyond national identity). There are cited verbal reactions of my interlocutors and their arguments for particular identity meaning. Subsequently, I try to find situational factors which determine the choice of particular identity types. Factors which influence identity selection are: attitudes of both parents to their own culture; their attitudes towards their marital partners' culture; physical appearance of transnational child; intensity of love and integration within the family; conflict and divorce.

Changing Places, Changing Families: Values and networks among Angolan migrants in Lisbon, Portugal

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In this paper I wish to address what could be considered the most important aspects of social capital and stratification among Angolan immigrants in Lisbon. I suggest that the possibility to move between Angola and Portugal, but also between a variety of socio-cultural contexts in Portugal (and abroad) is perceived as a crucial component of social capital in this community. The movement of both people and objects is thus important, yet movement itself is part of a person's social capital, in a number of ways.

This will be illustrated by elaborating on how Angolan children circulate/live within kinship networks in Portugal (i.e. extended families and social kinship that do not include their mother, father or siblings). This is a fairly common practice in Angola, yet, the moment a child is being brought out of the country by the new caretaker(s) to go to Europe, the practice is challenged by the demand for formal relations and 'proof' of the mutual relation. The change in social context also changes the relations between child and guardians. Whereas the networks of the latter would have performed an important role in terms of social control in Angola (i.e. keeping an eye

on how the child is treated, if she/he goes to school etc...), the child and the host family will often be outside such control in Portugal.

In terms of social capital, there is an asymmetrical relationship between child and guardian, since the child is often poor and the guardian is always a little higher up in the social hierarchy (it is relevant to think about Mauss' *The Gift* here). The movement between two contexts represent changes in both the meanings ascribed to the practice itself, and to the position of the tutors, since their role is dependent on the social universe they take part in.

Social capital and migration

Family networks and social capital among Somali and Tamil refugees in Norway

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Different groups of immigrants in Norway have very different economic and social profiles in their adjustment to Norwegian society. While some groups do quite well in terms of indicators like economy and housing, other groups perform less well. The Sri Lanka-Tamil and the Somali groups represent the extremes in this picture.

Throughout periodic fluctuations in the Norwegian economy, with concurrent fluctuations in unemployment rates, we find that Tamil immigrants are in general employed and self-reliant while the Somalis are unemployed and dependent on social welfare. The aim of the project underlying this paper is to say something about why this situation prevails by looking at the way networks within the two groups are structured. The general picture is that while Tamil networks in Norway are mainly formed on the basis of friendship and political loyalties, family relationships are the most important for Somali networks. The question which is raised is to what extent one set of networks can be said to contain "more social capital" than the other.

Migrating alone: Tackling social capital?

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This paper aims to explore the applicability of the theoretical concept of *social capital* in researches dealing with individual, non-collective migration experiences.

The theoretical reflections will be based on my empirical research on migrant women from Eastern Europe (in particular from the former Soviet Union and Romania) in Portugal. I focus on women who migrate alone, without their children, husbands and other family members; nevertheless, some of them are the (main) breadwinners for their families at home. My research shows clearly that migrant and other social networks in Portugal are of major *ambiguity* for these women: they offer not only support and access to the receiving society (e.g. to the formal and informal labour market) but also exercise control on the women's behaviour and their possibilities of agency. As a consequence, many women, who migrate alone, tend to distance themselves from existing networks, lacking support and facing loneliness.

It is necessary to ask if these women – despite the distance – *have* access to existing social capital of their compatriots' communities and networks. To what extent do they continue to use social capital they acquired 'at home', before migration? Could they transfer social capital? What roles do their families and friends play? Are they, as 'single' immigrant women, able to gain new, different social capital within their migration process?

Shifting Boundaries of Support: Re-negotiating Distance and Proximity in Local and Trans-local Social Support Networks in an Urban Fringe Area in Lilongwe City, Malawi

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The contribution explores how migrant families living at the margins of the city are organising their social support within and across rural-urban borderlands. It describes how the spatial repositioning of migrants changes the discourse of distance and proximity, using the urban-rural divide in order to re-negotiate access to support.

Migration changes social support networks profoundly, creating new geographic and symbolic realities of distance and proximity. The 'urban' and the 'rural' are thereby important means in order to re-negotiate and re-create forms of support by creating new identities, lines of in- and exclusion, entitlements and notions of support both over distance and in town. While distance contracts social support relations, it provides also the basis for the creation of new proximities and face-to-face relations, such as ethnic or regional associations or 'fictional' kin.

The presentation argues that the urban-rural divide and the distances and proximities it creates play a central role in the formation of social capital. These distances and proximities are neither static nor bound to a geographic reality but are underlying constant re-negotiation and boundary changing processes. Age, gender, socio-economic status and one's position as a provider or recipient influence these shifting boundaries of support.

The experience of return migration and resettlement

Deciphering Diaspora – Translating Transnationalism: family dynamics, identity constructions and the legacy of 'home' in second-generation Greek-American return migration

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The paper explores the phenomenon of 'return migration' in Greece through the settlement and identification processes of second-generation Greek-American returning migrants. It examines the meanings attached to the experience of return migration as they relate to and impact on the returnees' sense of self and sense of place. The concepts of 'home' and 'belonging' figure prominently in the return migratory project which entails relocation and displacement as well as adjustment and alienation of bodies and selves. Furthermore, the paper considers the multiple interactions (social, cultural, political) between the place of origin and the place of destination; network ties; historical and global forces in the shaping of return migrant behavior; and expressions of identity. The human geography of return migration extends beyond geographic movement into a diasporic journey involving (re)constructions of homeness and belongingness in the ancestral homeland. The new waves of migration, the different types of mobility, and new diaspora and transnational communities redefine the very concepts of identities and belonging; they also re-shape the traditional boundaries between inclusion and exclusion and how social and cultural capital is utilized. This type of socio-cultural transformation creates the need for complex research, which will inevitably challenge the old disciplinary boundaries and forge research into a new type of transdisciplinary and transnational context.

Transnational Networks: Refugees and Global Families

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Refugee populations are often thought of as passive victims of conflict and political unrest; however, the international community has increasingly recognized their agency in displacement. Moreover, programmes initially designed to help individuals resettle to Western nations are informally helping their families and friends cope with the experience of protracted displacement. In many refugee camps remittances play an essential role in the social and economic welfare of families. The cross-cultural political, social and economic relationship is both fluid and flexible for refugees living in Western nations and their families still living in displacement in the developing world. This paper will explore issues such as remittances, migration chains, family reunification, intention to return, bias towards male resettlement, perspectives on peace and coping mechanisms in protracted civil war through a comprehensive examination of resettled Sudanese refugees in Canada and their families living in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya.

