

Critique of Master Dissertation *Ethnic self-identification of second-generation immigrants in Germany (cases of the Russian and Turkish immigrants in comparative perspective)* by Iuliia A. Chekulaeva

A topic of Iuliia A. Chekulaeva's master dissertation stands in an intercrossing of two greatly debatable in contemporary sociology issues, namely a theme of ethnic identity and a theme of immigrants and their descendants' integration into an accepting society. The author fulfilled her field study in Germany taking interviews about their life-experience in this country from 10 second-generation young people whose families came to Germany from Turkey and the former Soviet Union. An extensive piece of theoretical discussion on problems of ethnic identity and generation categories in studies of immigrants precedes the empirical part of the study.

At large the author has succeeded in her intention to show readers a very complex and durable process of immigrants' assimilation which goes hand in hand with socialization and ethnic identity formation. The theoretical part of the study is especially well done and does not evoke any serious comments.

At the same time I have several criticisms. First of all, I think that the paper deals mainly not with ethnic self-identification, but with ethnic identity of the informants. Although some scholars (for example, Peter Weinreich) prefer to use the term 'self-identification' for a designation of an identity construction processes, Bristol social psychological approach (whose founders Henry Tajfel and John Turner the author mentions in her dissertation) sees self-identification as an attitude like, for instance, "I'm British", which is a core part of social identity defined as "shared/collective representation of who one is and how one should behave" (Hogg M.A. & D. Abrams. *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Routledge, 1988. P. 3 & 24-25).

Second, I would like to see Russian ideas of contemporary ethnic processes (first of all from books of Julian Bromley and Viktor Kozlov) beside Western approaches to assimilation and immigrant generations in the theoretical part of the study.

Finally, there are certain weaknesses with the sample. It includes only ten informants. Usually, qualitative studies similar to the one we deal with include from twenty to thirty informants. Moreover, the Russian subsample involves a guy born in Ukraine whose mother is ethnically Jewish and father is half-Jewish. From this person's interview we see that he consider himself mainly Jewish. So, he should be excluded from the study.

Nevertheless, all the mentioned shortcoming are not of critical nature. As it follows from the conclusion, the author is aware of limitations of her study and intends to overcome them in her next projects. To my opinion, the dissertation deserves a very high grade.

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