

Description of the planned dissertation project - Anita Rotter

Intergenerational articulation of migration within the family from a postmigrant perspective

My project focuses on the biographies of the children and grandchildren of the so-called guest workers in Austria. Based on the narrations of the young adults, I reconstruct from a “postmigrant perspective” (Yildiz 2017; Foroutan 2016a; 2016b), how they and their families deal with the living conditions. In the 1960s to the 1980s, the first generation – the guest workers - migrated to Austria. The idea of the guest worker was, to work there for a limited period of time and to leave the arrival country after it. In reality many of them have remained and so the children and grandchildren grew up there.

I am also interested in exploring the role of familial migration experiences for the younger generations and how they interpret them. How do the second and third generation, who were born and raised in Austria and have no own history of migration in the legal or classical sense – unlike their parents and grandparents, talk about being a migrant?

The biographies of the younger generations are thus very different from those of migrant workers. In public and academic discourse, migration is still considered as a deficit or a problem. This logic is applied to families with migration experiences. Local families, on the other hand, are considered as “normal”. **My research questions** are: How do the successor generations deal with the ancestral migration experiences and how do they position themselves?

What role do the different generations play? Are there generation-specific orientations and lifestyles? Which familial and generational attitudes, forms of knowledge and dynamics are passed on in the narrations?

I assume that families with migration history are places where the younger ones can learn a lot from the transnational experiences of their parents and grandparents. They use the experience and create new ideas and new forms of knowledge. For example, they convert the mobility of grandparents into social mobility.

The methodology is based on biographical research. I conducted 15 narrative interviews (Rosenthal 1995) with individuals and 15 group interviews with their families in Innsbruck. At the beginning, I ask a narrative-generating question and subsequently more specific questions. The interviews are evaluated using a multi-method, “das verstehende Interview” (Kaufmann 1999) and the “Grounded theory” by Glaser and Strauss (1998). The collected data are analyzed by an abductive procedure (Apitzsch 1999).

The **project** started in October 2017. I am expecting to **complete it by beginning of the year 2021**. My dissertation is being conducted within the Institute of Education, under the **supervision** of Prof. Erol Yildiz and being co-supervised by Prof. Wolf-Dietrich Bukow from the Research Kolleg, Siegen.

Literature:

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