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**Guided Migrations in the Czech Republic since
1989 and Its Outcomes Viewed from the
Perspective of the Year 2010: migration
networks and migration systems**

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My contribution is conceived as a continuation of the topic of Guided Migrations since 1989 as presented at the WG2 Conference in Rome in 2009. In my earlier contribution I introduced the issue of guided migrations from the territories of the former Soviet Union, which involved individuals belonging to minorities and their family members, that struggle to move to the countries of their origin. I was concerned especially with members of the Czech minority who were moving to the Czech Republic from the Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and discussed namely the process of their migration. In my newly suggested study, I intend to focus on the protagonists of that migration in the year 2010. A number of them have experienced almost 19 years of life in the Czech Republic. The study is anchored in theory of migration, especially in the theory of migration networks and migration systems, and its source data originate from fieldwork conducted in the Czech Republic and the Ukraine in the years 2009 and 2010, which are compared with the results of earlier surveys executed between the years 1991 to 1998.¹

Objectives, Basic Assumptions and Concepts

In this text, the reference sample are groups that became the subject of controlled migrations from Ukraine and Kazakhstan to the Czech Republic in 1991–2001 and that settled permanently in the Czech Republic and acquired citizenship here. Among these social groups, the author of this text implemented a subsequent field survey, whose qualitative part serves to verify the research questions set forth in this text. The author and other assisting bodies conducted subsequent research among the mentioned migrants in 2008–2010 with a series of sixty guided interviews, in which they inquired about the issues of the changes in their residence status, lifestyle, family situation, employment, social contacts and state of health and also discussed the problems of their children. Since they themselves, or other research groups, had already conducted research probes on the given issue and the groups have thus been under constant surveillance, they could concentrate to the dynamics of the changes in the migration networks in a wider time horizon and deal with the question of modifications and transformations. In this text, particularly the following themes are placed at the forefront:

¹ The mentioned data were gathered with help of the grant IAA 700580801 GA AV ČR and the institutional support of the Institute of Ethnology of the AS CR, v.v.i., in the scope of the research project AV0Z 90580513.

1. The problem of the emergence and collapse of a migration network and migration system in the course of boundary crossing.
2. The problem of the relation of migration networks and migration systems to other social systems and networks.
3. The character of migration networks and their transformation to the concepts of adaptation in a new situation and integration in the environment of target destinations.

In resolving the mentioned questions, I proceed from the following theoretical assumptions and definitions of terms.

1. I understand the migration networks as the central concept of this work. I define them as the relations between the people who are the agents of migration and those who organise migrations or in any way participate in their implementation. Douglas Massey defines migration networks as ‘sets of interpersonal ties that link migrants, former migrants, and nonmigrants in origin and destination areas through the bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin’ (Massey 1988: 396). We can divide migration networks into migration networks in the source countries, we further consider transfer migration networks that help the actual shift of the migrants from the source area to the target area, and migration networks in the target destinations, which reduce the investment into adaptation to the new milieu and integration into the social systems in the target destinations. ‘Network-supported migrants have important help in arranging transportation, finding housing and jobs in their place of destination and in effecting a satisfactory personal and emotional adjustment to what is often a difficult situation of cultural marginality’ (Light, Bhachu, Karageorgis 1989: 1). Migration networks are components of the relations between people, and although they are based on the specific social actions of individuals as well as the wider social groups, the actual concepts of migration networks, i.e. the categorisations of what we will include in them and what not and how we will formulate them are social constructs. In light of the character of migration, we consider migration networks as networks:
 - that are temporal, tied to the movement of individuals in space
 - that facilitate the movement of individuals in space

- that change the social situation in the source as well as target destinations
- that ensure the continuation of migration
- that participate in the emergence and persistence of migration systems.

Within this research project, I express the assumption that with the stabilisation of a group in the target area migration networks cease to exist.

2. Concepts of migration systems are later concepts than concepts of migration networks. The system theory was applied for explanation of migration movements in initially in 1960s (Gutkind 1962) and then basically theoretically conceptualized in 1970s (Mabogunje 1970). The concept of migration systems has appeared in several variations. In this work in agreement with James Fawcett (1989), Hania Zlotnik (1992) and Douglas Massey (1993), we consider a migration system as a multi-dimensional connection of two or more regions, in which one- or two-way migration movement takes place. Compared to migration networks, the term of migration systems is wider and entails any migration infrastructure, including the human relations and material environment, which in the system need not necessarily directly participate in the given migration movement but can play into it in a mediated way. The components of migration systems can be people who do not have immediate ties to one another, but this is not the case with one migration network. Migration systems appear in this sense to be more stable than migration networks; their subject becomes also the second generation of migrants, who are already integrated in the new milieu and do not participate directly in any way in further migration.

Within the research conducted, I express the assumption that the observed migration systems have contributed to the formation of the observed migration networks and that they have survived these migration networks. Also for the future, they entail high migration potential, whose implementation can be estimated and which can contribute to the creation of new migration networks formed by the same people who did not participate in the migration streams observed and described in this text.

Reference Groups, the Subject of the Research

We have obtained the answer to the basic theoretical questions and confirmation or rebuttal of our basic assumptions through the data from field research among the immigrants who came from Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to the Czech Republic in 1991–2001. They were the participants in the so-called controlled migrations assisted by the Czech state, which created above-standard conditions for the subsequent integration of the immigrants into the Czech milieu. Controlled migrations were relatively frequent in twentieth century Europe and sometimes had a violent or forced character. The controlled migration we refer about took place on the territory of the Czech Republic in the 1990s and the first years of the twenty-first century in two waves.

In the first wave, a total of 1,812 people were relocated from areas affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, of whom 1,731 lived at that time in Ukraine and 81 in Belarus. The displaced persons of Czech origin from Ukraine and Belarus were usually the offspring of the third to fifth generation of emigrants from the Czech lands to Tsarist Russia at the end of the 1860s and 1870s. The displaced persons from Ukraine affected by the mentioned relocation act had lived in Ukraine mainly in the rural localities of Mala Zubivshchina and Malinovka and in the towns of Malin and Korosten at a distance of approximately 55–80 km from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. The relocated persons from Belarus had lived in towns of Gomel and Mozyr near Ukrainian Borders.

Over the period of their residence, this population had almost entirely integrated into the milieu there, frequently living in mixed marriages with Ukrainians and Belorussians and with Ukrainian and Russian being the most often used language, although particularly the members of the older generation preserved a partial knowledge of Czech and some customs and habits that were possible to relate to the Czech milieu, from which their ancestors had come. Yet, since most of them had gradually converted to Orthodoxy and taken Russian citizenship under the pressure from the surroundings, their way of life also did not significantly deviate from the customs and norms there. Nevertheless, the people especially from the rural localities were aware of their origin and thanks to that could also request from the government of Czechoslovakia resettlement from the contaminated area. They were joined in their request also by the family members from larger Ukrainian towns.

As we have already stated, a component of the controlled migrations in 1991–1993 was also the resettlement of 81 inhabitants of Czech origin and their family members from

Belarus. Emigration from Bohemia to the area of today's Belarus also occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century and was concentrated primarily in some villages in the southeast part of the former Minsk Governorate and individuals also appeared in some towns, especially in Minsk, Gomel and Mozyr. The populace was less numerous and was marked by the assimilation pressures more distinctly than the displaced persons of Czech origin from Ukraine. In the second half of 20th Century the originally village population gradually resettled to above mentioned Belorussian towns. It was mainly a Russian-speaking population, which in the urban milieu often came from the middle, intellectual social classes that was resettled from Belorussia to the Czech Republic in 1993.

The topic of resettlement was particularly at its beginning widely publicised in the media and especially in 1991 the first displaced persons encountered an acceptance without problems. The migration was understood as ecological, forced and as compatriot assistance.

The displaced persons were offered the following conditions, which were slightly modified during the three years of the resettlement process:

- Free bus transport to Czechoslovakia, or the Czech Republic,² and the transport of their property in lorries;
- a one-week health and socialisation stay in a recreation facility and initial health examination;
- priority acquisition of permanent residence in Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic);
- social and health insurance to the extent provided to Czechoslovak, or Czech, citizens;
- provision of housing in apartments according to the size of the family (household);
- provision of employment at least for one member of the family of working age according to the local situation (hence irrespective of the qualification of the displaced person) without closer time specification (in 1991 a period of one year was stated);
- a one-off financial contribution, which was raised in 1992–1993 as compared to 1991. For an adult it was 7,100 CSK (CZK) and for a child 3,350 CSK (CZK). In 1991, it was 4,500 CSK and 1,500 CSK;
- the opportunity to draw an interest-free cash-free loan of 34,000 CSK (CZK) per family – in 1991 it was 30,000 CSK – intended for the furnishing of the household and payable annually over ten years.

² The resettlement was launched when the federal state of Czechoslovakia still existed. After the split of Czechoslovakia into two independent states Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, the resettlement process continued to the Czech Republic.

In 1991 and 1992, hence in the time before the division of Czechoslovakia, the displaced persons hoped for the possibility of acquiring Czechoslovak citizenship (after giving up their Ukrainian citizenship) without the five-year waiting period, as permitted by the earlier act. The displaced persons from 1993 had already been informed of the new act on gaining and losing Czech citizenship, which does not allow a shortening of the five-year waiting period. In the end, however, an exception was made in 1995 for the displaced persons from 1991–1993, which allowed a priority acquisition of citizenship.³

Another exceptional opportunity that the displaced persons could take advantage of were two-month educational stays for students of secondary and tertiary schools with intensive instruction in the Czech language with the aim of preparing students for study in Czech schools (unlike in 1991 there were no longer organised educational stays for children of elementary schools in 1992–1993 because of the smaller problems of including the children in instruction).

Migrations are usually understood also as selective mechanisms, on whose basis the demographic and qualification profile of a population changes. In this case, the migration processes mentioned above had a minimal selective effect. Whole families and wider groups of relatives migrated and the demographic profile of the migrating population was not specific in any way.

In terms of demographics, certain differences manifest themselves in the individual resettlement waves of 1991–1993 with the exception of the representation of men and women, who slightly outnumbered men (circa 52 % women and 48 % men) in each wave. The differences manifest themselves primarily in an increase in the percentage of children up to age 15 and a decrease in people of retirement age.

Of the total number of people resettled in 1991, children in the age of 0–15 years formed almost 25 %, in 1992 something over 26 % and in 1993 already almost 30 %. People of retirement age (men over 60 years of age and with women the age was counted from 56) formed in 1991 almost 19 %, in 1992 10 % and in 1993 almost 9.5 %. The reasons can be seen both apparently in the lower interest of older people in resettlement and in the different composition of the populations of the individual moving settlement areas.

³ According to the findings of Eva Janská and Dušan Drbohlav, however, a number of the members of this group still did not have citizenship of the Czech Republic in 1999 (Janská, Drbohlav 2001: 109). Nevertheless in 2010 we did not find any person from this first migration wave without Czech citizenship.

The transfer of displaced persons was conducted in several stages in each year. After the week-long health-socialisation stays, the displaced persons were transported to individual localities. The majority of the displaced persons had the chance to choose them from a list of offers which they had received when they were still in Ukraine. The list of offers included the size of the municipality, the housing capacity and generally also the working opportunities. A photograph of the municipality was also included. Primarily the displaced persons from 1991 and 1992 had the possibility to choose. The displaced persons from 1993 already had the choice considerably limited or could no longer choose.

The controlled migration from Kazakhstan shared a whole range of similar features. Czechs had arrived in Kazakhstan in greater number in two waves. The first came in 1911 from Bessarabia (today's Moldavia) and from Southern Ukraine, where there were Czech colonisation villages created at the same time and in a similar way like the Czech village in Volhynia and Chernobyl region (for more detail, see Uherek, Valášková, Kužel, Dymeš 2003). Thanks to the high population increase, drought and crop failure, a group of people appeared among the Czechs in South Ukraine and in Bessarabia that were willing to migrate to Kazakhstan, where colonisation actions of the Tsarist government were taking place, and seek there more advantageous life conditions.

In June 1911, the Czech colonists founded their own village of Borodinovka in Kazakhstan, where the related families from Bessarabia as well as from around Melitopol gradually moved.⁴ Several families came from Siberia, where there was a Czech settlement near Omsk, Novogradka.⁵ They thus formed a compact, Czech-speaking, initially

⁴ We find only a few fragmentary pieces of information on Borodinovka in the Czech interwar literature. S. Klíma (1925: 141) wrote: 'In the Ural area near the town of Tyemir, there is a Czech municipality Borodinka, founded by emigrants from Chekhograd in the Crimea (100 Czechs). The train station Artubursk is 110 verst (transl. note: an obsolete Russian unit of length. It is defined as being 500 sazhen long, which makes a verst equal to 3,500 feet /1,066.8 metres/) away by carriage.' In the work *Československá pomoc ruské a ukrajinské emigraci* (Czechoslovak Assistance to Russian and Ukrainian Emigration, 1924: 100), it is said: 'It is worth mentioning the statement of Mr Drahoš, a colonist from the Borodin Volost in the Urals, where compatriots, numbering circa 30 homesteaders, settled in a small village were struck by drought and before that by an influx of locusts and suffered starvation. They had to eat the steppe grass ...'

⁵ The Czech settlement of Novogradka near Omsk in Siberia is mentioned by S. Klíma (1925: 142). During our research, we encountered a woman in Aktyubin, born in 1916 in Novogradka, who moved with her family and siblings to their relatives in Borodinovka in the time of famine in 1921 (her mother later returned to Novogradka

endogamous enclave concentrated on the territory of Kazakhstan only in one rural community but having contacts with other Czech enclaves on the territory of Tsarist Russia.

Another immigrant wave of the offspring of Czech émigrés to northwest Kazakhstan was represented by incomplete families from Bessarabia, which was a part of Russia before the First World War. After the war this part of Bessarabia fell to Romania and in 1940 was reincorporated in the Soviet Union. In 1941, seven Czech prospering families were declared as kulaks by the Soviet authorities and deported by cargo wagons from Bessarabia. When after an approximately ten-day journey the women with children could alight from the train (still in Tiraspol the men had been separated from the families and subsequently shot), they discovered that the Second World War had begun and that they were in Kazakhstan. They contacted their relatives in Borodinovka and the majority moved to them (Valášková 1998: 166).

The Czech community in Kazakhstan and the surroundings did not remain only in Borodinovka. It gradually migrated from it also to other localities. Already during the Second World War, some Czechs were sent for various work, to the so-called *trudfront*. The increased migration movements occurred particularly after the War and in the 1960s to 1980s when individuals as well as some entire Czech families moved from Borodinovka to towns, mainly to Aktyubin, also to Tyemir, Shubarkuduk, Ken-Kiyak and other localities. Small Czech families settled also in the neighbouring municipalities, mainly in Perelyubovka. Finally at the beginning of 1990s a part of inhabitants from Borodinovka resettled to Russia to Orenburg region where they repopulated the abandoned originally German village Meshcheryakovka whose inhabitants moved to Germany in early 1990s. On the other hand, other ethnic populations headed for Borodinovka as a result of voluntary but also forced migrations. During the War, mainly Chechens and Moldavians were deported to Borodinovka, of whom the majority gradually left the municipality; after the Second World War, Kazakhs and Russians moved to the municipality. In this way, the Czech population was gradually Russified and Russian became their most frequently used language. Mixed marriages were also entirely common.

In 1994–2001, a migration action called ‘Return Home’ was organised in the Czech Republic at the request of the Czech population. In its framework, a total of 785 people arrived in the Czech Republic in 1994–2001, of whom 697 people directly from Kazakhstan,

and even died there). The Czechs from Borodinovka also knew of a Czech settlement near Barnaul in Siberia. See Španihel (1921: 30–34, 86–95).

110 persons from Russia, four from Uzbekistan, four from Moldavia and three from Kyrgyzstan. During their stay in the Czech Republic, the displaced persons from the action 'Return Home' had a total of thirty-three children, so the group as of 31 December numbered a total of 818 people. Of the towns and villages, the most commonly represented are Aktyubin, Kazakhstan (348 persons), then Borodinovka (170 persons) and Meshcheryakovka in Russia (75 persons). A high number of displaced persons came also from Martuk in Kazakhstan, Yasna, Kenkyak and other localities. In the group, women slightly outnumber the men (there are 52 % of women) and in 2001 the group had 35 % of the members below eighteen years of age.

The displaced persons came independently or in groups – families and were placed in a total of approximately 116 localities, mostly small settlements, but eleven localities were towns with a population over 20,000 people. Housing and employment was ensured by People in Need's Consultation Office for Compatriots. Every displaced person paid for their own travel.

In more than half of the localities, only one family was housed. In roughly one third of the localities, two families were housed. Unlike the immigration from the areas affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident, the displaced persons within the 'Return Home' action did not create a numerous enclave in any settlement but were placed alone or only with a few families among the majority population.

The Data and Their Generalisation

Since the mentioned migrations were state-organised actions, they were not only, especially initially, publicised in the media but also carefully monitored by the scientific community. The data, which were gradually amassed by ethnologists, social geographers, linguists and doctors, brought a whole range of knowledge particularly on the group of displaced persons from Ukraine from 1991–1993, which was also the most publicised in the media.⁶ There is not enough room in this study for their detailed assessment; we therefore limit ourselves to only the basic statements:

⁶ The most important ethnological (anthropological) texts on the topic are as follows: Valášková, Uherek. Z., Brouček 1997; Uherek, Valášková, Kužel, Dymeš 2003.

1. With the migrations taking place from 1991, the relation of Czech society to the newly arriving migrants progressively worsened until the mid 1990s. It later stabilised and became highly pragmatic. At the same time, in the source destinations the knowledge of Czech society improved and lessened the culture shock experienced by the newly arriving in the Czech Republic. The relation also on the part of the immigrants became more instrumental, more restrained.

2. With the decreasing possibilities for housing and employment of larger groups together, also the controlled migrations were more and more individualised. They became the question of adaptation and integration of the nuclear families, they could create the impression that they were part of larger groups only on the basis of subsequent stereotypification.

3. The will to integrate into Czech society did not increase with the growing amount of information on Czech society. On the contrary, the criticality towards European society as a whole increased. This criticality however did not lead to an attempt to abandon Czech society.

Migration and Ethnic Networks and the Persistence of Migration Systems

In July 2010, we conducted an interview with a Ukrainian woman whose husband, a driver, had alternated several jobs and currently works as an employee of a Russian who operates a cargo transport company. He often sends his almost compatriot, the Ukrainian, with a lorry to Ukraine. He knows the environment there, knows how to act in it and travels there more happily than to the West, where he feels uncertain in the linguistically foreign environment bound by strict norms.

The Czech Republic is currently full of supranational economic networks, which are very often dominated by foreigners, both from the West and from the East. Compatriots like to employ compatriots. This fact has been drawn attention to in the article by the authors Light, Bhachu and Karageorgis, when they indicate the fact, neglected by many migration

theories,⁷⁷ namely that immigration networks not only facilitate the search for work for those arriving but that they themselves create jobs and thus actively influence the economy of the target country (Light, Bhachu, Karageorgis 1989: 1–10). This is not only the case of persons from the former Soviet Union but also from the United States of America, Germany and France. While they select according to profession or qualification, they prefer compatriots. They communicate better with them, more easily come to an agreement with them and trust them. However, in the given case it is not about migration networks. These people contact one another first on the territory of the Czech Republic, and their relation has nothing to do with further migrations. These networks are social ties created in the Czech Republic and influenced by the social climate of this environment. These networks neither facilitate migration nor diminish investment for integration to the new environment.

The possibility to acquire preferential employment with compatriots corresponds nonetheless with the theme of the migration systems and can be the stimulus to migration also for persons who would otherwise not decide for migration themselves. As we have seen from the previous example, the migration system strengthens also by the fact that the individual firms in the source country trade better, communicate, estimate better how to connect the source and target areas advantageously. It is however necessary to realise that by ‘adding new opportunities, the migrant network modifies the economy in the destination region or locality’ (Light, Bhachu, Karageorgis 1989: 3).

Migration systems are strengthened not only by corporate companies. Every family of the resettled returns to the source area roughly once in two years. More than 90 % of the resettled know what is cheaper in the source area, what the social situation there is like, maintains contacts with distant relatives. On average, each family had recommended or invited at least one person to the Czech Republic, who resettled outside of controlled migrations. The number of migrants consequently increased through subsequent migration by approximately a third.

The persistence of migration systems from the 1990s has not decreased since 2000. Some families have limited their visits in the original destinations, but we have also recorded families that started to send their children to Ukraine to children’s summer camps so they

⁷⁷ ‘Network theorists share a more general tendency to ignore self-employment’s effects when discussing the labour force changes produced by immigration’ (Light, Bhachu, Karageorgis 1989: 2).

would not forget Ukrainian and Russian and would become better acquainted with the milieu from which their parents came.

Conclusion

In this work, I have only selected a few cases which indicate the diversification, variability and temporality of the migration networks. Using an example, I have shown their overlapping with other types of social networks, like with friendship networks in the local milieu, family networks and economic ties. I have shown that for analytical reasons it is suitable to separate the migration networks from other types of social ties and preserve their temporality and immediate bond to migration, in the case of family migrations, for instance, through the presence of the mediators of the migration in the vicinity of the family networks.

As against migration networks, migration systems show long-term persistence. They can exist for a long time in a latent form and renew themselves thank to the fact that knowledge and learning of an extensive group of people are related to them. The generational transfer of knowledge of the migration system is spontaneous and can take place for example by visiting the relatives. As we have already demonstrated, even in the case of the groups observed by us it is often the targeted transfer of cognizance and specific knowledge which could be of use also to the second generation.

Border theory can calculate with migration networks as well as migration systems. From this perspective, migration system outlines boundaries, calculates with them, utilizes them, and helps to conceptualize them. Migration networks, on the other hand, helped to overcome boundaries in my cases.

From the whole range of integration indicators like satisfaction in the target destination, aspirations for the future, spatial mobility, the choice of a spouse, we have selected a few that are controversial and hard to estimate, which show not only the diversification of the whole problem but also the disillusion of some of the respondents who moved to prospering Europe and now have the feeling that they are on its periphery, where it is ever worse and they are considered despite the long-term and problem-free residence as ‘the others’ who do not belong here.

The given text does not exhaust the theme but rather comprises notes which have a methodological character. The assessment of the entire research will be published in 2012.

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