

The struggle to belong

Dealing with diversity in 21st century urban settings.

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Expectation of Immigration¹

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Abstract

I scope will be emigration in slum area. People emigrate from different cities or countries to metropolises for various reasons. And aim of my research is to understand how or why these people decide to emigrate to these slum areas. Most probably they want to have a better life in future thus they emigrate to metropolis but then what has changed for them and what do they remember from their past? At the beginning, it is hard to find a job or find a place to stay for these people because now, they are so far away from their familiar lives and they do not have enough money to live. For this reason they choose to live in these slum areas. Because these areas are more affordable than other places and similar to their previous lives.

In my research I will use depth interview and participant observation methods as sociological methodology. On the other hand my collateral method which is also so important for this research will be öForum Theatreö technical. I had also experiences about theater in my educational background. At first I will give a chance to people for explaining their problems with acting (performing on stage) and then I will make a depth interview with these people about their problems and listening their own solution offers regarding these problems. When I looked at my previous experiences I saw that only depth interview sometimes could not be enough for finding the solution. Acting is always become more effective and intelligible than only speaking,

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The main purpose of this method is feel free the people and let them understand what are political and economical effects. Augusto Boal said that "People act and understand their social class". First people understand their position and then change words rule. This method can help the people to solve their problems and produce new solutions. Forum Theatre is not a performing show, it is a kind of tool to find a solution for the problems.

I would like to use "Forum Theatre" in my research with slum people because for these people in fact for all people sometimes words can not be enough for communication. However, people can understand each other through acting even though they do not speak same language. On the other hand, in performing, people have to feel themselves free. Because sometimes expressing yourself with words can be very difficult but acting on stage can be easier.

In conclusion, with my research I try to find a solution for the problem of these slum people, and to understand why they want to protect their current lifestyle and also to help them in period of for finding their own particular identity. However, while we are trying to solve their problems, my aim is to understand these people and show them the way of how to solve their problem and help them to find their own acceptable solution. Otherwise it is too hard for these people to accept the solution which was implemented by force, by the government.

Objectives

I would like to talk about two slum areas in Istanbul, this research is a part of my graduate studies. My undergraduate major is in sociology, and I study in this field because sociology seeks to understand all aspects of human social behavior, including the behavior of individuals as well as the social dynamics of small groups, large organizations, communities, institutions, and entire societies, and also sociology can train you to answer the "what," "how" and "why" questions about human societies past and present. In course of my undergraduate major period, I learned thoroughly the techniques about sociological imagination and from now on I would like to participate in sociology graduate studies and I would like to explain my research on urban poverty, emigration and other areas of urban sociology. In this research, I would like to combine my graduate background, three basic questions and new mix perspective for sociology method.

Background

Istanbul is a metropolis like Tokyo, London, Mumbai, New York etc. In this new century 'Metropolises' directly play an important role in nation-states' economy and so living in metropolises start to change its residents' everyday habits and practices noticeably. On the other hand some countries do not seem to be ready for this kind of structural transformation like Turkey, thence civil governments or other social institutes are not sufficient enough for social services activities or social researches.

At population registration of 2000 , Istanbul has 10 million population , if we research population registration of 2010 , we can see Istanbul has 14 million population , it means 18% of general population live in Istanbul now. ³ But this is legal number , we know that Istanbul's fact population is 18 million . Who is the 4 million people ? Four million population includes refugees , illegal international immigrant , off-the-record inland immigrant . These people live in slum areas of Istanbul . In this paper I would like to talk about two slum areas in Istanbul . First place is **inland immigrant people first stop : Tarlabas,** Other place is **penurious of the city : Sulukule** . They are two different kind of slum areas in Istanbul but they have both position in perspective of government . Both of these place is urban transformation area . Sulukule's transformation has done , Tarlabas, has still been gentrifying .

Sulukule is a neighborhood of Fatih which is old part of Istanbul. Mostly, gipsy people are living there for many years. They have a typical life style; houses are duplex, ten people or more living in same house at the same time, nearly all houses have a garden and people sit in front of their houses, in their gardens and use this area as communication places like pub, bars or cafes etc. Most of Sulukule community's members are low income families. For instance families salary is approximately three hundred Turkish Lira in a month (It is roughly 150 p) . These families do not have the capital power to spend in leisure activities, metropolis fun places such as expensive food restaurants . And also their cultural practices are not acceptable for such expensive places.

It is impossible or hard to orientate for these people to live in other parts of Istanbul because their financial income is too low and they can keep on living with taking on credit with each other. For this reason they are living together and prefer not to live individually to survive and protect themselves from economic and cultural problems. They work daily and informal jobs

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like carrier , street vendor , florist etc. so that they do not have health insurance . Usually their working areas are near to their houses and mostly in Eminonu area and they do not spend any money for transportation. They live in the same house with their children, grandmother ó grand father , in-laws, grandchildren et cetera hence they pay only one house rent .They do not need babysitter or helper , they do not have any budget for these jobs. All the neighborhood people in the same location are ready to help with each other in any time without waiting any reply for survival.

In case of government city progress studies people in Sulukule have been relocated to Tasoluk/Gaziosmanpasa where is another part of Istanbul by force in order to cloak of city planning. Apartment flats were given to these people by credit rates and they have to pay back these credits in fifteen years. However families salary is merely three hundred Turkish Liras and this salary is not enough for paying back this amount of credit rate. Most important point is choice . They do not want to leave their neighborhood . The leaving the neighborhood means mandatory change of their lifestyle .

Consequently, now, all the building of this neighborhood was pull down , only twenty five families are staying in Tasoluk . Other families have returned back to other areas of Sulukule, Balat or Karagümruk because they do not keep in step with their new individual life and on this point, know they live with their relatives now Sulukule has been restructuring without local people of Sulukule. Sulukule was emptied by municipal government .

Tarlabas, is a neighborhood of Taksim which is night life part of Istanbul . This palace is very important for illegal international immigrant and off-the-record inland immigrant which is first place of city immigrant. More people work such as waiter , dishwasher , body guard etc. in nightlife of place . In this sector always use energetic labor so that people who change quickly , work without health insurance . Ordinarily working without health insurance is worse but this is change for illegal international immigrant . Tarlabas, is most intercultural area in Istanbul , if we watch the neighborhood , we meet mostly African people ,Pakistani people , Kurdish people , Balkan people , Gipsy people , Turkish people .

After middle of the 18. Century Tarlabas, has being important because in this part has been center of city . Economics area of old Istanbul is very close to Tarlabas,. The non-Muslim communities who were very power in Ottoman economics , lived in this area. During around

a hundred years , middle class non-Muslims family had been lived here. After 1955 they leaved Istanbul result of politics case thus family's house to be derelict .

First period , inland immigrant people specially man has been starting to live in this house without a contract. They live 7-9 man in same house which name is ~~single house~~ These men mostly come from small east city of Turkey . First family's father who come from big city , find job and house , prepare best life for other family's member then other member of family immigrate to big city . Mostly they are relative or from the same part of the country . They do not have any security labor or health but they invented themselves security : House has one box . All the house member put own pay in the box , end of the week they share money . If any people has problem , they use in the box money . Sometimes they can not find job , in this way they have change to get money all week and they can sent money to own family .

After the 1990 , Istanbul has suddenly hugely inland immigrant for reason that government politics. The inland immigrant people locate this place near their relatives or near their husband (I said that first family's father come and find job than him family come , but suddenly all the family member have to migrate .) They choose to locate Tarlabas, because Tarlabas, which has less rent , is near city center . If they get more money , they will move another part of Istanbul . They live two or three small family together. All family member have to do different work for family survive . Men go to work out side the house and women work inside the house . If children young than eleven , they work inside the house , after eleven specially boy have to work out side the house . That children is too young for working so that they find only informal job , they clean the car window's in when cars stop in red traffic light or they sell serviette in the street .

The families have to move suddenly and mandatory , they do not orient city life . Specially women has language problem so that this women only communicate with each other. Istanbul's common language is Turkish , anybody who want to work , have to speak Turkish . These women can not participate social life of city so that they feel afraid to city life , they do not want to communicate with city .

Scope

Firstly I started to my research with children. Because, if we look at the previous inquiries eventuated in this area we can easily see that Sulukule's people do not like to speak with academic researchers. And when we searched the different kinds of group studies actualized in this area we can also see that only few of them are with Sulukule's children, mostly with adults. All the people of neighborhood have right to speak about the neighborhood life because of staying. But some of the people think that destruction is only adults problem however the destruction is affect all the member of neighborhood. These children do not have social activities and nobody wonder about how the urban transformation affects these children's and also these people's lives. And then I continued my research with the mothers of these children. I carried on same method to Tarlabas, . Communication is my first reason to use same method in Tarlabas, and the second reason is women and children's silence , they spend all the time inside the border of neighborhood , but they can not talk about their living area with people of outside in neighborhood.

My research scope is emigration in slum area. People emigrate from different cities or countries to metropolises for various reasons. And aim of my research is to understand how or why these people decide to emigrate to these slum areas. I want to learn their personal stories and contrast past stories with dreamed of metropolis . Most probably they want to have a better life in future thus they emigrate to metropolis but then what has changed for them and what do they remember from their past? At the beginning, it is hard to find a job or find a place to stay for these people because now, they are so far away from their familiar lives and they do not have enough money to live. For this reason they choose to live in these slum areas. Because these areas are more affordable than other places and similar to their previous lives. Specially children or young immigrants build new migration story .

Thence I chose to conduct a research in Sulukule because Sulukule is a very specific old slum area of Istanbul. Gypsy communities have been living here since 10th century, on the other hand people in here are still telling stories about their elder's migration. These people are living in this place for a long time but still they are feeling themselves as a immigrant in this metropolis. So they do not identify themselves according to the cities they live, they identify themselves with their ethnic groups and named themselves as Gipsy. If we look Tarlabas, , people identified themselves immigrant too. This result is so normal , most people are

immigrant of new generation . On the other hand , children who have not visited family's town ever , born in metropolis , identified themselves with family's town . The important point , they feel immigrant , they identified themselves immigrant but actually they have two identification : immigrant soul and local people of Sulukule , immigrant soul and local people of Tarlabas, . They want to protect neighborhood lifestyle and neighborhood identity . My second example is Tarlabas, because I would like to contrast two different slum culture in same metropolis which has same result of gentrification . And so second important point is period , before the destruction Sulukule has similar position of Tarlabas,. People who want to gentrification to Sulukule , always underline Sulukule's ethnicity but this is not fact reason . I would like to underline one more point , destruction of two neighborhood is not about ethnicity , it is about social class so that economy , some of the media company , who has big advertisement from building company , know this case but they show ethnicity reason for destruction .

Goals

Sulukule and Tarlabas, are located at a center point of the metropolis and this makes this area so profitable and popular, hence value and importance of this place are rapidly rising in the last twenty years. Therefore government and building firms try to develop this area for gaining more. Therefore they do not want gypsies in Sulukule and poor people in Tarlabas, and try to relocate them. However, Sulukule's people fight against this relocation and return back to their old neighborhood. And my research's aim to understand why these people returned back to these slum areas again and they do not to want change their current lifestyle and also why they are trying to protect their current living places and gipsy identity contrary to other immigrants. Just know on we are observing same period in Tarlabas, , they identified the neighborhood with cultural identity or ethnicity , they divided by them native's cities . They believe that if they protect our lifestyle and ethnicity , they can survive in metropolis. Last half century big international building company produce same style house inside big site and they blow down separate house . So that municipal government and big media company do not confirm Sulukule and Tarlabas, lifestyle. Lifestyle is protected neighborhood to destruction.

Chosen Method

In my research I use depth interview and participant observation methods as sociological methodology. On the other hand my collateral method which is also so important for this research to be "Forum Theatre" technique. I had also experiences about theatre in my educational background. At first I give a chance to people for explaining their problems with acting (performing on stage) and then I make a depth interview with these people about their problems and listening their own solution offers regarding these problems. When I looked at my previous experiences I saw that only depth interview sometimes could not be enough for finding the solution. Acting is always become more effective and intelligible than only speaking.

Because of language problem , this method is very useful and successful for Tarlabas, or international people whom living in slum areas .

As a result we can say that my research is composed of two parts. First part is "understanding what the problem is by using forum theater method". Second part is "try to find a solution with depth interview by the involvement of people in Sulukule or Tarlabas". I choose mixed of two methods because in my opinion depth interview method can be evaluated as a single acting modality. On the other hand if depth interview can be used together with forum theater, people do not want to be the inactive narrator but also they will be a part of the solution process. Before I have been to these slum area , a lot of researcher , academician , journalist , photographer visit these neighborhood , people of neighborhood explain their problem to these people time and again so that they alienation their problem .

Forum theatre was developed in the early 1970's by Brazilian director Augusto Boal. Its other name is street theatre . The goal of forum theatre is to make people more aware of some problems that they may have not considered previously. Forum theatre scenarios are designed to stimulate audience participation through discussion, interactive role-playing and shared experiences. For this reason this theatre need only minimum decor and costume because people are acting by using only their daily objects, decor and clothes. This theatre is the "Theatre of the Oppressed" and this method can help people to break political and economical effects of their life .

The main purpose of this method is feel free the people and let them understand what are political and economical effects. Boal said that "People act and understand their social class . First people understand their position and than change word's rule." This method can help the people to solve their problems and produce new solutions. Forum Theatre is not a performing show, it is a kind of tool to find a solution for the problems.

Method of "Forum Theatre" is solving the problems by communication with group members. First, group members choose a discussion topic which is one of the important problem for them by general compact, then make a discussion session for a short period . And then the acting coach gives the sign of "action" which is related to their problem, and one or more choosen group members act according to their memories about this "action". Coach could stop "the play" in any time and can ask "What did you do to make in this position" and on this point group members can change their acting position if they want and try to to find the best solution together. In performing time viewer can be performer or performer can be viewer in any time when they want .There is not any common theater rules in here also if any one or any group do not accept the solution in performing he/she or group can come and act his/her or their own solution . At the end of the play, all the group members have to agree about the solution. If only one of the group members do not agree with other group members, the play is continued to be played again till the agreement.

I would like to use "Forum Theatre" in my research with slum people because for these people in fact for all people sometimes words can not be enough for communication . However, people can understand each other through acting even though they do not speak same language. On the other hand, in performing, people have to feel themselves free. Because sometimes expressing yourself with words can be very difficult but acting on stage can be easier. At Forum Theatre method people can sight their problem but do not alienation their problem , they have a change to think problems solution.

And also while I am using "Forum Theatre" I am an acting coach in my research. So, my first plan was to start with explaining what is "Forum Theatre" and what are its activities, then knowing these people better and talk to them about the importance of their joining this play and "acting." As a result, I take a permission form these people for carrying out to this play.

Pilot Study

In my past studies I did a research related to this topic which can be a pilot study for this research by using depth interview and forum theater method. Scope of my pilot study was "how did second generation immigrant identify themselves in Gulsuyu, with their living places now or their families living places at past before emigration". I was wondering "did these people forget the first period of their emigration and have they been writing a new emigration story on their minds." And I continued my research on them. The main question was "what did the children/ second generation think about emigration. Did they feel themselves as an emigrant (because their parents emigrated to this city from another country) or a local (because a lot of children were born after the emigration), and what was their requested living places on their minds."

In my research I choosed Gulsuyu because again Gulsuyu was an old slum area of Istanbul. Without taking any permission from goverment people who emigrated to Gulsuyu built slum houses here. For this reason, they are always living with a fear of their houses pulled down by the municipality, the government. And some of the people in Gulsuyu have never seen "downtown areas" such as Taksim or Kadıköy which are so near to Gulsuyu. They are low-income families. And maybe in hyped-up thinking we can say that they are thinking that "their Istanbul" only consists of Gulsuyu. They never feel themselves as a proper resident in this city . But also now they have no other places to live...So, "how these people can identify themselves?" They clarified themselves like that "I was born in Istanbul but this is not important . My hometown is my family's town. In my retirement I am going to return my hometown. In here we have our own rules and we are solving our own problems with our own rules. Government does not care about us"

In my pilot research I used again mix of depth interview and forum theater with children. In first part of my research children identified yourself with their parents life style and hometown. I understood they create own identification but they can not explain their position with world . They can explain this position only daily life ritual . However, after performing on the stage they acted their own daily life style . Generally, children did not want to interview but they keenly wanted to perform on stage and be successful to express themselves. And I did my research with children because maybe their parents are thinking to

return back but these children are planning to stay in Istanbul but without losing their own cultural identity so they try to find an acceptable solution to live in here.

Conclusion

In conclusion, with my research I try to find a solution for the problem of these slum people, and to understand why they want to protect their current lifestyle and also to help them in period of for finding their own particular identity. However, while we are trying to solve their problems, my aim is to understand these people and show them the way of how to solve their problem and help them to find their own acceptable solution. Otherwise it is too hard for these people to accept the solution which was implemented by force, by the government.

If I count my pilot study one more example , I would like to show three slum areas in Istanbul which are area of gentrification for municipal government . They have different reason of built , different common ethnicity , different location . In common with these slum areas are increase in value last twenty years. First time these people are located these area by government and government received these areas value and tax . Istanbul has incorrect development plan , the plan is only about building new flat , it is not included lifestyle .

These people protect their lifestyle . Because neighborhood lifestyle is their best change to survive in the metropolis without social right.

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