

# **Assimilation as a Form of Unity**

Multi-Ethnic Society (4)

(May 8, 2014)

# Email assignment

- Exploring the unconscious side
- To fail to become a member of a nation: Is a nation homogenous? Function/dysfunction
- Nation-states as an ideal type
- How to consider the changes along with times: beginning of nation-state building and after (the present)

# Why Assimilation

- Japanese policy toward ethnic minority groups has been called assimilation.
  - Colonization and its remains
  - Newcomers (immigrants)
- Assimilation as a problematic term: to which degree do people look for the sameness?

# How to Conceptualize Assimilation

- Acculturation, adaptation, integration, modes of incorporation, etc.
- “Good” assimilation vs. “bad” (downward) assimilation
- Assimilation into what: mainstream or other groups

# Background of Assimilation Theory

- Mainly developed in USA as a country of immigrants
- How about indigenous peoples (native minorities)?
- How is it real or idealistic: melting pot, salad bowl, mosaic, vegetable soup, etc.

# Assimilation Theory in 1960s (Gordon 1964)

TABLE 5. THE ASSIMILATION VARIABLES

Subprocess or Condition	Type or Stage of Assimilation	Special Term
Change of cultural patterns to those of host society	Cultural or behavioral assimilation	Acculturation <sup>19</sup>
Large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of host society, on primary group level	Structural assimilation	None
Large-scale intermarriage	Marital assimilation	Amalgamation <sup>20</sup>
Development of sense of peoplehood based exclusively on host society	Identificational assimilation	None
Absence of prejudice	Attitude receptional assimilation	None
Absence of discrimination	Behavior receptional assimilation	None
Absence of value and power conflict	Civic assimilation	None

# Assimilation Theory After 1970s

- Dominant view up to 1960s: minority groups would disappear in the future
  - After 1970s: reflecting rise of minority groups in 1960s (such as civil rights movement), 'ethnicity' got popularity
- revised and detailed discussion: many deal with immigrants, paying attention to generation, gender and differences of groups, etc.
- @Gordon's contribution: differentiate cultural assimilation and structural assimilation

# Segmented Assimilation (Portes and Rumbaut 1996)

3 types of acculturation

- Dissonant acculturation: children acculturated while parents are not
- Consonant acculturation: both parents and children acculturated
- Selective acculturation: immigrant families preserve a part of their culture selectively

# Discussion

- Which variable is important to measure assimilation?
- What if assimilation does not take place? (ethnic enclave)
- How far should we follow the process?
- From which side is assimilation discussed?
- How is assimilation directed if it does not take place as something natural? (policy)
- Are there any theory / model which apply to the majority-(indigenous) minority relations?

# References

- Glazer, Nathan and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds.), 1975, *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, Harvard University Press
- Gordon, Milton, 1964, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*, Oxford University Press
- Portes, Alejandro, and Ruben G. Rumbaut, 1996, *Immigrant America: A Portrait* (second edition), University of California Press

## 【Email assignment】

How do you discuss assimilation to describe the relations between ethnic majority and ethnic minorities in a country (or in a society)? Or can you make a different conceptual / model?

## 【Preparation】

What is the definition of multiculturalism?

What types of multiculturalism do exist?

How has Malaysia kept balance between national integration and diversity?