Transnational Practices, Place-Based Identity and the Making of `Home` among Brazilians in Gort, Ireland

(article Olivia Sheringham)

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Focus on place

- Irish small town of Gort, county Galway
- Significant Brazilian presence 30-50%
- Explores relationship between the transnational practices and the local attachment of Brazilian migrants
- Both real and imaginary practices
Where is my home?

• Home vs. Away replaced by more open understandings 
  - Dynamic process involving imaginingm creating, unmaking, changing, losing and moving „homes“

• Macro context (global cities) vs. Actual placemaking practices - Practical and emotional importance of attachments to and in place

• Place and identity-construction: „Brazilianization“ enables positive (and/or negative) engagement with Irish identities and places
Transnationalism

• Place counts (within particular nation state) – e.g. Ireland
• However “state policies” are often far from the actual “practices and adjustments” of immigrants themselves
• Brazilians maintaining strong ties with their ethnic counterparts both in the receiving society and in Brazil
Brazilians

- All respondents – economic reasons
- Strong social networks (reducing financial and emotional cost)
- „Everyone went through“ the journey from Brazil – shared experience by all
- Common identity – being a brazilian in Gort
- But also internal divisions within community (region, religion, migration history)
Important aspects

- Food and food shops
- Brazilian fashion
- Personal appearance
- Religious Practices – different churches (direct links with Brazil)
- Traditional Festivals
- Important places of social interactions
- Communication, Media
Everyday lives

- Strong sense of attachment to Gort /awareness of the local context
- Sense of „in-betweeness“
- Different „scales of belonging“
- Depending on social/language capital – need for English
- Increased competition for jobs
- Criminality
- Structural barriers for integration
Thank you