

# **SOC585 MIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONALISM – MIGRATING PEOPLE, MIGRATING CULTURE: OPTICS, METHODS, AND IMPACTS (Fall 2013)**

## **Final exam – Aleksander Aronovich Staroselsky, ID 425215**

**Choose 3 questions from the list and write an essay response to each (this means it is a coherent text not just a brief list of statements). The responses should be no less than 400 words for each question. You should use the literature from the course but you can additionally also refer to other sources. Do not forget to make proper references to the literature you cite.**

### **Questions:**

**3. Discuss immigrant integration using the concepts of ‘cultural armature’ and ‘city scale’.**  
(8 points)

In order to understand immigrant integration in a city, it is not sufficient to discuss its economic and demographic reality, but also its ‘cultural armature’ which is the understanding of a city’s history and cultural geography, its urban self-presentation, cultural responses to demography and what is its prevailing ethos toward immigrants. Recent studies on the matter have taken a broader view than previous works, which see successful immigration as a result of the overall context of culture, barriers, social capital, ethnic networks, and labor market conditions et. al. understanding that it’s a fluid process which could be understood as a multilevel interrelated game with many conditions which affect how integration can be achieved. (Jawrosky, Levitt, Cadge, hejmanek and Curran, March 2012). The perception of newcomers in a city is crucial, and this, in the context of current studies is seen as influenced by public discourse and how the media presents immigration, positively and negatively (Chavez 2001; Padín 2005) is discussed also in Further studies that have discussed the effects of discrimination and prejudice (Millard & Chapa 2004) bringing further understanding about the importance of the cultural ethos about immigration and the effects of racism and social discourse, and how it influences immigrants and their relative success or failure, when trying to integrate in foreign urban environments. There many other factors of the cultural armature of a city which accommodate and ease integration, such as religious institutions (Cabell, 2007), which can make specific civic areas ‘more receptive’. As the cultural armature of a city, that is the overall umbrella term presented by Jawrosky, Levitt, Cadge, hejmanek and Curran, its implementation as argued by them is explained in other studies which stress different parts of it. For example, Glick, Schiller & Caglar (2009) are presented as arguing that one of the major factors of cultural armature is cultural diversity, which has become an important part of the struggle between cities. In their work, Jawrosky et. al. (2012) argue that in the case of Portland, Maine, which has seen alternating growth and decline in immigration over the past decades, government and federal policies have influenced the cultural armature and numbers of immigrants coming to an already multicultural Portland, which has historically received immigrants, now becoming an important destination for refugees due to public policy. Making Portland the city with the

highest number of people requiring social services provided by the state of Maine, and with existing institutions built entirely for that, the city is successfully aiding in the integration of its immigrant populations, which are diverse themselves and are coming from new countries of origin, mainly from conflict-torn areas. Another example brought by Jawrosky et. al. (2012) is the case of Danbury, Connecticut. A city of a smaller scale, with a background of multicultural communities; mainly from Europe but also from Lebanon and Syria. With a failing economy throughout much of its history, it was only after the development of infrastructure and economic centers such as a shopping mall, that the city began to flourish, becoming a 'highly desirable suburban small city', bringing an influx of Hispanic and Portuguese-speaking immigrants which joined other non-European communities formed in the late middle-late twentieth century. Resulting in a foreign born population in the city, that reaches nowadays to almost a third of the city's population. And as the need came, the city itself and a number of NGOs were created to give services to the new immigrant communities, such as community centers for some of the communities, which have helped maintain connections with the immigrants' homelands and ease their integration by 'fostering community building' along with the adequate religious services needed by those communities. Jawrosky et. al. (2012) also explain and give examples about each of the armatures of their example cities, Such as the fact that Portland is a port city, which historically had to adapt to newcomers, creating a cosmopolitan environment which has historically created global citizens which resisted isolation in minority communities. This trend continued through history, and was also affected by the effects of tourism, all of which according to interviews done in their study by Jawrosky et. al. (2012) have aided in creating Portland's open spirit, which is exactly how its cultural armature developed, easing the integration process for its new coming immigrants. As a contrast, Danbury has never produces a spirit of cosmopolitanism, critically and negatively affecting the city and creating a social decline in its downtown and urban epicenter. The self-presentation of the city and its cultural branding is very important as a part of the armature, and in this case Portland is of course more attractive to multiculturalism, as it is a vibrant mixture of living institutions as compared to Danbury's more dormant and suburban environment. All of these realities and policies have affected thus the cultural demography of the two cities, and as Jawrosky et. al. (2012) explain, this are the direct results of the cultural armature of a city.

City scale is a term used to measure and systematically understand forms of urban competition (Glick Schiller and Caglar, 2009) which explains the position of a city within hierarchical powers and influence. Glick Schiller and Caglar (2009) explain the term 'city scale' as 'the differential positioning of cities determined by the articulation of institutions of political, cultural and economic power within regions, states and the globe.' Thus, this definition reflects the place of a city and its surroundings in all degrees and criteria, from population, services, size, and any kind of opportunities and infrastructure the city provides to its population. But any variant within this equation does not determine the power and influence of a city alone, but it is the combination of all factors which can position a city higher or lower on the scale, regardless of for example, the size of a city or the density of its population, not even the size of the population or its distribution. It is influenced by institutions, and reflects on the population and is a result of the regimes in the city. These institutions can be political, social, economic et. al. and create intersections of influence and power which affect the scale, all of which are reflected in migrants and how they integrate into a city and why they choose to immigrate to a specific city. Thus, the city scale and the cultural armature of a city are both influencers on immigrant integration and reasons for the

choice of immigration destinations, they are interrelated and one might even argue that a city scale benefits from a good cultural armature.

Jaworsky Bernadette, Levitt Peggy, Cadge Wendy, Hejtmanek Jessica, Curran Sara (March, 2012) New Perspectives on Immigrant Contexts of Reception, *Nordic Journal of Migration Research. Volume 2, Issue 1, Pages 78–88*

Glick Schiller Nina and Caglar Ayse (February 2009) Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 177-202*

**4. What state is responsible for social protection of the migrants? Answer this question using at least 2 readings from the syllabus. (8 points)**

According to Hujo Katja in her study 'Migration and social protection: Claiming social rights beyond borders' (2012) social welfare and protection varies and depends on the welfare policies of each country. Hujo provides several examples, including those who interact with migrants for their inclusion in such policies, as an example, the EU provides social protection for those immigrants who reside lawfully within their borders. But for newcomers, according to Hujo, inequality is usually the prevalent status. As the immigration policies of each country define the levels of welfare, also do the circumstances of each immigrant's way to reach his country of destination, which result in variations of how they are accepted by the new country's bureaucracy, welfare and social protection systems, which widely vary in their quality according to the level of development of each country, in many cases resulting in total exclusion from welfare policies. These exclusion/inclusion depends on citizenship laws, and as presented in the same journal by Sabates, Koettl and Avato, the country of origin of the immigrant plays a major role in how the destination country treats him, for example – north-north immigrants within developed countries enjoy better conditions and treatment from both countries. The opposite case as explained by them is: 'The most disadvantaged migrants are those moving within low-income regions. In these regions, formal social security provisions are less developed, and migration is characterized by high numbers of undocumented migrants'. They divide social protection into four parts: "1. access to formal social protection..." (Such as healthcare benefits) '2. Portability of vested social security rights between host and origin Countries. 3. Labor market conditions for migrants in host countries and the recruitment process for migrants in the origin country and 4. Access to informal networks to support migrants and their family members.". Thus, as mainly argued by Hujo and by Sabates, Koettl and Avato, the main responsibility lies with the country of destination. Gijsbert Vonk, Sarah Van Walsum argue that "states have a stronger responsibility towards the social protection of asylum seekers than irregular immigrants", giving thus the greater responsibility for non-asylum seekers to the countries of origin. When it comes to Extra-territorial responsibility, Gijsbert Vonk, Sarah Van Walsum explain that countries which interest in sending citizens abroad have a high level of responsibility towards their citizens, and that countries as Albania have established 'some interesting precedents for this' where emigrants can choose to remain members 'affiliated' to their social insurance in Albania. There are more cases presented with this idea, such as in the Philippines and Sri Lanka. But not all of them are voluntary as in Albania, thus may hurt the Immigrant which will have to pay and remain obliged to his country of origin, which benefits from this economically. Gijsbert Vonk, Sarah Van Walsum also argue that 'the export of

benefits is in no way contrary to the policies of exclusion of irregular immigrants'. In conclusion, Each case of immigration has unique characteristics which may influence who is socially responsible for the immigrant, such as the level of development of the country of origin, the circumstances of the immigration (weather or not the immigrant is an asylum seeker or a refugee), policies in both the country of origin or the country of destination (as in the case of Albania), et. al. As an immigrant I believe that both countries are responsible, the country of origin in providing welfare and social security funds to any emigrant in need as they paid their social security prior to leaving the country, and also the country of destination as a national interest of helping immigrants in their integration, and by allowing NGOs in both sides help with both goals, but this also may change in each case, and the country of destination in my view and according to the above stated sources is more accountable for the treatment of immigrants, as the majority of immigrants arrive in those countries due to bad living conditions and in the searching for a better life.

Hujo Katja (June, 2012) Migration and social protection: Claiming social rights beyond borders. *Revue internationale de sécurité sociale* Volume 65, Issue 2, pages 137–140

Sabates-Wheeler Rachel, Koettl Johannes and Avato Johanna (2012) Social Security for Migrants: A Global Overview of Portability Arrangements

Gijsbert Vonk, Sarah Van Walsum ACCESS DENIED; Towards a new social protection approach for excluded migrants

## **7. Discuss the relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism using the example of arts and museums. (8 points)**

In his paper, "Cosmopolitan Memory Holocaust Commemoration and National Identity", Macdonald discusses the holocaust as is presented in memorials and museums worldwide as a source of cosmopolitan identity, as the messages which are connected with the holocaust have become somewhat universal, such as 'never again', which is an ideal which has its sources in the jewish perception and Zionist experience, but reflects a pan-European expression of repent and identity, which has created a communal awareness, but is not always reflected in the experience of other areas of the world out of the western countries which actively participated in WW2, and more specifically, in the battles of the European fronts. It is, as explained by Macdonald a case of paradigm in the cosmopolitan memory, and as such it is reflected differently in different places, and as a concept it no longer belongs to a specific territory. This messages of the prevail of good over evil, and communal responsibility over humans as they are humans, has also helped evolve western understandings of human rights, and has had a global influence ever since, rising and clashing with other nonwestern ideas. The way that the holocaust has been remember and presented in places as Israel, the United States and Germany differs slightly, but overall a cosmopolitan message has been achieved, as argued by Macdonald, and that is the message of 'a timeless and deterritorialized measuring stick for good and evil' the differences of how the portrayal of the historical events differ reflects the national point of view, in Israel as victims which no longer have to fear persecution as they have reclaimed their national sovereignty on

their historical lands, and those of the United States of being the humane and moral saviors of Europe, compared to Germany's guilt and difficult relationship with their own past as a nation. And so, there is a shared cosmopolitan message which has integrated a unified awareness over the WW2 holocaust as a whole, but nationalism, ethnocentrism, and community-internal views have shaped and influenced the identity of nation and how they view the holocaust from their own perspective. In her book *The Bog and the Beast, Museums, the Nation, and the Globe*, Peggy Levitt explains how in some places Museums are regional, and in others they present a global approach, how they build national identities and help the people of a nation to build their national identity and union with their national imagined community. Understanding these ideas is interesting when dealing with Macdonalds' examples as they are a perfect example of how global experiences and events such as the holocaust, and specifically the Jewish holocaust of WW2 are reflected in cosmopolitan thinking and national approaches to the same events, in order to cope with history in the context of the national ethos. The physical choices of how the exhibitions are positioned, which artifacts are shown and what textual explanations come with them are a mirror to how the museum wants to create these identities. These also brings dilemmas, as values and feelings of guilt, pride, nostalgia, strength, shame and national history are presented in this artistic and orderly manner. (Macdonald, 2013)

Macdonald, Sharon.(April, 2013) "Cosmopolitan Memory Holocaust Commemoration and National Identity" In Macdonald, S. *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today*, pp. 188-215.