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THEMATIC ARTICLES – MIGRANTS’ INTEGRATION IN HOST SOCIETIES

Socialisation strategies of African refugees in the United Kingdom

Dieu HACK-POLAY

Abstract. This article provides an account of socialisation strategies among two African communities, the Congolese and Somali, in Britain. It looks at the ways in which the refugees attempt to make sense of new social realities in the host country and rebuild lives. This involves a process of psychological healing which leads the African refugees to adopt various strategies with varying degree of success. Among such strategies, involvement in educational, community and religious activities as well as marrying and founding a family will take unprecedented importance.

Key words: refugees, acculturation, socialisation, psychological healing, racism

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUNDS

The article examines the socialisation process of African refugees in the United Kingdom. The process of asylum seeking and subsequently life in exile that follows carry an important psychological and social dimension in terms of the disruption that it causes to the lives of individuals and groups. In ordinary life, leaving one’s family for a journey could be disruptive not only for the leaver but also for people left behind, e.g. relatives, friends, etc. The psychological and social disruption affecting people in exile or seeking asylum has been well documented. Gordon (1964) argues that there are three models of merging in the host that most refugees will experience. The Anglo conformity model (or host-conformity) is where the refugee is to resemble the indigenous people and accept their dominant culture; the melting pot model is where both the natives and immigrants merge to
form a new kind of social entity; cultural pluralism is where “refugees acculturate to the dominant culture for politics, play, education and work, but tend to keep their communal life and much of their culture”. However, the experience of the Congolese and Somali respondents interviewed points to their affiliation to the host-conformity model predominantly, although elements of the cultural pluralism may apply. The purpose of the article is to look in details at refugees’ strategies to achieve socialisation. The research found that education and training, dating and building a family, frequenting migrant organisations & social networks have been significant strategies.

**Resettlement and adaption**

The resettlement of refugees in a national and international context and the problems associated with it has attracted a number of examinations. A key theme is that refugees are faced with adaptational difficulties. The behaviour and mental health of refugees are deeply affected by these difficulties and culminates in intense stress. For the author seven specific factors are causing or exacerbating the level of stress in refugees. These factors are loss & grief, social isolation, status inconsistency, traumatic experiences, culture shock, acculturation stress, accelerated modernisation and minority status (Ghorashi, 2005; Lin, 1986). This catalogue of factors elucidates somehow a set of refugee experience. In leaving the native countries and societies, refugees lose not only belongings but also and more importantly family networks and friends. Having landed in an unknown social landscape, exiles may not necessarily enjoy the same status and social privilege as they may have had in their countries of origin. They struggle to come to term with past events and strive to adjust to new lifestyles and technologies. As strangers in the host societies either because of their physical appearance or other behavioural traits, refugees may be racialised and enter minority categories.

From a sociological perspective, these points are significant and most social scientists agree that people are part of a wider network on which they depend. The social network to which an individual belongs has strong affective effects on people in terms of the shared norms, cultural and religious beliefs. Research in forced migration (Zmegac, 2005; Ghorashi, 2005) evidenced the importance afforded to the study of exile in sociological inquiry. The mostly social causes to refugee stress lead to several socio-psychological implications that generate emotional and
behavioural problems of which the most serious are depression & anxiety, somatic preoccupation and complaints, material conflicts, intergenerational conflicts, substance misuse and sociopathic behaviour. Other research came to similar findings.

There is some consistency in the experience and behaviour of exiles. Sizeable amounts of the problems facing refugees are linked to a hostile social environment in which they are segregated and placed at the outskirts of the social world. If this is the case, then a view could be that most remedy to the psychological and social disruption in refugees should be sought and found in the reconstruction of the social environment that is the normal and natural place for social actors. To express this in metaphorical terms, constructing a social atmosphere for refugees would be just like returning a fish to its water after some time out of it. For Blackwell (1989:1) “the process of arrest, torture, release, flight and exile involves trauma at many levels. In so far as humans are social beings the trauma can be understood, not only as an assault on the individual person but as an assault on the links and connections between people and the patterns of relationships through which people define themselves and give meaning to their lives”. The erosion of social networks which comprises the nuclear and extended family, friends, bosses, subordinates, etc. represent an important loss. These allow people to develop a sense of belonging to a community and a sense of ‘sociality’ and worthiness. The idea of social context affecting the individual’s psyche is a reminder that refugee problems need interdisciplinary debate.

**Homesickness in the host society**

Moving away from home has always led people to feel homesick. Homesickness as a psychological state created by the prospect or the reality of social isolation has been under-researched. Hack-Polay (2007), Shibuya (2004), Leff *et al.* (1970), Weissman & Paykel (1973) and Ekblad (1993) found evidence to support the claim that homesickness affects health. Homesickness could be more pronounced in the refugee population. Indeed, the literature suggests that it is common in refugees and that it is an illness of socially disorientated and isolated people.

Fisher (1989), Baier & Welch (1992) found evidence to support this claim. Examining the cognitive symptoms of homesickness, Fisher (1989) reveals that
there is a feeling of “missing home, obsessed thoughts about home, negative thoughts about the new environment and absent mindedness” and there is a tendency to idealise home rather than revisiting the problems one encountered there before (quoted in Van Tilburg, Vingerhoets & Van Heck, 1996:903). The behavioural symptoms include “apathy, listlessness, lack of initiative and little interest in the new environment”.

More realistic modes of interventions may be found in the “stress management” approach (Fisher, 1989). It is designed to help the affected people to accept the feeling of homesickness, to be involved in the new environment, to do physical activities (sports, games, visits), to eat and sleep well, to go onto training programmes (Van Tilburg, Vingerhoets & Van Heck, 1996). It can be seen that most remedies are social interventions and they turn around reconstructing the social context or what is regarded as home. However, in order to be effective, the artificial home needs much resemblance to the original one and this should be reflected in the resettlement strategies and the choice of resettlement areas for refugees.

**Cultural struggle and acculturation**

The reconstruction of a familiar social context needs to take account of culture because acculturation has often been another big problem for displaced people and refugees. Kovacev & Shute (2004) argue here that acculturation is a psychological and social phenomenon which happens both at the level of the individual and the group to which s/he belongs. The attack on two fronts considerably diminishes the survival chances of the alien culture.

Most specialists in the field would agree that acculturation has tremendous effects on refugees and displaced people; it is a painful experience. The change that refugees and displaced people go through is generally too fast and too profound to be smooth and conducive to rapid and/or successful integration. Lin (1986) has referred to refugees' struggle to adapt to the fast moving new environment as "accelerated modernisation". This is a forced process whereby refugees have to learn new cultural patterns including technology and cultures. The most difficult is left to refugees who had arrived from rural areas. For this category of exiles, the pace of change in the industrial world in which they have landed is barely sustainable. The difficulties in sustaining new modes of living in the new place have
been well documented in the United States (Wagner & Obermiller, 2004; Rumbaut & Rumbaut, 1976). The use of new transport systems such as trains, the underground, buses, etc., the need for one to find directions using maps and to queue at the Social Security benefits offices, are all part of the process of 'accelerated modernisation' because these social facts are often part of the sophisticated arena of the industrialised world which the refugee was not familiar with in the country of origin. It is therefore no surprise that the irreversibility and unsustainable character of such gigantic and systematic changes bring "culture shock" and "acculturation stress" (Lin, 1986) upon refugees. The big culture shock originates from the wide gap between refugees' original cultural spheres and the host ones. Probably the change is far beyond what the refugees may have expected and people in the new cultural milieu are bombarded with messages which are foreign to them.

Another key dimension of the acculturation process well noted in the literature is the crisis of identity that the affected groups and individuals go through. Berry (1986) introduces the term deculturation. In that the author sees a situation dominated by confusion and anxiety within the individual and his/her group. It is not only about a problem of social isolation or marginality. But it is about a deeper crisis whereby individuals and groups cannot find their marks, themselves and their identity. When the situation of powerlessness arises as a result of the heavy weight of the dominant society on the minority groups, then cultural identity dies out. This has led Berry (1986) to use the term "ethnocide" which presents two possible scenarios. The first scenario is one in which the newcomer may tend to associate themselves with the swamping majority or dominant host group (Brand, Ruiz and Padilla, 1974). This is a case of resignation where, perhaps, groups and individuals feel that the battle is lost and therefore resisting the assault from the new identity is a vain effort that leads nowhere. Thus, people let themselves carried away in the strong current of the cultural river of the new environment. The second scenario is where individuals and groups, if empowered, prefer to "opt out" (Hack-Polay, 2008; Berry 1986) in order to maintain and promote their traditional identity, at least for as long as they possibly can. However, sooner or later they may capitulate, being swallowed by the host society and its identity. This second scenario often occurs in societies with large numbers of ethnic minority communities but where the idea of multiculturalism is not translated into reality.
Identity

The question of identity in exile also involves loss of language and even personality. Here again, it is a forced choice. Refugees have to learn the language of the dominant group, English, and use it as survival tool. Failure to master the language - or to put it metaphorically - refusal to be linguistically colonised, leads to diminished chances of survival in the unknown social and cultural jungle. In terms of personality change, three tendencies have been identified which dominate the literature. Hack-Polay (2008) and Stonequist (1935) argue that there is a different tendency in personality change that affects displaced people; that is the one involving individuals who "swing about" and participate in both the dominant and minority groups as part time social actors on each side. The significance of the study of personality change that affects migrants and refugees lies in the fact that it helps to understand how and why many individuals will demarcate from natural behavioural patterns to adopt artificial ones. The problem of identity is best summarised in a case study of refugee children presented by MacFadyean (2001:34) giving the specific example of Salo who “feels he belongs in the United Kingdom; Worthing is his favourite place. But does the United Kingdom feel that Salo belongs? That is the heart of the story. Where do these (refugee) children belong?

The experience of Salo exemplifies the refugee experience and leads to some fundamental questions. In fact, if the refugee experience is made up of so many psychological, physical and social difficulties, then how does this affect their cohabitation with their hosts in the new environment?

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the research is to examine the strategies used by Africa refugees when seeking integration in the host country. A qualitative methodology was used with in-depth interviews with 30 refugees from Congo (DRC) and Somalia. The interviews explored such critical socialisation issues as education and training, social life, dating and marriage in the new socio-cultural context. The participants were interviewed in South London which has a large concentration of African immigrants and refugees. The choice of the nationalities was motivated by the interest in contrasting race and successful economic and social integration in exile.
in view to establish the weight of factors such as race and ethnicity.

A snowball sampling method was used. The initial participants contacted through local forced migrant community organisations led the researcher to other refugees who were likely to meet the selection criteria. As the initial respondents led the researcher to others, the difficulties in trying to find suitable participants and to arrange interview time and location were minimised. In-depth interviews allowed participants freedom to provide detailed accounts of their stories and expand on particular aspects. The approach was interesting for studying the experiences of the African refugees whose racial background could be a factor influencing their degree of socialisation. The analysis assesses the extent to which the strategies used enabled the refugees to settle successful.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Language and cultural acquisition as socialisation strategy

Language acquisition and awareness of the culture of the receiving country were of key importance in individual refugees’ social integration strategy. Without language one may struggle in the re-socialisation process in the new country. Without an understanding of social norms and cultural values one runs the risk of living at the margin of society. Freire (1970) argues that “to exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it” and this naming is possible through language and literacy. The Department for Education and Science (DfES, 2001) found that millions of people in Britain struggle with English, which impacts on their participation in society.

It is not clear whether over half a million who have some serious deficiencies in English language are refugees or foreign nationals but it could be inferred that a substantial number could be included in this proportion. However, Home Office statistics show that less than a quarter of refugees arrived in the UK with competent English and more than a quarter came in exile with no knowledge of English language at all. Language has been described as one of the most important barrier faced by refugees (Marshall, 1992). If this is the case, then, they face the disastrous consequences described by the DfES as being missed employment opportunities, poor health and housing, etc. Freire (1970) pursue similar lines with his ideas that human existence is possible through language and
literacy because human existence is also and mostly about acquiring culture and seeking and seizing economic opportunities. The refugees interviewed understood these constraints at an early stage after their arrival in the United Kingdom and a number of them acknowledged that not understanding English was like being deaf, blind and dumb, and disabling.

The metaphor associating illiteracy to deafness, blindness and dumbness was prominent among refugees from all two communities involved in the research, i.e. Somalia and Congo. The need to understand, to speak for self and participate in active communication has been at the heart of the refugees’ willingness and devotion to learn the language and culture of their new country. Whether they went straight to work, for the few, or to study formally the language, the desire to come out of linguistic ignorance was widely shared. Such linguistic ignorance brought a sense of shame to some respondents like Charlotte who explained her frustration as she could not express herself but had to rely on other people to speak for her at the doctors, in shops and benefits offices.

By socialising predominantly with people from their ethnic origin and social conditions, the refugees sought to protect themselves from the shame they felt because of their inability to communicate using the language of the host society. However, there was at the same time realisation that the issue had to be faced and dealt with. As Kader, a refugee acknowledges that it is not possible to avoid contacts with indigenous people in the host society, hence the crucial need to learn at least the language.

Combating the social shame of not being able to use the language of the host country for social action and the desire to acquire the language for economic and psychological benefits have been the driving forces that led many of the refugee to the path of learning, whether in the formal framework of the school or the informal framework of the factory or the street. A Congolese refugee put that he wanted to learn English in order “to be one of them (the people of the new society)”. To belong, to be part of a society was the aspiration for all and strategies put in place were to fulfil this aspiration. The British Refugee Council (2002) provides an example of how language acquisition was used by an eminent refugee in the UK both as a means to eradicate social exclusion but also as a means of economic betterment; the refugee agency interviewed Shappi Khorsandi, an Iranian refugee comedian and writer who explained that being able to make one point and reach across to the very people you now live with is essential.
Unfortunately they had diverse degree of success in terms of socialisation and inclusion although most would describe their experience of learning English as enjoyable and stimulating. As argued earlier, most refugees socialised with people from their own communities who shared some key social credentials with them, e.g. language, culture, legal and economic status, and alien-ness. The purpose of undertaking an educational course had more fundamental motivation than the mere acquisition of new qualification and literacy. It was a means of making contact with the outside world after being locked in their inner self and their local accommodation for some time.

The refugees overwhelmingly describe asylum as “a prison”, “hell” or “jungle” to translate the idea of loneliness and confinement to a locked space and self. Now that the education and training alibi presented itself, many took it as an opportunity to escape the imaginary prison, hell and jungle that seemed to suffocate them. Without specifically saying that they went to college or school to make friends and socialise, the analysis of the discourses actually shows that socialisation opportunities were also leading the refugees to go to college. Many, like Charlotte, argue that they met fellow country men and women at college, which gave them some comfort and helped them to realise that they were not alone.

Women particularly benefited from educational opportunities as social opportunities and alibis to set themselves free from the oppressive closure of their new world. The few women in the sample agreed on the education and training as a form of emancipation from the home in which they perform “female” role, i.e. looking after the children, cooking, cleaning, ironing and waiting for the man of the house as Henriette from Congo explained. For Henriette, finding work in exile was breaking away from traditional norms in her country of origin where it was very difficult for women to return to work at the same time as raising a family. This psychological relief that coming out to study represents has been therapeutic in many cases in terms of healing wounds left by war and torture at home but also by the separation from the extended family network which culturally, socially and psychologically a form of support. For women and other respondents in this situation, the metaphor of “exile as heaven and hell” may well apply. Heaven would be their salvation from torture, persecution and certain death for many; hell would be the psychological torture that isolation and loneliness bring to them in exile. The Home Office in the UK found evidence that some refugee women are not
permitted to occupy the same room as men in training or education and strong pressure (social control) is exerted to ensure that they conform. Education and training have been there to help the healing process and help rediscover a sense of worthiness and hope.

The motivation for many of the male refugees for attending college was not remote from the women’s. Nine in ten of the men interviewed described their experience of idleness as extremely depressing. Many were used to doing something, a form of work in their country of origin. Among the refugees from African origin that were interviewed, the cultural assumption was that “a man who stays at home all day is lazy; he’s not a man. A real man must work to support his dependents”. This cultural prerequisite has meant that most men in Somalia and Congo would find some sorts of work to occupy themselves in order to show their manhood. The male refugees interviewed in the three nationalities had similar cultural conception of the male role vis-à-vis work and may explain why they felt so desperate to escape their ‘home-prison’ as they metaphorically described their flats or other accommodation they occupied in their UK exile.

**Academic and professional re-qualification**

Beyond finding some human beings out there to talk to, so as to feel their own humanity again, many of the refugees in the research sought education and training as a way of re-qualifying. In many instances, the qualifications that refugees held from their country of origin have not been recognised in the UK. An overwhelming majority of the refugees had qualifications from their native educational systems prior to becoming refugees. In fact, eight in ten had qualifications between school leaving certificates and postgraduate, with a sizeable proportion (two in five) possessing degrees or postgraduate degrees. The qualification level in the respondents’ native countries reflects findings by Home Office (1995) research based on a sample of 263 refugees which reported that 33 per had degrees or equivalent professional qualifications. Many studies of refugees’ educational background in the native country have been consistent in terms of the forced migrants’ level of academic and professional credentials prior to becoming refugees, e.g. Hack-Polay, 2006; Clark, 1992; Marshall, 1992.

There are numerous examples from the respondents that portray the situation where their qualifications from the native land have been considerably
downgraded. In many cases the qualifications seen in the refugees’ countries as degrees or postgraduate awards were downgraded in the UK to A level or lower standards. The non-recognition of refugees’ qualifications has long been one of several key factors that hindered refugee training and employment, thus integration. The case is well documented in the literature. Marshall (1992), Clark (1992), Bloch (2002) found evidence that in a large number of cases the devaluation of refugees’ qualifications hindered their personal but also institutional integration strategies. Refugees spend a long time learning English before aspiring to undertake academic education or professional training. In some cases, it could take years.

Respondents who took this route adopted a strategy to minimise the time spent in the re-qualification process. Charlotte, a Congolese refugee, undertook an English course, combined with basic Information Technology. Charlotte spent six years to obtain a licence, bachelor’s degree in Congo. However, in the UK, her academic labour was equated to between A level and an ordinary undergraduate degree. That meant that to obtain a British Bachelor’s degree, Charlotte had to undertake higher education for up to three years, excluding an initial three years she had to learn English to an acceptable standard. Charlotte did not want to undertake such lengthy studies, particularly with uncertainties over her immigration status, i.e. whether she would be allowed to remain as a refugee or not; this respondent was thus happy with her basic ESOL with I.T. qualification. Another refugee undertook an English course with a health and social care combination. Thus, within the two to three years they spent learning English, they also learned about a professional area in which they would pursue the search for employment. However, this in itself is part of the devaluation process. Usually the professional element of the English course is very basic covering skills and knowledge below or up to GCSE level. Such a qualification could only land refugees a job in the manual field or in the low status grades. Charlotte, after her course entered employment as a data entry person, work which is not professional; the Somali refugee entered employment as a care assistant, a job which until recently required no qualification and is low paid.

Education and training as a way of re-qualifying is an important stage in the lives of the refugees. It provides them with the language tool to communicate. It also provides the refugees with some skills in order to get starter jobs in exile in the UK. However, in order to respond more fully to the aspirations of refugees, that is
to gain similar status to what they had prior to fleeing, education and training needs to be available at higher levels than what it offered. But, often, refugees cannot afford the cost of such higher level education due to a number of factors including cost, legal status and lack of information (Bloch, 2002).

**Migrant organisations and social networks**

Migrant organisations are not separable from the life and concentration of people from different cultures who try to settle in an alien society. Migrant organisations represent a way of establishing or maintaining norms and values within a population of newcomers that share similar characteristics. Such organisations are important factors in the integrations of migrants. Omi & Winant (1986:22) explain that “the key factor in explaining the success that an ethnic group will have in becoming incorporated into a majority society ... is the values or norms it possesses”. The assumption in Omi & Winant research that a group is incorporable only if they have particular values and norms could be disputable. In fact in the context of migration, many migrants may not have the opportunity to be affiliated with a group close to their original culture but through individual struggle integration is possible, alongside the struggle of other migrants with whom they may share little or no cultural ties.

Furthermore, evidence from other research namely Park (1950) suggests that other characteristics such as skin colour, physical appearance, etc., are likely to impact on the level and speed of integration of minorities in a dominant society. Park writes that “where races are distinguished by certain external marks these furnish a permanent stratum upon which and around which the irritations and animosities, incidental to all human intercourse, tend to accumulate and so to gain strength”. Research in the integration of refugees in Britain showed varying levels and degrees of integration of groups of refugees, which may have some racial foundations (Brennan & McGeevor, 1990; Clark, 1992). However, a key remark in Omi & Winant’s point is applicable to sizeable groups that have the capability to erect themselves as a distinct category which they want to perpetuate. This is the case of Irish immigrants in the USA whose integration Park (1950) has described as successful and rapid compared to that of black people.

In other cases, migrant organisations aim to represent a support group, a self-help initiative in order to support economic prosperity and welfare. These
therefore do not necessarily strive to perpetuate or identifiable norms. It can thus, be established that migrant organisations may have two different aims: either to perpetuate particular norms and values or act as a brokerage for economic and social success and integration of its members who may be or may not be from the same cultural origin. Wagner & Obermiller’s (2004:100) found four types of functions fulfilled by migrant ethnic organisations among American immigrants. These four types comprised organisations founded for social purposes, “to affirm their identity, to remain connected to their roots, and preserve their heritage”. However, from the experience of the Congolese and Somali refugees, a classification can be established that identifies three types of refugee community organisations, fulfilling various functions including some of the roles described by Wagner & Obermiller. Table 1 shows the typology of community organisations favoured by respondents.

### Table 1 Typology of community organisations frequented by participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of organisation</th>
<th>Key function</th>
<th>Level of involvement by nationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social community organisation</td>
<td>- welfare solidarity – assistance with employment- education guidance- social events (wedding, religious, dancing parties)</td>
<td>- Somali (high) - Congolese (high)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural survival community organisation</td>
<td>- affirm identity - retain connection with roots - preserve heritage preserve language and religion</td>
<td>- Somali (high) - Congolese (moderate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political community organisation</td>
<td>Political mobilisation- national government in exile – lobbying of foreign powers</td>
<td>- Somali (low) - Congolese (high)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two groups of refugees studied fall within these three categories. However, they differ from the degree of involvement in a particular type. For example, Somali community organisations in Greenwich fulfilled mainly social and cultural survival functions but they had lower level interest in political mobilisation. However, the Congolese community organisation existed mainly as a social support network and for political reflections. The models followed by the refugees studied
can be said to fall in the Immigrant-host framework of which Patterson (1965) is a strong advocate. She argues that the process of integration of an immigrant community involves both the host community and the newcomers to adapt to and accommodate a changing social and racial geography, although the immigrant group had more of the adaptation to do.

The support element centres around two broad themes: employment and social life. Members of migrant groups are aware of the difficulties that they face in those areas. Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1995) stress the fact that migrants face various forms of exclusion and discrimination in employment. This justifies to a certain extent the flow of migrants within those community structures which can provide advice and some practical assistance to newcomers wanting to enter the job market. It was established in the previous chapter that one of the key routes into employment for refugees was through friends.

Many refugee groups in the United Kingdom are referred to as refugee community organisations (RCO). The role of the refugee community organisation is vital as a social tool contributing to the healing and the integration processes. Community organisations fulfil many different functions. Such structures represent a focal point for new arrivals, as these are the places or milieus where they encounter the first humanly contacts, the first contacts that are meaningful, reassuring and hopeful. Many refugees in the sample told their experiences of the encounter of a local community organisation. For Pfister-Ammende (1960) and Gordon (1964), the ethnic community reduces the shock suffered by immigrants as a result of sudden landing in the new society because it reduces disorientation while enabling a sense of identity. Many refugee community groups operate in the three boroughs and serve the interests of exiles from particular nationalities or ethnic origins. The name of the groups or organisations usually includes the name of the nationality or ethnic category it covers. However, there are some generic refugee community organisations in the boroughs which are cross-nationalities, serving one or more or all refugee groups.

In Greenwich, the Somalis have set up several community organisations to meet the community. The Somali community organisations provide essential, culturally and religiously appropriate care services for elderly and disabled Somalis in the area. Other Somali organisations, the Somali Community Centre, Somali Community Education & Employment Support and the Somali Refugee Action Group aim to provide welfare, educational, training, employment, health, cultural
and religious support to their members. When asked about any political activities the organisations may be pursuing, none of the community leaders would admit to undertaking political activities. However, they acknowledged that some members used the premises for political meetings that discussed the socio-political situation in Somalia.

Congolese refugees frequented the Lewisham Refugee Network, a cross-nationality and cross-ethnic refugee organisation concerned with welfare advice, educational and training support and the provision of practical help such as the distribution of food and clothing, household furniture and small grants to newcomers and those experiencing hardship. Three Congolese refugees used other refugee organisations that catered specifically for the needs of refugees from Congo and/or French-speaking exiles. The motivation for these refugees to use nationality-specific refugee organisations was that they were culturally and linguistically close but they also disseminated accurate and timely information about cultural, religious, social and political events relevant to the people from their country of origin. There was also a higher level of trust.

The importance of refugee community organisations has been stressed by many authorities in the field. The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture (1994) argues that such organisations have a therapeutic role. Refugees who have affiliations to similar groups tend to get better quicker and integrate more rapidly. This echoes Parsons' (1951) analysis of the psychological dimension of the healing process. Studying a number of patients in hospitals, he argued that those with confidence and a positive view of the future tended to overcome their ills and recover prompter than those with low moral. Comparing these findings to the Medical Foundation’s examination, the refugee role can sometimes be likened to the sick role. Like in the case of Jean-Baptiste above, gaining a smile and being able to engage in ‘normal’ human interactions are socio-psychological dimensions that help refugees to get away from the perceived ‘abnormal’ nature of their new conditions, i.e. loneliness, isolation, speechlessness, depression, etc.

In total two in three refugees felt a sense of comfort and safety when they made contacts with community organisations dealing with people from their culture, nationality or ethnic origins. This finding is consistent across the boards, from the Congolese to the Somalis. Metaphorically, it could be said that the refugees felt like in heaven when they came in close contact with a recognisable community organisation and within reach of rediscovering their humanity again.
Many refugees who use community and voluntary organisations’ services do so due to warm welcome friendship that helps them feel a sense of family.

However, the role of the community organisation could be viewed from a different perspective which may not always be in the line of inclusion. In fact, instead of freeing the individual, the community organisation could alienate them, confining them to dealing only with people that look like them, speak their languages and dance their rhythms.

The fact that some migrants feel that they do not require English to live in the host society highlights to a large extent the alienation that community or ethnic based groups could place their members in (Hack-Polay, 2008). Stein (1986) sees contradiction in the role of the ethnic organisation; while on the one hand, it smoothens the transition between being a citizen in the homeland and becoming refugees, the community organisation can be “dysfunctional, as a barrier that keeps the refugee in an ambivalent position – midway to nowhere between the lost homeland and the new society” (Stein, 1986:17). Such practices help maintain the status of a divided society, which is not always the sole making of the indigenous population but, as Castles & Kosack (1973) found, could be a more complex problem that involves the deliberate subordination of migrant communities in labour, housing, education as well as discrimination against minorities. Usually, the first generations, and maybe the second, would almost be confined to similar micro-social groupings and only later generations could start to see openings through education, work and leisure attendance together with the indigenous young people. In the current research those among the refugee respondents who had friends from other communities, particularly from the local population, viewed having an ‘English friend’ as a significant step towards successful integration.

When the perpetuation has been the making of the indigenous population, the refugees have perceived it as a manifestation of racism through which some of the hosts distance themselves from newcomers. Although only one in five of the respondents saw racism is the isolation and rejection they faced from the locals, this proportion is significant enough to attract some analysis. The nature of the part of London in which the respondents have been selected could help explain why the proportion is small. Lewisham and Greenwich are London Boroughs with large pockets or minority communities and refugees. In Greenwich for instance, there are around 25 per cent of ethnic minorities and over 10,000 refugees. The
largest minority group is the Black Africans. The make up of Lewisham is very similar. With a very diverse population, the degree of tolerance of other cultures could be greater. However diversity could be problematic. In some cases, the worst ‘hell’ that experienced by the refugees has been the result of racism.

Dating, marriage and founding a family scored high on the respondents’ agenda in exile. All but one of the respondents were either officially married or had a long term partner. The age of the participants could explain this high proportion of married refugees or those having a partner. Several reasons were given by the respondents to support their tendency to seek a relationship in the early period of coming into exile but in general these reasons are essentially social and psychological. As Lin (1986:65) point out “refugees who live with their spouses have the good fortune of retaining a most important source of emotional support”. The Congolese and Somali refugees agreed with Stein and put forward numerous other ways in which dating, marriage and founding a family have been key social factors in their lives as exiles.

**Dating: a daring enterprise**

Dating in exile was seen as a daring enterprise and a test one’s skills for integration. A figurative comparison given by Joseph, a Congolese refugee is enlightening in this respect. Joseph explained that he went nightclubs most nights, looking for someone to meet. It was a way of combating boredom but also a way of showing that he is a member of the new society. After many disappointing attempts, he finally met a woman from his country who he later married.

In the above experience, the respondent was clearly testing his skills of integration. He attempts to liken life in exile to life in his country of origin to see how well he could do. There is a feeling of being effeminate if one does not have a companion, a partner. Capability of engaging in a positive relationship is vital to survival. But in psychological term, dating and marriage proved to be significant too. In many other instances, the refugees used dating and marriage as a coping strategy. In their grieving situation, there would be someone to comfort them. If the partner is from a refugee background as well, then they would comfort each other from the loss of belonging, relatives, status and sometimes from the loss of physical strength and health. Refugees from Somalia particularly fell within this category. Mohammed argued that meeting his partner helped deal with loneliness.
and isolation. Mohammed’s story reflects the way in which many other respondents met their partners. A number started dating within community organisations where people go for advice on welfare, immigration, training and employment. There migrants met migrants. This could explain why over half of the respondents were either married or in a relationship with someone from their country of origin or from a refugee background. But in over 80 per cent of cases people from the same country married. Another place of encounters was religious institutions. The case of Mohammed above is not isolated. For the Congolese, dating and marriage followed similar example. Most of the Congolese interviewed either attend a Black African church in Lewisham or congregate at the French Sunday service in Central London; however, the congregation is made up of a greater number of black African French speakers than their white counterparts.

The analogy of fishing in the new sea by Joseph, as explored above, still present some interest, when looking at the places where people usually met. Joseph likened the new society to a sea, a vast unknown where the lost refugee has to strive for survival. In that sea (the new society), the fisherman (the refugee) identifies pockets (nightclubs, pubs, religious places) which are rich in ‘fishes’ (potential partners) and therefore make a catch more likely. The refugee who provided the ‘sea’ metaphors frequented such diverse places as nightclubs, pubs, public places and churches in the hope of meeting someone who could be a partners and perhaps a future wife. This is far from being a mere game, a simple equation about going out to kill boredom. It denotes a structured mental exercise that is part of the wider coping strategy. Keeping the mind busy so as to forget the past and one’s current conditions is part of the hidden agenda, which also encompasses the idea of making up for the loss which was being grieved for. Mohammed’s statement that “you can go mental if you don’t have anyone to talk to” is eloquent.

Given the circumstances that led to their exile, the presence of kinship for the three societies of refugees studied, was almost non-existent. Most of the refugees do not have families in the country of exile and in many cases they may have lost their immediate families in wars or other disasters which led them to flee. The situation of the respondents in this research closely follows research findings by Stein (1986:13) which concluded that refugees “are likely to lack kin, potential support groups, in the country of resettlement”. This explains the need to establish what was referred to earlier as parents by alliance, and crucially start an early dating process, marry and found a family.
Marriage and the family: a micro-social network

For the refugees, marrying and founding a family in exile bears more meaning and symbolism than in any other circumstances they would have imagined. The family in exile represents a real micro-society within which the refugees perform a wide range of normal social functions. Wagner & Obermiller (2004:32), describing the conditions of Black African miners in a coal town, found that “family solidarity was reinforced by the living conditions”. In the case of refugees, the family is a support network; it has a leisure function, a competition function, financial function, a reflection of idealised family units in the country of origin. This plurality of functions of the family is reflected in the narratives of a large number of refugees. A refugee noted that the birth of her child in exile was an occasion to celebrate in the family and have people around and be at the centre of an event.

In such circumstances refugees feel significant because they capture some attention and interest. They are at the centre of something, an event which in the home country would have gathered a number of relatives and acquaintances. Although, the number invited may be no near what it would have been in the refugees’ country of origin, psychologically it is galvanising and socially it is overwhelming. The leisure or entertainment function of the family continues in later years, as the children grow up. They and the refugee parents become an integrated team that could challenge a lot of social deficiencies, such as boredom, neglect, depression, etc. Hassan, a refugee with three children in exile, stresses the importance of the family for refugees in terms of having company and a social unit that helps make sense of a potentially lonely existence.

Cases such as Hassan’s have been highlighted by a few other refugees in the sample. The reliance on the children to play a role in the family unit in order for it to mime the wider social context was unveiled either blatantly or in a hidden way in many narratives. The children were given a significant and primary role in the working of the family. Such allocation of roles on an almost equal basis revealed a necessary partnership between children and parents. The idea of the family as a team introduced the in the paragraph above is not an exaggeration of its function. A team is a social unit which acts in a coordinated way in pursuance of a common goal. In the case of the refugee families, the defined common goal was happiness,
social integration in the new society and the division of a strategy for the future. In fact, Margaret Thatcher, a former British prime minister, saw this wholesome aspect of the family when she once stated that the family is “a nursery, a school, a hospital, a leisure place, a place of refuge and a place of rest” (quoted in Abbot & Wallace, 1992). A refugee revealed another key function of the refugee family in exile; this is to create an atmosphere that looks like ‘back home’.

Such a discourse is an exemplification of the fact that refugees are often successful at re-creating social and cultural lives, whatever artificial they may be. There is, however, a great missing link, relatives, grand-parents and close friends who may have been able to share the joy of the refugees in a more natural way. Doing with ‘new people you meet here’, is consistent with the metaphor of new beginning which was well used by many refugees at the end of their narratives. The idea of making things look like “back home” in Paolo’s statement is further evidence to support the extensive use of the metaphor of exile as nostalgia. The refugees, in almost all they do or enterprise to do, rely on the idealised model of the country of origin. It was argued that many refugees had lost their parents and other relatives; they have also lost touch with their childhood friends and even their culture. Reconstructing those psycho-social realities and entities, from scratch, amounts to a new beginning. Al-Rasheed (1993) and Hirschon (1989) also argues that such reconstruction represents an attempt “to establish familiar patterns and maintain continuity with their past in an attempt to overcome personal alienation and social disintegration” (Hirschon, 1993:92).

The sophistication of the asylum family has another latent dimension. The family has an economic function which is manifest in the decision making within the family. Jerome pointed out that he discusses every aspect of financial life with his partner, from paying the rent, to shopping bill and potential future investment in their country of origin. The financial function of the family was evident in other narratives where the exiles nourish plans to buy land or build family houses for their return home, if they were ever able to. Jerome made the point that, because of their language abilities, they did not feel confident speaking to people outside. The issue of trust in the new society led the asylum families to become their own financial advisers and sometimes their own mini-financial centres.

As it could be appreciated from the examples above, the asylum families have multiple dimensions and functions. They do not only fulfil the individual’s needs but moreover take a wholesome approach to looking after the social and
psychological well-being of the members of the unit. The refugee family, through its many attributes, is a therapeutic unit. People have perhaps a greater sense of a common purpose than ‘normal’ indigenous families. The refugee family is a unit striving to maintain a certain originality of families from the country where they came from; but there was also the demand for adaptation and integration to new realities. However, a hidden meaning of marriage in exile, beyond the open discourses, is one of security. In his Marriage in Exile, Al-Rasheed (1993) elaborates on the examples of Iraqi women he interviewed. The women viewed marriage as “a natural and inevitable” life event which a security element associated to it, as they were taught from their childhood. Although the study was carried out on a female sample, the findings reflect the views of the predominantly male sample in the current thesis. The respondents general stressed various elements such as financial benefits, psychological, social benefits which could amount to psycho-social assurance. In their study of African American miners and migrants, Wagner and Obermiller (2004:33) see marriage among those displaced for the purpose of their employment in artificial mining towns as a means of stability. They write that “the presence of wives and children acted as a stabilising force, discouraging absenteeism and high employment turnover”. With that in mind, employers in the mine towns often sought African American workers who were married because they saw them as assets for their businesses. In exile, the refugees predominantly sought to make use of the healing and stabilising force of marriage, confirming a widely accepted thought among social scientists that “it is almost axiomatic that the family is a universally necessary social institution” (Moore, quoted in Morgan, 1973:3).

**Religious activities in exile**

Religion plays an important role in human and social organisations. It has both psychological and social functions. While socially, it could be seen as a means for social control, on the psychological and individual levels, religious beliefs help relieve people from mental oppression. These functions have been highlighted by Durkheim (1961) who argues that religious practice is a form of recognition of the social because members of a religious community get together to express their faith and belief in one common sacred entity; often this gives them hope in a better future, if their current conditions are below their expectations. The idea of hope in a
better future is an important and a recurrent feature in refugee narratives and metaphors provided by the refugees interviewed in the present research. The metaphor of “asylum as a new beginning” was mentioned by at least two members in each of the groups of respondents; those using such a metaphor were often the ones who had strong religious affiliations, e.g. Muslims, Christians. Some refugees believe that going regularly to church, God will help them win asylum cases. The message was no different for a Muslim exile who explains that it is Allah (God) that helped him escape alive and attending the Mosque is synonymous of thankfulness and not doing so could attract a curse.

Escaping alive from persecution and finding a safe haven in Britain is “the hand of God”. The refugees’ religious belief is largely strengthened by events of massacres, deaths and starvation from which they see escape as miraculously executed by God. Dislocation, isolation and the possible death of loved ones perhaps leads the refugee to find in the religious community some form of comfort. This leads to question whether religious refugees use their belief and community for purely religious purposes or for socialising and meeting other. From Malinowski’s (1954) and Hack-Polay’s (2008) perspective both answers are valid because “religion promotes social solidarity by dealing with situations of emotional stress”. The social isolation, the death of loved ones and the loss of one’s homeland, are dramatic events that are susceptible to cause great anxiety which medicine may not always have the answer. Some of the refugees at the time of the interviews were attending churches which some researchers classify as sect nowadays, which have also proliferated in Britain in the past decade. Many recruit their members among African communities. The proliferation of sect is not a new social phenomenon. For Wilson (1970), sects arise within marginalised social strata during periods of rapid social change, with important disruption in social mechanisms. In the case of the refugees, much of the evidence put forward in the preceding chapters make a case for their dramatic change that they have gone through: spatial dislocation, social and psychological disruption, loss and grief (Stein, 1986). The refugees therefore seem to have a lot of questions about the world, themselves, their past and their future, which they would like see answered. The refugees believe that only God could re-establish their status in the human society, hence their regular church attendance to invoke his mercy.

It seems as though many refugees would join religious organisations because religion appears to provide answers to the unanswerable questions exiles pose. Besides the social, adhering to a religious community brings psychological healing to the mind and represents a remedy for crisis (Parsons 1965) as well as a means for adjusting and
coming to terms (Malinowski, 1954) with loss and grief.

However, religion is in some cases both a dividing and uniting factor. A Somali Muslim refugee who married a White English woman and converted to Christianity was excluded in his community due to his new beliefs. Mohammed could not attend the Mosque’s community events and the community organisation. The refugee, therefore, became a devoted Christian who attended church services regularly to build links and forge a new social network. Similarly some refugees, who were persecuted by religious movements back home, were reluctant to join any religious community in exile. On the contrary, they wanted to stay away from such milieus because of their past experience. A Congolese refugee remembered that some of those who pursued him were part of his local church congregation. Consequently, refugees in this situation reject the assumption that attending a place of worship would make any difference; on the contrary the religious institution in exile is perceived by some refugees as undesirable and hazardous because of the recurrent fear encountering the very people who persecuted them and who might still seek to assassinate the exile. Religion plays a big role in the healing process for many refugees. The church or the Mosque becomes more than a place where the refugees congregate to meet and worship God. These were places where they went to meet people and socialise; these were also places of psychological healing and rediscovery of cultural values from their country of origin. Hack-Polay (2008) speaks of instruments of socio-cultural conservatism.

CONCLUSION

Refugees can very be enterprising in seeking socialisation into the host society. In attempting to attain this, they employ several strategies. Language acquisition, education and training were the primary strategies because those are vital if the refugees were to be able to come out and participate in society; they are equally crucial if refugees were to re-qualify or update their professional skills and experience. The forced migrants then sought to join migrant community organisations that would provide some friendship and means of coming out of social isolation. Coming out of such isolation is critical for the refugees who used other forms strategies to combat it. Dating, marrying and founding a family as well as frequenting a religious place were all part of struggle.

The lives and socialisation process of the African refugees fit Hall’s (1993) view that “modern people of all sorts of conditions have had as a condition of survival to be members, simultaneously, of several overlapping ‘imagined communities’” The
dislocation suffered by the refugees is echoed by Mutiso’s (1979) assertion that “refugees suddenly find themselves virtual (cultural) highlands in a strange and sometimes hostile sea”. This supports the refugees’ use of the metaphors ‘exile as a strange place’ and ‘exile as a desert’ in which one could easily be lost and be at the mercy of cultural predators. Such dislocation imposed a natural struggle and resistance against cultural alienation and social isolation. That is a dilemma facing the refugees who do not want to capitulate at the first cultural assaults but also want to root themselves into the host society. In many instances, such resistance though not in vain ends up in defeat because, as Berry (1986:31) argues, “refugees may have fewer cultural resources available to help them avoid assimilation”. Similarly, Castells (1997:68-69) argues that with “reduced networks of primary identity and individual survival, people will have to muddle through the reconstruction of their collective identity, in the midst of a world where the flow of power and money are trying to render piecemeal the emerging economic and social institutions before they come into being, in order to swallow them in their global networks”.

The uprooting of the African exiles in the new society and their striving to find meaning to alien social realities suggest that the refugees are living an artificial social existence in the new country. Evidence from research, supplemented by the behaviour of the respondents in this study, point to a positive answer. Life with new friends as adults and the construction of parenthood by alliance is not the natural milieu for most refugees interviewed. The idea earlier explored of wanting to do things like back home itself is an analogy that is meaningful in this analysis. It shows that much of what is presented to the newcomers is a fabricated replica of the real social and psychological reality that they may have naturally lived if they were let to evolve in their natural or, rather, original milieu. In Al-Rasheed’s (1993) study of Iraqi women and marriage in exile, the author found that “the women are involved in a process of reconstruction of meaning simulated by a crisis whereby their old assumptions seem to be irrelevant to their present reality”.

REFERENCES


Poles Living in Ireland and their Quality of Life

Agnieszka NOLKA, Michał NOWOSIELSKI

Abstract. The economic growth of Ireland resulted in a significant number of Poles migrating to Ireland following the EU enlargement in 2004. The article explores the quality of life of Poles living in Ireland. Using data from a preliminary survey conducted in 2006, several dimensions of living conditions are analysed, including interpersonal relations, material security, health and healthcare. The study shows that evaluations of almost all aspects of quality of life improved, apart from components such as healthcare and the ability to acquire help from social organisations. Also interpersonal relations, contrary to the initial assumption, were enhanced by migration to Ireland.

Keywords: Polish migrants, interpersonal relations, material security, healthcare, Ireland

Introduction

Although intra-European migration is not a novel phenomenon, it has radically changed during the last few years. The accession to the EU of new countries in 2004 and 2007 has caused a new wave of migration, which has been limited by the restrictions on free labour movement of some of the member states. The phenomenon of migration itself is a very important issue in both European policies and research. There are, however, some dominating leitmotifs within European migration studies. The first seems to be the immigration policies of European countries, and their special emphasis on immigration control\(^1\). Relatively close to this issue is another focal point of migration studies – the growing role of

the EU in regulating migration policies. This subject is especially important when taking into consideration the growing role of supranational institutions in framing migration strategies. The third important issue in European migration studies is the integration of migrants. A review of the literature shows that a large part of the analyses and research is devoted to issues of migration to Europe from external states. The problem of intra-European migrations is analysed rather briefly in such debates. It seems that, to some extent, this phenomenon is not perceived as a trend observed at the European level. There are however a few motifs that are well described. The first concerns an interesting trend observed from the beginning of European integration – the migration of older people, usually from northern to southern member states, where they retire. The second well described issue is that of workforce flows and the differentiated politics of member states with regard to free labour movement from ‘new’ European countries. It is, however, worth noticing that intra-European immigration is mostly researched as an economic phenomenon. Other approaches or interpretations are relatively rare. One example of such a noneconomic approach are the studies which interpret intra-European immigrants from new member states as a new wave of transnational labour migration. Such interpretations are

rather rare. These are spheres that are not encompassed by analyses and in-depth studies. For example, studies on the new wave of intra-European migration usually underestimate the problem of political representation of immigrants’ interests, and their modes of influence on the activities of public authorities. To a relatively small degree do they focus on the everyday life of intra-European immigrants. In the search for quantitative tools that would allow effective descriptions, and above all comparison, of intra-European migrants’ lives, we would like to pose a question: is the quality of life research procedure an appropriate tool in migration research? The aim of this article is to present a description – based on the example of Poles living in Ireland – of the use of such a research tool and its evaluation.

Looking at the specific example of Poles living in Ireland, one has to notice that although there is a very strong tradition of migration from Poland, it is only recently that Ireland has become a popular migration destination for Poles. Traditional destinations for Polish emigrants include countries such as Germany, France, Great Britain, the USA, and Canada – and Ireland itself was traditionally the source, rather than the destination, of migrants. Until the 1990s, about 0.2 per cent of the Irish population left the country annually for economic reasons. But Ireland’s economic boom in the late 1990s and the beginning of the twentieth century reversed these tendencies. A growing number of employment opportunities brought about increasing immigration. The greatest flow of migrants appeared following the European Union’s enlargement in May 2004.

9 Piaras MacÉinri and Paddy Walley, Labor migration into Ireland (Dublin: Immigrant Council of Ireland, 2003), 15.
10 Nicole Doyle, Gerry Hughes, and Eskil Wadensjö Freedom of movement for workers from central and eastern Europe. Experiences in Ireland and Sweden (Stockholm: Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, 2006).
and Poles are now the largest group among the ‘new Europeans’ in Ireland\textsuperscript{11}.

The special economic – and in many cases temporary – character of Polish immigration means that the typical sociological tools usually used in Polish diaspora research\textsuperscript{12} do not seem to be sufficient. The idea of using a quality of life research methodology\textsuperscript{13} came from the hope that it may provide new inspiration, and help to include issues other than identity and nationality. The term ‘quality of life’ is by its nature multidimensional – satisfaction with life consists not only of economic components such as income level or material resources, but also incorporates other dimensions, like relations with significant others, health, work, esprit de corps, safety, etc. When the research tends to be more objective, the evaluation of those factors can be done using statistical data. But apart from secondary analysis, it is also possible to conduct survey research which is intended to deal with more subjective appraisals of life. The quality of life methodology is rather rarely implemented in migration studies, although there are a few exceptions\textsuperscript{14}.\

Research on the subjective evaluation of living conditions seems to grasp some of the relevant factors in new wave of intra-European immigration. The basic problem addressed in our preliminary research that has been performed here is whether the economically based migration of Poles to Ireland brings amount an improvement in their quality of life in all its aspects. We advanced the

\textsuperscript{11} Katarzyna Kropiwiec and Rebecca Chiyoko King-O’Riain Polish Migrant Workers in Ireland (Dublin: National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, 2006).
\textsuperscript{12} Krystyna Iglicka, “National paradigms of migration research in Poland” in International migration. A multidimensional analysis, ed. Krystyna Slany (Cracow: AGH University of Science and Technology Press, 2005).
hypothesis that most aspects of the immigrants’ quality of life were enhanced (mainly because of bettering material conditions), with the exception of interpersonal relations, which we expected to worsen.

Data and design

Quantitative research concerning immigrants – especially temporary immigrants or those recently settled in the host country – is particularly difficult. Respondents are hard to reach, reluctant to participate, and sometimes distrustful. For this reason the use of a survey and interview questionnaire technique may be seen as a rather adventurous project. But such techniques are the only ones that allow quality of life research, including index analysis. The representative sampling procedure is difficult because of a lack of sufficient knowledge about the population. Although the data of the Irish Department of Social and Family Affairs, based on the Personal Public Service Number (PPSN), are available, they can be only taken as an estimation, because not all Poles living in Ireland have a PPSN. We can precisely estimate neither the number of Poles in Ireland nor their demographic characteristics. This is why we have decided to use one of the most purposeful sampling procedures – snowball sampling. As this procedure does not ensure representativeness, the results of the study should be treated not as material for generalisation, but rather as a description of the actual population.

This preliminary research was conducted in the summer of 2006 in Ireland, using the snowball sampling procedure on 102 respondents who declared that they had lived in Ireland for at least six months.

The overall evaluation of the quality of life of Polish immigrants in Ireland is composed of six components: health and healthcare; material security; interpersonal relations; satisfaction with the possibilities of self-development, self-realisation, and work; satisfaction with environment; and leisure time and entertainment. For each component, respondents could assign a score from one – ‘Definitely dissatisfied’, to five – ‘Definitely satisfied’.

Results

Health and Healthcare Component

The health and healthcare component has three subcomponents: the
respondent’s satisfaction with their own health, treatment possibilities, and satisfaction with healthcare available near their place of residence.

The mean value of this component among respondents was 3.42. The lowest rate was achieved for the satisfaction with healthcare available near their place of residence component, for which the mean value was 2.95. Treatment possibilities were better evaluated, with a mean score of 3.08. These two subcomponents lowered the value of both the health and healthcare component and the overall quality of life index, and they were the two spheres that were evaluated lowest among the others.

In contrast, respondents evaluated their health quite highly (4.22). Only 30 per cent of those surveyed had not felt completely healthy at some time during the last 30 days. More respondents (38 per cent) felt exhausted and lacked energy. The reason for such a relatively high proportion of exhausted respondents may be both that their work demands much physical and mental effort, and the necessity of working and living in a relatively new environment causes migration stress. There are some statistical relations between malaise, the feeling of sadness, and the discomfort of staying abroad.

Comparing the evaluation of health and healthcare subcomponents before and after settlement in Ireland (see table 1), one may notice that they were generally better in Poland, and worse in Ireland.

### Table 1. The change in evaluation of health and healthcare subcomponents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and healthcare subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with one’s health</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with treatment possibilities</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with healthcare available near place of residence</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>-0.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values means that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.
Material Security Component

The material security component consists of evaluations of 13 different indicators. This was the most detailed index, because the described wave of migration had been mostly economic – 75 per cent of respondents declared that the most important reason for their move to Ireland was economic factors. The overall value of the index is rather positive, and amounts to 3.99. See table 2 for the subcomponent values.

Table 2. Values of subcomponents of material security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcomponent</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to satisfy food needs</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with material situation</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with housing conditions</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to regularly pay rent and bills</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to cover extra expenditure, without needing to reduce current expenditure</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with owned furnishings and material goods</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with income</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to receive help from family</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to make larger household purchases</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material situation</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with social services</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to save</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get help from friends</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get help from appropriate institutions</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to get help from non-governmental organisations</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material security index</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ability to gain help from social organisations has a relatively low value, which seems to result from the fact that respondents usually do not have sufficient
knowledge about help available through nongovernmental organisations. Another possible reason might be the strong perception that there is a lack of such organisations – especially Polish immigrant organisations – in Ireland. Among those of respondents who declared that they see a need for the development of Polish immigrant organisations, 36.5 per cent justified it by citing the necessity for accessible institutions to provide Poles with help and advice, concentrating in the areas of legal problems (29.1 per cent), work (11.4 per cent) and social help (7.6 per cent).

The main income sources of those surveyed were single-workplace jobs (77.5 per cent). Only 11.8 per cent of respondents worked in a number of places, and at the same time merely 8 people declared that they did not have a job, and must be supported by their family or partner. It is worth emphasizing the fact that among the people surveyed there were none who admitted to living off social help. This is especially important when we take into consideration that at the beginning of this intra-European immigration, many of the potential host societies feared that their social help system would become overloaded by the flow of immigrants. The example of our respondents shows that in this case those fears were not realised. It seems that Poles prefer to work than to take benefits (other than Child Benefit).

The material situation of those surveyed depends on the length of their stay in Ireland – 65 per cent of those of respondents who had been in Ireland for longer than a year evaluated their material situation as high. Inversely, 69 per cent of those who had stayed in Ireland for a shorter period of time perceived their material situation as medium. This may result from the fact that a longer stay usually brings a better job and more possessions, which are crucial in evaluating one’s material situation.

Another subcomponent of material security is satisfaction with housing conditions. In many cases (59.6 per cent), the respondents declared that they lived with acquaintances. When we take into consideration the fact that all but 13.1 per cent declared that they lived with strangers, we see three quarters of the respondents lived with unrelated people. This is justified as a normal strategy of labour migrants – living with acquaintances and other unrelated people in jointly rented flats and houses is cheaper, and is a survival strategy. Of course, after a longer period of time migrants tend to prefer to live with their families or separately.
When compared to some of the subcomponents of the material security index before and after the move to Ireland (see table 3), it is obvious that the move positively affected this aspect of immigrants' quality of life.

### Table 3. The change in evaluation of material security subcomponents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material security subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with housing conditions</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to satisfy food needs</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with material situation</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with social services</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values means that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.

Clearly the largest change is in the respondents' material situation. The evaluated difference is 1.64. Before their move to Ireland, they perceived their material situation as rather poor – they were somewhat dissatisfied with it. After settling in Ireland, the respondents’ evaluation radically changed to ‘definitely satisfied’. Only 7.9 per cent of the surveyed did not find their material situation better in Ireland. The rest (92.2 per cent) perceived it as better, among whom 60.8% said that this improvement was significant. This of course affected other subcomponents – more money also means greater satisfaction with housing conditions, and greater ability to satisfy different kind of material needs.

**Interpersonal Relations Component**

The interpersonal relations component consists of subcomponents which evaluate marital relations and relations with family and friends. This is vital issue, especially taking into consideration the risks of weakening relationships and falling out of contact with family and friends that migrants are prone to. On one hand, immigrant’s relations with their friends and family that stayed in Poland radically
change – direct contact is reduced to a minimum. Yet on the other hand, in Ireland the immigrant becomes embedded in a new social environment and meets new friends – sometimes Polish, and sometimes from other ethnic groups. This radical change might have brought about, in our initial assumption, relatively low evaluations of this sphere of life. Yet the data shows that the value of the interpersonal relations index is high, reaching 4.09 (see table 4). Apart from that, it seems that this component has the greatest influence on the overall value of the quality of life index\(^\text{15}\).

**Table 4. Values of subcomponents of interpersonal relations.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcomponent</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with marriage</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with family relations</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived attitude of Irish people toward oneself</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with friends</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with one’s children</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with Poles living in Ireland</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with neighbours</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of loneliness from living in Ireland</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relation index</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lowest evaluated subcomponent is the feeling of loneliness from living in Ireland – as many as 24.5 per cent of respondents stated that they often feel such loneliness. Some of them (12.8 per cent) stated that missing their relatives who remained in Poland was the greatest disadvantage of emigration. Apart from that, 35 per cent of those surveyed who declared that they would like to return to Poland claimed that the most important reason for their return would be this

\(^{15}\) The Pearson coefficient is 0.9; \(\alpha=0.05\).
feeling of longing. Usually loneliness is negatively correlated with length of stay in Ireland. The longer they stay, the less lonely they feel. It may go to show that a longer stay in a host society involves embedding in existing social networks – which usually reduces the feeling of loneliness and longing.

Marriage is the sphere of interpersonal relations that brings the greatest satisfaction. Most of the married respondents declared that they lived with their spouse. This shows that most of these respondents come to Ireland with their spouse, which may suggest that most of the married couples plan to stay for a longer period of time in Ireland.

Another important aspect of family life is relations with one’s children. Satisfaction with such relations is relatively high (4.25). This is especially interesting when we take into consideration the fact that – unlike with the case of marriage – only 50 per cent of respondents’ children live with them in Ireland, not counting cases where the children’s age makes it unlikely.

The loneliness and the awareness of absence of relatives and friends is reduced by frequent contact. Most respondents – 79.4 per cent – declared that they communicate with relatives at least once a week. Only one of the respondents said that they had completely broken off relations with relatives in Poland.

The subcomponent concerned with the perceived attitude of Irish people towards oneself scored highly (4.32), and is worth analysing. Most respondents declared that Irish people’s attitude toward them is positive. Respondents generally perceive the Irish as friendly, even though contact with natives may not be very intense. Most of the surveyed only rarely spent their time in Irish company (58.8% per cent), and only one quarter had frequent contact with Irish people.

The perception of the attitude of Irish people towards Poles may be related to another factor – the experience of discrimination. However most of the surveyed (75 per cent) claimed that they had not meet with any form of discrimination. The other 25 per cent happened to have experienced some form of discrimination, mostly at work and in public places like shops or offices.

Respondents established more intense relations with other Poles – 51 per cent of respondents stated that there are definitely more Poles among their friends than any other nation, and 14.7 per cent stated that they have only Polish friends. This is mostly connected with their relatively poor English language skills. Some of the respondents have developed more cosmopolitan relationships during their stay in Ireland. About a quarter of respondents stated that they had relations with
people of other nationalities, such as Spanish people, English people, Italians, Slovaks, and Czechs, but also Venezuelans, Japanese, and Peruvians.

Interesting conclusions can be drawn from the fact that the surveyed evaluated their contact with Irish people better than that with other Poles (4.06). This may be caused by more intense and more frequent contact within the relatively limited Polish social networks. The evaluation of relations with compatriots living in Ireland worsens with time – the longer respondents stayed in Ireland, the worse were their evaluations. Perhaps those of the respondents who embedded more firmly in Irish society became more independent, and felt that they did not need further assistance or support from their ethnic group.

The changes that affected the subcomponents of the interpersonal relations component of quality of life are mostly positive (see table 5), apart from satisfaction with relations with friends. It seems that the move to Ireland, perhaps surprisingly, did not negatively affect the social relations of respondents.

### Table 5. The change in evaluation of interpersonal relations subcomponents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal relations subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with children</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with marriage</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with family</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relation with friends</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>- 0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with relations with neighbours</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values means that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.

**Self-development, Self-realisation, and Work Component**

The component describing self-development, self-realisation and work has 14 constituent variables. The overall value of the index, at 3.68, is average. See
The analysis of more detailed data shows that about the same number of respondents worked in positions which accorded with their qualifications, as worked in positions which were not connected with what they previously did in Poland. It seems than that the popular thesis that most of the migrants need to take jobs inconsistent with their earlier experience cannot be confirmed. This may be connected with the fact that in Poland most of the surveyed had been manual office workers (30 per cent). Other groups were students (17.6 per cent), specialists with higher education (14.7 per cent), and workers (11.8 per cent). Far less numerous were managers (4.9 per cent). Only 3 per cent of respondents had been jobless before their move to Ireland, which clearly shows that this move was a choice taken by people who actively search for ways to better their lives, and not only by searching for a job.

At the same time it is worth noticing that the component of the overall index measuring agreement of one’s job with one’s vocation has the lowest value,
amounting to only 2.97. This obviously comes from the respondents’ feeling that their education has lost some of its value after moving to Ireland. It frequently happens, for example, that engineers work in technicians’ positions; their diplomas are not recognised, and their level of English does not allow quick promotion. Yet to a certain extent, relatively higher salaries compensate for this loss.

When analysing the changes that occurred in the subcomponents of this self-development, self-realisation, and work component on moving to Ireland (see table 7), we see that the most significant change concerns satisfaction with job security, which amounts to 1.61. Generally it seems that Poles living in Ireland feel more secure and more comfortable at work. The only aspect that was evaluated as worse in Ireland than in Poland was the possibility of further training and education. Perhaps this is a result of linguistic barriers that prevent respondents seeing the possibility of attending courses or universities in Ireland.

Table 7. The change in evaluation of self-development, self-realisation, and work subcomponents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-development, self-realisation, and work subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with job security</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with job</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with own life achievements</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with possibilities of further training and education</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values means that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.

Satisfaction with Environment Component

The fifth component, concerning satisfaction with environment, is composed of three subcomponents: satisfaction with place of residence (4.26), with the level of accessible public goods and services (4.07), and also the feeling of safety in the place of residence (4.32). This part of the overall quality of life index was evaluated the highest of all components.
As can be seen in table 8, the evaluation of the changes in these subcomponents is positive, but not very high. In respondents’ opinions, Poland seems to be less safe and less comfortable. For example, the move to Ireland usually entails living in a higher standard house or flat, and in a better neighbourhood than they could afford in Poland.

Table 8. The change in evaluation of satisfaction with environment subcomponents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction from environment subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling safety in the place of residence</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with level of accessible public goods and services</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with place of residence</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values mean that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.

Leisure Time and Entertainment Component

The final component measures the satisfaction felt with the amount of leisure time, and ways of spending it, as well as with the possibilities of cultural consumption. The overall mean value of this component is not very high, and amounts to 3.87. Table 9 shows the details.

Table 9. Values of subcomponents of leisure time and entertainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcomponent</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with ways of spending leisure time</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to satisfy one’s cultural needs</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with amount of spare time</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure time and entertainment index</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The relatively low satisfaction with the amount of spare time may come from the often considerable overtime worked. This, however, does not seem to strongly affect the quite high satisfaction with ways of spending time. This, again, may be connected with the relatively high salaries that enables Poles to entertain themselves well.

The comparison between rates of leisure time and entertainment subcomponents before and after the move to Ireland, presented in table 10, shows that although Poles in Ireland seem to have more leisure time, they generally evaluate this sphere of their life as less satisfactory than in Poland.

**Table 10. The change in evaluation of leisure time and entertainment subcomponents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction from environment subcomponents</th>
<th>Evaluation in Ireland</th>
<th>Evaluation before move to Ireland</th>
<th>Difference *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with amount of spare time</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with ways of spending leisure time</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to satisfy one’s cultural needs</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean value of the differences between individual observations, rather than the difference between the mean values. Positive values reveal that the evaluated aspect had higher value in Ireland than in Poland.

**Conclusion**

Analysing the evaluation of overall quality of life made by the Poles that participated in the survey shows that the quality of life after the move to Ireland is perceived as somewhat satisfactory (3.68), and generally surpasses the value in Poland. The fact that the best values, and the highest changes, were obtained in the material situation subcomponent is not surprising. The earnings and living standards seem to reach almost all the migrants’ expectations. Unexpectedly however, it appears that interpersonal relations are also generally rated more highly in Ireland than in Poland. This observation shows that the hypothesis put forward at the beginning of the study
was false. A possible interpretation might be that the improvement in the material aspect of their quality of life results in a reduced number of potential sources of conflict and frustration. Apart from that it’s worth noticing that the surveyed often migrated with their families, which lessened the discomfort of breaking off important social relations. Modern means of communication and relatively cheap transportation additionally help to keep close contacts with the home country and with relatives. This is one the reasons why this new wave of intra-European migration is a fine example of transnationality.

The worst grades were ascribed to health care, the ability to acquire help from social organisations, the agreement of jobs with vocations, and the possibilities of promotion. However it is worth noticing that those subcomponents mostly concern adaptation to the formal structures of the new environment – the labour market, the health system, and social services. One can expect that gradually Poles who have migrated to Ireland will evaluate these spheres more positively, as they acquire the increased competences, especially linguistic, necessary to feel at home in Irish society.

When trying to characterise the profile of the intra-European migrant of the new wave described in this research, what stands out is that it agrees with popular descriptions of migrants from the ‘new’ EU member states – they are often young (most of the respondents were below 30) and well educated. Rarely, however, did they make the decision to migrate immediately after finishing their studies. It seems that usually they waited a few years, which may show that the move to Ireland is their final attempt to improve their career and quality of life.

The data gathered does not give a final answer to the question of whether the respondents are planning to return to Poland. This is again one of the symptoms of transnationality – no decision is made, and moving back to Poland is as easy as staying in Ireland or moving to another country. The decision can be made in the twinkling of an eye. For the moment, life in Ireland has no serious disadvantages (apart from maybe the bad weather, which surprisingly is perceived as the most important fault of Ireland), but in the future this situation may change.

Another interesting observation can be drawn from the fact that – unlike the popular image – the new intra-European migrants do not only want to accumulate money and quickly return home, but they also relatively rarely provide money for their families in Poland. It seems than that for some of those surveyed, emigration is not a way of improving their life in Poland, but rather a mean of improving their life in general.
There is however one remark concerning more general issues that needs to be made. The quality of life methodology proved to be an interesting and effective research tool in migration studies. We believe that it is especially applicable to the new waves of labour migrants which are still embedded in their homelands while living in new places that may never became a ‘new homeland’. It enables us to grasp issues hitherto passed over by some studies – especially qualitatively. Conducting further more representative – and above all, comparative – studies would surely contribute to more a precise description of the phenomenon of the new wave of intra-European migration. Moreover, seizing a broad range of aspects of quality of life enables not only the description of intra-European immigrants’ lives, but also acts as a source of important immigration policy recommendations. Diagnosis based on such surveys can show which of the spheres of immigrants’ lives ought to be improved, which should be more controlled, what are the incentives for their immigration, etc. These issues are of crucial importance when it comes to establishing immigration policies. If there were more comparative intra-European research using quality of life methodology, the results would surely bring numerous advantages.

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Socio-Economic Integration of Refugees from Ex-Yugoslavia into the US Society

Borislava MANOJLOVIC

Abstract. The United States and many other developed countries have been built on immigration. Refugees and immigrants in all their roles make indispensable contributions to American economy and they compose an increasingly essential part of the US workforce. However, the influx of more migrants in search of safety, better life and work in the developed world continues to create deep social and political cleavages. The refugee group that will be the focus of interest in this paper are Ex-Yugoslavs living in Boston area, primarily those coming from the war stricken regions such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. The wars in ex-Yugoslavia took place in the period of 1991 to 2002, ending with the conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia. The said crisis has generated massive flows of refugees that went in one part to Western Europe and for the other to the US, Canada and Australia. My aim is to find out how these refugees accommodate to the new environment, what are the best practices and main obstacles that facilitate or hinder their everyday life and integration into the new society.

Keywords: refugees, integration, the United States

Introduction

Refugee migrations represent highly complex phenomena and refugee admissions and integration should be analyzed as a multi-faceted phenomenon. Refugees represent a global issue and dynamics of their resettlement and integration into the new societies has the uttermost importance for the well-being and prosperity of the host societies as well as refugees themselves. It has been currently estimated that there are 80 million migrants (people living permanently or for a long periods of time outside their countries) – which is equal to 1.7 per cent of world population. By the start of 2006, the global refugee population had dropped from 9.5 million to 8.4 million – the lowest total since 1980, largely as a result of more than 6 million refugees returning home over the past four years.

Refugees currently constitute 40 percent of the total population 'of concern' to UNHCR. The people of concern for UNHCR are also asylum seekers, IDPs and stateless people. At the start of 2007, the number of people 'of concern' to UNHCR rose to 25.1 million from the 2006 total of 20.8 million.  

The United States and many other developed countries have been built on immigration. Refugees contribute to the American society in many ways - they are students, workers, business owners, investors, clergymen etc. According to the study on immigrants conducted by the National Academy of Sciences, refugees and immigrants in all their roles make indispensable contributions to American economy and they compose an increasingly essential part of the US workforce. However, the influx of more migrants in search of work in the developed world continues to create deep social and political cleavages – even in countries with a long history of immigration. Irregular migration is a symptom of the failure to adequately address migration in the globalization context. In recent years, states not only have provided assistance to contain displaced population within their borders, but also have manifested a growing reluctance to provide refuge to the victims of persecution (Zolberg & Benda, 2001).

The refugee groups that will be the focus of my interest in this paper are Ex-Yugoslavs, primarily those coming from the war stricken areas such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia who are affiliated with International Institute of Boston (IIB) and community based organizations (CBOs) in Boston area. The wars in ex-Yugoslavia took place in the period of 1991 to 2002, ending with the conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia. The said crisis has generated massive flows of refugees that went in one part to Western Europe and for the other to the US, Canada and Australia. Apart from violations of human rights on mass scale and ethnic cleansing, refugees were also generated by the consequent collapse of the state and rewriting of the borders. My aim is to find out how these refugees accommodate to the new environment, what are the best practices and main obstacles that facilitate or hinder their everyday life and integration into the new society.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Office of Admissions, Refugee Processing Center (RPC), the statistics are as follows: the highest numbers of refugees have been admitted to

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2 See table in Appendix 1; retrieved from: http://www.unhcr.org/statistics.html on January 4, 2009
the US during the years 1997, 1998 and 1999 from Bosnia ranging from 21,000 to almost 31,000, from Croatia ranging from 1,600 to almost 3,000 in the year of 2000 and from Serbia with the greatest number of refugees recorded in 1999 with around 14,280 people.\(^3\)

I conducted my research at the International Institute of Boston (IIB) in the period of June 30 to September 30, 2007. My interest in refugees comes from my personal desire to explain the phenomenon of nowadays forced migrants whose life characterize drastic movements and change of place in search of safety, work and better life. I seek to find out how difficult or easy for the forced migrant is to accommodate to a new environment in the context of American society and how integration basically works. By examining programs of International Institute of Boston and two other community based organizations (CBOs) in Boston area that contribute to the socio-economic integration of refugees into their host communities, I will seek to determine best practices and identify ways of improving existing programs and bridge attendant gaps. For purposes of this study, I will refer to host communities as sections of the broader community where refugees work or reside.

I hope to produce useful findings that would determine best practices and the possibilities of facilitated integration, which would contribute to the better institutional responses. I have chosen socio-economic aspect of integration since the IIB programs are aimed at providing basic and immediate help that mostly contribute to socio-economic integration. Programs that facilitate socio-economic integration are seen by the researcher as positive. If the newcomers integrate faster and more easily, it will contribute to the overall socio-economic and political situation of a receiving country and be of benefit for both host society and the incoming refugees. CBOs or Community based organization have greater role in preserving and maintaining cultural identity of the newcomers. Successful integration depends largely on whether a certain group feels secure and comfortable with its national identity and the corresponding political institutions. This represents a very significant coexistence issue which, if not addressed adequately, may generate future conflicts, political radicalization and mobilization of the underprivileged groups.

\(^3\) See: Table 14D retrieved on 10 August 2007 from www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/statistics/yearbook/2006/Table14D.xls; Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), Office of Admissions, Refugee Processing Center (RPC).
This report will also examine the international and US policies as well as the current situation related to refugees and integration. During the research, integration will refer to multi-dimensional process, which relates both to the conditions for and actual participation of refugees in all aspects of the socio-economic life of the country of durable asylum as well as to refugees' own perception of acceptance and membership in the host society. This study focuses on the social and economic integration of the refugees affiliated to the above mentioned NGO and CBO organizations.

Immigration, integration and identity

In traditional immigration countries, immigrants and refugees have been crucial element of nation-building. However, the arrival of more migrant refugees escaping persecution or war and in search of better life and opportunities in the developed world continues to cut deep social and political cleavages – even in countries with a long history of immigration.

The United States have been managing diversity and perpetual influx of immigrants by using the pluralist model. Incorporation of refugees into economy and society has been largely left to market forces and the US society has been seen as giving the best opportunities for newly arrived to integrate (Castles, 1998:215). Political and human rights movements in the 50s and 60s led to changes and more egalitarian approach towards minorities, and especially, African Americans and immigrants. After that, the situation has deteriorated and, as Castles and Miller (1998) argue “The Reagan-Bush era led to increased community tension and in 1980s the increase of migrant entries caused anxieties about ‘alien control’ and loss of national identity.” In September 1996, the US Congress approved a law aimed to cut illegal entries and to reject welfare benefits to both legal and illegal migrants.

Upon their arrival to the US, refugees are confronted with different culture, language and social rules. Cultural shock, war trauma and foreign set of rules and values contributed to the emergence of civic and socio-economic tensions and sense of inadequacy on the part of refugees that could compromise their successful integration and coexistence with host communities. Some cultural and ethnic traits persist even in the third and fourth generations of immigrants. Therefore it is necessary to look at the existing social forces that inform this phenomenon. The process of integration can also lead to greater cleavages and highlighted
differences not only between host society and new comers but also within the same communities. Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003) argue that differences do not disappear and there is a need for this process to be understood and recognized:

“The issue was that, even after several generations, cultural difference between immigrants and their offsprings on the one hand, and the surrounding ‘host’ society on the other did not disappear totally. At times, such differences even became reinforced and served as a basis for community formation, as a rally point for claiming forms of special attention, in particular from the public authorities.”

It is also important to mention when considering integration that communities that had developed as a consequence of immigration might wish to stress their cultural identity, notwithstanding the fact that their members might be fully incorporated into the surrounding society. Therefore, full integration into certain society and participation in its major institutions do not necessarily mean the abandoning of a specific identity. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan argue that “the cultural content of each ethnic group in the US has become similar to one another, but the emotional significance of attachments to the ethnic group seems to persist (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975:8).”

The concepts of culture, multiculturalism and cultural differences should also be considered in this report since integration largely depends on them. Language, signs and behavior is part of a complex and established system of meaning which bears importance for the cultural identity of a group or an individual. This can consequently lead to difficulties for the migrants in adjusting to the set of social rules and customs of the new society.

Anton Pelinka states that “...conflicts between cultures are exercises of power. Therefore, the opposition, co-existence, or cooperation of cultures is affected by the degree of the given imbalances or balances of power between these cultures.” Cultures with extremely unequal potentialities of power tend to collaborate much less. Such cooperation should be, in that case, analyzed

4 Han Entzinger and Renske Biezeveld. ‘Benchmarking in Immigrant Integration’ (Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2003).
5 Ibid.
differently, than that between cultures that are relatively equal (in terms of power). Therefore, multiculturalism requires not only an adequate degree of ‘good will’ of those involved, but also an adequate political context.\(^7\)

Cultures are associated with identity and they include diverse identities. The culture with distinctive ethnic features can generalize the complex relationship between “objective and subjective components – as when other, non-ethnic, factors of identity (e.g. gender, generation, religion, class) have their power to generate culture are disregarded” (Pelinka, 2001). Ethnic identity is of the highest importance for all the Yugoslavs, for whom, due to historical and nation-building processes, ethnicity plays central role. Non-recognition or imposed integration of such a community can even cut deeper cleavages between the newly arrived and the host groups. Lipset, Seymour Martin\(^8\) argues that ethnicity is one of several lines of conflict (“cleavages”) that cut across every society “with which ethnicity engages in a complementary and competitive fashion. What all lines of conflict have in common is that they – potentially – generate identity, and thus culture (Lipset 1981: 230-278).” If ethnicity cleavage is dominant cause of conflict, all other possible identity issues that can cause conflict become irrelevant and they are being defined by the dominant identity issue. “The more gender and religion, class and generation, are subordinated to ethnicity as their defining factor, the more difficult it becomes to deal with the social reality of difference in a peaceful manner (Pelinka, 2001:9).”

Hornsey, Matthew J. and Hogg, Michael A. discuss sociostructural relations among subgroups within a superordinate category. They extend principles of social identity theory to address structural differentiation within groups. “Subgroup identity threat plays a pivotal role in the nature of subgroup relations, as do the social realities of specific subgroup relations” (inclusiveness, nested vs. crosscutting categories, leadership, instrumental goal relations,

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power and status differentials, subgroup similarity). Their analysis shows that subgroup identity threat is the greatest obstacle to social harmony; social arrangements that threaten social identity produce defensive reactions that result in conflict. Social harmony is best achieved by maintaining, not reducing, subgroup identities, and placing them within the context of a “binding superordinate identity”\(^9\). However, the core of the American national character is denial of legitimacy and privilege based exclusively on decent and original ethnic identity. The primacy is given to the American identity, way of life and sense of nationhood that is primarily based on Anglo-Saxon, western and Christian models of thought. There is a conflict between hereditary old-world hierarchies and new diverse nation united in the pursuit of happiness and equal opportunities.\(^11\) Ethnic consciousness, according to Werner, is a constituent feature of modernism, not modernism's antithesis. People coming to America are supposed to consent to the ways and ideologies that this country was built on. But that sometimes does not happen, and this may result in “the central drama in American culture” that is related to American identity and conflict between consent and decent.\(^12\) After the Second World War, there were about 50 millions of refugees who lost their homes and livelihoods and large scale migrations towards the West have taken place in search of better life and work. New ethnicities became not only working, but also cultural force in the new societies. Stephen Castles\(^13\), who is one of the leading figures on migration, analyzes the global migration since 1945, presenting examples and evidence on how the migration generated economic, cultural and social changes around the world. He shows discrepancies between global migration and policy. In his article on "How nation-states respond to immigration and ethnic diversity", Castles highlights very important issue related to the drawbacks of the American response to diversity and argues: “Difference is tolerated, but it is not seen as the role of the state to assist with settlement or to support the maintenance of ethnic cultures. It incorporates immigrants and refugees as

\(^10\) Ibid.
\(^12\) Ibid
citizens, and yet there are strong divisions based on class, race and ethnicity. The constitutional safeguards were designed to ensure equality of rights for all citizens but have ethnicity. Three major factors explain this paradox: the extreme racism coming from slavery period; the culture of violence resulting from tradition of frontier society; and the tradition of individualism with its corollary of a minimalist social policy” (Castles, 2000: 139).

Methodology

General characteristics of the study

This study focuses on the social and economic integration of the refugees affiliated to the IIB and two community-based organizations situated (CBO) in Boston - Center for Balkan Development and Kometa. The programs of the said organizations promote cultural exchange between communities, youth initiatives and organize language classes and cultural events in Boston such as conventions, fund-raising events, exhibitions etc. to promote and preserve their culture and identity. Socio-economic integration has institutional and socio-cultural dimension. Institutional is related to the level of immigrant participation in the major societal institutions such as labor market, education, and health. Socio-cultural dimension refers to refugees’ cultural identity. During the course of the study, I will look at both institutional and socio-cultural dimension of integration and search for the answers to the following questions:

1. How the programs and services of the above mentioned host organizations address refugees’ socio-economic needs leading to their socio-economic integration and how successful they are from the point of view of the NGOs/CBOs/refugees?

2. How the programs and services of the host organizations address refugees’ cultural identity issues and how this relates to the socio-economic integration of the refugees

I will therefore use the data acquired through comparative study and research of perceptions of two relatively homogenous groups – Ex-Yugoslav refugees and program officers of the above mentioned host organizations - to test the successfulness of NGO and CBO programs related to socio-economic
integration. My aim is to identify advantages, possible challenges and, if necessary, recommend best practices.

**Framework of analysis and theory of change**

Ideally, one of the main goals of refugee integration programs and policies is to promote healthy relations between refugees and host communities. Relationships are at the heart of conflict transformation.

“Two central "root causes" of social conflict are identity and relationships. Rather than concentrating exclusively on the content and substance of the dispute, the transformational approach suggests that the key to understanding conflict and developing creative change processes lies in seeing the less visible aspects of relationship. While the issues over which people fight are important and require creative response, relationships represent a web of connections that form the broader context of the conflict. It is out of this relationship context that particular issues arise and either become volatile or get quickly resolved.”

The proposed framework of analysis therefore focuses on exploring possibilities for creation of healthy relationships and how they impact identity and socio-economic integration of refugees. I have looked at and built on Johan Galtung’s model of conflict where he argues that conflict occurs in societies because of some disparity between social values and the social structure of the society, particularly the distribution of political, economic and social benefits. The creation of a situation of goal incompatibility (a conflict situation) gives rise to adversaries’ conflict behavior in order to achieve their (apparently contrary) goals, plus a related set of perceptions and attitudes about themselves, the others and third parties affected or affecting the relationship of conflict. All four components interact over time and are altered through this interaction.

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Programs that focus on changing relationships often suggest that new networks, coalitions, alliances and other cooperative relationships between members of diverse groups not only positively change the individuals directly involved, but can be a powerful force for fostering social changes that help build relationships. Conflict interventions often try to improve inter-group relations by establishing conditions for cooperative and meaningful interaction between members of conflicting groups. In the proposed model, CBOs can play a crucial role as the bridge between refugees and host community. There should also be interplay between government sponsored organizations and community based organizations to facilitate the process of integration and create healthy relations between refugees and host community. The processes of learning about the “out-group”, changing behaviors toward out-group members, developing cross-group friendships, reassessing the ‘rightness’ of one’s own group, and, at times, establishing a new, common in-group identity facilitate inter-group cooperation (Pettigrew, 1998).

In addition, many programs provide explicit skills in consensus and coalition building, as well as opportunities for parties to plan parallel and joint action initiatives aimed at changing conditions that foster inter-group conflict and violence.

The ultimate aim of the government sponsored programs and CBO programs should be trust and confidence among different communities. Confidence and trust allows us to have the courage to do things, see the world through the eyes of others and reach out to the people that are different than us. Upon their arrival to the US, refugees are faced with multifaceted programs and policies. Refugees go through NGO government sponsored programs, community based programs and they are, of course, influenced by the government policies related to integration.

I have identified creation of healthy relationships as crucial for the success of all the above mentioned: government policies, COB and NGO programs. All these initiatives can be perceived as successful to the extent

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that they lead to institutional, economic and socio-cultural integration into the host society. See below the Model of integration.

*Model of refugee integration developed by Borislava Manojlovic

**Respondents**

The study focuses on 30 refugees affiliated to IIB, Kometa, and Center for Balkan Development. The 30 refugee respondents were given a questionnaire mainly consisting of closed questions (See Appendix 1). The questionnaire also included open-ended questions that gave the respondents the possibility to explain their views in more detail. I accessed my target group through the process of snowballing – getting to know some informants and having them introduce me to others. A potential drawback of the snowball technique is that it can limit diversity of the informants, but it proved effective due to the limited number of the respondents affiliated to the said organizations. Additional interviews were
conducted with the managers and program officers of the said organizations in order to get a comprehensive feedback on the integration process.

The sample group is a relatively homogeneous group. Ex-Yugoslavs belong to a group that slightly differs in linguistic/dialectic, background and cultural aspects. They have been selected in order to test the group’s response to the programs offered by the mentioned NGOs and CBOs. I have chosen not to divide Ex-Yugoslavs in separate ethnic groups since I found them pretty homogenous based on observation, interviews and experience. I therefore concluded that individuals coming from Ex-Yugoslavia can be considered a single group since they belong to similar if not the same cultural and socio-economic setting.

The representation of males is slightly higher than the female representation in the whole group: about 56 per cent are men and the remaining are women. It is a relatively young population, ranging from the age of 18 to 45, most of them being aged 25 to 40.

Most of the sample population has been living in the US for more than 4 years and all of them came to this country as refugees. Many of them are in the process of obtaining green card and citizenship. It is significant to point out that this population is comprised of individuals that have to struggle for their socio-economic independence because they wish to restore their livelihoods in the US, although they face many obstacles.

Data collection and analysis

This research largely used ethnographic methods\textsuperscript{18} by studying people's behavior in everyday contexts with observation, questionnaires and interviews being the main methods. In order to develop grounded theory, I have been using a strategy proposed by Glaser and Strauss called “theoretical sampling” which means selection of new cases of study according to their potential for helping to expand on or refine the concepts and theory that have already been developed. In asking questions, I was all the time aware of the purpose of my study and of all other information one can collect through interviews such as behavioral and sensory information, opinions, feelings and background information. That is why I used to write down my observations necessary

for subsequent analysis of data. It was also very important to establish rapport and create a sense of importance of the subject to both informants and the researcher.

There is a significant amount of description of the experiences of people in a particular setting from the point of view of primary subjects – the refugees as well as organization managers and the researcher. When considering what to omit from the extensive descriptions, my aim was to preserve direct quotations that would enable readers to fully understand the research setting and the thoughts and experiences of the informants introduced in the narrative. I have found that in order to code replies for the main categories laid out in the findings, it is important to create similar circumstances for a sequence of interviews and decide on a general method of organizing and recording the responses.

Presentation of findings

Refugee admissions to the US

The president of the United States issues a directive each year on the numbers of refugees that can be accepted. Actual admissions have never reached the proposed numbers since the 2001 terrorist attacks, because the entire process has been reviewed and security measures increased. A slowdown in refugee admissions is still ongoing. The laws aimed at preventing terrorist activities have also prevented refugees from being admitted or this process is significantly stalled. The 9/11 brought about security concerns about the identity of candidates for resettlement as well as the places to which US staff might need to travel to determine refugee claims. After the endorsement of the Patriot act in 2001, the definition of terrorist activity and the categories of terrorist organizations were expanded. It resulted in screening out those refugees who provided incidental support under extreme circumstances to armed groups on the basis that they provided material support to terrorists.

Three main ways of refugees’ admissions to the US are:

1. Individual referrals (primarily UNHCR referrals)

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19 U.S. refugee admissions are authorized pursuant to a Presidential Determination issued at the beginning of each fiscal year, setting the total spaces to be made available and allocating those spaces by region or country. Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 207, 8 U.S.C. § 1157 (2000)

20 See: www.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/rls/rpts/2003/28257.htm
2. Group processing (currently the P1 and P2 categories)

3. Family based (currently P3)

According to the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, the average annual admissions for the five years prior to 2001 amounted at about 76,000 admitted. In 2002 and 2003 admissions fell to 28,000 refugees each year. The United States admitted 53,000 refugees in 2005 against a goal of 70,000. The proposed number of refugees in 2007 is 70,000 refugees. However, the issue of material support is preventing the State administration and the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration to meet its admissions target of 70,000 refugees.

Targeted federal spending on immigrant families and the communities within which they live can be viewed as falling within two largely distinct categories. The first is formula-driven reimbursement to state and local governments to offset costs ascribed to immigrants (often thought of as “impact aid”). The second is funding to provide education and services to vulnerable newcomer populations such as non-English speakers, refugees, and the children of migrant workers. Total funding for the programs (roughly $1.6 billion in FY 1999) can be viewed as modest at best, since the 30 million immigrants in the United States now represent more than 10 percent of the nation’s population.

Refugees must also go through a series of interviews before reaching the U.S and getting security and medical clearances. It can take from six months to two years (or longer) to complete this process. There are new trends in the refugee resettlement and existing barriers and challenges to resettlement can distract positive resettlement and integration initiatives. A basic mismatch exists between the US essentially liberal and regulated immigration policies and its historically laissez-faire immigrant policies. “That is, despite the fact that the nation admits more immigrants who are on track for citizenship than any other country, U.S. immigrant integration policies have essentially been ad hoc and small-scale”.

Integration

Socio-economic integration can be said to have institutional and socio-cultural dimension. Institutional is related to the level of immigrant participation in the major societal institutions such as labor market, education, and health. The
socio-cultural dimension refers to refugees’ cultural identity and general socio-cultural orientation. A refugee who is integrated into one dimension does not necessarily need to be integrated into another. For instance, many of my respondents managed to get relatively safe and good jobs, but these very people have all their friends within their own community. Better understanding of correlation and interdependency between elements of the two dimensions should be the focus of interest of decision makers and academics. Positive analysis and understanding of these basic concepts would lead to improved policies and practices.

**The institutional dimension of integration**

*NGO programs as initial basic help and life impulse to the newly arrived*

During the course of research, one of the most important findings has been that the programs of NGOs, CBOs can provide necessary basic help. Sometimes their programs coincide, but generally there are differences. NGOs such as IIB implement government sponsored programs and they help those who come to America to start their life from scratch. Programs such as citizenship classes, English classes, legal advice, and financial aid and microfinance loans are helpful, but not sufficient.

However, the respondents who did not get initial help from the government sponsored organizations but only their communities have declared much worse state of affairs. Most of the respondents, around 80 per cent, confirmed that their quality of life would improve if they are given both certain level of independence and support from the host organization.

Ms. Rettig, IIB Head of micro enterprise program, sees other significant ways to help the newly arrived such as business and self-empowerment through economic independence:

“Business is universal language or tool for bringing different cultures together. Barriers are insignificant. We have Avon ladies; we give loans to refugees for starting small businesses. It helps them build their own capacities and confidence. Earning your own salary and economic independence can be great motivation for integration. Micro-enterprises are catalysts for empowerment. Self-employment is available and it forces you to interact with the members of the host community.”
The perception of the IIB program officers interviewed for the purpose of this study is that Ex-Yugoslavs who are coming from a relatively industrialized society find it much easier to adapt to the new environment because their way of life is not too much different from that of the host society. When compared to the ethnic groups from the Third world, they seem much better off. As the Director of a CBO Somali Development Center, Abdi A. Yusuf stated,

“Somalis are minority in many ways. They are racial minority because they are black; they are linguistic minority since they speak Somali language and they are religious minority because they are Muslims. So all of the above mentioned can be a huge obstacle to integration.”

Audrey Robert, Program officer from the IIB Legal department, says that refugees come to this country and they have special status – they are under the protection of the US.

“What we are trying to do in International Institute of Boston is to navigate legal system into helping the refugees understand their legal rights. That would subsequently result in their regaining safety and stability that was missing in their own countries”, argues Ms. Robert.

98% of the refugees and NGO/CBO program managers claim that the major challenge for socio-economic integration is language barrier. IIB provides in-class language classes and also one-on-one tutors.

“We had to find a way of how to make the complicated legal procedures understandable to some of them. You have to realize that some of the refugees come from rural and underdeveloped areas into urban and economically developed environment which creates major problems. It takes time for them to adjust”, says Audrey Robert.

Most of the interviewed officers think that integration has more to do with one’s education, rather than age, ethnicity or background. People who speak good English and are educated have more possibility to succeed. Those who come from underdeveloped rural areas need more time to adjust and create possibilities to integrate. However, lack of funding for the English classes for refugees, resulted in 6 months waiting lists for language courses that are essential for the newly arrived refugees. Knowledge of English is an independent variable which many other variables depend on. If one does not speak the language, one cannot get a proper job. The livelihood of the refugees and his/her family is endangered.
whose economic status is unstable, cannot even think of integration into the new society, let alone acculturation.

Hilary Rettig, IIB Head of Micro Enterprise Program, has identified English classes as one of the most important IIB programs and proposed the following policy of change: “The government should invest more money in English Learning Classes. There are six months waiting lists and this is a major problem.”

Most of the respondents stated that integration for them means primarily “...economic independence. When the refugees get a job, it gives them sense of ownership over their own fate.” They are no longer dependant and they become more open to the new society.

Dallas Anderson, Program officer with IIB Legal department, sees regulation of legal status as essential starting point for the refugees to become economically and socially independent:

“We are helping people to adjust their status and become legal residents. We provide them with letters even before they receive their employment I-94 cards, with which they can seek employment. These letters explain their status and eligibility for work. It is very important for refugees to early become economically independent.”

Ms. Marcela Klicova, Program officer of the Resettlement department at IIB, argues that the grants and financial aid given to each individual refugee is to small – it amounts to about 400 dollars per person limiting in that way single persons and giving preferences to families since singles or even couples would find it difficult to survive in Boston area with only 400 dollars. They meet the refugees at the airport, find them furnished place to live as well as food and clothes. Due to the insufficient financial aid, my refugee respondents pointed out that they had to turn to their community based organizations that helped them financially through their social networks and donations of their members. This kind of help is essential in the transitional period when newly arrived refugees are looking for jobs.

Age and education

Age and education of the respondents has proved to play a very important role in determining the successfulness of integration of refugees’ population as well as their responsiveness to the governmental programs. Young respondents find it much easier to get by in the new society and they are much more receptive to the
programs. It is easier for them to learn the language and become computer literate. Majority of the respondents of the age range between 18 to 40 finds it much easier to adapt to the new culture and learn the language. All of them possess at least beginners to intermediate English language skills which open more options for them. There is predominance of 18-45 year-olds. This figure shows that the respondents are mostly in their most productive working age and retirement is far way which also indicates economic benefit for the host country.

Persons involved in the implementation of programs of the mentioned CBOs and NGO are young people. They tend to have positive attitude towards multiculturalism and diversity and are strongly inclined to tolerance. They are often proponents of the leadership based on participatory model, inclusion and cooperation of all ex-Yugoslav ethnic groups in the mutual projects.

Change in social status

It is not rare that educated people, once they come to some country as refugees find themselves doing manual and physical labor jobs or they are just unemployed. The arrival of refugees who had done manual jobs at the bottom of the labor market has made possible the release of many host community members from such kind of work. It opened the door for the host community members to get better and government sponsored jobs. There is an obvious division as regards to job possibilities except for a small percentage of younger (age of 20-40) and educated refugees with good English language skills.

The inability to find better paid jobs eventually leads to divisions in other social spheres. Immigrants, at least initially, live in poor conditions, usually in overcrowded apartments. The refugees are sometimes seen by the host community co-workers as alien intruders who can represent economic menace. They are also afraid that the employers might use the refugees’ as cheap labor force to lower the wages and lessen the benefits of health insurance. This can lead to confrontations and hostility between host and refugees communities.

On the other hand, these low paid refugee workers represent a stabilizing element for the economy and capital accumulation. However, lack of education, insufficient language skills and lack of training are usual factor that keep the refugees at the lowest level in labor market. Lack of access to good jobs brings
about poor education of the next generation which creates future disadvantageous position for the descendants.

The refugees are a particularly vulnerable group in relation to the labor market. They are subject to unemployment or irregular employment and deteriorating socio-economic status. Both men and women are often forced to resort to unofficial solutions. They are turning to community based informal networks usually situated within community based organization for support. Community Internet lists advertise jobs, financial aid is collected through donations to help those in need.

Therefore, the respondents have identified language and computer classes as most useful of the programs offered by NGOs and CBOs since they see inability to communicate as the greatest obstacle to becoming functional and financially independent member of the society.

“If you don’t speak English, you can only work cleaning hotels and restaurants for the minimum wage. If I have to do it, I do not want my children to do it to. That is why I tell my daughters – use the opportunity that you have to learn English and it is for free”, argues Mira from Croatia.

The indicators of successful socio-economic integration are related to refugees’ access and participation in the labor market and social institutions. Refugees, who only depend on uncertain and irregular employment within the black market and informal economy, are also being poorly paid and their working conditions are very meager. Such people’s situation is constantly unstable and insecure. My respondents’ participation in the labor market and institutions is directly influenced by the level of education and language skills they possess so they can also be used as very important factors that need to be looked at when measuring successffulness of socio-economic integration.

The programs of the affiliated NGO and CBOs address basic and immediate refugees’ socio-economic needs. These programs are generally successful and indeed provide initial help to the refugees to accommodate to the new environment. They provide refugees with initial cultural orientation, computer and language classes. All of the said are necessary for acculturation and getting by initially. Economic independence of the traumatized group that lost all of its assets in its home land is of the greatest importance for them to regain self-confidence and become individuals, and not “just numbers on UNHCR lists”. “After being received and given the opportunity to work”, as one of my citizenship class
students said, “one becomes alive and can have plans and dreams again”. “As if we are given an opportunity to live all over again; as if our previous lives did not exist at all.”

60 per cent of my informants declared that they have almost no access to higher education because they do not have the means or time to educate themselves. While the respondents older than 50 mostly do not have the language skills or time to undertake further education, younger respondents usually have access to education and other institutions because of their language skills and flexibility to adapt to the new culture.

**Trauma**

The war has a dehumanizing effect on people. It creates deep psychological problems such as trauma and sense of inadequacy. A lighter form of trauma is a cultural shock with which the refugees are also faced when they come into the new society. There have been multiple themes running through the discourse of the refugees related to trauma: the loss of worth and capability, not being recognized as an individual, loneliness and linguistic ghettoization, the change of roles of family members. Men often find themselves incapable of taking care of their families and women don’t have time to take care of the children so that the traditional roles are inverted.

In the interview with Ms. Retting of the IIB, she points out that the psychological issues such as trauma interfere with the person’s ability to function and integrate. He or she becomes dissociated and lost. This can bring about social problems on a family and community level such as domestic violence, crime. NGOs such as IIB have been an important tool for the ex-Yugoslav refugees to reclaim some of their professional and class status lost due to war.

**Socio-cultural dimension**

*Integration dilemma – “old vs. new identities”*

In this report, identity is seen as dynamic phenomenon that is undergoing constant changes. For a group that finds itself in a new society, ethnicity, customs and culture are constantly challenged, reconstructed and negotiated. Each of my
respondents has a sense of loss and estrangement for leaving their country and culture so abruptly and under threat. Getting employed and subsequently regaining economic independence cannot solely fill the existing gap. That is why I have identified a second salient topic of interest, that is, how the refugees deal with problem of their old and new identity. Ex-Yugoslavs living in Boston area complain that they were “losing their culture and traditional values” because of being so far from home.

“The most serious conflict that has been created by loyalties running both to the United states and to the homeland has been the one experienced by the ethnic group itself in the process of establishing its American identity,” argues Mona Harrington (1980:686) discussing the issue of dual allegiance of immigrants who had come to the US since the beginning of the 19th century. “People tend to belong to a certain nationality but their ethnicity is different from their nationality”.

Between 1991 and 1993, more than 5 million citizens of the former Yugoslavia became refugees or displaced persons. The wars in Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina have long term consequences on the people of ex-Yugoslavia and they have also affected the communities in exile. Due to the ethnic conflict in Ex-Yugoslavia, belonging to a certain ethnic group bears special importance to the identity of the people as individuals. Most of my respondents, no matter if they are Serbs, Croats or Muslims, have strong attachment and sense of belonging to a certain ethnic community. Even the current political changes in the home country affect and re-define identities of the communities in exile. Additionally, the US consists of multitude of different identities, and it becomes increasingly important for the ex-Yugoslav communities, whose identity is heavily defined by their ethnicity, to preserve their own identity.

Newly arrived refugees, initially find themselves lost and disoriented in the new society and, on top of that, they find themselves confronted with the previous old diaspora community living in the US for several generations. I have found, based on the questionnaires, interviews and observation, that the refugee community is not only challenged by the host community values and set of rules but also with those of the old diaspora.

It is very difficult for the newly arrived to penetrate the circles of the old diaspora because the old diaspora is in much better socio-economic standing while the refugees have to start from the scratch and often find themselves as outsiders in such circles. Also there is a difference in narratives about history, ethnicity and
religious identity between the two. According to the conversations that I had with the respondents, old diasporas tend to be more traditionalist and conservative trying to preserve their own concepts of culture and faith which sometimes clashes with the concepts of the newly arrived.

**Social networking and the role of CBOs**

The places that bear particular significance for the formation of one’s identity are churches and communal organizations. Exile affect some respondents religious identity in the sense that some become more religious church-going individuals while for the others religious commitments and practices decline. The mosque or a church becomes a social welfare office, an education centre, where a collective spirit of the community is created (Karlsson and Svanberg, 1995).

During the course of research, I have found that 90 per cent of my informants do not socialize so much with the host community members, that is, “Americans”, except for the 10 per cent of young generation members who do interact and associate with the host community members. Most of the answers to the roots of such a situation are related to the insufficient language skills to socialize freely and easily. Most of the respondents’ time is spent at work, since they are doing several jobs around the clock, and weekends are usually spent with families or at community based organizations, restaurants or churches. In churches such as Saint Sava church in Cambridge, different social and cultural activities have been taking place. From my respondents I have learnt that the Ex-Yugoslav community has its festivals, sports and outdoors activities and fairs organized by groups and social networks that usually meet in the church. I would add that community based organizations such as Kometa or Center for Balkan Development also have similar role and organize similar activities that contribute to socialization of the newly arrived. Churches, mosques and CBOs are places/locales that are of the greatest importance for their members’ cultural identity.

The Program Officer from the IIB Legal department, Ms. Anderson argues that the gap between government institutions and refuges is bridged through the NGOs. She also states that CBOs or “community based organizations” also serve as a sort of a support system to the existing programs of the government sponsored organizations. “They are a bridge between communities and facilitate both cultural and economic transition of refugees”.

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The stories of the refugees are complex and diverse and they challenge the master narrative that belongs to their ethnicities respectively. The refugees from Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Serbia tend to relate their perceptions of ethnic affiliations and national identifications primarily to their experience. The master narrative usually refers to the facts about who were the victims and perpetrators in the war; who was right and who was wrong. The victimization characterized by the feeling self-importance and self-righteousness is the most important element of the master narrative. The importance of the master narrative tends to lose its strength in the context of a new society.

Identity is best understood as a relational dynamic that is constantly being redefined. It is not primarily about negotiating an agreement to solve a material problem, but rather is about protecting a sense of self and group survival. While it is rarely explicitly addressed, identity shapes and moves the expression of conflict. At the deepest level it is lodged in the narratives of how people see themselves, who they are, where they come from, and what they fear they will become. It is also deeply rooted in their relationships with others.23

Miodrag B., a refugee from Bosnia, says: “Who should we blame for starting the war - the politicians, the other side. It made us hate our neighbors and it left our life in total disarray. We had to leave our beautiful Mostar. I often dream about my hometown, but even if I go back, it will never be the same. I don’t like it here, but I do not have the place to go to if I would want to return.”

Young respondents generally do not follow their ethnic group master narrative and there are more interethnic connections as well as interactions with the host community members among the young. In the era of globalization, young people form efficient networks through internet, clubs, and church and help one of their own rather than some outsider to find jobs, rent apartments etc. The important link between them is the language, ethnic background and similar interests.

90 per cent of my respondents stated the importance of cultural orientations sessions. When they came to the US, they were faced with many different and new rules and practices. It has been their priority and their interest to

get acquainted with the new set of rules and customs so that they could become economically independent and have access to all the advantages and benefits that the new country offers.

**Advantages of government sponsored and community based organizations’ programs**

Government sponsored and CBO programs have certain similarities and some of their programs such as language and cultural orientation coincide. I have identified advantages and disadvantages to the government sponsored mainstream programs and concluded that the disadvantages of government programs can be supplemented by the advantages of CBO programs. Therefore, it is necessary for these organizations to collaborate, support and learn from each other since they have the same goal – successful integration of refugees into the host society.

**Advantages of government sponsored programs:**
- Better and more structured institutional capacity;
- Established regulations and procedures that can limit unpredictability
- Developed network and political constituencies
- Facilitated and better funding

**Advantages of CBO programs:**
- Specialized cultural, customary and linguistic knowledge of refugees and their communities
- More immediate and adequate response to refugees' needs
- Less bureaucratic and ready to apply current ideas and adjust to the new situations

**Challenges**

1. The language skills are very important for integration of forced migrants. The level of competency can imply the degree of integration. In societies segregated by ethnic and racial lines, to learn the language is sometimes not seen as necessary by either incoming forced migrants, or by those who came earlier. There can be reluctance to learn the language even on the part of refugees, which might result in fewer programs, services and teachers for learning the language. There should be even compulsory programs for learning the
language as well as developed monitoring system of the acquired skills since the knowledge of language influences attitudes of the host society towards migrants and vice versa. Therefore it can bring about either segregation or healthier relationships.

2. Intercommunity workshops, dialogue and mutual projects and programs should be developed for a long term socialization of host community and newcomers. The main goal should be the change of "us" and "them" thinking. This attitude implies generalizations and prejudice of both sides towards each other and it impedes integration.

3. Ignorance about the real conditions in many of the countries where the refugees come from can result in prejudice. Therefore, it is necessary to expand educational efforts and programs that would reach every member of the community with true information.

4. If people are humiliated or constrained by the new set of rules and behaviors of the host community, they will be likely to resist or find the solution in informal activities. It is necessary that they feel confident about their own culture and understand the culture of the host society. Therefore, the synergy of CBOs and government programs should exist and be aimed at creation of positive attitudes and cooperation between communities.

Conclusion

1. General policies and improvement of programs

For the refugees to be fully integrated, it is necessary that the policies and regulations are introduced and implemented to prevent discrimination and promote better access to education, training and jobs. From the organizations’ point of view, more funding from the state is necessary for additional and improved programs that would facilitate integration. From the point of view of the refugees there should be more courses and trainings as part of cultural orientation. Refugees should get acquainted with the set of rules of the new society. They should learn how to get by, how to get the necessary documents, access to government services such as health and welfare. This should be an ongoing process that would help refugees at all times with resources and education until they get the sense of being fully independent. That would not
only facilitate the integration but it would significantly speed up the process. Organizations such as the IIB and CBOs that are dealing with refugees should include refugees or former refugees in their programs as volunteers or employees. The refugees would be able to provide the organizations with a broader perspective, which would help to improve the existing programs and give ideas for the future ones. It would also enable better monitoring and evaluation of the programs. The U.S. government should increase MRA installments in addition to increase of annual refugee ceilings.

2. Community Based Organization as a bridge between refugees and the host community

A significant contribution to the American multicultural setting is the ongoing flow of the refugees and immigrants. Multiculturalism and pluralism has to be supported by the state. Policies that would facilitate minimum economic and social rights for the newly arrived should be introduced and implemented which would ensure more equitable and less violent society. In the US approach to pluralism, diversity is tolerated and encouraged. But the state as such does not support the maintenance of ethnic cultures. If the refugees do not have access to certain socio-economic benefits and services such as quality healthcare and housing, retirement plans, education and access to non-manual jobs, they can turn to other sources that would give them sufficient income to subsist in a consumer-oriented society such as the US. They could turn to black market jobs and crime which would in turn create clashes with the host community on the whole. The community based organizations are of the greatest importance for the preservation of the mother tongue and maintenance of the groups’ cultural identity. They also serve as locale for creating social networks and facilitating integration as well as adding to their socio-ethnic conformity. Therefore, in order to avoid ethnic and cultural clashes, the government should think about investing more in projects and programs of community based organization. These organizations can serve as bridge between government sponsored organizations and refugee community. That is how the political radicalization and social mobilization of underprivileged communities can be prevented. Group of Ex-Yugoslav refugees in Boston is relatively small and it would be overstated to expect that this group
could in some way cause major political stir in the direction of policy changes and more support for the ethnic programs and organizations. However, there is a necessity of this group to be recognized. These needs have to be addressed for the members of this group to become fully functioning in the context of the new society and to the benefit of all. Migrants receive some support from the state for setting up their own community based organizations where they meet one another and conduct various educational and cultural activities such as language schools for children, festivals, exhibitions, news papers and pamphlets etc. More funding for CBOs are necessary for support and maintenance of specific community programs. CBO programs can serve as a bridge between government programs and host communities and fill in the gaps that the government sponsored programs failed to fill.

3. Better access to social benefits and employment

Refugees’ eligibility for public benefits is currently limited to their first five to seven years after settlement even they had gone through trauma of war and devastation. Citizens and legal immigrants have no time limits in receiving, for example, health benefits while refugees do not have sponsors who can be compelled to support them. Therefore, new government policies should be introduced that would provide additional support for the refugees in terms of financial support or welfare, free healthcare, access to educational programs etc. Policies that standardize professional and educational credentials awarded outside the U.S. would help relieve labor shortages and provide adequate use of refugees’ potential. The prevalence of foreign workers in low-wage industries and the slow wage increase imply that greater policy attention should be drawn to enforcement of wage, health, safety, hour and other social rules in the workplace. The capacity of refugee entrepreneurs should be built by providing technical and financial assistance such as training, grants and micro-grants so that their businesses can become both more stable and more compliant to regulations.
4. Education

Education should be a two way process. The NGOs such as IIB are suggested to extend their class periods and numbers of English and cultural orientation classes by increasing their teaching staff. That would give the refugees more access and time to master English and other topics. Also, evaluation tools and techniques of the language and other programs should be improved and based on the participatory model that would include both recipients and staff. For the refugees, it is essential to acquire essential education about new culture and language. Host community members should also get acquainted and understand the people and communities other than their own. Therefore, there is a necessity for the programs that would disseminate information and knowledge about different cultures, customs and values to the members of the host society such as TV shows, documentaries, and intercultural workshops. Some middle ground of acceptance is possible only through understanding of the difference.

5. Trust and healthy relations

The aim and the indicator of successful integration is creation of healthy relations between the new comers and the host community. Trust and confidence in oneself and in others can be a great unifying force in a multicultural society. Curiosity and creativity is based on trust. Trust can be built through educational projects and learning about each other’s culture and history. It subsumes dialogue, listening and humility. Healthy relations can be built on common integration platforms where people can meet, do things together, conduct artistic activities (music, theatre, and singing). It is very important to acknowledge each other as well as the difference between each other so that they could move on and build on that. Being a part of the society is very important for the refugees and so is sense of order and coherence for the host community. This can be accomplished only on the basis of healthy relations.

6. Discrimination, racism and marginalization

Discrimination is present towards the poorest, less educated and minorities. “Racism does not always seek to exclude or exterminate the other. It is
common for racists to seek to inferiorize and exploit minorities” (Balibar 1991:39-40). New ethnic cultures represent a potential threat to the national culture. If the newly arrived try to preserve their language, customs and tradition, it can be seen as a threat to the mainstream Anglo-Saxon culture and way of life. Looking at possible ways in recreating adoptable policies based Swedish model of welfare state and education in all levels of society can contribute for both sides to reduce the envisioned threat and tension. Alongside these ethnically defined cultures, “there are the subcultures of women and those of men; there are also the cultures of the elderly and the youth; there are the cultures of the intellectuals, the peasants, the workers; there are the cultures of the believers and of the non-believers; there are the cultures of the poor and those of the rich.” Better relationships should be built on similarities rather than differences.

If the newly arrived are socially and economically marginalized, formal citizenship or constitutional rights is not a guarantee for full political and civil rights and privileges. The American philosopher Iris Marion Young (1989) argues the right for groups to be different. She defends a concept of “differentiated citizenship” with two main aspects. First, democracy must mean not only enfranchisement of all, but also mechanisms to secure participations of usually excluded social groups in decision-making and political life. Second, the principle of equal treatment is based on the concept of generally applicable norms of behavior. But these back them. Cultural identity of a group has to be recognized. Refugees cannot accept full participation in the life of a new country if they are not recognized as a group with specific cultural and ethnic background. The analysis shows that group’s identity threat is the greatest obstacle to social harmony; social arrangements that threaten social identity produce defensive reactions that result in conflict. Social harmony is best achieved by maintaining, not weakening, subgroup identities, and locating them within the context of a binding super-ordinate identity. The policies should not only endorse individual rights but also rights of underprivileged communities whose “difference” should be protected.

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APPENDIX 1

Refugees and IDPs by Numbers at the end of 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of forced displacement</th>
<th>Total (in mln)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees under UNHCR mandate 11.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees under UNRWA mandate 4.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of refugees</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict-generated IDPs</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural disaster IDPs</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of IDPs</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of refugees and IDPs</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 2 - Questionnaire

I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. How long have you been in the US?
   - ☐ Less than 6 months
   - ☐ Between 1 and 5 years
   - ☐ Between 6 months and 1 year
   - ☐ More than 5 years

2. What best describes your position?
   - ☐ Refugee
   - ☐ Other: __________________________

3. What is your family status?
   - ☐ Married
   - ☐ Single
   - ☐ Widowed
   - ☐ Other: __________________________

4. Nationality: __________________________

5. Sex:  ☐ M  ☐ F

6. Age:
   - ☐ Less than 25
   - ☐ 25-45
   - ☐ 45-54
   - ☐ 55 or older
7. Have you participated in a cross-cultural/diversity training?
☐ Yes, multiple day training ☐ Yes, less than one full day training
☐ Yes, one full day training ☐ No

7b. If yes, was this training offered through any organization?
☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Have you attended classes or tutoring in basic English and computer skills?
☐ Yes, multiple day training ☐ Yes, less than one full day training
☐ Yes, one full day training ☐ No

8b. If yes, was this training offered through any organization?
☐ Yes ☐ No

II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy living independently</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy living in a family</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I make decision on whatever I want</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consult in my decision-making with an organization/family</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I socialize and interact with my community members</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I socialize and interact with the host community members</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am recognized</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get support from host community</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My communication with the host community members is easy</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in social events and engagements</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have support from my own community</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have organizational support</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have opportunities for self improvement</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to solve problems by myself</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are employment opportunities</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to education</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The programs offered by the host organization helped me get a job</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable at my work place</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity training offered by the host organization helped me accommodate to the new environment</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Which of the following statements do you agree with more? (Rank them in order of importance starting from 1)
☐ If the refugees have as much independence as possible and the maximum opportunity to develop themselves, the quality of their life will improve as a result.
☐ If the refugees are continuously being taken care of by the host organization, the quality of their life will improve as a result.
☐ If the refugees are given both certain level of independence and support from the host organization, the quality of their life will improve as a result.

11. Are you satisfied with the overall usefulness of host organization programs (organizations that first helped you when you arrived to the US)?
☐ Yes. ☐ No. ☐ I haven’t thought about it.
☐ If no, explain why? ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

12. What do you perceive as the major obstacles for adapting to the new environment?
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

APPENDIX 3- LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARP - Asylum Representation Project
BiH – Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBO – Community Based Organizations
DS - Department of State
EE - English for Employment
ESL - English as a Second Language
FG - The Federal Government of the United States of America
IDP – Internally displaced person
IIB – International Institute of Boston
IRSA - Immigration and Refugee Services of America
MAA – Mutual Assistance Association
MG - Matching Grants
MORI - Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants
MRA - Migration and Refugee Assistance
MRRP - Massachusetts Refugee Resettlement Program
NGO – Non-governmental organization
ORR - Office of Refugee Resettlement
PPESS - Post-Placement English for Self-Sufficiency
PPVST - Post-Placement Vocational Skills Training
R&P - Reception & Placement
RCA - Refugee Cash Assistance
RCA - Refugee Cash Assistance
RJS - Refugee Job Services
RJS - Refugee Job Services
TAFDC - Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USCRI - US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
ESSAY

Identity of Romania

Ovidiu FORA

Abstract: Romania’s paradox is the fact of its unremembered identity. Recalling the national identity is the biggest bet of the new generations born after the revolution of December 1989. This paper attempts to explain this paradox and to announce, eventually, a way out of this situation, as long as it’s still possible.

Keywords: nation, identity, freedom, history, national consciousness

“A man is what he remembers about himself” used to say Nichita Stanescu, through the 70’s, in an eye-catching tone contrasting the spiritual mood of the time. Spirit, in which most likely the population of Romania was forced to repress their memories that promoted their own historical roots, as known until then and convinced, through the psychic and physic theory, to accept the role of single party and keeper of national memory. Paraphrasing, we could say that a nation is also what it remembers about itself. This layer in the block of our nation’s past (or people, according to father Stăniloae), hides the drama of a powerlessness coming out after the so-called revolution on December ‘89 and wears a name: the drama of not being able to remember who we are.

During the natural evolution of a nation, its evolution of fulfillment as a nation, comes a time in which its natural path moves from lived history to told history; More precisely, its own tome of history which will become the silent witness of a possible final judgment of nations. When I say history, I am not thinking of office history that held the evidence and affairs of noblemen; I am referring only to the concept of history which exclusively astounds the dawn of a conscience belonging to a nation, when we therefore may talk about a real national sentiment. Until that moment, the smaller or bigger communities existed only under the direct report with the hazard or alliances, the one capable of ensuring the protection of tomorrow’s day. Many communities, blossoming in the dawn of
civilization, disappeared in the feculent waves of initial Babylonian mixture, without being able to fully understand all the factors that competed on the removal of those from the scene of history. Since the transgression is impossible to probe or reveal in time, miscellaneous theories (more often mystical-religious) meant to explain the incomprehensible perpetuation in history were created. It could be say that Iov was born faster that it was attested in the Bible.

Rotating back to the original idea at the basis of this article, we may say that in times of peace, the safety of tomorrow which inevitably leads to the freedom of thought, of rising beyond the techniques of survival, every nation passed from stepping through history to verbalizing it, in order to become known by generation to come. This is a drive strictly human, that after a long period of survival, to let behind ourselves a sign, maybe for our own ego of withstanding what is to come, maybe from the need of a mental health to block the centrifugal impulse of forgetting our own identity. Mutatis mutandis and the people that have succeeded in passing the humiliating conditions imposed by the chaotic history of human civilization and that have succeeded in standing on their feet, have begun writing. Ever since then we remember who we are!

Human history dots in 1789 a big revolution, that of the French nation, after which the conscience of the European nations woke to life, starting the process of a generalized case history. Despite the economical, political and social gaps, the Romanian people have started to remember who they are later, at the same time as the revolution in 1848. It is then that we realized we are on an island of Latin in a sea of Slavic. We even gained in this sense a slogan to represent the guardians of the borders with the “Double monarchy” empire: “Virtus romana rediviva”. Maybe it should be said again the idea of a great contemporary Romanian (N. Djuvara) that, among all the greatest nations of Europe, we have concretized the efforts of our political fight of coagulating ourselves in a single nation, concentrating exclusively on the idea of unification of the Romanian language. For us, the orthodox religion and the Romanian language represented landmarks in our conscience of being Romanian.

During the ulterior moment of the 1848 revolution, in a manner profoundly spenglerian, the Romanians passed from the stage of a nation that spoke Romanian to that of a Romanian nation. Following the rule created by O. Spengler in “The history of the west”, which treats universal history as a history of great cultures, namely, of dividing culture in three phrases:
- Precultural: in which the human community is still in a primitive phase, described also as a population.
- Cultural: in which the accent falls on the high attributes of the spirit such as art, science, philosophy et al and the human community evolves from population to historic nation.
- After culture: when human communities metamorphose in nations of fellahs;

  We say the Romanians made the transition towards the cultural phase, that of becoming a people-nation. We then started to fulfill the two conditions, still spenglerian, of reaching this phase: we began to be contemporary with our own culture, which had begun several centuries in our collective subconscious and which sublimely modeled us, remaining to see how huge the dispersal might have been; and we began to manifest ourselves visibly on the large scale of universal history.

  As stated above, the conscience that belongs to our nation and the unique language spoken by those who lived from Tisa to the outskirts of the Danube, made us fight in order to integrate ourselves between lines until then imaginary, named after their passing in reality and over the border. Thus came our moment of historic genius, behind which there were people and political parties which represent a hard to equal landmark of the contemporary. It was called the “Great Union “on December 1st, 1918!

  This settlement of ours in the limits of a border, after centuries of military and political struggle against the ottomans, the polish, Hungary and the Habsburg Empire, gave us hope in the integration of our nation in the bosom of the great European nations. During this full enthusiasm regarding our modern economic, political and social realities, we’ve remembered those who have pulled the Romanian strings of history and finally did them justice. We’ve started, from 1918 to 1922, the biggest agrarian revolution known by us so far, and not only. In a way that was unique to Europe regarding the social agreement of that period, the bourgeoisie and other noblemen agreed to divide again the agricultural lands to the peasants in order to satisfy the promise made by King Ferdinand, of appropriation of those who would participate in the First World War. Not unimportant would be the detail that the scepter of the same king, received as a gift at the Great union in 1918, was taken as a model and restyled half a decade later, and then used at the enthronement as president with full power, on March
28th 1974, of one of the greatest tyrant of our history: Nicolae Ceausescu. Through this example of historical cynicism, we could add that we had a royal communist.

Coming back to the original strand of idea, no better had we managed to proceed with the opening of the collective memory barriers and transpose it in school textbooks that the Second World War was already at our door. It happened on Dec 1st, 1939. A darkness of human condition oblivion settled on European nations and Abel was murdered again. Now, over a half century later we can say, paradoxical, two contradictory things: we were historically lucky to not vanish as a nation under the leadership of a new administrative-territorial unit in the old Russia but we were unlucky to inhale the lethal virus of communism.

If other parts of Europe, luckier than us for reasons known only by divinity, continued on the road opened by Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, that of liberalism, through the new current of neo-liberalism founded during the “in between wars” period and theorized by Jacques Rueff and Maurice Allais, which pun competition at the basis of economical liberty and dynamics, we might have had a different destiny. Beyond the Carpati we started an experiment of social, economic and political engineering derived from the Marxist-Lenin socialism which after a wear-and-tear period, specifically the 70’s, dressed the coat of the national-communist totalitarianism. When we talk about communism, the epithets and phrases are as though used from a pantheon of evil. It is difficult, after the trail of evil, to distinguish the greatest evil, from an ocean seemingly not yet exhausted, coming after the year of 1946, with the boot of the national conscious occupant. In the end, the evils are only other facades of the same black diamond. From the perspective of the Romanian nation, one of the greatest evils, because even here the malignant valences are multiple, brought by the track of Tudor Vladimirescu’s division (name chosen with cynicism by other’s history), was the forcing to forget our history which barely got to crystallize. Our image of the being represented by the tank that goes on its own way can be transposed cynically in this situation as well. In the perspective newly created, we have been inoculated, with the weight of a tank, a semblance of being which we had to adopt as if it was our own authentic being. The trails began to leave behind the new constituent symbols of false values. The image of the stakhovist person should have replaced the image of the humble peasant twinned with the forest; giving food to the cattle with that of cars with hoods raised up on a Sunday; that of traditional tools with handspikes and screwdrivers. Do not understand, however, that this shouldn’t have been our path
as a result of completely modernized Romania; it was just that we were hooked at our own rhythm and it was necessary for us to do our own search and tasks. What would have been the point? We would have created our own identity of the XX century! We can see ourselves in the losses just as much as in the winnings. Otherwise, what could we say about posterity? That we’ve been lived? It cannot be conceived that you go to bed as a peasant and wake up in a working overalls eager to fulfill the five-year duties. It is inadmissible to surrender when your landmarks of national conscience are changed against your will, similarly as when you surrender your own national territory without even as much as shooting a bullet.

The new state of things was so false that, this time, we were not confronting in a just battle with our natural enemies, from which we created our own identity; we are fighting ourselves, against our own will. We were just as an organism whose immunity system is being destroyed by microscopic beings which pretends to make it healthy. We were living as in Oedipus’s Greek tragedy, from a crazy perspective: King Tebei fulfilled the prophesy with good knowledge and continued the concupiscent with Iocasta as well as with Antigona. What was the stake in the battle with us? A big one: our collective memory, which hid our own identity. This is what the memorable H.R. Patapievici said in his “Politics”: “the transmitting of collective memory is the act through which a community is preserving its identity” The modernization of Europe started to secrete its own poison: the ideological battle, guerrilla style, literally, to which the Romanian society in its search for physical methods of survival, answered to it by jumping in a generalized schizophrenia.

Along the lines of universal history, people and later nations which put in application the impulse of expansion beyond their own horizon based their aspirations on various theophorics concepts of some superior race that is when the ego and military genius of those in power did not intervene. Fortunately (or unfortunately), paraphrasing Heraclitus, our nature was our faith. In one of the categories presented above, destiny spared us the humiliation of times such as those after the battle at Mohacs (1526). We have paid tribute to the power of the day when the battle was swelter, not sufficient to survive in our traditional way. Or, who knows, perhaps in the divine plan of nations it was meant for us to be erased from history by a great power who wished to do so.

Despite all of this, what happened in Romania after 1945 is directly related to the history of a greater nation which saw itself being called to fulfill the wish of
god, to become a third Rome, and in another time of proletarian dictatorship. I named here Russia or the Soviet Union. The last half or more of the century, our country was positioned on an orbit of extremely Eastern leftist, that at some point in time we were so leftist that we found ourselves meeting the right side, still leftist.

The expansionism of the great Siberia began, in Russian variant, at the horizon of a theory named in XIX century Pan-Slavism which also induced. In the same period, a Slavophil movement. We find the origins of Pan-Slavism from the XV-XVI centuries, at the same time as the Russian expansion in the area of the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, Baltic areas and south steppe of today Russia. The ideology which pushed our eastern neighbors to battle had the lively color of the Middle Ages, in which the role of the catalyst was occupied by the inheritance become symbolic since XII century, the crest of Emperor Constantin Manomah of Eastern Roman Empire, by the prince of Kiev. This expansive ideology took account of the Christian-orthodox messianism which was emitted from Moscow and which sent aspirations of a third Rome, especially after the fall of the Ţaringrad. The XVII-XVIII centuries brought a slight modification to the ideological perspective. In this new situation, the great eastern neighbor considered himself called to free the Christian nations from under the “pagan Turks” and “Latin Polacks” (to be known as catholic). In this order of thought, there were two expansionist-liberating projects: one developed by Ecaterina the II, also called the “Greek project, which aspired to the foundation of a Greek empire with a Russian government, and the other established by Alexander I (1801-1825), encompassing similar aims. The last plan listed is related to Romanian history on a larger context, the emulation of the battle against the Ottoman Empire is transposed in the movement led by Tudor Vladimirescu, former lieutenant in the Russian army. The resolution of this movement is known, more importantly to analyze would be the differences between the brave “Mr. Tudor” and Alexander Ipsilanti, the leader of revolutionary Greeks and former deputy of the Russian Czar. The XIX century uneartns the Slavophil movement, essentially conservative, which aimed at an old styled Russia, opposite the newly created currents of the middle class, which wished for an accelerated Europeanized Russia. The traditionalist movement was theorized by N.I. Danilevski (1822-1885) in his book entitled “Russia and Europe”, although another great writer also contributed through similar ideas, Dostoievski. The pillars of this theory were orthodoxy, Russian nationalism and the tyrannical monarchy, the goal was represented by a new moral and religious impulse given to the world.
In order to achieve its goals, the movement required a strong Russia which was greater than all Slavic nations and not only. To maintain an objective tone, I must add that the Russian expansion was not the only threat to our national identity, but we also had “close calls” with the Ottoman empire, the Polish, Austro-Hungarian et al expansionism. What did the first have that the others didn’t? The crushing contingency linked to our modern and contemporary history. When we talk about contemporary history we are inevitably subjective. That is if we take into account the metamorphosis of the military expansion in that of the economical one. If we remember that even the cannons have been silenced since the capitalist markets have opened and the cartridges have become useless when the conscience is being controlled by the cold radiators.

Rotating back to the period after the end of WWII, the destiny of the Romanian nation started to flow in a direction strange to the national will. Time didn’t have more patience with us, we might say, paraphrasing Moromote. The transfer of our collective memory from the generations, who did not have the time to polish the first millennium of Romanian culture, was starting to be seriously affected by the alteration of identity symbols. Class struggle and dialectic materialism were becoming concepts that were supposed to explain human history from the origins to the success of the Bolshevik revolution. Idola Fori was replaced by pieces of paper. The protest was starting. The world came down to catchphrases. On the stage the Marxist-Lenin socialism charm was rising with its bastards: Leninism, Stalinism, and Maoism. Romania stopped choosing its own destiny, putting it in brackets and chose in its place the ones present at Ialta on February 1945. We were becoming Leninists in order through the combination with local laziness, to excel at Stalinism. The traditional trades and the hearths of popular Romanians passed with force in the dawn of “forgetting”, being replaced by the famous kolkhozes. Foreign investments became Soviet-Romanian societies, known better as economical hemorrhages. The liberal principles which economically raised the west and ourselves in the “between wars” period, of liberal competition, as the giver of equilibrium and economical organization and price, of the motor of economical activities were replaced by an ideology which minimized the role of the state and that of the only party, working/socialist/communist in leading the economical, social and political aspects, of stabilization of the development of the economy in a the department of a five-year plan. The natural differentiation of society, with its result on differentiating the social classes, was
replaced by the intention of forced dismembering of those mentioned, followed by an eventual equality. One of the dramas of Romanian society then, effect which did not cease to this day, was the reversal of social poles. The uneducated, poor, chameleon-like elements as aftermath of certain manners of society have become representative with a leading role. The ideal platonic society became, sublimely, absolutely ridiculous. The scale of values was turned upside down with a heavy price until present. The non-value has become the leader and the value has become the primary material of concentrated space.

One of the sustaining poles of the Romanian being, the orthodox religion has regressed so much that it has become vegetative, simply becoming an insect. The servants in sultans have changed the altar of the church with the latticed altar of the communist dungeons. Churches have been destroyed to make room for the monstrous reality of socialism and to try to break the connection with the divinity. Our brother Alexander forgot that we interiorized the eternity of our faith ever since the “daco-geti’ considered themselves immortal. The arrows formerly shot to chase away the clouds which hid the divine faces, transformed in time in prayers of Christianity. The solidarity of our faith was beyond time. National dignity started its salvation through Christianity dignity.

The language, which united us once at Alba Iulia, started to be sabotaged from the inside. It was replaced with another language, which in a paradox, sounded still Romanian; it was the language of the ideological occupant translated in Romanian. It was actually the language that didn’t say anything; it was the wooded language of Romanian. To learn it, a school was also invented. It was named the Stefan Gheorgiu Academy. A poet was needed such as Nichita Stanescu to show us that the Romanian language did not die and that anyone can still become a polyglot of the language, authentic I may add.

If for Lenin the official dictatorship supported the maintenance of the state as a warranty for the continuation of the political battle of physical extermination of the bourgeois class, Stalinism announced that this was not enough; it wished for the extermination of the bourgeois spirit as well. Through this mutation of the doctrines, the abuse and arbitration were making their entrance unheard of in the socio-communist space, and especially in Romania. Anyone was suspected simply because he/she was complained from personal spite, of perpetuating a belief or “unhealthy” social behavior, meaning bourgeois, and was therefore condemned to pay with deportation or jail. The wasteful son had the nerve of threatening the
integrity of his brother. Romanian society, in its majority, was at the beginning of the XX century was more of a physiocratic society than an industrialized one; one mostly rural than urban, more uneducated rather then educated, situation in which there was to come a chosen democratic evolution on the path of liberalism and a large social representation was made to follow foreign models of any cell of its identity. The social engineering experiment which was supposed to be at the basis of its acceleration on the social ladder was replaced by the criteria of obedience and the increased dose of evil which you could do to your fellow man. In order for the new political system to assure a superficial education and criteria of promotion professional schools, workplace qualifications, military and political schools were created.

Cain was crowned in Romanian society, and Hypnos contained within its wings the Romanian entity; and he called on watch out his good brother Thanassos. In order for our forgiveness to be assured regarding the loss of our identity the elysian fields were largely opened and concentrated in common grounds with diverse names: Aiud, Gherla, Sighet, Pitesti, Malmaison etc. or with diverse functions: reeducation, work camps, common holes etc.

To the pride of our memory, entered in rehabilitation after 1989, we had people that also continued with the perspective of the eternal Romania and have suborned themselves not to forget. Some sustained their fights using logic as their way, others literally, but both shared the courage. The geography of Romania never entered the stage of apostasy and has accepted our battle. Several names are chosen randomly such as Toma Arnautoiu, colonel Arsenescu or Elisabeta Rizea and are representative in this way of hundreds of other martyrs, shot merciless by the Security troupes.

After approximately 50 years of communism, destiny smiled again. We have become free. In the middle of all this, there was also a revolution, still not completely solved. The most humiliating aspect of this is the spirits of the victims which will never know their hangman. The faces of the dead from the Romanian revolution have been left as a question mark which our own coward characteristic refuses to answer. Nonetheless, walking the open road of the revolution we have succeeded in adhering to the social, political and economical structures of our western brother. The new Ialta is judging us rightfully this time. In a way we have reached on a circular trajectory, the aftermath of 1918.
This historical time necessary for us to remember started flowing again. We’ve reached the necessary tranquillity to realize that the soviet Stalinism in combination with the national Romanian communism was on the verge of erasing the authentic historical landmarks which formed us as a nation. The weapon was not the denial of the above, but the dethroning of the senses through a fill up of ideological residue. One of the problems encountered in the department of the social post revolutionary dialog was that by denying the national symbols in order to escape from the residue of the communist ideology we woke up either completely destroying them helped by the political current or we’ve succeeded from an other way running, from the impulse of counterbalancing, to keep them in a non-critical way. The dear to bring forth the memories has a price unpaid, not even in half.

The meeting with our own national memory, which was held after the ‘89 revolution, was distorted by the ideological occupant. It is in this way that the essential challenge in the last twenty years of recovering our identity and imprinting it once and for all in the history textbook (meaning in posterity) started. The Romanians should know that they can be proud they had the strength to battle the Roman Empire, the one that the pope named “Atleta Christi” after the battle in Vaslui meaning Stefan the Great; the fact that we had the strength of launching an overnight attack under Vlad Tepes order; that we were united by Mihai the Brave; that we had a colonel who acted as general, A. I. Cuza; that we were led by Avram Iancu; and the examples could go on. To capable of rewriting history, however, we need to learn to accept both big courageous acts as well as historical losses which did not skip us: the noblemen murders, battles between the parties, the takeover of the Quadrilater, the betrayal of the allies, etc. The right to the appeal of our own past does not excuse our exaggeration, slatternly propaganda and shallow nationalism. The tone of the writing must be academic, neutral and precise. And there is one other thing to say: to record everything in a tome of truth. This will certainly makes us free!

Generations to come must known that in our small courageous deeds we were just as big as those who fought the Vikings, only that our destiny was not as visible. The Romanians were not on the scene of the big history, we did not build empires and we did not send conquistadores, but perhaps, we made a history of survival in the gun hole. And if this is not noticeable history, nothing is!
Twenty years from the fall of communism, the access to our memory must be quickly made again attending to our survivors (how many they might have been left) of the communist purgatory, collecting again in front of the Sighet Memorial, the reading and rereading of the confessions made by political convicts that already crossed in Caron’s boat, and after everything is done to reread the heavy tomes in history left after the Great Union and write down clearly the deeds of the Romanians on the eternal sky of history.

We the Romanians, definitely have the destiny of the squanderer son. Therefore, I’m glad we’ve found each other my brothers! Let’s remember that we were home!
BOOK REVIEWS


Review by İsil ACEHAN

The decades following World War II witnessed a changing face of the United States as a new set of policies led to the reception of an unprecedented flow of immigrants from around the world. The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration since 1965, edited by Reed Ueda and Mary C. Waters, assesses this new wave of immigration, which produced a generation of “New Americans” with unusual names, eating habits, religious beliefs, cultures, and languages. The book’s quality is clearly an outcome of Reed Ueda’s great knowledge of the subject as an historian of immigration, and Mary C. Waters’s expertise on the sociological aspects of immigration and inter-group relations. The third editor is Helen B. Marrow, whose dissertation won the American Sociological Association’s Best Dissertation Award for 2008.

The example of Somerville, a small neighborhood in Boston, is given at the beginning of the Introduction to show how the United States changed its ethnic structure several years ago. As a longtime resident stated, “Somerville is changing... You see it in Union Square, where there are Asian, South Asian, Caribbean, Portuguese, and Latin American markets and Cambodian-French, Armenian-Lebanese, Portuguese, country Korean, Brazilian, Chinese, Indian, Greek, and French bistro joints.” (p.1) The immigration restriction acts passed in the 1920’s halted the migration of large numbers of many ethnic groups, especially those from eastern and southern Europe, for a long time. But in 1965 immigration laws and
policies again changed significantly, leading to the admission of many new ethnic
groups in large numbers. It is these “new immigrants” now populating many
American cities and suburbs who form the subject of The New Americans.

The organization of articles and their sequences is one of the strong points
of this book. Following a fine introduction by Reed Ueda and Mary C. Waters, the
immigration phenomenon is taken up in thematic articles where both empirical
material and scholarly interpretation are masterfully employed. Among the themes
treated in this, the first half of the book, are immigration from the global historical
perspective, citizenship and nationality policy, ethnic and racial identity,
assimilation, language, religion, and education. The articles are organized in a way
that reveals various aspects of the new immigration. The first five articles deal with
intended and unintended effects of U.S. immigration laws on immigrants; the next
two concern the ethnic and racial identities of immigrants, their offspring, and the
effects of intermarriage on identity. After three essays taking different approaches
to assimilation and transnationalism, the next seven essays take up the effects of
immigration on economics, politics, media, religion, language, and education.

Every article includes a comparison of the immigrants of the so-called mass
migration movement and those who migrated to US after 1965, thus providing the
reader a historical perspective. Moreover, each key term is provided with a
definition, a literature review, and interpretations from different perspectives.
Following these discussions of the “big picture” in the first half of the book, specific
immigrant groups are examined. The second half focuses on migrant-sending
regions such as West Africa, East Africa, Canada, Central America, China, Colombia,
Western Europe, Central and Southeastern Europe, the Middle East, and North
Africa. In these thirty-one articles the reader will find the most recent scholarship
on each subject. The articles are arranged in alphabetical order, contributing to the
book’s encyclopedic nature and adding to its usefulness as a reference work. Each
ethnic group is discussed within the historical framework of its first entry into the
USA in considerable numbers, mostly during the so-called mass migrations that
took place between 1850 and 1930. The reader is thus provided a background and
an historical scheme illustrating how the characteristics of a given immigrant group
and government policies towards them both changed over time. The immigration
issues discussed in the first part of the book, i.e., transnationalism, assimilation,
ethnic media, education, language and religion are employed in the specific
analyses of these groups. The analyses are supported admirably by charts and
tables full of statistics. An appendix provides a useful list of all the immigration laws passed between 1790 and 2005, giving both their official and popular names, such as the Act of 1965, known also as the Hart-Celler Act after its lawmakers.

Immigration, which became a visible national debate in the 1920’s, is still a subject that shapes domestic and foreign policies of the United States. Assimilation and integration of immigrants has always been an important issue, and once again it had become a public debate since prejudice against certain ethnic and religious groups became more pronounced after 9/11. A comprehensive and inclusive guide to immigration such as *The New Americans*, consisting of articles by distinguished scholars from diverse backgrounds, is an excellent reference for students of history, political science, and international relations, for scholars, and for everyone who wants to learn more about the current debates and dynamics surrounding the immigration phenomenon in the United States.
UPCOMING CONFERENCES

International Conference: Post-Communism and the New European Identity

The Research Centre on Identity and Migration Issues within the Faculty of Political Science and Communication, University of Oradea is organizing the International Conference “Post-Communism and the New European Identity”, that will be held on November 5th - 7th, 2009 in Oradea, Romania.

The main topics of the conference are:
1. Identity and mobility in Europe
2. The image of the New Europe in the mass-media
3. Institutional changes and democratic reforms after the fall of communism

Proposal submission: Proposals (including a paper title and a 250-300 words abstract of the proposed paper) should be submitted by email as MS Word attachment to contact@e-migration.ro, before July 15th, 2009. The papers presented at the conference will be published in the conference volume. Several selected papers could be published in the Journal of Identity and Migration Studies (see www.jims.e-migration.ro).

Fees: The conference fee is 25 Euro (100 lei) and has to be paid directly to the organizers before the conference. The fee covers the conference materials and publication of the papers. The accommodation and meals are in charge of participants (the organizers will provide information concerning more types of accommodation).

The registration form and the preliminary program of the conference are available on the RCIMI’s 2009 Conference webpage.
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GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Manuscripts will be accepted with the understanding that their content is unpublished previously. If any part of an article or essay has already been published, or is to be published elsewhere, the author must inform the Journal at the time of submission. Please find below the standard requirements that have to be fulfilled so that your material can be accepted for publication in JIMS:

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- The number of bibliographic references should be within reasonable limits.
- The inclusion of tables, charts or figures is welcome in support of the scientific argumentation.
- All articles should be presented in Microsoft Office Word format, Times New Roman, 12, at 1.5 lines, and will be sent to the e-mail address jims@e-migration.ro and a copy to contact@e-migration.ro mentioning "Manuscript Submission: [TITLE OF ARTICLE]"
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- Contributions are welcomed at any time of the year and will be considered for the next issues.
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- The extensive use of a too technical language or mathematic formulae should be avoided.
- Footnotes (no endnotes);
- References and bibliography (Chicago Style of Citation).

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