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**American National Identity**  
**Case Study: Mexican Immigration to the United States of America**  
**through Samuel Huntington's *Who Are We? The Challenges to***  
***America's National Identity***

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the**  
**Degree of Magister in American Civilization**

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## **DEDICATION**

To the memory of my father

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## ABSTRACT

The study aims at exploring the relationship between national identity, multiculturalism, and nativism in the United States of America and focuses particularly on the notion of national identity which has been subject to far-reaching criticism. Recent critiques have suggested that although the notions of national identity may have had a degree of validity in the past, this has now been lost. As a matter of fact, the thesis will take as an issue “How new are the current threats to American national identity?” through shedding light on Harvard’s political scientist Samuel Phillips Huntington’s book: *Who are we? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*.

Samuel P. Huntington argues that the sheer number, concentration, linguistic homogeneity, and other characteristics of Mexican immigrants will erode the dominance of English as a nationally unifying language, weaken the country’s dominant Anglo-Saxon values, and promote ethnic allegiances and identities over a primary identification as an American. Testing these hypotheses with data from a variety of researches, studies, and surveys, the study demonstrates that Mexicans exhibit telltale signs of advanced stages of assimilation, all the evidence reveals a powerful linguistic gravitational pull that has produced conversion to English monolingulism and implosion of Spanish language. Most of Mexican offsprings imagine the economy as a ladder upon which they are all perched at some level. Moreover, a clear majority of Mexicans reject a purely ethnic identification and patriotism grows from one generation to the next. At present, they directly and indirectly encourage political innovation since they provide the United States with energetic new participants who may enter politics with new ideas, or at least new prospective on prevailing practices in a multicultural society.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>CILSS</b>	Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey Study
<b>FTA</b>	Free Trade Agreement
<b>IIMMLA</b>	Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles
<b>IRCA</b>	Immigration Reform and Control Act
<b>NAFTA</b>	North American Free Trade Agreement
<b>OED</b>	Oxford English Dictionary
<b>SAW</b>	Special Agricultural Worker
<b>UCLA</b>	University of California at Los Angeles
<b>WASP</b>	White Anglo-Saxon Protestant

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## INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the most enduring image of America is that of near-penniless immigrants arriving at Ellis Island shores, and through dint of hard work, clambering their path way up the ladder of success in the land of opportunity. No one doubts the power of this image. The United States has well afforded to be a nation of immigrants from a variety of distant lands. The question: “Can the United States still afford to be a nation of immigrants?” implies a premise that historically immigrants from much wider array of nations and cultures have continued to flood to its shores to start their lives anew seeking political refuge, economic opportunity or religious freedom. Such argument was once deeply embedded in inherent mythology as to be axiomatic. In fact, many Americans in the United States trace their history and ancestry to immigrants who have shaped the country’s national self understanding. American political figures and intellectuals reinforce America’s self-image, in contrast to many other nations, as a country of immigration. Arguably the most recognizable national symbol, the statue of liberty, is dually linked to immigration and national consciousness; its inscription reads in part:

*“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”*<sup>1</sup>

A cursory review of immigration history reveals the paradox of American sentiments concerning immigration, Americans have always been of two minds about immigration.<sup>2</sup> The symbolic notion of a nation of immigrants is deeply engraved in the character of the American nation. Many scholars, politicians and journalists have evoked such sentiments. In 1938, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated: “Remember, remember always that all of us, and you and I especially are descended from immigrants or descendants of immigrants and revolutionists.”<sup>3</sup> Sociologist Robert Bellah echoed similar notions in claiming that “all Americans except the Indians are immigrants or descendent of immigrants.”<sup>4</sup> Oscar Hardlin, one leading historian of immigration at Harvard University, pondered in his monumental *‘The Uprooted’*: “Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I

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<sup>1</sup>Emma Lazarus, “The New Colossus”, this sonnet was written in 1883 and, in 1903, engraved on a bronze plaque and mounted inside the lower level of the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_New\\_Colossus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Colossus) (Accessed: February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>2</sup>Warren Zimmerman, “Migrants and Refugees: A Threat to Security?” In *Threatened Peoples, Threatened Borders: World Migration and U.S. Policy*, ed. Michael S. Teitelbaum, and Myron Weiner (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1995), p.88.

<sup>3</sup>James Fulford, “Immigration Myths (A Series): FDR Never Addressed the DAR as ‘Fellow Immigrants’”, *VDARE*, March 21, 2001. [http://www.vdare.com/fulford/fdr\\_dar.htm](http://www.vdare.com/fulford/fdr_dar.htm) (Accessed: September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

<sup>4</sup>Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p.88.

discovered that the immigrants were American history.”<sup>5</sup> Twenty years later, President John F. Kennedy, the great grandson of Irish immigrants, quoted Roosevelt in his posthumously published book: *A Nation of Immigrants* (1964). What all these politicians, scholars, and journalists meant, at a time when the history of immigration was not highly thought of, was that it was not possible to understand the history of the United States without understanding America’s immigrants. Even though, all Americans who now populate the United States, except of American Indians, are immigrants and their descendents, Americans have rarely displayed an overtly enthusiastic welcome to the newly arrived.<sup>6</sup> Especially during periods of mass immigration, many native-born Americans ranted and raved about the dangers of being overrun by immigrants, therefore they took skeptical stances and fears toward them, particularly fears about their political and economic well-being as well as their culture being swamped by incoming strangers. White Americans have created a climate of opinion in which, after a period of quiescence, ugly nativism was on the rise. Public sentiments of stringent anti-immigration legislations, barricade immigrants ports of entry, denying public benefits to newcomers, and deportation became the hinge on which “the golden door” of immigration began to swing closed. Restricting immigrants has more than a temporary effect on the American society, it has become central to America’s national identity. Battles over immigration define the composition and character of the American nation, how Americans perceive themselves as a nation, a community, and people.<sup>7</sup> American identity is of necessity something different, pointing out this reality may confirm that the United States “differs from other countries in that its history is short, its people are a hodgepodge of ethnic groups, and it does not have the same kind of religious or ethnic cleavages as European countries do. American identity is therefore “exceptional.””<sup>8</sup> The attitudes of Americans towards their identification within a national community may correctly be described as ambiguous. While many Americans define their identity inclusively focusing on shared characteristics related to the same principles of government, citizenship and political identities, others define American identity in narrow, exclusive terms, identifying who is authentically “American” and who is “alien”. This binary opposition between Americans and un-Americans or foreigners is central to the phenomenon called nativism, also described as “intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign [i.e., ‘un-American’] connections.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, Third Printing, 2002), p.3.

<sup>6</sup>Robert N. Bellah, op.cit., p.88.

<sup>7</sup>Leo R. Chavez, “Immigration Reform and Nativism: The Nationalist Response to the Transnationalist Challenge.” In *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States*, ed. Juan F. Perea (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p.66.

<sup>8</sup>Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *Who Counts as an American? The Boundaries of National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.15.

<sup>9</sup>John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963), p.4.

As the twentieth century comes to a close, immigration has reemerged as one of the most decisive controversies in American policy, resurfacing at time when the nation is simultaneously experiencing anti-immigration animus which has chiefly accompanied the large scale of immigration from Latin and Asian countries. Interlocking and highly visible groups and organizations have raised a hue and cry about such immigration menace. Representing position across the political skepticism, well financed pressure groups have mounted campaigns calling for the implementation of new legislations designed to restrict and control the flow of immigrants in general, and Spanish-speaking immigrants in particular.<sup>10</sup> Those Spanish-speaking newcomers bore the brunt of most recent revival of restrictionism in the U.S.A. As a result, Latinos in general and Mexicans in particular find themselves caught in the middle of the immigration controversy since they have come under vociferous attacks in the Southwest and nationally. Much of the animus and anti-immigrant sentiments have relentlessly made scapegoats of immigrants of a variety of social ills, and created a mood of intolerance against them. Restrictionists were even more rabid in their assessment of Mexicans. They augmented many flagrantly virulent and racist arguments by presenting Mexicans as animals, deformed of body, moral maroons, subnormal intellectually, and hungry dogs.<sup>11</sup> Most of all, many Americans are concerned that newcomers, in their opinion, are a source of crime, terrorism, narcotics trafficking and a drain on public education welfare, and health services.<sup>12</sup> Skepticism toward immigration action is also marked by an antipathy toward non-English languages and hostility toward affirmative action and multiculturalism in America. In 1994, the U.S.A. has witnessed a resurgence of cyclical nativism; the practice of favoring native-born citizens over immigrants. The California Proposition 187 was one of the initiatives of cyclical nativism. Ostensibly, the purpose of this proposition was to deny certain publicly funded social and healthcare services to illegal immigrants, and also to prevent them from enrolling in tax-supported educational institutions. The most dramatic reform proposal has been the campaign to deny automatic birthright citizenship to the U.S. born children of illegal immigrants, also cynically referred to as “anchor babies”, although birthright citizenship is guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which reads in part: “All person born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside.” Critics argue that the birth right citizenship rewards and thus stimulates illegal immigration.<sup>13</sup> Since the early 1990s, immigration has become a crucial topic in

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<sup>10</sup>David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 208.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>12</sup>Warren Zimmerman, *op.cit.*, p.89.

American public policy, many American politicians and scholars have articulated nativist sentiments in bestselling books. Social and political concerns about immigration, multiculturalism, and national identity are best articulated in Harvard's political scientist Samuel Phillips Huntington's book: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (2004) which endeavors to answer the question: "What is American national identity?" American identity, Huntington argues, is inherently shaped by the Anglo-Protestant culture that maintains Americans as white, English-speaking Protestant of European ancestry. Anglo-Protestant culture, also called core culture, which has been shaped by all Americans and has distinguished Americans from others Protestant people, includes Christianity, the English language, the English concept of the rule of law, and the Protestant values of individuals, the work ethic, and the belief that Americans have a duty to create a city upon a hill<sup>14</sup>. In his controversial book, Huntington raises questions regarding Latino and Mexican assimilation, and if they will pursue the historical path of full socioeconomic, cultural, and political incorporation. According to him, the high level and the large scale of such immigration, especially Mexicans, are endangering the core of the American identity and culture. Huntington asserts that Mexicans and other Hispanics<sup>15</sup>, in contrast to previous immigrant groups, refuse to share or even denounce the core culture because they retain their own cultural, linguistic, and ideological baggage which impedes their full incorporation into the American mainstream. Most disturbingly, continuing flood of Mexicans will split the U.S.A. into two languages: Spanish and English, and between two cultures: Hispanic and Anglo-Protestant.<sup>16</sup>The recent influx of Mexicans, Huntington alleges, is significantly different from earlier immigrant groups who were more likely to assimilate into the core culture, learn English, adopt the dominant cultural values, and become citizens. Mexicans are regionally concentrated and residentially segregated within Spanish-speaking enclaves. In these enclaves, they fail to develop educationally and economically since they experience growing poverty levels. Huntington suggests that these conditions, in conjunction with a political atmosphere that embraces multiculturalism and diversity, will likely lead to the establishment of a Spanish-speaking nation within the United States that stands in opposition to the abundant culture and value system, and consequently threatens the defining element of American national identity. Huntington also raises fundamental concern against

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<sup>13</sup> Ramesh Ponnuru, "Born in the U.S.A." *National Review* 58, no.3:28, February 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), p. xvi.

<sup>15</sup> The terminology used to describe this population is steeped in controversy and contention. The term Hispanic was first adopted by the United States government in the early 1970s, during the administration of Richard Nixon, as a descriptor of the total Spanish-heritage population of the United States. It generally parallels the U.S. Census Bureau, agencies of the federal government, other state and municipal applications for employment, general assistance, and school enrolment. In this context, the term refers to ethnic groups who trace their origins to predominantly Spanish-Speaking nations of the Western Hemisphere. The term Latino, on the other hand, has been used as a self-referent by Americans of Hispanic ancestry as a way to denote their sense of pan-Hispanic solidarity that cuts across ethnic and national lines. As Hispanic/Latina Americans are racially diverse, the choice between the two terms is difficult. Thus, the two terms are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p. xvi.

multiculturalism and diversity which are strongly favored within the United States by powerful secularists and enlightenment based liberal elites. The sense of national identity among Mexicans, he claims, is disappearing because multiculturalists promote group identities and ethnic identities that supersede American identity.

In his highly publicized and most reviewed book, Huntington identifies mounting worries of Mexican immigration, and then posits the seeds for strong national unity and building measures because he claims to be a patriot and a scholar who vigorously wants to defend his native culture and identity, and to maintain its purity against foreign influences.<sup>17</sup> The present research attempts to inquire into the understanding of American national identity and strives for a deeper understanding of what people think uniquely and rightly constitutes its meaning, focusing particularly on Huntington's book: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*. This topic is of great significance because it responds to Huntington's mounting worries that the American national identity is undergoing destabilizing changes with threatening implications for its cohesion due to the current trends of Mexican immigration. The dissertation is concerned ultimately with the prevailing pessimism about the prospect for the assimilation of Mexican immigrants and their progeny. Huntington's pessimism is partly rooted in outmoded views of incorporation and simplistic accounts of how past immigrants entered the American mainstream. What has been lacking, in my view, is a sophisticated and up-to-date account of causal mechanism that makes assimilation relevant for new groups. Thus, only with clear conceptual lens can one detect the evidence which demonstrates powerful elements of continuity that connect the assimilation experience of past immigration with current waves of immigrants from Mexico. In one sense, this continuity does not mean that the present replicates the past, simply because history does not repeat itself in a mechanical fashion.

In reworking ideas about assimilation, the study seeks to demonstrate that even the term multiculturalism as a social phenomenon is of recent vintage, it has been an ongoing social reality in the United States, not just since its inception as a nation, but even in its primeval cradle. As a nation of immigration is an incontrovertible fact, the U.S.A. continues to manifest a dynamic cultural pluralism that has always marked its existence. Despite fears about divisiveness, the American mainstream is larger than before. Despite nativist anxieties about non-westerners that are not blending in the American mainstream, Mexicans are demonstrating their desire to assimilate, learn English, and to have higher naturalization rates.

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. xvii.

As far as Mexican immigrants are concerned, this dissertation contends that, when support of diversity occurs within a framework of social justice and political equality and when all members of society are permitted to participate in the public space, the result is more cohesive, albeit plural, civic community. For the sake of answering the problematic of this study, an attempt has been made to rely on a combination of descriptive, argumentative, and analytical approaches. Because of the nature of the topic, this dissertation endeavors to study, description has been useful to confine my review to the theoretical conceptualizations that inspire a genetic notion of the meaning of the terms within socio-historical context of the United States, while scholars often elaborate fine distinctions and definitions of the concept, I have attempted to provide general conceptualizations that are more likely to match the public attitudes, and more effectively capture the essence of more commonly accepted definitions of the terms, such as: identity, American national identity, ethnic identity, multiculturalism, and assimilation. Arguments have been used to try to show the essence of American national identity in regards to Huntington's polemic discussion about its loss, particularly current issues of multiculturalism, diversity, and affirmative action. Ultimately, analysis as a way to empirically refute Huntington's arguments about Mexican immigration, and to expand the scope of current attitudinal debate on assimilation, multiculturalism, and identity with analysis of data, emanating from several surveys and studies, thus augmenting a study composed exclusively of empirical research. The choice of the topic of this dissertation has been dictated by the fact that it is particularly timely in context of the current political and social debates raging in the U.S.A. over its identity and direction, issues that are commonly invoked by assimilationists and conservatives as explanations for persistent threat, and as justifications for persistent othering and exclusion. For the sake of advancing the inquiry into a problematic, I propose to conduct the following research agenda in my dissertation: Chapter I of the research work sets the review of the historical and sociological framework in which the central concepts and theories of American national identity and nativism evolved. I also provide an in-depth discussion of the conceptualization process associated with the four views of American national identity as ethnocultural, liberal, civic republicanism, and as patriotism in order to show that prominent scholars have striven for a deeper understanding of its content which emerges from contestation, acceptance, and amalgamation of valuable endeavors over time. Then the chapter examines group dynamics that play a key role in the social theory of American national identity, and what impacts these group dynamics have on people's behaviors. I argue that the social dynamics of national identity lead to commitment to the group, the setting of group boundaries, and also group norms which are the expectations that guide behaviors and attitudes within a social group. Being strongly committed to the group

leads people to two kinds of behaviors: helping national fellows and being strongly loyal to the group. These boundaries are set to differentiate between those who fit the national group and those who are marginalized under the umbrella of nativism, as the Mexican case. Chapter two is devoted to discuss Mexican migratory patterns which have been a major area of contention between the U.S.A. and Mexico since the 1920s. Frustrated by the early attempts to stabilize Southwest supply in the rail, mining, and agricultural industries and construction, American employers looked to Mexicans as filling no other niche than that of cheap labor. Thus the rapid expansion of Mexican ethnic population in the U.S.A. was a result of several interrelated political and economic developments that unfolded in both the United States and Mexico. In most concrete aspects, migration networks between the two governments were strengthened by legislation, policies, and programs such as: the Bracero Program, the Immigration Reform and Control Act “IRCA” law of 1986, and North American Free Trade Agreement “NAFTA”. These programs had stimulated a great flow of illegal Mexican immigrants who were driven to make the journey north to the United States for a combination of factors such as: the blandishment of labor recruiters, the lure of higher wages, and better living conditions. In this chapter, my dissertation has the potential to question and discuss Samuel Huntington’s arguments, and then it will show that his book has stirred up a lively and in many ways an acrimonious reaction of opposition from virtually scores of scholars, journalists, and political activists. Though some political strata in the U.S.A. have drawn more temperately a number of valid arguments suggesting that his book is certainly grounded in some troubling advert realities in America, his fears about the questions of the future of the United States and American identity may nevertheless be more than a little exaggerated. From the academic perspective, his book is weak, working poorly with questionable data combined with a lack of political correction, and the willingness to observe some current troublesome realities in contemporary American society. In this chapter, interpretative analysis of several survey data allows me to rebut Huntington’s ungrounded theoretical speculation which seems to be based on a complete and a polemic combination of a list of six attributes, known as “the Mexican Challenge”. In the last chapter, my study advances the inquiry into multiculturalism meaning, significance, and constituencies. Further, this research seeks to show that people in the United States wrestle over the proper means to assimilate newcomers and their descendents, and how to maintain a vital and potent American culture. In this regard, establishing the conceptual and theoretical foundation of the terms assimilation, pluralism, and diversity provide the means to not only define them, but to come to an understanding of the significance these concepts hold, and particularly their impact on the evolution and expansion of national civic identity.

# CHAPTER ONE

## American National Identity and Nativism

### Introduction

The wide-ranging interest from social thinkers and scholars in explaining and understanding identity in general, and national identity in particular marks a variety of arguments across a broad spectrum of disciplines. Areas of mainstream psychology, history, and politics provide a rich body of questions and findings concerning identity, ethnic identity, and particularly topics pertaining to American national identity. In part, the proliferation of researches concerning American identity stem largely from the contentious polity of immigration, the growth of ethnic and racial landscape in the United States. The social and political understandings of American identity open up all sorts of questions. What is American national identity? What are the components that uniquely and rightly delineate its meaning? In this regard, prominent scholars have long struggled over its competing components which emerge from contestation, acceptance, and amalgam of valuable endeavors over time. A deep understanding of American national identity leads to engage more fully with what means to hold a national identity, particularly the differences in people's commitment to their national group, boundaries they set on that group, and norms that guide behaviors and attitudes. In this regard, group dynamics are important to explain two types of consequences: helping national fellows and staying loyal to the group. In many ways, strong identifiers define their national group more narrowly because they set strict boundaries for who is included in the group and who is excluded from it. This is the case of the United States of America where nativism is interpreted in negative reactions and hostility against ethnic minorities, particularly Mexican immigrants, as an expression of worries concerning the survival the American national identity.

# 1-National and Other Identities

## 1-1-The Concept of Identity

The concept of identity is as indispensable as it is unclear. It “is manifold, hard to define and evades many ordinary methods of measurement”.<sup>18</sup>In recent years, scholars working in remarkable array of social science and humanities disciplines have taken a broad-ranging interest in questions concerning identity which itself remains something of an enigma. In this regard, the sociologist Hall Stuart states that:

*“Identities are never unified and, in the late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation.”*<sup>19</sup>

While the term identity is inescapable in recent discussions of politics, culture, and social issues, “its currency is of relatively recent origin and dates back no further than the 1950s. The responsibility for the vogue in identity talk can probably be assigned to the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson”<sup>20</sup> who introduced and applied this term to a wide range of social, historical, and political debates. Within politics, the concept of identity has become at the center of lively debates in every major subfield. Scholars of American politics have devoted much new research to identity in relation to sexuality, gender and race. In comparative politics, the concept of identity is at the heart of works on nationalism, ethnic conflicts (Anthony Smith 1991). In international relations, the idea of state identity plays a central role in constructivists’ critiques of realism and analyses of state sovereignty (Alexander Wendt 1999). Focusing on the political theory, interest in identity marks a variety of arguments on culture, nationality, ethnicity, gender and sexuality in relation to liberalism (Will Kymlicka 1995). Under the influence of postmodernism and debates over multiculturalism in the late 1980s and 1990s, historians, anthropologists, and most of scholars of humanities have relied ever more heavily on identity as they explored the cultural politics of race, class, ethnicity, citizenship, and other social categories.

Given the intense interest in identity and identities across a broad spectrum of disciplines, one might expect it easy to find clear and simple definitions or statements of what is meant when people use these concepts. Overwhelmingly, scholars and academic users of the word identity show no need to explain its meaning to readers. In popular discourse,

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<sup>18</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.21.

<sup>19</sup> Hall Stuart, “Introduction: Who Needs Identity?” In Hall Stuart and Paul du Gay (eds), *Question of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2003), p.4.

<sup>20</sup> Ross Poole, *Nation and identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.44.

identity generally refers to something ineffable and even sacred, whereas in the academy, identity is often treated as something fuzzy and complex. Of course, one can find short definitions and clarifications in many references. The following examples, culled mainly from several areas, attempt essentially to clarify the concept of identity:

1-Identity is “people’s concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others.”<sup>21</sup>

2-“Identity is...the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture.”<sup>22</sup>.

3-“National identity describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols-have internalized the symbol of the nation...”<sup>23</sup>

4-“Social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is, as a social object....[Social identities are] at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine “who I am /we are” in a situation and positions in a social role structure of shared understandings and expectations.”<sup>24</sup>

5-“My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose.”<sup>25</sup>

The difference, complexity, and unclarity among these quotations are remarkable. It is also striking that the definitions seem to refer to a common underlying concept. Almost every one evokes a sense of recognition, thus none seems obviously wrong, despite diversity. However, the need of a definition leads first to look to dictionaries, in the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, the most relevant entry for identity is “the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality.”<sup>26</sup> Note that this explanation does not easily capture what is meant by “ethnic identity” or “national identity”, for example. Does national identity mean the sameness of a nation over all times and places, or the fact of being the same nation and not another? Obviously the concept of national identity entails an idea of temporal and spatial continuity of a nation, but as a matter of fact, this is not the case when talking about

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<sup>21</sup> Hogg Michael, and Dominic Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Deng M. Francis, *War of Vision: Conflict of Identities in the Sudan* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1995), p.1.

<sup>23</sup> Bloom William, *Personal Identity, National Identity, and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.52.

<sup>24</sup> Wendt Alexander, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State.” *American Political Science Review* 88:384-96, 1994, p.395.

<sup>25</sup> Taylor Charles, *The Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), p.27.

<sup>26</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Oxford University Press, 1989).

American national identity. The dictionary definition also fails to capture what the exact meaning of identity is. Basically, the comparison between the *OED* definition and the social scientist's definitions listed above show that, while there is a considerable overlap among social scientists' definitions, almost none of them captures the dictionary meaning. The *OED* definition reports an older meaning of the word that is still used frequently in popular or everyday discourse, but it is nonetheless narrower than the present concept of identity. In this older sense, identity refers to the link of particular name of a particular person, and the fact of being a particular person or the same person as before. Note that there are absolutely different senses between what one means when he says: "This job is quite inconsistent with my identity" or claims that: "Identity is the particular fact of ethnic conflicts." And what is meant when he says: "He revealed the identity of the killer" or "a case of a mistaken identity."

It is likely that many who use the term these days would wish to be committed to the direction of Eric Erikson's particular brand of psychoanalytic theory. As the historian Philip Gleason shows, our present sense of identity has evolved in the last forty years, deriving most of all from psychoanalyst Erik Erikson's concept of "an identity crisis." The following quote from "American Identity and Americanization" by Gleason gives some indication of the novelty of Erikson's usage.

*"The term "identity" has become indispensable in the discussion of ethnic affairs. Yet it was hardly used at all until the 1950s. The father of the concept, Erik H. Erikson, remarked on its novelty in...Childhood and Society (1950): "We begin to conceptualize matters of identity...in a country which attempts to make a super-identity of all the identities imported by its constituent immigrants."...Erikson....quoted this passage and added that the terms "identity" and "identity crisis" seemed to grow out of "the experience of emigration, immigration, and Americanization.""*<sup>27</sup>

The term "identity crisis" is randomly applied today to almost any loss of identity, regardless of whether this loss is applied to an individual or a nation. Eric Erikson hypothesized the term in the American culture specifically, and in the world in general. "The concept of identity implies that there is a constitutive linkage between forms of *subjectivity*, *i.e.* the ways in which we conceive of ourselves, and forms of social *objectivity*, the patterns of social life within which we exist."<sup>28</sup> Thus, identities answer the questions, "who am I/ are we?", "what am I/ are we?", "who and what am I / are we not?" When people ask these questions, they are inquiring into their individual (personal), collective (national), and ethnic (group) identities.

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<sup>27</sup> Philip Gleason, "American Identity and Americanization." In *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p.31.

<sup>28</sup> Ross Poole, *op.cit.*, p.45.

## 1-2-Ethnic Identity

As with the concept of identity, there has been a great deal of attention, both academically and popularly, to the experiences, to the meanings and also politics surrounding ethnic identity in recent time. Areas of social psychological processes have shown an interest in ethnic identity, and particularly topics pertaining to culture. In part, the proliferation of studies concerning ethnic identity doubtless stem largely from the growth of ethnic and racial landscape in western societies which all have been undergoing major changes. An ethnic group is collectively within a larger society, having real or pure common ancestry, memories of a shared past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements which define the group's identity such as: kinship, religion, language, shared territory, nationality or physical appearance. Members of an ethnic group are conscious of belonging to the group.

In general, there is no one universally definition that captures the exact meaning of ethnicity because scholars have used interchangeably the terms ethnicity, ethnic identity, ethnic cohesion or attached to show the group's belief in its common ancestry and its member's perception, and self consciousness. Primordial understanding of ethnic identity suggests that ethnic groups' differences and distinctiveness are related to cultural behaviors, customs, values, dress, food, holidays, and beliefs. It's worth mentioning that members within the group vary widely in the degree of identification as members of their minority group, and also to the extent to which they feel culturally and socially attached to that group. Ethnic identity can be understood, therefore, as one key to differences between them and members of their own group, as well as to differences between them and other ethnic minorities. Since the founding of the U.S., ethnic groups have played a role in making American history. Despite high pressures to stampede immigrants into an exclusive American national identity, many individuals retain strong ties to ethnic kin, customs and memories. The prediction that ethnic groups will blend completely into a melting pot of any other group within a nation, and lose entirely their distinctiveness has not been borne out. Despite the fact that many white Americans of European heritage witnessed a mythic assimilation, many of them wish with pride to claim a European ancestry, such as: Norwegian or Italian, which makes them feel distinctiveness and differences of not being like ordinary Americans.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, ethnic identity is a key to both ethnic attachment and national belonging.

In contemporary America, many empirical researches now make clear that there is no uniform linear process by which immigrant generations are assimilated into the wider

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<sup>29</sup> Miri Song, *Choosing an Ethnic Identity* (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2003), p.9.

mainstream fabric of the U.S.A., but there is a conclusive evidence that ethnic identities gradually wane in significance over time. Segmented assimilation, in contrast to the linear model, indicates that many past 1965 immigrants could achieve socioeconomic mobility through the maintenance of their cultural heritage and ties to their community. Third and fourth generations of immigrants can maintain ethnicity without participating in an ethnic network or an ethnic culture, this is what the American sociologist Herbert J. Gran named as “symbolic ethnicity.” According to Gans, there is an impressive evidence and a powerful tide of assimilation among Jewish and Catholic white ethnics, losing their native culture and attachment, and moving into non-ethnic primary groups. They still perceive themselves as ethnic groups since they maintain their ethnic identity through symbols such as ethnic food and festivals. Symbols that don’t require efforts and rarely interfere with other aspects of their lives. In this regard, studies show that even intermarriage between racial groups does not much to hinder some cultural traits like the preservation of ethnic cuisines. The success of maintaining a distinctive culture may lay in the fact that ethnic groups are able to survive and persist as ethnically distinct people, despite encroachments in their way of life. Racism, discrimination, and nativism encourage ethnic groups to cling to their ethnic identity and to uphold a strong sense of their heritage. The classic conceptualization of incorporation expects complete disappearance of ethnic group distinctiveness. It presumes the existence of Anglo-Saxon core culture to which immigrants are forced to assimilate. In contemporary America, however, this core has been eclipsed and multiculturalism has become more acceptable as to comprehend that diverse people are developing the American experience. Accordingly, the new conceptualization of ethnicity and assimilation suggest a construction of a process of both attaining American identity and retaining ethnic identity. Such ethnic identity is becoming mostly symbolic, mere vestiges of newcomer’s cultures and heritage and doomed to vanish before the irresistible force of assimilation. With high rates of intermarriage among descendents of immigrants, ethnic boundaries can blur, stretch, and move. Though ethnic identity today is experienced as relatively a third identity, though it can be celebrated and significant in some way, it does not tend to fundamentally structure ethnic group lives today. Most of non-white Mexicans are likely to celebrate their ethnic identity because, as sociologist Harriet Bradley notes: “Active identification often occurs as a defense against the actions of others or when an individual is conscious of being defined in a negative way. Active identities are promoted by the experience of discrimination.”<sup>30</sup> What needs more exploration is the diverse ways in which ethnic minorities work at asserting their sense of belonging within a national identity.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

### 1-3-National Identity

Identity is an individual's or group's sense of self over time. Both individuals and groups have identities, but the former can find and define their identities in context of the latter. They can have multiple identities; cultural, economic, political, social, territorial, national, and other identities. These identities are constructed as a product of interaction between the self or the group and other identities which can change in a given time and situation.

Obviously wars fought by groups of different histories, religions, and languages made nations, and developed the sense of collective identity in order to differentiate their selves from others. As the British politician Michael Howard points out: "No nation in the true sense of the word could be born without war...no self-conscious community could establish itself as a new and independent actor on the world scene without an armed conflict or the threat of one."<sup>31</sup>

In this respect, Benedict Anderson states that: "In an anthropological spirit...the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community-and imagined as inherently limited and sovereign."<sup>32</sup> Benedict's definition of a nation as an imagined community has become unavoidable in recent debates and discussions of nationalism and national identity since the understanding of national identity as a shared sense of belonging to a community fits to a further extent the notion of imagined. This notion implies that the nation is both sovereign and limited. It is sovereign in the sense that it governs and rules itself. It is limited in the sense that the nation sets boundaries between who is included in the community and who is excluded from it. Despite the fact that members of a community have met only a small number of their fellow nationals, they can only imagine the rest who are included within the boundaries of the larger group, thus a nation "is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."<sup>33</sup>

Relations between members of the nation are reinforced and mediated by their mutual recognition that they belong to the same nation, and feel a sense of comradeship. Like Anderson, the British political theorist David Miller holds a social understanding of national identity, he claims that there are five aspects of national identity that are important in constructing the national group. These aspects are: a belief exists that a national community

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<sup>31</sup> Michael Howard, "War and the Nation-state", *Daedalus*, 108 (fall1979), p.102

<sup>32</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), pp.5-6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

exists; the identity embodies historical continuity; the national community is an active community; the identity is embedded in a geographical place; and there is a common political culture with shared belief.<sup>34</sup>

According to David Miller, the core idea of national identity depends heavily on people's shared belief that national community exists and it is this what defines the national group. Nation, as Miller notes: "Aggregates of people distinguished by their physical or cultural traits, but communities whose very existence depends upon mutual recognition."<sup>35</sup>The strength of national identity depends on the level of commitment and attachment to the group, many people feel a sense of fellowship even without the benefit of personal interaction or even though they have never met, and will never meet.

Philosophers Johann Gottlieb Herder and Charles Taylor argue that a nation is constituted through its language and culture which are not merely aspects of the social environment, but they are also components of people's identity. It is through language and culture that one becomes aware of himself and of others; the nation has appropriated to itself the linguistic and the cultural means that form a sense of who they are, and also a shared sense of belonging to a particular community. Shared culture, acquisition of language, and other forms of communication are crucial aspects which provide individuals with primary means by which they are able to be part of national community. Charles Taylor claims that the stability of democracies entails a strong sense of commitment and attachment to one another, and thus a strong feeling of collective identity:

*"A nation can only ensure the stability of its legitimacy if its members are strongly committed to one another by means of a common allegiance to the political community....In other words, a modern democratic state demands a "people" with a strong collective identity. Democracy obliges us to show much more solidarity and much more commitment to one another in our joint political project than was demanded by the hierarchical and authoritarian societies of yesterday."*<sup>36</sup>

Social identity theory provides a rich body of findings and ideas on the origins and the results of a strong social identity that has a great impact on political debates in recent years. Various researches concerning national identity raise important questions: "What is a collective identity?" "What does national identity mean?" "How do people identify themselves within the group?" Basically, people can have multiple identities and can define themselves as they wish. They may have ethnic identity, or belong to a racial or a national group. A person who identifies himself as an American establishes Americans as a

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<sup>34</sup> Miller David, *On Nationality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.22-26.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>36</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *op.cit.*, p.7.

community that holds a set of particular characteristics which are different from other national groups. Professors of social psychology Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams argue that people's identification and belonging to groups means: "a sense that one's conception or definition of who one is (one's identity) is largely composed of self-description in terms of the defining characteristics of social groups to which one belongs."<sup>37</sup> This identification of people with the group entails a shift from the personal (individual) identity to the collective (national) one. The latter includes all these components people need to think they are a member of their national group, evaluate their community positively, and feel attached to the national group.

### **1-3-1-Measuring National Identity**

When people identify with their group, their sense of self shifts from the personal to the national. This sense of collective identity explains how strongly people feel committed to their group, how they set their group's boundaries and limitation, and how they guide their behaviors through social norms.

#### **1-3-1-1-Commitment to the Community**

The positive effect of national identity on attitudes and behaviors relies on the level of commitment to the national group. Feeling of attachment to the ingroup members leads to a strong sense of community and fellowship. "Who identifies most strongly with their national group and who feels neutral or actively distances themselves from this same group? And what effect does a strong commitment have on group members?" The chair of political science at Nebraska University Elizabeth Theiss-Morse argues that: "The more strongly committed people feel to their national group, the more likely they are to hold strongly the group's norms and the more likely they are to judge group outcomes positively."<sup>38</sup>

Strong identifiers are those people who think more highly of fellow ingroup members than of outgroup members, and they even tend to derogate the outgroup. Ingroup members are also more likely to think in terms of the group. Thus they tend to move outside of their individual interest and sense of self because they are more inclined to feel good and positive toward their group, thus they attempt to enhance the success of their fellows through promoting the well-being of their community, to act in less self-interested and idiosyncratic ways.

People need to discern ingroup members from outgroup members; ingroup members who fit the group are fully accepted as full members of the group, and therefore are trusted,

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<sup>37</sup> Hogg Michael A., and Dominic Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* (London: Routledge, 1988), p.7.

<sup>38</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, op.cit., pp.34-35.

whereas outgroup members are those who do not fit the prototype, and therefore are marginalized, invidious, and detrimental. “The sense of fellowship is powerful for those fully accepted as compatriots and is bitter for those not accepted as full members of national community.”<sup>39</sup> The distinguished professor of history George Reid Andrews convincingly argues that the level of attachment depends on voluntary and involuntary membership, in the sense that people who likely choose to be members of the group voluntarily will feel strong and great attachment than those who identify with the group involuntarily, and they feel or do not feel part of that group because they like or don’t like it since they are born into racial, gender or national group. This is what explains the wider variation in groups commitment; some people will strongly reject their group membership, others will simply not care about it, hence “the ascriptive nature of national identity means that people will vary in their level of commitment to the group, but the potent nature of this identity means that many of those who identify with their national group will feel that commitment strongly.”<sup>40</sup>

### **1-3-1-2-Group Boundaries and Limitation**

When people feel strong commitment towards their group, they also tend to set boundaries that influence their attitudes and behaviors. A great deal of research has been carried out on the boundaries between ingroup and outgroup, and the process that underlies how the setting of these boundaries impact ingroup relations. The setting of boundaries can be used to distinguish between who are full members in the national community and who are not. It makes sense that boundaries are set to differentiate those who fit the group and those who are marginalized.

According to the American social psychologist Marilynn Brewer, people are driven to groups to satisfy two needs: assimilation (inclusion) and differentiation. Assimilation in the sense that people want to include (assimilate) themselves into a larger community, and differentiation in the sense that they want also to distinguish themselves from others. Optimal distinctiveness theory shows that people satisfy these two opposing needs through social identities: “the need for deindividuation is satisfied within ingroup, while the need of distinctiveness is met through intergroup comparisons.”<sup>41</sup> Strong identifiers are more likely to view themselves as prototypical (and actually to be prototypical), to view their group as homogeneous, as well as to establish clear boundaries for their community that distinguish it from other national groups. Prototypes set boundaries by differentiating who is typical and

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid.,p.5.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.,p.10.

<sup>41</sup> Marilynn Brewer. B, “The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time.” *Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin*, 1991 .17(5); 475-482.

who is atypical, they want to see themselves distinctive, exclusive, and embodying the group's standards and norms, therefore to maintain and keep the community alive, well, and strong because they consider themselves as full-fledged and vital members of the group. They consider that group members are "people like them." Marginalized group members, however, are people who are not "like them" because they deviate from what is prototypical, thereby they are seen as a threat to the prototype of group since they make the national group less distinctive, less exclusive, or even less cohesive. Atypical group members are often pushed aside and boxed up to the group periphery where they are ignored, and not always treated as full members of the group. Marginalized groups are generally under exclusionary boundaries through which they are frequently reminded that they are part of the national group, but not prototypical members of it because they are not considered as full-fledged and vital members.<sup>42</sup>

The boundaries of national identity are salient, and they can change over time, as a matter of fact, Irish catholic and Italians were not fully included in the American national community and they were marginalized, but now they are not. Perhaps, the best example which gauges group inclusion and marginalization is the history of African-Americans who remain burdened by the legacy of slavery and deep-seated racism. Moreover, Asian Americans were considered by many to be inferior to white Americans, but recent expectations prove that they are in many ways superior, harder working, and intelligent. More recently, the question is about Mexicans and Hispanics /Latinos in general. American perceptions of Africans and Asians have changed and shifted from treating them negatively to perceiving them positively and superior. "These shifts in stereotypes of American people suggest that shifts will occur in the future as well."<sup>43</sup>

Emphasizing distinctiveness and exclusiveness suggest that strong identifiers are more likely than weak identifiers to hold an ethnocultural view of citizenship; they are more inclined to set hard (strict and exclusionary) boundaries which are different for people to obtain if they were not born into these characteristics such as: being born in the U.S., being Christian, being white, having the U.S. citizenship, living in the United States over long period, and also speaking English. Soft boundaries are basically porous, amorphous, and permeable which include value of freedom, equality, respecting American laws, institution, and individualism. According to Elizabeth Theiss, older, less wealthy, less educated and Christian people who more likely tend to set hard group boundaries.<sup>44</sup>She argues that national

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<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *op.cit.*, p.77.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.181.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.86-91.

group distinctiveness is marked not only by demographic based boundaries (racial, ethnic, and religious characteristics), but also by self-based boundaries (such as: feeling American). “Strong identifiers want their group to be strong and viable, but these desires lead them to place group solidarity above the best interests of group overall. The solution that could possibly work attempts to break down the setting of exclusive boundaries while keeping intact the sense of community that leads to group outcomes.”<sup>45</sup> As groups experience the main group dynamics through their level of commitment and their setting of group boundaries, they also promote certain norms that play an important role in understanding their behaviors.

### **1-3-1-3-Group Norms**

The other group dynamic relevant to national identity is group norms. According to Michael A. Hogg and Dominic Abrams, norms are: “the set of expectations concerning the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour of a particular group of people. They are the social uniformities within groups which also distinguish between groups. They are the stereotypic perceptions, belief, and modes of conduct associated with a group.”<sup>46</sup> Social norms are important in intergroup relations, and prototypical members are guided to adhere closely to these norms. They act to guide behaviors and attitudes, and to influence group members’ relations, in the sense that these norms determine how members are expected to believe and how they are expected to behave within a social group, the American social psychologists Cialdini B. Robert and R. Melanie Trost suggest that norms “are understood by members of a group, and that guide and /or constrain social behavior without the force of law.”<sup>47</sup>

When people follow group norms, they are considered as prototypical group members, therefore their beliefs and behaviors are closely related to this group, whereas group members who refuse to follow the norms are considered as atypical, deviant, hence they are marginalized within the group. Group norms influence intergroup relations and group members are inclined to behave in accordance to these norms. If hostility and discrimination towards an outgroup are key norms of a group, then this group will treat outgroup just that way. But if a group holds norms that are fair, friendly, and caring towards group members, then group members will treat outgroups accordingly.

Professors of social sciences Stephen Reicher and Nick Hopkins even state that behaviors which are influenced by norms of “dominance, affluence and aggression” are quite different from those affected by norms of “charity, generosity and caring.” As they point out:

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.,p.185.

<sup>46</sup> Hogg Michael, and Dominic Abrams, op.cit., p.159.

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, op.cit., p.13.

“It may well be true that in many cases group culture prioritizes such things as dominance, affluence and aggression such that differentiation from the outgroup entails negative and discriminatory behaviors toward them. However, one could also differentiate oneself by being more charitable or more generous or more caring toward the other.”<sup>48</sup>

The content of group norms differs according to groups, whether they have individualistic culture such as the United States and Great Britain or collectivist culture such as: Japan and Brazil. Both psychologists Hazel Rose Markus and Shinobu Kityama assert that national identity is stronger in collectivist culture than in individualistic culture. Members in collectivist communities are more directed to group interest rather than individual interest, but in individualistic communities, members are likely to behave freely without being pressured by the group.<sup>49</sup>

### **1-3-2-Consequences of National Identity**

Social psychologists have long understood the important influence which group dynamics have on people’s attitudes and behaviors. Especially important in terms of consequences is the combination of commitment, setting of group boundaries, and social norms. Such group dynamics explain two types of consequences: helping national fellows and staying loyal to the group.

#### **1-3-2-1-Helping National Fellows**

According to Miller David, national identity generates a desire to help national group members, and obligations toward them, in other words, national identity makes people care more about the well-being of their community members. Miller states that: “The potency of nationality as a source of personal identity means that its obligations are strongly felt and may extend very far-people are willing to sacrifice themselves for their country in a way that they are not for other groups and associations.”<sup>50</sup>

People feel obligated to help their compatriots in various ways by supporting strong welfare system, giving to charities, responding in natural disaster, volunteering and so on. This feeling of obligation to help fellow nationals is then closely related to strong national identity. Researchers in social psychology Doosje Bertjan, Ellemers Naomi, and Russell Spears assert that strong identifiers are more willing to make personal sacrifices and to do whatever needs to be done in order to help fellow nationals even at personal costs. Strong identifiers are more inclined to promote the common benefit and good of the whole group

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.,p.68.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Miller David, *On Nationality*, op.cit., p.70.

rather than individual self interest. National members want to see their group successful, viable, and in good conditions, thereby they make decisions that best benefit the national group even at higher personal expense.<sup>51</sup>

Are all ingroup members equal recipients of helping and cooperative behaviors? Group members are more likely to help prototypical members than marginalized members in the community. They help prototypical members more because these are the people in the group who do the most to advance the group's well-being. "This inequality in the treatment of prototypical and marginalized group members is largely due to the perceived potential damage that a marginalized group member can do to the group distinctiveness."<sup>52</sup> Strong identifiers tend to help prototypical members because helping them makes the national group alive, well, and strong. Weak identifiers, on the other hand, are less concerned about group viability, thus they have little motivation to help fellow nationals, and they are less willing than strong identifiers to be helpful and cooperative toward fellow group members, they feel less of an obligation to help in any way since they don't feel a sense of responsibility, and they generally behave self-interestedly.

### **1-3-2-2-Loyalty to the National Group**

The other consequence of national identity has to do with loyalty to the national group, and particularly the relationship between strong national identity and reaction to criticism. Doosje Bertjan, Ellemers Naomi, and Russell Spears argue that strong identifiers are more willing to remain loyal to their national group during hard times, and to acknowledge the positive aspects rather than negative information of their national group. Strong identifiers are less likely to feel a sense of shame or guilt concerning bad accomplishments of the group, and also less likely to recognize that their country had done something bad or wrong, in the sense that they refuse to feel, and admit the harmful or negative past of their national group. The best explanation of this idea was found by Doosje Bertjan and his colleagues who gave Dutch students positive and negative aspects or information about the colonization of Indonesia by the Dutch, they found that strong identifiers tended to focus on the positive information of their national group, and therefore are less likely to respond with heightened feeling of collective guilt than weak identifiers.<sup>53</sup>

People generally perceive criticism coming from an outgroup members as a threat. Social psychologists Hornsey J. Matthew, Tina Oppes, and Alicia Svensson assert that strong

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<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, op.cit., pp.27-28.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 100-101.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-29.

identifiers rally to defend the group actions, to rationalize criticism, and to derogate the outgroup because outgroup members don't know anything about the ingroup, or they want to weaken or destroy the ingroup for the sake of their group benefit.<sup>54</sup> Strong identifiers don't dismiss criticism from prototypical members since their constructive criticism can improve the group, motivate change, and thus to make the group stronger and better. However, "outgroup criticism arouse more sensitivity because they are seen to be less constructive and less legitimate."<sup>55</sup>

While prototypical members are viewed as loyal, trustworthy to the group, and their criticism is seen as helpful and constructive, marginalized members are perceived as dangerous, unpatriotic, disloyal, bad, and their criticism is viewed as destructive and illegitimate. In general, strong identifiers disregard criticism coming from marginalized group, even they do not need to be listened to since their criticism is roundly rejected and not taken seriously.

## **2-American National Identity**

From the founding of the United States, scholars and pundits have strived for a deeper understanding of what constitutes American national identity. Their interest in explaining its competing components emerges from contestation, acceptance, and amalgam of valuable endeavors. But most of them accept the conception that American national identity is of necessity something different and distinct.

### **2-1-What is American National Identity?**

Scholars have long struggled over the complex and often the competing components of American national identity and the concern of values and norms that people think uniquely and rightly constitute its meaning. Prominent scholars and pundits center their arguments on the norms, and values that delineate American identity since they strive for a deeper understanding of its content which emerges from contestation, acceptance, and amalgam of valuable endeavors over time. Basically, national identity is linked to religion, history, culture, and territory. As Samuel P. Huntington points out:

*"For people throughout the world, national identity is often linked to a particular piece of earth. It is associated with places of historical or cultural significance...or lands where they believe their ancestors have lived since time immemorial (Germany, Spain). These peoples speak of their "fatherland" or "motherland" and "sacred soil", loss of which would be tantamount to the end*

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 149-150.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

*of their identity as a people....People may also see some specific locale as the historical, cultural, and symbolic heart of the nation.”*<sup>56</sup>

Unlike German identity, Japanese identity or Brazilian one, the case of American identity is something different and exceptional. In 1849, the missionary Alexander Mackey observed that an American “exhibits little or none of the locale attachments which distinguish the European. His feeling is more centered upon his institutions than his mere country. He looks upon himself more in the light of a republican than in that of a native of a particular territory...Every American is thus, in his own estimation, the apostle of a particular political creed.”<sup>57</sup>This manifestation reflects that “territorial identity has been weak or missing in America,” “Americans identify their country not with place but with political ideas and institutions.”<sup>58</sup> American identity is, therefore, exceptional, this exceptionalist view of the American nation comes to be widely promulgated by the consensus of the exceptionalist argument which underlies the countless studies of many contemporary social thinkers. Recent interesting examples include the sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset: “The United States is exceptional....Being American, however, is an ideological commitment. It is not a matter of birth. Those who reject American values are un-American.”; Samuel P. Huntington: “The creedal definition allows Americans to hold that theirs is an “exceptional” country because unlike other nations its identity is defined by principle rather than ascription.”<sup>59</sup> All these scholars accept the conception that American national identity is unique and exceptional through perceiving the United States as the world’s first universal nation, however, a second view which provides a snapshot of dimensions of contestation with the grain of the exceptionalist discourse, predicated on the claim that American national identity has been shaped by Anglo-Protestant culture that maintains Americans as white, English-speaking Protestant of northern European ancestry. As the American historian and political scientist Roger Smith points out:

*“...from the outset of the nation many Americans chiefly identified membership in their political community not with freedom for personal liberal callings or republican self-governance...but with a whole array of particular cultural origins and customs-with Northern European, If not English, ancestry; with Christianity, especially dissenting Protestantism, and its message for the world; with the white race; with patriarchal familiar leadership and female domesticity; and with all economic and social arrangements that came to be seen as the true, traditional “American way of life.”*<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp.49- 50.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p.51.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.50- 51.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47.

<sup>60</sup> Smith M. Rogers, “The American Creed and American Identity: The Limits of Liberal Citizenship in the United States.” *Western Political Quarterly*, 41(2):225-51, 1988, p.234.

Many studies have documented this understanding of American national identity, focusing particularly on the contentious polity of immigration in the U.S.A. Despite the fact that ethnoculturalism has always been seen as a defining element of the content of American identity, it has increasingly discredited and less celebrated than liberalism. Liberalism, on the one hand, has traditionally realized within national community that it is committed to shared principles. It is overwhelmingly seen as the defining essence of what makes Americans American in terms of shared beliefs in equality of opportunity along with democracy, economic, and political liberties. The setting of liberal boundaries in the American community yields Americans who don't infringe upon the political and economic liberties, and rights of others, therefore endorsing liberal values. Ethnoculturalism, on the other hand, has been a defining component of American identity as basically maintained by the WASP cultural boundaries within which Anglo-conformity was promoted.

Despite the wide ranging interest from social thinkers in explaining and examining both liberalism and ethnoculturalism, other conceptions of American identity such as: civic republicanism and incorporationism have garnered less amount of explanation and analysis from scholars. Generally, views of American national identity, as Elizabeth Theiss-Morse claims, "fall into four camps: American identity as historically ethnocultural, American identity as a set of belief or principles, American identity as community and American identity as patriotism."<sup>61</sup> The study will analyze and discuss each one separately for further clarification of the arguments.

## **2-2-Views of American National Identity**

The exceptional view of American national identity comes to be promulgated by the consensus of the exceptionalist argument which underlies four understandings: American identity as ethnocultural, American identity as liberal, American identity as civic republicanism, and American identity as patriotism. In this respect, the study will raise concerns about each understanding and discuss how each one contributes in analyzing the social theory of American national identity.

### **2-2-1-American National Identity as Ethnocultural**

From the beginning of the foundation of the United States, there was a strong consciousness that American identity contained an ethnocultural element. The American statesman John Jay's quote describes clearly this ethnocultural vision of the American people:

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<sup>61</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, op.cit., p.15.

“Providence has been pleased this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs.”<sup>62</sup>

In this regard, the historian David Hackett Fischer also argues that the United States began as a collection of a common culture based around core English settlers of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of them spoke English, were Protestant, adhered to British legal traditions, and valued British liberties. This collection of a common culture was perpetuated in America as Fischer observes: “most Americans are Albion’s seed, no matter who their own forbears may have been .... The legacy of four British folkways in early America the most powerful determinant of a voluntary society in the United States today.”<sup>63</sup> It was, therefore from the beginning, a claim that American identity has been shaped by a hegemonic Anglo-Saxon culture which has been for centuries its central component. American identity as ethnoculturalism is defined in terms of race and ethnicity; this ethno-racial model is firmly associated with the essence of ethnic descent. Indeed, Thomas Jefferson had seen the Americans as the direct inheritors of the Anglo-Saxon culture, language, and government. When he founded the University of Virginia, he established the Anglo-Saxon language as the main course. VanHoosier writes:

*“For Jefferson, the Anglo-Saxon form of the English language contained all of the Anglo-Saxon characteristics that had given birth to democracy and common law centuries before. He believed that these original democratic elements could be transferred to the modern student through the study of the Anglo-Saxon language. After absorbing these elements, the student could then trace the changes in English from that period to the present day and thereby, gain a corresponding understanding of the development of English social, political, and legal customs up to the American Revolution. Studying this early English grammar and vocabulary as well as its subsequent changes would provide insight into the relation between Anglo-Saxon cultural institutions and their descendents. Jefferson felt that this was the perfect training for an American citizen.”*<sup>64</sup>

This Anglo-Saxon descent tried to accrete newcomers into its WASP core, and to explain the immigration process within its ethnic myth. In the nineteenth century, for example, there was a wide spread belief among American elite that both Anglo-Saxon blood and American environment altered the newcomers, making them Anglo-Saxons. The American historian John Higham argues: “The Anglo-Saxonists were pro rather than con. During an age of confidence almost no race-thinker directly challenged a tolerant and eclectic

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp.15-16.

<sup>63</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.42.

<sup>64</sup> Gary D. German, “One Nation under God? Ethnicity and Identity in Modern America.” <http://amnis.revues.org/86>. (Accessed: April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

attitude toward other European groups...happy belief that the Anglo-Saxon has a marvelous capacity for assimilating kindred races, absorbing their valuable qualities, yet remaining essentially unchanged.”<sup>65</sup>

It was New Englanders’ moralism, their optimism and their worldly vision that formed the foundation of American national identity which had earlier developed from the Great Awakening of 1725-1750. This revival spread across the colonies and had subsequently infused the American colonies with the first instance of American national consciousness.<sup>66</sup>This self-consciousness led to the birth of the American national identity which was derived from the ability and willingness of Anglo elite to stamp its image on other peoples coming to the United States.

The struggle over the American identity in regard to the ethnocultural view has been a key focus of nativists’ interest, especially in connection with immigration, and naturalization issues in the U.S.A. In the early days of the republic, nativists developed their position of hostility toward immigrants as an expression of their anxiety and fear about the survival of the American identity. Nativist position was that immigrants would constitute a threat to the American identity since they were inassimilable. The first strong nativist reaction was anti-Catholicism that appeared in form of the “Know-Nothing” agitation of the 1830s, in response to the influx of Roman-Catholic Irish. However, nativism focus destined to retain well into the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries with increased bans on Asian immigration, and tensions over Hispanic immigration to the U.S.A.

## **2-2-2-American National Identity as a Set of Principles “Liberalism”**

As the ethnocultural understanding of national identity fits well the various debates over immigration and nativism, the liberal view rests on the set of beliefs the Americans hold. The historian Philip Gleason claims that: “The United States defined itself as a nation by commitment to the principles of liberty, equality and government on the basis of consent and nationality of its people derived from the identification with those principles.”<sup>67</sup> Gleason’s quote depicts clearly the liberal view of American identity. According to him, what unite Americans as a community are liberal values and principles upon which the United States was founded. Smith M. Rogers also argues that the most supported and accepted understanding of American identity is based on the set of beliefs that Americans adhere.<sup>68</sup>America is “a nation

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<sup>65</sup> Higman Jhon, op.cit., p.33.

<sup>66</sup> Zelinsky Wilbur, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundation of American Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), p.226.

<sup>67</sup> Philip Gleason, op.cit., p.31.

<sup>68</sup> Smith M. Rogers, op.cit., pp.229-230.

based not on a common ethnic stock linked by mystic chords of memory, connection, kinship, but rather by common universal ideas.”<sup>69</sup> These universal ideas and principles unite and define Americans and make their National identity exceptional.

Samuel P. Huntington and Seymour Martin Lipset suggest that the American national identity is derived from the adherence to particular beliefs and principles, these principles are referred to as the American creed which is “ a set of universal ideas and principles articulated in founding documents by American leaders: liberty, equality, democracy, constitutionalism, liberalism, limited government, private enterprise.”<sup>70</sup> The political ideas of the American creed have been the basis of national identity, and this creedal definition allows Americans to perceive theirs in an “exceptional” way because unlike other nations, their identity is defined by principles. In fact, it was not only Huntington, but also Lipset who entrenched the emphasis upon the creed, he points out that this “creed can be described in five terms: liberty, egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez-faire.”<sup>71</sup> To all this commitment to core liberal virtues, it can be added: individual rights, a faith in self-reliance, the prospect of upward mobility, and the notion of the American dream which are all tied to the American identity. In regard to this perspective, American identity has an open, expansive, and inclusive character that would embrace and absorb newcomers who endorse the defining principles upon which the country was constructed. Thus, to be an American is to be loyal to these principles. As Philip Gleason observes:

*“To be or to become an American, a person did not have to be any particular national, linguistic, religious or ethnic background. All he had to do was to commit himself to the political ideology centered on the abstract ideals of liberty, equality and republicanism. Thus the Universalist ideological character of American nationality meant that it was open to anyone who willed to become an American.”*<sup>72</sup>

When it comes to ethnic diversity, the liberal conception of national identity is quite optimistic about the assimilation of immigrants in contemporary American society. This liberalism was propounded on the diametrically opposite attitude that there is no reason to claim that immigration would threaten American identity. In the sense that ethnic and social minorities would never erode the core of national identity, so there is no reason to fear its loss. Over time, the mass stock of newcomers will blend into the American mainstream. This was well reflected in words of the American philosopher, poet, and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson who proffered that America was “the asylum of all nations...the energy of Irish, Germans,

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<sup>69</sup> Glazer Nathan, “The Closing Door.” *The New Republic*, 27 December, 1993, p.17.

<sup>70</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The Erosion of American National Interests.” *Foreign Affairs*, 76 (5):28-49, 1997, p.29.

<sup>71</sup> Seymour M. Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1997), p.19.

<sup>72</sup> Philip Gleason, op.cit., pp.31-32, 56-57.

Swedes, Poles and Cossacks, and all the European tribes, of the Africans and Polynesians, will construct a new race...as vigorous as the new Europe which came out of the smelting pot of the Dark Ages.”<sup>73</sup>

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the melting pot notion, dating back to the French-born writer J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and popularized by the British writer Israel Zangwill, became the leading concept. Although it presumed to be liberal and tolerant, it was assimilationist since its proponents took it for granted that new immigrants would merge into the Anglo-Saxon racial mold. However, the process of the progressive fusion of previously excluded Americans into the American identity notably failed to include people of color such as: the Chinese act (1882) which defined Chinese as inassimilable. Thus, with ever growing immigration waves, skepticism about the successful concept of the melting pot metaphor grew.

After the entry of the U.S.A into the First World War, the anti-German campaign against hyphenation called for the abdication of newcomers’ home culture. Furthermore, in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, exclusivist immigration and naturalization laws discriminated on the basis of Anglo-Saxon racialism; Japanese and Chinese had been subject to immigration barriers, and Mexicans were repatriated in 1924.

Liberal understanding of American identity, which expect all Americans to become Anglo-Saxon under restrictive and exclusivist attitudes, was criticized by the American philosopher Horace Kallen’s notion of “cultural pluralism” as proposed in his essay *“Democracy versus the Melting Pot”*: *A Study of American Nationality*. His supporters rejected both Americanization and Anglo-Saxonism, and turned the acronym of WASP from a laudatory tag into an ethnic slur, hence the U.S.A was perceived no longer as a nation with a shared identity, but rather as “a federation or commonwealth of national cultures...a democracy of nationalities, cooperating voluntarily and autonomously through common institutions...a multiplicity in a unity, an orchestration of mankind.”<sup>74</sup>

Cultural pluralism, also under the conception of Multiculturalism, is an alternative response to the issues of ethnic diversity in America, “ethnicity assumed greater salience as an element in the national identity than it has had at any other time”, and “during the first quarter of the twentieth century, the ethnic factors of race, nationality, language...were the issues that

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<sup>73</sup> Erik Kaufmann, “American Exceptionalism Reconsidered: Anglo-Saxon Ethnogenesis in the ‘Universal Nation’, 1776-1880.” European Institute: The London School of Economics and Political Science, 4-7 April, 1997. [http:// www.sneps.net/US/WASP\\_reconsidered.pdf](http://www.sneps.net/US/WASP_reconsidered.pdf) (Accessed: April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

<sup>74</sup> Schlesinger, op.cit., p.36.

sprang immediately to mind when Americans asked themselves, ‘What does it mean to be an American?’”<sup>75</sup>

The palpable discrepancy between the lucid liberal American ideals as pronounced in the Declaration of Independence, and a faulty-burdened American reality as represented in the treatment of blacks gave a powerful impetus that unleashed the Civil Right Movement (1954-1956). The politics of this period involved a grass-roots protest movement in the South against discriminatory and racist institutions which included schools and public facilities. Civil Rights legislation completed the legal and the political revolution with the passage of the 1964 Voting Right Act which ended the abridgement of the right to vote on race or color basis, and the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act which eliminated the discriminatory national origin quotas. The passage of these acts obviously implies that the definition of American identity is heavily based on an ethnically and racially pluralistic society since multiculturalism emphasizes ethnic consciousness and pride since what the son of an immigrant wants to forget the grandson wishes to remember.

Multiculturalism has not been without its critics. liberals respond that multiculturalists promote group identities over a uniting American identity because groups tend to retain and promote many racial and ethnic identities that supersede American identity in a cultural pluralist community. But the professor of political psychology Deborah Schildkraut (2005) defends and supports multiculturalism under her incorporationist view of America as a diverse nation of immigrants. Incorporationism has grown over time due to several factors, including the political incorporation of immigrants and their descendents. It is new and more recent innovation to the set of norms that constitute the content of American identity, and it is grounded basically on the ability of both to assimilate and maintain difference. Schildkraut argues that incorporationists “allow for both differentialism and assimilationism, each to some degree.”<sup>76</sup> Americans want to assimilate while they also show their interest to maintain pride in their ethnic heritage through continuous observing of their traditions.

### **2-2-3- American National Identity as Community “Civic Republicanism”**

The third understanding of American national identity is linked to commitment. David Miller claims that strong identification within a national group generates a sense of obligation, and a feeling of commitment to fellow nationals. He states that:“The potency of nationality as a source of personal identity means that its obligations are strongly felt and many extend very

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<sup>75</sup> Philip Gleason, op.cit., p.46.

<sup>76</sup> Schildkraut J. Deborah, *Press One for English: Language Policy, Public Opinion, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p.53.

far-people are willing to sacrifice themselves for their country in a way that they are not for other groups and associations.”<sup>77</sup>

Such feeling of commitment and obligation is embodied in the notion of civic-republicanism understanding of national identity. Elizabeth Theiss-Morse notes that civic republicanism view is more prescriptive than ethnocultural and liberal views of American identity since it focuses on different aspects of it as practical.<sup>78</sup> Civic republicanism is based on a shared sense of group membership that leads to the well-being of the community. It advances the notion of a vibrant participatory democracy that entails duties and obligations toward the community as a whole. Smith argues that civic republicanism understanding emphasizes on “achieving institution and practices that make collective self-governance in pursuit of a common good possible for the community as a whole.”<sup>79</sup>

Identification and participation in the group entail a greater feeling of obligation, and strong feeling of attachment to the group, thus members are more likely motivated to promote the common good of the group over their self interests. People want to feel a sense of responsibility to group members, and they want them to succeed, and to do well for the benefit of the community even at a personal expense. Strong identifiers are more likely to cooperate, and help each other to accrue group benefit, whereas weak identifiers feel less compulsion to promote group’s interest over self interest because they are less motivated to feel a sense of obligation toward a group that do not like much. Weak identifiers are reluctant to be cooperative and helpful toward fellow nationals.

According to Rogers Smith, civic republicanism entails a need for both homogeneous and small communities to make republicanism participation.<sup>80</sup> The United States, indeed, is a diverse and large country, thus this is what explains the failure of Americans to be good civic republicans through their own lack of political involvement since most of them prefer not to involve or participate in politics. Despite the fact that national groups are generally large, amorphous, and imagined, and members within the group know only small numbers of fellow nationals face to face, people can feel attached to the whole group. This is the case of large countries like the United States where Americans can feel attached to their fellow nationals, and to feel a sense of obligation toward the American community as a whole. David Miller argues:

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<sup>77</sup> Miller David, *On Nationality*, op.cit., p.102.

<sup>78</sup> Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, op.cit., p.22.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

*“Because I identify with my family, my college, or my locale community, I properly acknowledge obligations to members of these groups that are distinct from the obligations I owe to people generally. Seeing myself as a member, I feel a loyalty to the group, and this expresses itself, among other things, in my giving special weight to the interests of fellow-members.”*<sup>81</sup>

All in all, civic republicanism emphasizes demands on group members to be an involved presence in community life, to prioritize the common good of the group through seeing the community as a central component of their own identity. All these attitudes and behaviors guide expectations about Patriotism among Americans.

## **2-2-4-American National Identity as Patriotism**

Patriotism is an abstract and intangible form of sublinear emotion, commonly referred to the feeling of love and pride toward one’s own country. It is usually tied to the genuine love to the land, devotion to country, and political loyalty of citizens to the free polity they share. President George W. Bush, in his commencement ceremony to graduates of Ohio state University defines patriotism as follows: “Patriotism is expressed by flying the flag, but it is more....American needs more than tax payers, spectators and occasional voters. American needs full-time citizens. American needs men and women who respond to the call of duty, who stand up for the weak, who speak up for their belief, who sacrifice for greater good. America needs your energy, and your leadership, and your ambition.”<sup>82</sup>In the same regard, the professor Igor Primoratz argues that the key to patriotism is the loyalty to a particular people and place, as he states: “Patriotism must involve special concern for one's country and compatriots. Patriotism is not the same as love of and concern for humanity; a patriot loves her country more than any other, and is more concerned for the interests of her country and compatriots than for the interests of other countries and their inhabitants.”<sup>83</sup>

According to many scholars in both psychology and politics, patriotism and national identity are used interchangeably as the same concept, and they often tend to mingle them. Among these scholars is Samuel Huntington who links the notion of national identity with patriotism, he says: “in their surge of patriotism....Americans have been a flag-oriented people. The Stars and Stripes have the status of a religious icon and is a more central symbol of national identity for Americans.”<sup>84</sup>

The professor of political science Stanley Renshon also melds the concept of national identity with patriotism, and she defines national identity in terms of three constitutive

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<sup>81</sup> Miller David, *On Nationality*, op.cit., p.65.

<sup>82</sup>George W. Bush, “Commencement Speech to Ohio State University Graduates, Columbus, Ohio.” June 2002. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/200020614-1.html> (Accessed : May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011)

<sup>83</sup> Igor Primoratz, *Patriotism* (Amherst, New York: Humanity Books, 2002), p.188.

<sup>84</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p.3.

elements: attachment to what America stands for, psychological features, and patriotism as “the missing link of American national identity.”<sup>85</sup> However, some scholars make significant distinction between patriotism and national identity, they see national identity as “a group identity, a group made up to fellow nationals, and consists of a cognitive, affective and evaluative attachment to that group.”<sup>86</sup> Whereas patriotism, in its basic form, is the love of country, to remain devoted, faithful, and loyal to it. It is a positive feeling of pride towards the country and its symbols, culture, heritage, and territory because it is sensed through the American flag, the national anthems, and days of recognition as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July...etc. Elizabeth Theiss-Morse makes such distinction between patriotism and national identity, and she claims that: “National identity is not the same as patriotism and the two concepts need to be kept distinct. People who hold a strong national identity feel a deep collective identity with their national group. Patriots feel a deep love for their country.”<sup>87</sup>

### **3-Nativism in the United States of America**

As immigration to the United States soared from the early days of settlement, nativists have become increasingly confident that their agenda would soon dominate political debates. Such political debates are interpreted in negative reactions against ethnic minorities, particularly anti-Mexican sentiments which can be associated with the revival of white nativism as an expression of fear concerning the survival of American identity.

#### **3-1-What is Nativism?**

On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 1992, the Los Angeles riots at the corner of Florence and Normandie symbolize stark, critical evidence of an anti-immigrant spectacle, and the rise of nativism directed to new immigrants. Over the four days of the Los Angeles riots, the sorry, the bloody racial and class tensions came to represent the worst modern race riot of an anti-foreign sentiment since most of the victims of the violence were people of color including Mexicans, Japanese, Koreans, Vietnamese, and Latinos. Those people of color were harshly beaten and spat upon by a group of young African males who were frustrated by developments in contemporary American society. Moreover, during Spring 2006, immigrants and supporters flooded streets in cities across the U.S.A. to challenge current and future immigration reforms in regards to the impact of immigration and ethnic demography of the United States.

A central concern is raised since the early 1990s by the work of many contemporary American scholars, and politicians who have articulated nativist sentiments in bestselling

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<sup>85</sup>Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, *op.cit.*, p.211.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25.

books, including Lawrence Auster, *The Path to National Suicide: An Essay on Immigration and Multiculturalism* (1991), Arthur Schlesinger, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (1992), Peter Brimelow, *Alien Nation: Common Sense about America's Immigration Disaster* (1995), Roy Beck, *The Case Against Immigration: The Moral, Economic, Social, and Environmental Reasons for Reducing U.S. Immigration Back to Traditional Levels* (1996), Patrick Buchanan, *The Death of the West: How Dying Population and Immigrants Invasions Imperil Our Country* (2002), Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (2004).

The American historian John Higham, in his fundamental, enduring, and now classic study: *Stranger in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism* (1955), defined nativism as:

*"Intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections. Specific nativistic antagonisms may, and do, vary widely in response to the changing character of minority irritants and the shifting conditions of the day; but through each separate hostility runs the connecting, energizing force of modern nationalism. While drawing on much broader cultural antipathies and ethnocentric judgments, nativism translates them into zeal to destroy the enemies of a distinctively American way of life."*<sup>88</sup>

John Higham was careful and clear to locate modern nationalism and ethnocentrism at the core of American nativism. Ethnocentrism or "unfavorable reactions to the personal and cultural traits" of others are not necessarily nativists, but "they become so only when integrated with a hostile and fearful nationalism."<sup>89</sup> This form of nationalism which is basically defensive in spirit reflects fearful and anxious attitudes about the changes that could be wrought by immigrants. In this regard, the intellectual discussion of nativism by Higham focuses on three major anti-foreign traditions which came to foster and shape American nativism in the late nineteenth century. The first one was the anti-Catholicism nurtured in Protestant evangelical revival, the second one was virulent anti-Radicalism against foreigners who were prone to overthrow stable institutions, the third and the most important tradition was racial nativism which was molded out of the belief in the Anglo-Saxon origins of the American nation. Cultural antipathies, modern nationalism, and negative reactions to personal and cultural traits of others are fundamentally translated into an ardor to destroy the enemies of an American life. Despite of the several complaints that are hurled at the perceived enemy, all these complaints are basically tied to the charge of disloyalty. Fearing a failure of assimilation, ingroup minorities along with their sustaining foreign connections are believed

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<sup>88</sup> John Higham, *op.cit.*, p.2.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

to pose a threat to the American political order, economic system, and the way of life at the community level.<sup>90</sup>

Nativism discourse is often decidedly associated with hostility, and fear of foreigners. It denotes antipathies, xenophobia, and assault sentiments towards both newly arrived, and undocumented immigrants “illegal aliens”. With the increase of immigration in contemporary America, anti-foreign sentiments have marked efforts to reduce the impact of newcomers through emphatic restrictions of excluding, or discouraging foreigners to immigrate, and also through toughening measures to curb illegal immigration. When immigrants reside in the U.S.A., nativism takes another brand that pressure newcomers to blend into the Anglo-Saxon cultural mainstream.

Loathing foreigners in regard to anti-immigration ideology is expressed in persecuting discriminatory traits, prejudices, denying fundamental rights, and assaulting with physical violence, even lynching. Anti-immigrant sentiments successfully capitalize on public policies, and they result in the creation of obstacles at the ports of entry along the U.S.A. borders, and the adoption of stringent legislation to obstruct and curtail immigrants from entering American territory; officials have even deported people who were considered as public charges. Indeed, the mass deportation program of 1954, officially known as “Operation Wetback” was implemented by federal government in order to remove undocumented Mexican guest workers. Between 1954 and 1959, more than 3.7 million Hispanics were deported by this program.<sup>91</sup>

Native-born Americans with an immigration background are frequently deemed foreign. Even if their immigration background goes back to several generations, they are subject to similar bigotry as immigrants, and they are forced to reject their ethnic heritage and to assimilate into the white Anglo-Protestant culture dominance. In this contemporary era, Americans of Hispanic descent, and Asian origins face an increased impact of nativism. Native-born children and grandchildren of these immigrant groups, particularly those melded into white and middle-class suburban communities, are confronted with renewed accusations of “foreigners” simply because they seemingly look like as one of the newcomers who don’t fit the old model of an Anglo-American. Many of them are not accepted as full members of the community in which they were born because their loyalty to the American nation is

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<sup>90</sup> Charles Jaret, “Troubled by Newcomers: Anti-Immigrant Attitudes during two Eras of Mass Migration to the United States.” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 18 (3) (1999): 9-39, p.37.

<sup>91</sup> Gilbert Paul Carrasco, “Latinos in the United States: Invitation and Exile.” In *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States*, ed. Juan F. Perea (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997), p.197.

frequently questioned.<sup>92</sup> The nativist form of ethnocentrism contains negative and confrontational elements of dehumanizing and diminishing the values vis-à-vis ‘the self’<sup>93</sup>.

Uniting ethnocentric judgments with restrictive and defensive form of nationalism, American nativists make basic distinctions between who is desirable for the American society and who is not. They emphasize a differentiation between ‘American’ vs. ‘un-American’, of ‘native’ vs. ‘alien’, of ‘we’ vs. ‘they’, and of ‘us’ vs. ‘others’. In recent nativist debate, for example, some immigrants are viewed as bad for this country, including Mexicans, Koreans, Vietnamese, Puerto Ricans, Haitians, and Cubans, while Jews, English, Germans, and the Irish are deemed good for this country.<sup>94</sup>

The presence of a distinctive other is primordial in discussing who Americans are, and what the components of American national identity are. In the sense that inclusion and exclusion attitudes of nativist logic strongly shape the idea that a homogeneous national identity or a common spirit of American character predominates in the American community. To imagine a homogeneous identity, the figure of the alien is viewed as a source of insurrection, discontent, sedition, and resistance.<sup>95</sup>

The other has political traditions, and cultural identities that are detrimental to the prevalent customs, values, and beliefs of the American community. Thus the continuous presence of the other helps ordinary Americans to fashion an exclusionary sense of belonging, and a distinctive mode of national identity. Americans can feel cultural belonging, patriotism, and citizenship through the other who is marginalized and discriminated. Nativism can be, therefore, interpreted as a part of a “ritual of purification” targeted to ease ingroup insecurities by creating enemies and blaming them for America’s own problems.

### **3-2-History of Nativism in the United States of America**

The United States has a long and a shameful nativist history. Nativists’ sentiments targeted first blacks, and conquered minorities such as: native-Americans and Mexicans who were seen as a prone to every kind of sinful impulse, savageness, blood thirstiness, fornication, rampant sexuality, and sloth.<sup>96</sup> It is evident that there was, from the beginning of the American history, an increasing resentment from the English-American colonists and their descendents to intrude new immigrants into what was seen as the Anglo-Saxon land.

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<sup>92</sup> Min Zhou, “The Changing Face of America: Immigration, Race/Ethnicity, and Social Mobility.” In *Mass Migration to the United States: Classical and Contemporary Periods*, ed. Pyong Gap Min (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2002), pp.81-82.

<sup>93</sup> Dirk W. Raat, and Michael M. Brescia, *Mexico and the United States: Ambivalent Vistas*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2010), p.1.

<sup>94</sup> Rita J. Simon, and Susan H. Alexander, *The Ambivalent Welcome: Print Media, Public Opinion, and Immigration* (Westport: Praeger, 1993), p.45.

<sup>95</sup> Ali Behdad, *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.11-12.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

Newcomers with different political, religious, linguistic, economic, and social backgrounds encountered fierce opposition from white Anglo-Protestant Americans. Destitute and convicted criminals of certain religious groups, particularly Catholics and Jews were discouraged from entering the colonies because the notion that America is Christian and specifically Protestant can be seen clearly in the anti-Catholic, and anti-Jewish shared feelings of many Anglo-Americans leaders. In the eighteenth century, the American public and Anglo-Americans reacted strongly and negatively to the influx of new non-Protestant immigrants such as: Catholic Irish and German Jews who had migrated during 1850s. The pattern of nativism which was a hallmark of American thought on the question of American identity had clearly emerged prior to the American Revolution. For example, Benjamin Franklin, as early as 1751, explicitly defended the Englishness of the American colonies emphasizing on the German threat, he wrote:

*“Why should the Palatine boors be suffered to swarm into our settlement, and by herding together establish their language and manners to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglyfing them, and will never adopt our language or customs, any more than they can acquire our complexion.”<sup>97</sup>*

Also the same fear was expressed by Thomas Jefferson in his *Notes on the state of Virginia*:

*“But are there no inconveniences to be thrown into the scale against the advantage expected from multiplication of numbers by the importation of foreigners?....They will bring with them the principles of government they leave, imbibed in their early youth; or, if able to throw them off, it will be in exchange for an unbounded licentiousness, passing, as is usual, from one extreme to another....In proportion to their numbers, they will share with us the legislation. They will infuse into it their spirit, warp and bias it directions, and render it a heterogeneous, incoherent distracted mass.”<sup>98</sup>*

Nativists developed their position of hostility to immigrants as an expression of their fear concerning the survival of American identity. Nativism was conceptualized in several forms. The first form expressed itself most powerfully in the nativist American party ‘Know-Nothing’ which enacted numerous laws to harass and penalize immigrants, including the first literacy tests for voting which were designed to disfranchise the Irish in particular.

Defining and historicising America’s “gate keeping” ideology clearly started with Chinese immigration in the American West during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>99</sup>The increasing number of Chinese people immigrated to the U.S. West had persuasively enforced congress to

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<sup>97</sup>Benjamin Franklin [1750-53], *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, Vol.4. edited by Leonard W. Labaree (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961). The electronic book is available on this web site: <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp> (Accessed: May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009).

<sup>98</sup>Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia [1743-1826]*. The electronic book is available in this web site: <http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/jefferson/jefferson.html> (Accessed: May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009).

<sup>99</sup>Andrew Gyory, *Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), p.78.

draft the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 in response to the perceived Chinese immigrants as permanently alien, threatening, and inferior on the basis of their race, culture, labor, and aberrant gender relations. They represented economic, and geographical mobility reluctance, thus protecting the nation from dangerous immigrants became a necessity by using the power of the state to legalize modes, and processes of exclusion, restriction, surveillance, and deportation. Chinese were considered as inferior due to their status as heathens and their failure to assimilate in an Anglo-Saxon mold, and thus challenging the survival of the American national identity. Similarly to the Chinese movement, Americans on the West coast became increasingly alarmed with new immigration from Asian countries, particularly from Japan, Korea, and India. Californians depicted this new immigration as another “Oriental invasion”, and newspapers, radio, and motion pictures stereotyped them as untrustworthy and inassimilable, therefore to be considered as a threat due to their race, and their labor.<sup>100</sup>

The anti-Japanese complain started with acts of violence and lawlessness such as: mob-assault and arson because Japanese achieved great success in agriculture, and they tended to settle, and also to start families in the United States. They were denied citizenship, and the right to own or lease agricultural lands, besides they were prohibited from certain occupations, and even from marrying whites. California lobbied the federal government to stop all immigration from Japan, consequently Japanese laborers were excluded by an executive act in 1907.

One of the significant consequences of Chinese exclusion was that providing recent nativist a powerful framework model, and set of tools to define fundamentally later debates over immigration. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nativists repeatedly pointed and made direct connection between the new immigration from southern and eastern Europe, and the established Chinese threat. The democrats pointed to a new danger: “If it became necessary to protect the American workingmen on the Pacific slope from the disastrous and debasing competition of Coolie labor, the same argument now applies with equal force and pertinency to the importation of pauper labor from southern Europe.”<sup>101</sup>

In response to the increasing immigration from southern and eastern Europe such as: Italy, Austria, Hungary, Greece, many Boston intellectuals promoted a set of racial ideas that designated southern and eastern Europeans as different and inferior, therefore they were considered as a real threat to the nation. Nativism activists rallied to impose severe reductions in immigration between 1921 and 1924, while congress passed the national origin quotas

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<sup>100</sup> Neil Gotanda, “Exclusion and Inclusion: Immigration and American Orientalism”. In *Across the Pacific: Asian Americans and Globalization*, ed. Evelyn Hu-DeHart ( Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), pp.129-132.

<sup>101</sup> Gwendolyn Mink, *Old Labor and New Immigrants in American Political Development: Union, Party and State, 1875-1920* (Cornell University Press,1990),p.107.

which privileged the “old immigrants” from western and northern Europe and discouraged “new immigrants” from eastern and southern Europe. The feeling of being besieged by new immigration at the gates and the threat to the national identity were virtually expressed and voiced by the President Woodrow Wilson:

*“Immigrants poured in as before, but...now there came multitudes of men of the lowest class from the south of Italy and men of the meanest sort out of Hungary and Poland, men out of the ranks where there was neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence; and they came in numbers which increased from year to year; as if the countries of the south of Europe were disburdening themselves of the more sordid and hapless elements of their population.”*<sup>102</sup>

Following the World War II, the passage of Civil Right Act (1965) and the Immigration and Nationality Act (1965) marked the ascendancy of the liberal outlook on immigration because these acts eliminated the national origins system. Instead of allocating immigrants visas on the basis of country of origin, the amendments placed annual quotas, for example, on the principles of family reunification, and certain needed professional skills.<sup>103</sup>

Though the purpose of 1965 Immigration Act was to decrease southern and eastern European immigration, the far-reaching and unanticipated consequence was a major increase in Asian immigration as restrictions were based on national origins, and race was abolished.<sup>104</sup> The outcome thus was the emergence of anti-immigration feelings in the late 1970s and early 1980s, then nativists’ literature was quickly refashioned to be applied on Central America, especially Mexican immigrants who have been the target of renewed public alarm<sup>105</sup>.

Though Mexican immigration was largely protected by agricultural and industrial workers during the 1920s, Mexican immigrants felt a long-standing wrath of nativism; nativists characterized them as foreign, illegal, inferior, and inassimilable. Fears and worries rippled throughout nativist literature, as Major Frederick Russell Burnharm points out: “Our whole Southwest will be racially Mexican in three generations unless some similar restriction is placed upon them.”<sup>106</sup> Perhaps the most recent debate about Mexican immigration is raised by Professor Samuel P. Huntington in his bestselling book: *who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*. Huntington argues that the continuing flood of Hispanics, particularly Mexicans, will split the U.S.A into two cultures, two peoples, and two languages. As he argues: “The continuation of high levels of Mexicans and Hispanic immigration plus the

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<sup>102</sup> Woodrow Wilson, *A history of the American People. Vol. 4, Critical Changes and the Civil War* (Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2010), pp.212-213. As cited in <http://www.prb.org/pdf06/61.4USMigrarion.pdf> (Accessed: June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

<sup>103</sup> Calavita Kitty, “U.S. Immigration and Policy Responses: The Limits of Legislation.” In *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, eds. Wayne A. Cornelius, Philip L. Martin, and James F. Hollifield (Stanford University: Stanford University Press, 1994), p.61.

<sup>104</sup> Sergio Diaz-Briquets, *op.cit.*, p.167.

<sup>105</sup> Katherine Hempstead, “Contemporary American Attitudes toward U.S. Immigration.” *International Migration Review* 30, no.2, 1996, p.538.

<sup>106</sup> Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.51.

low rates of assimilation of these immigrants into American society and culture could eventually change America into a country of two languages, two cultures, and two peoples.”<sup>107</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Though the concept of identity is often treated as something unclear, complex, and ineffable in both popular and academic discourses, it is inescapable in recent sociological, historical, and political debates. It has become at the heart of works of nationalism, ethnic conflicts, and citizenship, and multiculturalism. Overwhelmingly, scholars across remarkable array of social sciences and humanities have devoted much new research to explain the concept of identity which is derived most of all from the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson’s concept of an identity crisis which is randomly applied to almost any loss of identity regardless of whether this loss is applied to a person or a nation. Unlike other national identities, American national identity is something exceptional and different because Americans exhibit little attachment to the locale, and they are hodgepodge of ethnic groups from a wider array of nations. These groups do not have a real or a pure common ancestry, memories, religions, and cultures. In this regard, the exceptional view of the American national identity falls into four camps: ethnocultural, liberalism, civic republicanism, and patriotism.

With the increase of immigration, white nativism has marked efforts, associated with hostility and fear of foreigners, to reduce the impact wrought by immigrants through toughening measures to curb and discourage them from entering the American territory, and also through stringent legislations of mass deportation and exclusion. The U.S.A. nativism took another brand of anti-immigration that is expressed in persecuting discriminatory traits, prejudice, and denying fundamental rights. Recently, nativist sentiments are best articulated in Samuel Huntington’s book: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity* in which the fear of the threat of Mexican immigration and deconstruction of American national identity are exaggerated.

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<sup>107</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.256.

## CHAPTER TWO

### **Mexican Immigration through Samuel Huntington's book: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity***

#### **Introduction**

The United States' legacy with Mexico is characterized by contention and conflict about the issue of immigration. The complex migratory patterns from Mexico into the United States had its roots in the U.S.A. annexation of almost half of Mexico territory as the result of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In fact, mass Mexican immigration to the U.S.A began during the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a consequence of the confluence of several factors which are: the construction of rail lines that linked Mexico City and western Central Mexico to the northern border with the United States, the rapid expansion of agriculture and mining in the southwestern United states required the recruitment of large migratory workforce of manual laborers, the Bracero Program which allowed the entry of impoverished Mexican men as agricultural laborers to relieve wartime labor shortage, and the luring attractiveness of NAFTA, as well as IRCA with its two legalized programs. Taken together, all these factors helped to initialize and encourage a great inflow of Mexican immigrants to the U.S.A. According to Huntington, Such huge influx of Mexicans is considered as a mounting threat to the American National Identity which is undergoing destabilizing changes with menacing implications to its cohesion. Huntington's fear of Hispanization makes an alarmist case about non-assimilation of Latinos in general, and Mexicans in particular due to the polemic combination of six factors. Thus, he points to the need for strong national unity building measures concerning the survival of the American identity.

## **1-Mexican Immigration to the United States of America**

Mexican immigrants to the U.S. have been a major area of contention for the US-Mexico bilateral relations since 1900s. Despite the United States' restrictive immigration laws, Mexico continues to be the largest source and the leading country for legal and illegal immigrants into the United States. In this regard, the study will examine social, economic and political factors that explain Mexican immigration patterns to the United States from 1900s to present day. Understanding Mexican immigration is a timely project because it is now placed at the top of the list of policy priorities for both Mexico and the United States. The issue of Mexican migratory flow, its impact, and its contributing factors had been an issue of great concern in North America only in the nineteenth century.

### **1-1- From an International Railroad to the Second World War**

Mexican immigration is generally mingled with migration from other Central American continent, and the literature typically focuses on Latino immigrant's experiences, failing to differentiate between countries of origin. However, major reasons cannot be ignored in understanding Mexican immigration to the U.S.A. Among those reasons is the unavoidable reality that three characteristics of Mexican and Mexican American groups in the U.S. are particularly distinct: (1) Mexican communities have been part of the Southwest U.S. society economic, and culture since prior the arrival of the Europeans, (2) Mexico and the U.S. share 2000 mile border that experiences both migration flows and cross-border trade and remittances, and (3) human networks have expanded socio-cultural exchanges between the two nations.<sup>108</sup>

“The rapid expansion of the Southwest ethnic Mexican population was the result of a number of interrelated economic and political developments that unfolded in both the United States and Mexico during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.”<sup>109</sup>As fairly new and eager country, Americans entrepreneurs as well as the United States leaders were conscious of the importance in uniting the whole country through connecting the East to the West coast and the North to the South with the extension of vast railroad network. Railroad construction would not have been possible without a massive infusion of labor. As railroad companies found themselves with a shortage of a reliable source of labor due to the fact that laying railroad tracks was extremely dangerous, intensive, and grueling labor, combined with the harsh working conditions of the Southwest desert, they first began to look to the far East as a

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<sup>108</sup> Uma A. Segal, “Immigration to the U.S.A: The Case of Mexicans.” School of Social Work & Center for International Studies, University of Missouri-St. Louis, July 2006, p.10. [http://www.eliamap.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/migys\\_us\\_mexican\\_july\\_2006.pdf](http://www.eliamap.gr/en/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/migys_us_mexican_july_2006.pdf) (Accessed: April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>109</sup> Gutiérrez, David .G, op.cit., pp.40-41.

solution to their labor problems, particularly to import Chinese laborers in large number. However, these Chinese laborers experienced fierce opposition, rejection, and discrimination by American workers and some businesses, and as a result Chinese workers were ultimately barred from entry to the U.S.A. by the passage of Chinese Exclusion acts of 1882. American employers once again found themselves with a lack of laborers after the Exclusion acts, thus they turned to Japan as a source of a potential labor panacea. At the beginning, Japanese labor represented an ideal answer to labor problems, but it soon became clear that Japanese immigrants did not behave according to the plan since they tended to form cooperatives, pool resources, buy or lease lands, and most of all compete against their former employers. Thus, California lobbied the federal government to stop immigration from Japan, consequently the Japanese laborers had come to an end before World War I.<sup>110</sup>

When both the Chinese Exclusion act and Gentlemen's Agreement reduced the available labor supply, American employers began to hire Mexican immigrants to fill the increasing of low-skilled and low wage jobs in the Southwest. The U.S. and Mexico were structurally connected by transnational railroad system that linked the U.S. railroad with the Mexican one, this transnational railroad ultimately led to the beginning of the American recruitment of Mexican workers. The recruitment of Mexican workers through the railroad system therefore played a great role in initializing and encouraging the first influx of migration from Mexico. Statistics on Mexican migration during this period are inaccurate, but extrapolation from Mexico and United States census reveals a great flow of immigrants. "By 1920, the Mexican-born population, residing in the United States had more than doubled, to at least 478.000 individuals. " <sup>111</sup>

## **1-2- The Bracero Program**

Braceros is derived from the Spanish word "brazo" meaning "arm" and idiomatically refers to the farm hand labor for hire, bracero translates to " day laborer" or "arm man". The Bracero Program consisted of a series of bilateral agreements between the U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the Mexican President Manuel Ávila Camacho in 1942, allowing impoverished Mexican men entry into the U.S.A. as agricultural laborers for short-term labor contract to relieve wartime labor shortage. As professors Rachel Ertel, Geneviève Fabre, Elise Marienstras state:

*"L'immigration des Braceros a débuté en 1942. Il ne s'agit pas cette fois d'immigration clandestine, mais du résultat d'un accord entre gouvernements*

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.,p.43.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.,pp.44-45.

*mexicain et américain. Ce programme, qui devait théoriquement se terminer en 1963, a mené aux Etats-Unis jusqu'à cette date 4.5 millions de personnes. Cette immigration correspond à la demande en main-d'œuvre rurale créée, pendant la guerre, par l'exode des ouvriers agricoles américains vers les usines de défense. En principe, pour ces ouvriers qui reçoivent un visa temporaire, généralement de six mois, le gouvernement américain a fait des promesses au gouvernement mexicain garantissant l'absence de discrimination, des salaires décents et des conditions de travail correctes. Mais il n'est aucun moyen de contrôler si ces clauses sont respectées. ”*<sup>112</sup>

Politically, the Bracero Program was justified by labor shortages that many feared would occur with United States citizens going off to war. In 1917, W.W.I labor shortages were used to modify immigration law to allow the Bracero Program, however, it was until the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1942 that the United States concluded an intergovernmental agreement for the use of Mexican agricultural labor on the U.S. farms. As southwestern employers raised concerns about severe labor shortages, claiming that they were losing labor to industry and military, along with the massive increase and growing scale in agricultural production, “the program began quietly with the transportation of 500 Mexican contract workers from the interior of Mexico to the sugar-beet fields outside Stock, California.”<sup>113</sup>

The Bracero Program had various negative consequences, among them was the parallel movement of illegal workers; its use had stimulated a great increase in the number of illegal migrants who poured into the United States seeking work. Evidently, the influx of undocumented immigration in the late 1940s surpassed that of 1920s, when the border had seemed open virtually to all immigrants. In the beginning of 1945, the flow of undocumented entries in the United States from Mexico already exceeded the numbers of workers who had entered under the Bracero Program. Thousands of illegal immigrants “were induced to come to the United States through a combination of factors, including the lure of higher wages, the blandishments of labor recruiters, and, perhaps most important, the encouragement they received from friends and relatives.”<sup>114</sup>

Both governments were actually aware of the problem, but there was little they could do about it. The early solution to this was the mass deportation achieved with “Operation Wetback.” Each of the parties blamed the other for this problem. Mexico needed to control the number of illegal workers leaving the country, while the United States had to punish those issued work permits to unauthorized Mexican workers. As criticism continued against the Bracero Program from both religious and labor organization, the Department of Labor issued

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<sup>112</sup> Rachel Ertel, Geneviève Fabre, and Èlise Marienstras, *En Marge sur les Minorités aux États-Unis* (Institut d'Anglais Charles V, Université Paris VII, Paris 1971), p.207.

<sup>113</sup> Gutiérrez, David .G, op.cit., p. 134.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p.142.

a study in 1959 through which it stated that domestic farm worker was at a disadvantage due to this program, as a result it came to an end in 1964. A huge number of both legal and illegal Mexicans entered the United States during the whole years the Bracero Program lasted, from which it can be concluded that this program has a great influence in increasing Mexican immigration.

### **1-3 - From Immigration Reform and Control Act “IRCA” to North American Free Trade Agreement “NAFTA”**

There was relatively a great flow of illegal Mexican immigrants after 1976 because of the U.S. higher wages and devaluation of the Mexican Peso. By 1980, an estimated one million of undocumented Mexicans were living in the U.S.A.

As the Mexican economy witnessed a crisis unleashed by the severe devaluation of currency, increasing number of unauthorized Mexican workers crossed the border North to the United States. Such increase in unauthorized Mexicans prompted the Congress to enact the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) whose purpose was to control and reduce clandestine immigration by imposing sanctions and penalties on the U.S. employers who knowingly hired unauthorized workers, and by legalizing some illegal foreigners in the United States under the amnesty program.

The IRCA included two legalized or amnesty programs, and more than 70 percent of the applicants in each were from Mexico (table 1). Residence-based legislation allowed those who had been continuously resident since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1982 to legalize their status since they were entitled to receive green cards immediately, while the employment-based Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) program permitted unauthorized immigrants to obtain legal resident status in certain years if they could demonstrate that they had worked at least 90 days of farm work in the U.S.A.<sup>115</sup> In more controversial provision, the SAW program had easier eligibility requirement and was rife with fraud, thus IRCA did little to discourage illegal immigration. Enforcement was underfunded and ineffective since fraudulent documents were widely used by workers. IRCA encouraged the entry and the employment of additional illegal worker; Mexicans came to the U.S. ports of entry, asserting that they did qualify farm labor and needed to enter the U.S. to obtain proof from their past employers, as a result thousands of Mexicans were admitted with temporary work permits. As Richard Alba & Victor Nee argue:

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<sup>115</sup> Richard Alba, and Victor Nee, *Remaking the American Mainstream: Assimilation and Contemporary Immigration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), pp.178-179.

*“The impact of IRCA on the flow of illegals and on the size of the illegal population was difficult to measure for obvious reasons. But in retrospect it is clear that it provided no more than short relief. Indirect measures of the cross-border flow, such as the number of border apprehensions, suggest that there may have been a several year dip in clandestine entries after IRCA was passed; but the decrease was temporary.”<sup>116</sup>*

Migration networks between the United States and Mexico were strengthened by the legalization of workers and their family members under IRCA, as it had given legal residence to the spouses and children of immigrants legalized under it. Legal immigration from Mexico sprang up tremendously, thus began an era in which Mexico was rather consistently the single leading source of the U.S. legal and illegal immigration.

**Table 1: IRCA Legalization Applicants in 1987-1988**

Characteristic	LA(a)	SAW(b)
Median Age at Entry	23	24
1.Age 15 to 44 (%)	80	93
2.Male (%)	57	82
3.Married (%)	41	42
4.From Mexico (%)	70	82
5.Applied in California (%)	54	52
Total Applicants	1,759,705	1,272,143

Source: Immigration and Naturalization Services Statistical Yearbook, 1991, pp.70-74.

(a):Persons in the U.S.A. since January 1,1982 filing I-687 Legalization Applications. About 80.000 farm workers filed the applications.

(b): Persons who did at least 90 days of farmwork and filing I-700 Special Agricultural Worker Applications.

#### **1-4 - North American Free Trade Agreement “NAFTA”**

Mexico economic reform culminated in North American Free Trade Agreement “NAFTA”, when the President of Mexico Carlos Salinas de Gortari approached the U.S. President George Herbert Walker Bush with the idea of forming a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). President Salinas de Gortari’s motivations in pursuing an FTA with the United States were to increase boosting exports, creating jobs, increasing wages rates, giving the Mexican economy a growth stimulus and reduce poverty. NAFTA which went into effect on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1994 was primary proposed by Mexico, locking in place policies that lowered barriers to trade and investment in Canada, Mexico and the U.S., as a way to solve the 1982 debt crisis in which the Mexican government was unable to meet its foreign debt because Mexico had borrowed heavily in early 1980s in the expectation that the price of the Mexican oil would remain high, but oil prices fell down and Mexico found itself suffering a recession due to the mounting debts. Some Americans and political leaders promoting NAFTA thought that the

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.,pp. 178-179.

economic benefits of treaty's passage would slow the Mexico-US immigration, however, the ultimate extent of NAFTA economic consequences of the treaty implementation will stimulate more migration than it will stem. This view is implied or expressed to varying degree by a lot of authors, simply because NAFTA is supposed to affect the current patterning of migration, particularly to stimulate increased migration well into foreseeable future. Thus Mexican President Salinas asserts that freer trade means: "More jobs...higher wages in Mexico, and this in turn will mean fewer migrants to the United States and Canada. We want to export goods, not people."<sup>117</sup>

The best evidence suggests that the United States is currently receiving many immigrants from Mexico with a given certainty that future immigrants will mainly venture over established trajectories heading north. It is likely that migration will substantially increase as potential Mexican immigrants increasingly respond to the attractiveness of NAFTA-induced expansion and economic opportunities that are simply not available in Mexico; an impoverished country with rampant joblessness and correspondingly low wages. As a matter of fact, Mexico-U.S immigration increased along with Mexico-U.S trade. The estimated number of unauthorized Mexicans in the U.S. increased from 2.5 million in 1995 to approximately 4.5 in 2000, then to 11 million in 2005, and the number of foreign born-U.S. residents reached almost 36 million, including 30 percent who were unauthorized. Almost 60 percent or six millions of the unauthorized foreigners were Mexicans.<sup>118</sup>

A migration hump (figure 1) in response to economic integration between labor migration and host countries leads to a paradox: the same economic policies that can decrease migration in the intermediate to long run can increase it in short to intermediate run, or in the words of the U.S. Commission examining mutually beneficial policies to substitute trade for migration, there is "a very real short-term versus long-term dilemma" to persuade a skeptical public that NAFTA is the best way to slow unwanted migration. Stimulating increased migration in short run under NAFTA can be explained by political leaders as a worthwhile price to pay for policies that reduce unwanted immigration in the long run, however, they must understand why both trade and migration grow together (The Migration hump illustrated in figure 1).

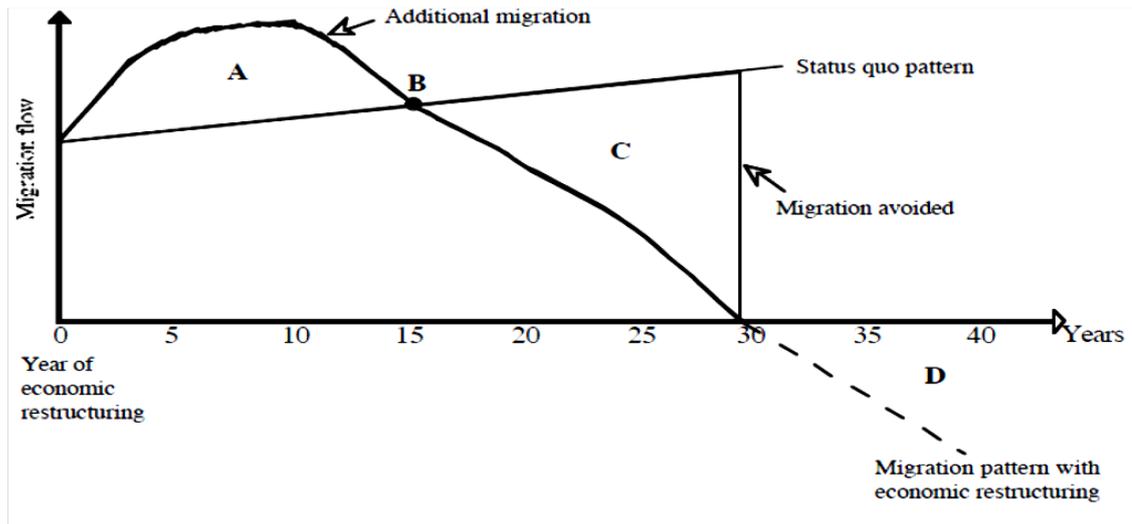
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<sup>117</sup>George H. Bush, "Letter to Congress", May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1991, p. 17.

<http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1991/html/Dispatchv2no18.html>. (Accessed: June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>118</sup>Passel S. Jeffrey, "Estimates of the Size and Characteristics of the Undocumented Population, 2005." <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/44.pdf>. (Accessed: January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

**Figure 1: The Migration Hump**



Source: Martin Philip, "Mexico-US Migration", [http://www.iie.com/publications/chapters\\_preview/332/08iie3349.pdf](http://www.iie.com/publications/chapters_preview/332/08iie3349.pdf).

The steadily rising line represents the status-quo migration flow, and the hump line shows the additional migration associated with freer trade and economic integration. The migration rises in the status quo due to primarily previous faster demographic growth and slower economic growth in Mexico. The upward slope of the hump is explained by insufficient jobs creation and labor displacement, as well as, shows the U.S. demand for Mexican workers. The down slope of the hump was expected to begin when Mexican labor to the U.S.A. fell, and economic development helped to create more and better wage rates in Mexico (year 8). After year 15, Mexico-U.S. migration is avoided because the additional migration under NAFTA was a reasonable price to pay in short-run for a reduction of Mexican-U.S. migration in the long run.<sup>119</sup>

## **2-Samuel Huntington's book: *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity***

Harvard Professor Samuel P. Huntington had long been considered as one of America's most distinguished political scientists. He has become very famous with his book: *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of the World Order*<sup>120</sup>, in which he demonstrates that human societies and civilizations are not driven by politics, economics, and secular concern alone, but more fundamentally they are based on religions and cultures. He identifies not only a single Christian civilization, but rather he distinguishes three of them: western, Latin American, and Orthodox.<sup>121</sup> And he also distinguishes eight major civilizations according to

<sup>119</sup> Philip Martin, "NAFTA and Mexico-US Migration." December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005. [http://giannini.ucop.edu/Mex\\_USMigration.pdf](http://giannini.ucop.edu/Mex_USMigration.pdf). (Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>120</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996)

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

the territories of the world's great religions. Especially after the period of 9/11 when he gave considerable attention to Islam and more interest to what he called "a high propensity to resort to violence"<sup>122</sup> among Muslims.

In his highly publicized and much reviewed book, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Professor P. Huntington takes up again some of the themes of his *Clash of Civilizations*, but this time from some different perspectives. In his book, Huntington argues that the American national identity is undergoing destabilizing changes with threatening implications for America's national cohesion due to trends toward cultural loss. The driving force of this is immigration from Latin America, and especially from Mexico.

Huntington has attracted much attention with his contention that Latinos and particularly Mexicans are overwhelmingly American borders, labor markets, and their descendents are failing to assimilate as European immigrants did before them. As he says: "Mexican immigrants and their progeny have not assimilated into American society as other immigrants did in the past and as many immigrants are doing now."<sup>123</sup>

His book typically identifies a mounting threat of Mexican immigration, and then he points to the seed for strong national unity building measures, thus if the required vigorous measures, according to him, to the particular challenge at hand are not forthcoming, various calamities will ensue; the Anglo-Protestant identity will be undermined and the U.S. will lose large part of its territory to Mexico. It is sometimes argued that the cast of Mexican immigration to the U.S. is different since much has been made about the Mexican reconquest of the Southwest which belonged to Mexico prior to the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Huntington argues this cultural claim when he writes: "Mexican immigration looms as a unique and disturbing challenge to our cultural integrity, our national identity, and potentially to our future as a country."<sup>124</sup> Certainly, the intimations of a threat are in no way new, nor are a unique product of the war on terror. What is new, however, is the force with which they are being articulated today and the ways in which they are entering into popular circulation in the U.S.A.

*Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* focuses a large part of its accusation on a deconstruction of American identity in an impassioned analysis that would almost be called a polemic except for the author's relentless and dry factual piling up of data and citations one upon the other. Huntington represents Mexican immigration as a special

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., pp.256-258

<sup>123</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p.222.

<sup>124</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge." *Foreign Policy magazine*, March/April, 2004.  
[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2004/03/01/the\\_hispanic\\_challenge](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2004/03/01/the_hispanic_challenge) (Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

case of non-assimilation to the American creed, a series of civic virtues derived, in his view, from the American Anglo-Protestant cultural heritage. He argues that immigrants, especially those from Mexico, are undermining the Anglo-Protestant creed, destroying the shared identity that makes the Americans, these immigrants do so by refusing to incorporate into the American mainstream, to learn English, to become citizens, and worst of all by maintaining a segregated society centered on un-American values. According to Huntington, it is not entirely the Mexican fault, but also the current trends of multiculturalism and diversity which are strongly favored within the United States by powerful enlightenment ideas, if not by what might be called the current American establishment itself.<sup>125</sup>

It should not be surprising that *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* has not met with a uniformity favorable response from criticism, particularly in the present cultural climate. Huntington's book has evoked reactions of opposition from virtually all political strata in the U.S.A. Perhaps not surprisingly, Huntington has even been attacked as a masked racist, possibly the most damaging epithet that can be applied and voiced to a political scientist in the United States today, and thus placing him outside the pale of acceptable society and discourse. Although some other critics have drawn more temperately a number of valid arguments suggesting that his book is certainly grounded in some troubling and advent realities in the U.S.A., his worries about the questions of the future of America and of American identity may nevertheless be more than a little exaggerated. His book has stirred up a lively and in many ways an acrimonious debate among the scores of scholars, journalists, and political activists. Most of them criticized the defiant way the author has approached that subject matter since they have shown that this book, from the academic perspective, is weak, working poorly with questionable presentation of data combined with a lack of political correctness, and the unwillingness to observe some of the current troublesome realities in contemporary American society. The present study will concentrate on the issue to which Huntington examines the idea of what constitutes American national identity. The former Assistant Secretary in Falls Church Virginia Kenneth D. Whitehead criticizes Huntington and his work, she argues that:

*“Although he is impressively learned in the history and development of the United States and of the American character, and fervent in his patriotism and his allegiance to traditional Americans as he understands it, I believe he is in some ways quite wrong-headed and indeed ultimately mistaken in his explanation of*

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<sup>125</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p.221.

what basically constitutes the American character and American national identity.”<sup>126</sup>

Huntington states that American national identity is defined not by race and ethnicity, but by the fusion of its democratic political creed, a distinct Anglo-Protestant culture and way of life that combined the English language, Protestant Christianity commitment, individualism, strong work ethic, love of freedom, and a sense of obligation “to try to create a heaven on earth.”<sup>127</sup>

## 2-1- American National Identity in Huntington’s View

Over time, Americans have defined their identity in terms of ethnicity, race, ideology and culture during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this part, the study will question and discuss Huntington’s perception of these concepts. The following chart (table 2) summarizes particularly his position<sup>128</sup> :

**Table 2: Component of American Identity**

<b>Components of American identity</b>				
	<b>Ethnic</b>	<b>Racial</b>	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Political</b>
<b>1607-1775</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1775-1940</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes (except 1840-1865)</b>
<b>1940-1965</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1965-1990</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1990-</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Source: Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), p. 39.

### 2-1-1 –Ethnicity

Up until the nineteenth century, as most Americans shared an Anglo-Saxon heritage, they defined themselves in terms of ethnicity since it played a central role in the definition of American identity. The issue of ethnicity assumed greater salience as a component of national identity around 1900 when in addition to traditional huge majority of northern European immigrants, the rate of southern and eastern European newcomers rose dramatically. As increasing numbers of southern and eastern Europeans entered the U.S.A. between 1880 and

<sup>126</sup> Kenneth D. Whitehead, “Mistaken National Identity: Samuel Huntington’s Who Are We?” [http://www.catholicsocialscientists.org/CSSR/Archival/2005/Whitehead\\_197-214.pdf](http://www.catholicsocialscientists.org/CSSR/Archival/2005/Whitehead_197-214.pdf) (Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>127</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.32.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p.39.

1914, anti-immigration intellectuals and political movements stimulated a fierce opposition against them on the basis that they belonged to inferior races. Pressured by public opinion, congress passed severe limits to shut off immigration from northern and southern Europe. The ongoing assimilation of immigrants, however, contributed to the virtual elimination of Anglo-Saxon ethnicity as an exclusive component of American identity. Huntington argues: “By World War II and the assimilation into American society of large numbers of southern and eastern Europeans immigrants and their offsprings, ethnicity virtually disappeared as a defining component of national identity.”<sup>129</sup>

From the Second World War onwards, Huntington’s project of downplaying ethnicity derives from his insistence that America no longer consisted of homogeneous Anglo-Saxon population as Asian, Hispanic, Irish, German, Italian, Polish, Greek, Jewish, and other Americans became part of the American community.

### **2-1-2- Race**

White Americans have always felt passionate about race, they have extremely distinguished themselves from other national minorities: Native-Americans, blacks, Mexicans, and Asians who were discriminated in the American community. The ways in which exclusion is perpetrated against racial minorities vary considerably. The most intense form is the genocide that was committed against Native Americans. Other Minorities were enslaved, segregated, oppressed, and discriminated. In Huntington view, the Anglo-racial model as a component of American national identity lost its significance by the end of the Civil War, but especially during the Civil Rights Movement in 1950s and 1960s. The achievement of the Civil Right Movement and the Immigration Act of 1965, which eliminated a racially-based system of allocating immigrant visas on the grounds of country of origin, resulted in the disappearance of race as a defining component of American identity<sup>130</sup>. As the chart “components of American identity” shows, since the 1970s, Americans have defined their identity only in terms of culture and creed.

### **2-1-3 –Culture**

So what is the American culture? The author of *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity* believes that it is the culture of the Anglo-Protestant settlers. The core culture consists of “social and political practices inherited from England, including most notably the English language, together with the concepts and values of descending

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<sup>129</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.38.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

Protestantism which faded in England but which the settlers brought with them and which took a new life on the new continent.”<sup>131</sup>

Huntington’s project of downplaying ethnicity is also derived from his tendentious concept of culture. For him the notion of culture raises a number of questions among them: “Is the U.S. truly an Anglo-Protestant cultural model or not?” Culture, according to him, is a matter of ideas, beliefs, and institutions, such as religious commitment, individualism, and the belief that humans have to create a model society on earth. These values have shaped Americans attitudes towards economic activity, public policy, morality, and laid to the foundation of the American creed. In this regard, he asserts that what is important is the Anglo-Protestant culture, not the Anglo-Protestant people. Yet he argues if America had not been settled by British-Protestant people, “It would not be America; it would be Quebec, Mexico, or Brazil.”<sup>132</sup> Obviously, this is an admission that Anglo-Protestant people are in fact crucially important to American national identity, but how would America create an Anglo-Protestant culture without an overwhelming Anglo-Protestant population? No one can deny that Protestantism in America had a great influence on the formation of the America’s national identity; however “it was no longer necessary to be a Protestant or to subscribe to a Protestant version of Christianity in order to be an American in the full sense, possessed of an authentic American national identity.” Catholics, Jews, or non-believers could also qualify as Americans in the full sense. It is worth mentioning that Huntington points out plainly that America is a Christian country, and this Christianity that forms American culture is Protestantism, these claims “might bespeaks on Professor Huntington part’s a prejudice against, and an ignorance of the Catholic church that is quite unworthy of him.”<sup>133</sup> Huntington’s insistence upon Protestantism as a key element defining American identity today is greatly unwarranted since he would deliberately limit the meaning of Christianity by excluding Catholicism as the major Christian body existing not only in America but in the world. In this perspective, Huntington shows clearly that he fully accepts only those Catholics he believes have been protestantized by America.<sup>134</sup>

Evidently, Protestantism that inspired America’s early settlers is not the same Protestantism of today’s America, thereby “if the revival of this cherished Anglo-Protestant culture truly is what is necessary to the salvaging of America’s threatened identity, then there would seem to be some need for America’s culture to be Protestant in the traditional sense described by Professor Huntington, namely, as denoting what Protestants once believed was

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>133</sup> Kenneth D. Whitehead, op.cit.

<sup>134</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp .96-97.

“right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate,”<sup>135</sup> in a word, America at its founding is not America of today.

The final component of American culture, in Huntington’s view, consists of the legacy of European philosophy, literature, art, and music. The core culture also includes a British tradition of law, justice, the limits of governmental power, and the concept of the balance of powers.<sup>136</sup>

#### **2-1-4- Creed**

The American creed, or the ideological component of national identity, has united Americans for centuries. This creed includes the political principles of liberty, equality, democracy, individualism, human rights, private property, representative government, and the rule of law. The commitment to the principles of the creed provides Americans with an ideological base for national identity.<sup>137</sup>

Huntington claims that Americans have in common a civic national identity which is constructed and based on social contracts, including all immigrants of any ethnicity class, and race. America is said to be more civilized, more principled, and more liberal comparing to other societies with an ethnic-basis of nationhood. Ethnic nationalism, which is based on a distinguished membership in the nation of individuals who share distinctive cultural and ethnic characteristics with the exclusion of others who do not fit the group, is said to be more exclusive than civic nationalism.<sup>138</sup> Although, in Huntington view, ethnic and racial components of American identity have lost significance since the second half of the twentieth century, Americans continue to define their identity in terms of creed and culture.

Huntington holds the opinion that traditional identity is in danger of disappearing due to various forces that challenge both the core American culture and creed, and this could prompt Native Americans to invigorate the discarded and racial components of American identity. As the chart “component of American national identity” cited above, he doubts whether at the run of the twenty first century, culture will prevail as a crucial component of American identity or not because he thinks that American identity appears to be under threat of the Mexican immigration.

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<sup>135</sup> Kenneth D. Whitehead, op.cit.

<sup>136</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp. xv-xvi-40.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.,p.19.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.,pp.47-48.

## 2-2- The Threat of Mexican Immigration to the United States of America

As the impact of Latin immigration is felt in the U.S., immigrants' cultural, economic, and political assimilation into American mainstream society has come to the forefront of academic discussion. The debate is centered upon questions regarding Latinos' incorporation, and if immigration from Latin America will pursue the historical path of full socio-cultural, economic, and political assimilation. Works in this vein have generated diverse and competing perspectives that yield to a wide number of predictions regarding Latino immigrants in general and Mexicans in specific. The debates on whether the cultural heritage and ideological baggage impede their full incorporation or not, are alive and kicking.

According to Professor Huntington, considered the first to raise the question of Mexican assimilation in contemporary America, Mexican immigrants "have not assimilated into mainstream U.S. culture forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves," and rejecting "Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream."<sup>139</sup>

In the face of Huntington's ungrounded theoretical speculation on Mexican immigrant's non-assimilation and dual citizenship, a growing number of anthropological and sociological case studies have begun to gauge the political practices of transnationalism on both sides of U.S-Mexico border within a wider discourse positing a tension between dual loyalty and national identity formation. In our current epoch of ever increasing transnational interconnectivity and heightened global mobility, what the future of American national identity is, by focusing the analytical lens more precisely on the arguments advanced in the work of Huntington who addresses important questions regarding American national identity under globalizing conditions. These conditions provide additional grist for the mill of arguments predicting the breakup of the nation by positing representation of Mexican immigrants as culturally isolated, alienated, and particularly a real threat to the U.S. civic republicanism. The aim of the study in the present part is to cast greater light on the most controversial chapter: "Mexican Immigration and Hispanization". The story arm of *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* is punctuated by numerous lists of causes and attributes of what he call "the Mexican problem" of non-assimilation and cultural isolation.

Drawing back history, it is evident that southern and eastern Europeans followed the historical path of full assimilation, and that the conflict between Catholicism and Anglo-Protestantism was seemingly dissolved by incorporation. So why should Huntington assert

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<sup>139</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Hispanic Challenge.", op.cit., p .30.

that Mexican immigration is more permeable to deviate from this historical pattern? At the outset, he articulates that the wave of today's immigrants is much less diverse than in the past because Spanish-speaking countries are the primary source of more than half of today's immigrants. Huntington pessimistic view of Mexican immigrants' inability to adopt the mainstream American society is based on a number of additional and structural factors that influence the persistence of the Anglo-Saxon culture, and impede the assimilation process. In his book, Huntington posits a list of six attributes of what he calls "the Mexican challenge." In order to comprehend Huntington's source of alarm, the study will highlight his one-sided vision and decipher the complex and the polemic combination of these six factors which are: (1) the contiguity of 2000 mile land border between Mexico and the U.S.A.; (2) the spacial concentration of Mexican immigrants in the Southwest, particularly southern California; (3) the large number of Mexican immigrants; (4) the persistence of Mexican migration uninterrupted by war and economic change; (5) their historical presence; and (6) the illegality of contemporary Mexican immigrants.<sup>140</sup>

### **2-2-1-Contiguity**

Perched between two giant nations, the border bears witness to 2000 mile line, with the reality that no other first world country has such extensive land frontier with a third world country. The United States is often symbolized by the image of newcomers who arrived to it after crossing thousands of miles of the Pacific Ocean. However, this image, according to Huntington, has little or no relevance for Mexican immigration. The United States is now confronted by a huge migratory flow of people from poor, contiguous country with more than one third the total population of the United States. Contiguity enables Mexican immigrants to remain in an intimate contact with their families, funds, and home localities in Mexico since it is easier to travel back and forth, and retain ties to their country of origin. They form trans-border communities which, according to Huntington, threaten the American national identity because Mexican immigrants maintain and develop ethnic identity instead of an American. As a result, immigration is blurring the border between the U.S. and Mexico, advancing the emergence of a hybrid society, a half Mexican, "Mexifonia" or "Amexia"<sup>141</sup> where the proportions of Hispanics continued to grow in these regions with heavy concentration.

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<sup>140</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit.,p.230.

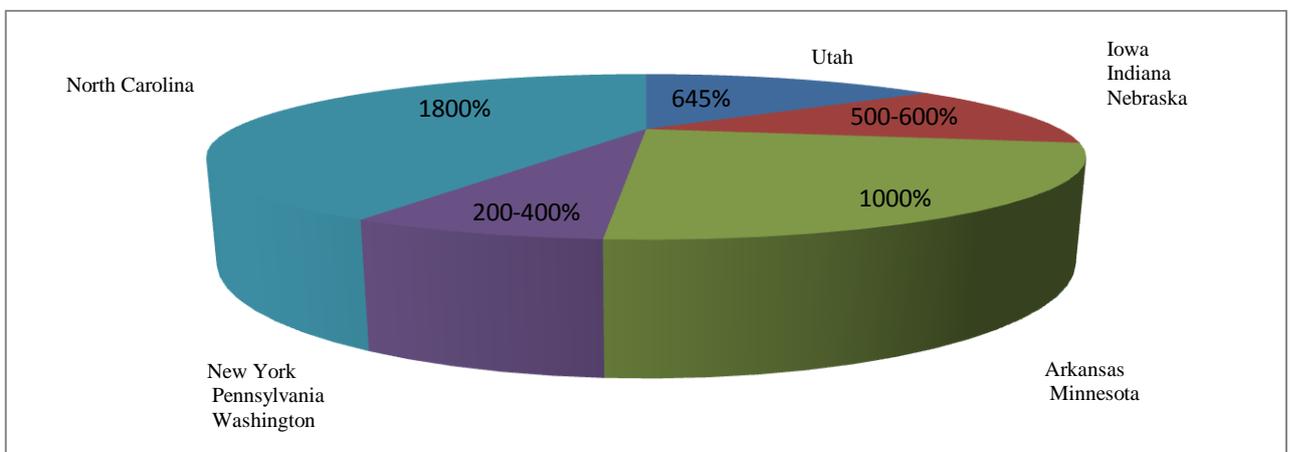
<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*,pp. 221-223.

## 2-2-2 -Spatial “Regional” Concentration

Huntington posits that Hispanics have tended to concentrate regionally, Mexican in southern California, Cubans in Miami, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans in New York. On the one hand, The concentration of Mexican immigrants in enclaves near the border, according to Huntington, will facilitate the maintenance of traditional Mexican values, and the Spanish language that is increasingly used as the language of commerce and government. On the other hand, dispersion, residential mobility throughout the U.S.A., and also the social contact with other ethnic minorities enhance the need to learn English as well as to acquire new norms and values. This has been, according to Huntington, the pattern historically and continues to be the pattern for more immigrants of non-Hispanic origins. The biggest concentrations of Hispanics, however, are in the Southwest region of the U.S. In 2000, approximately two third of Mexican immigrants lived in the western area, and nearly one half in the state of California. Moreover, during the same year, 64 percent of Hispanics living in Los Angeles were of Mexican origins.<sup>142</sup>

Regional concentration of Mexicans in California, in Huntington view, is a sign of their failed assimilation and represents, at the present time, a strong cultural threat to the regions concerned, therefore Mexican immigration threatens to transfer the U.S.A. from an Anglo-Protestant culture to a Hispanic-Catholic culture. In reality, the Census reports of 1900 and 2000 indicate changes in migration destinations for Mexican immigrants. Between 1990 and 2000, sociologists Víctor Zúñiga, and Rubén Hernández-León report the following increases in non-traditional states:<sup>143</sup>

**Figure 2: Mexican Population Increase in Non-Traditional States**



Source: Víctor Zúñiga, and Rubén Hernández-León, *New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005), pp. xi-xxix.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., pp. 226-227.

<sup>143</sup> Víctor Zúñiga, and Rubén Hernández-León, *New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2005), pp. xi-xxix.

While the states: Arizona, California, Illinois, New Mexico, and Texas continue to have the largest Mexican American populations, the U.S. Census indicates that six additional states have large concentrations of Mexican immigrants: Georgia, Florida, Colorado, North Carolina, New York, and Nevada.

### **2-2-3- Persistence**

Huntington argues that the recent wave of immigrants shows no ebbing, and this rapid growth results in creating a large Mexican component of that current wave which is “likely to endure for some while absent a major war or recession.”<sup>144</sup> The flow of Mexican immigrants decreases only if the economic well-being of Mexico comes approximately to that of the United States. To achieve this proportion in a long run, however, would require rapid expansion and growing scale of the economic sector in Mexico with a great exceeding rate comparing to that of the United States. In this regard, Huntington holds that sustained high levels of immigration can result in three major consequences. First immigration becomes easier for any subsequent groups since migrants help their friends and relatives to join them as they provide them with information, resources to facilitate movement, and also assistance to find jobs and housing. The second consequence, Huntington insists on, is as immigrants constituency increase, it becomes so difficult for politicians and leaders to stop it, and also to oppose what their representatives wish. As Huntington notes: “Representatives of different immigrant groups for coalitions that gather support from those favoring immigration for economic, ideological, or humanitarian reasons. The benefit of any legislative success these coalitions achieve rebound most importantly, of course, to the biggest immigrant group, that is, Mexicans.”<sup>145</sup> Third, the constant influx of Mexican immigration can slow and even impede the assimilation process. Such constant and rapid flow helps to maintain the language alive among the children and their parents because newcomers with their Spanish-speaking tongue are continually exceeding the population that is being assimilated.

### **2-2-4 –Number**

Mexican immigration is the result of political, economic, and demographic changes of the sending country and also the lure and attractiveness of the economic, political, and social conditions in the United States. Huntington argues that Mexican immigration to the U.S. witnessed a constant and a steady increase after 1965. Mexicans accounted for 14 percent in 1970, 23 percent in 1980, and 25 percent in 1990. These high ratios of such increasing

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<sup>144</sup>Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p. 227.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 229.

magnitude of immigrants flow do not equal the ratios of the Irish immigrants between 1820 and 1860, and the German immigrants during 1850-1860. Mexicans are considered the largest group in the United States, and this is due to immigration policies and the increasing rates of fertility among them. Thus, Huntington declares that the domination of the Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, makes quite clear that half of immigrants after 1965 speak the Spanish language only.<sup>146</sup> Especially among illegal immigrants whose numbers appear to have risen tremendously because prior experiences in the United States give individuals detailed knowledge about illegal pathways into the U.S.A.

### **2-2-5- Illegality**

Illegal immigration to the United States was impossible since no law restricted or prohibited immigrants from entering the U.S. for almost a century after the adoption of the American constitution, however, the 1965 legislation took steps against illegal immigration system, its practical impact was felt most heavily, according to Huntington, with the Mexican immigration phenomenon. The Immigration Act of 1965, the increased availability of transportation, and the driving forces prompting Mexican immigration to the U.S.A., have contributed greatly to the problem of illegal immigration from the South of the border.

The main legislative attempt to manage the undocumented flow was the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 which contained provisions to legalize clandestine immigrants already present in the United States, and also to control and reduce future undocumented immigrants. Huntington considers illegal immigration to the U.S.A. as more a threat to social security since it is a special experience for America that had not happened previously, and because no other immigrant group has asserted a historical claim to the American territory as Mexican immigrants can make such claim for the Southwest.<sup>147</sup>

### **2-2-6 -Historical Presence**

The anxieties of Huntington go beyond the threat of culturally, linguistically, and politically fractured American society. He ultimately fears that Mexicans might grip a large part of the United States, in other words, due to their historical presence in the American Southwest, Mexican immigrants could undertake what no previous immigrant group could have dreamed of undertaking, namely to challenge the existing cultural, educational, legal, commercial, and political foundations that make the U.S. Huntington believes that:

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<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.,p.225.

*“No other immigrant group in American history has asserted or has been able to assert a historical claim to the American territory. Mexicans and Mexican-Americans can and do make that claim....United States has invaded, occupied its capital... and then annexed half of its territory. Mexicans do not forget these events. Quite understandably, they feel that they have special rights in these territories.”*<sup>148</sup>

Fears of threat of secession had much broader ramifications; reunification of the southwestern states have indeed become coterminous with a whole set of other considerations on the future of the Southwest with a broader decline of the American identity which is rapidly becoming a Mexican identity. Huntington’s mongering fear of secession is advanced in an extremist form. Is it in fact true that Mexicans refer to the Southwest territory in property term, asserting special right and a historical claim to that territory? Nevertheless, how adequate is such evidence?

As his work is heavily footnoted, Huntington offers no credible evidence that Mexicans seek or are about to reunite their lost territories together in order to form a new country, and thus to break away from America. In fact, Huntington’s assertion that Mexicans claim a historical presence would be enough to day to provoke a kind of opposition from critics who stirred up an acrimonious debate about such claims. Among them, Enrique Krauze, editor of *Letras Libres* who points out that: “The obvious questions: who made this claim, and when? No serious (or unserious) figure of the twentieth century, political or intellectual-at least none that I know of-ever proposed something so absurd.”<sup>149</sup>

Indeed, Huntington’s provocative assertion of the likelihood of a Mexican “*reconquista*” is supported by only one prediction of Professor Charles Truxillo of the University of New Mexico who “predicts that by 2080 the southwestern states of the United States and northern states of Mexico come together to form a new country, *La Republica del Norte*.”<sup>150</sup> The combination of the six factors: contiguity, spacial concentration, persistence, number, illegality, and historical presence, in Huntington’s view, pose fears of hispanization and a challenge to the American national identity.

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., pp.229-230

<sup>149</sup> Enrique krauze, “Identity Fanaticism: In defense of Mexican-Americans.” *New Republic*, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2004. [http://www.docstoc.com/docs/85306327/Identity-Fanaticism\\_-The-New-Republic](http://www.docstoc.com/docs/85306327/Identity-Fanaticism_-The-New-Republic) (Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>150</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.246.

## **2-3- Fears of Hispanization and Facts of the Mexican Challenge to the American National Identity**

Huntington's fear of hispanisation assumes to mean that the United States will become a Hispanic nation. His skepticism makes an alarmist case about the criteria that can be used to gauge assimilation among Hispanics in general, and Mexicans in specific in terms of language, education, occupation and income, citizenship, identity, and intermarriage.

### **2-3-1- Language**

One major measurement of acculturation is the acquisition of the governing language. Although research on immigrants' language retention, up to the present, has been hampered by a lack of data on language use or ability broken down by generation, Huntington voices concerns about the prospects of Mexican immigrants' linguistic assimilation, he says: "If the second generation does not reject Spanish out of hand, the third generation is also likely to be bilingual, and the maintenance of fluency in both languages is likely to become institutionalized in the Mexican American community."<sup>151</sup>

There is only Americanism created by an Anglo-Protestant society, "Mexican-Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English."<sup>152</sup> The most threatening aspect of the "Hispanic Challenge", in Huntington view, is their failure to learn English because they are much less likely to speak it than earlier generations of European immigrants. Huntington considers Mexican immigrants to be such a complex and unique group that he does not believe that they will follow the same pattern of linguistic assimilation as did earlier immigrants groups. He is convinced that by the third generation, Mexican immigrants will differ from previous immigrant generations; Mexican immigrants and their descendents in different generational cohorts are able to speak their mother tongue and actually do so.

Huntington is particularly upset by the fact that, instead of focusing on the issue and finally declaring English as the only official language, the United States spends money on bilingual education schemes and seems to embrace Spanish language as an alternative way of social communication which is by no means favored by Huntington who believes that since the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the U.S.A. and the Anglo-Protestant culture have been assaulted by the popularity of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. Huntington argues that the current political trends and ideologies are, on balance, hostile to assimilation.

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p.232.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p.256.

Bilingual education and multiculturalism mean that public schools are no longer promoting national identity or patriotism, but eventually establishing a subsociety based on the Spanish language on the U.S. soil. This subsociety could come to monopolize power and economy in some regions of the U.S. This is seen by Huntington as a sign of the impending collapse of traditional American values, and a threat to the English monolingual Americans.

While the United States has probably incorporated more bilingual people with cultural and linguistic diversity, since the first days of the building of the nation, the U.S. history is notable for its mass-extinction of non-English represented by exclusion and repression. The use of two languages is not an exceptional practice, it is rather a normal one in the experience of a good part of the world population.

Huntington's prediction of an American job market, in which knowledge of Spanish language is more important than fluency in English, seems rather for fetched. President of Immigration Works Tamara Jacoby opposes Huntington skepticism about language assimilation of the third generation Mexican Americans, arguing that: "Study after study shows that virtually everyone in the second generation grows up proficient in English, and by the third generation, two thirds speak only English."<sup>153</sup>

It is particularly noteworthy that scholars such as sociologists Richard Alba & Victor Nee are more optimistic. They expect that assimilation will proceed pretty much as it was for the European wave, roughly from 1850 to 1930. In this respect, Richard Alba states:

*"The abundant data about language practices among Hispanics demonstrate unequivocally that 1) with rare exceptions, U.S.-born Hispanics speak English well, as do the majority of immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for 10 years; 2) about half of the second generation is English dominant; and 3) by the third generation English dominance, if not monolingualism, is the prevalent pattern. The seemingly high rates of Spanish use among Hispanics today are due mainly to very high rates of recent immigration: in 2000, the foreign-born made up 40 percent of the entire Hispanic population. These facts do not lay the basis for a separate Spanish-language subsociety."*<sup>154</sup>

In response to Huntington charge that Mexicans can share the American dream only if they can only dream in English, Professor of American Civilization and Politics

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<sup>153</sup> Tamar Jacoby, "Rainbow's End: A Renowned Student of America's Maladies Detects a New Threat to our Identity." *Washington Post*: BW03. May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

<sup>154</sup> Richard Alba, "Mexican Americans and the American dream." *American Political Science Association*, 4(2) (June 2006):289-296. [http://www.ime.gob.mx/2006/estudios/APSA-Identidad-Mexico\\_Americanos.pdf](http://www.ime.gob.mx/2006/estudios/APSA-Identidad-Mexico_Americanos.pdf) (Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

Lawrence H. Fuchs points out: “Actually, most of the grandchildren of Latino immigrants could not dream in Spanish even if they wanted to.”<sup>155</sup>

### 2-3-2 –Education

Assuming current trend to continue, Mexican immigrants and their offsprings will virtually all speak English, despite the increased Spanish in the air. As with English language acquisition, Huntington presents data that appear to show very low levels of Mexican American education profile beyond high school, asserting that the educational gap between those newcomers and native-born causes a variety of economic, fiscal, and social ills. The decrease of educational attainment regardless of generation is significantly clear among Mexicans, and Huntington doubts that Hispanic immigrants, particularly Mexicans, will make notable strides in narrowing their educational gap. Thus, he mentions data with numbers reported from several resources, showing that:

*“The education of Mexican origin differs significantly from the American norm. In 2000, 86.6 percent of native-born adults had graduated from high school...down to 49, 6 percent for all Latin Americans and only 33, and 8 percent for Mexicans. In 1990, the Mexican rate of high school graduation was half the rate for the entire foreign-born population. According to 1986 and 1988 Current Population Survey, male Mexicans immigrants had a mean value of 7.4 years of schooling compared to 11.2 for those of Cuban origin, 13.7 for Asians, and 13.1 for non-Hispanic white natives....What is clear is that the educational achievement of subsequent generations of Mexican-Americans continue to lag.”<sup>156</sup>*

Huntington shows that a very huge share of Mexican immigrants have not completed high school, and only a small share of them have a college or graduate education appreciation. The comparison and interpretation, that Huntington provides, are characterized by both deficiencies in data and a lack of intergenerational mobility in education in the Mexican American case because he understates the considerable attainment among Mexican immigrants. He represent data that is related to high school diploma only category, however, the some college category is absent from his presentation and comparison, where the majority of Mexican American college goers finish. Data of 2000 Census (table 3) indicates that the proportion of Mexican Americans, individuals born in the U.S. between 1971 and 1975, is quite notable and substantial; more than 50 percent of Mexican Americans “males or females” attend college comparing to Anglos. Huntington also shows that only 4 percent of the fourth generation attains the baccalaureate, however, these data also show that the populations’ percentage with baccalaureate degree is 26 percent and this is not as low as Huntington’s data

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<sup>155</sup> Lawrence H. Fuchs, “Mr. Huntington’s Nightmare. Review of Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity.” *American Prospect*, 13(8) (August 2004):70-71.

<sup>156</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp. 232-233.

indicate. The number and pace of these transitions suggest that the expectations of Huntington that Mexican immigrants lag educationally and thus will fare poorly in American society are unduly pessimistic.

**Table 3: Educational Attainment, 1971-1975 Birth Cohort**

Cohort Born in U.S. 1971-1975 (ages 25-29)	No High School Diploma	High School Grad	Some College (No Degree)	Associate Degree	Baccalaureate or More	Unweighted N
<b>Mexican Americans</b>						
Male	27.4	31.1	25.3	5.4	10.8	18.784
Female	21.4	27.7	28.7	7.0	15.2	18.441
<b>Anglos</b>						
Male	10.2	27.6	25.3	7.5	29.3	278.246
Female	7.7	22.8	25.4	9.3	34.8	282.371

Source: 2000 Census PUMS Data.

Still, to evaluate intergenerational education mobility among Mexicans correctly, an important question concerns how Mexican Americans do when compared to their parents, thus data must be realigned to match up parents, sons, and grandsons of Mexican immigration. In order to track the degree of improvement in education of both Hispanics and Mexicans and their offsprings, it is helpful to analyze (table 4) which is indexed by immigrant generations with cohort for Hispanics and Mexicans.<sup>157</sup>

**Table 4: Hispanic and Mexican Men's Education (years), by Generation**

YEAR OF BIRTH	HISPANIC			MEXICAN		
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
1830-1834			3.17			2.80
1835-1839			4.34			4.61
1840-1844			3.69			3.49
1845-1849			5.30			5.47
1850-1854			5.27			5.43
1855-1859		6.34	5.97		5.50	5.68
1860-1864		5.19	6.62		3.76	6.32
1865-1869		4.46	7.33		3.72	6.96
1870-1874		5.26	7.97		3.70	7.75
1875-1879		4.77	8.40		4.77	8.20
1880-1884	3.12	5.65	9.55	2.67	5.08	9.17
1885-1889	3.62	6.22	10.05	2.79	5.66	9.75
1890-1894	4.98	7.55	10.89	4.56	7.04	10.47
1895-1899	4.68	8.13	11.74	3.80	7.47	11.61
1900-1904	4.55	7.75	12.08	3.81	7.37	12.40
1905-1909	5.06	9.59	12.24	4.27	9.27	12.17
1910-1914	6.10	10.56	12.13	5.02	10.30	12.13
1915-1919	7.41	11.17	12.47	6.20	10.93	12.45
1920-1924	7.91	11.80	12.4	6.22	11.61	12.29
1925-1929	8.28	12.28		5.96	12.04	
1930-1934	8.76	12.10		6.23	11.64	
1935-1939	8.40	12.50		6.15	12.26	
1940-1944	9.09	12.88		6.86	12.51	
1945-1949	9.56	12.42		7.79	12.08	
1950-1954	9.13			7.72		
1955-1959	9.47			8.23		
1960-1964	9.79			8.71		
1965-1969	9.90			9.30		
1970-1974	9.66			9.10		

Source: James.P Smith, "Assimilation across the Latino Generations." *American Economic Review* 93 (May 2003): 315-319, p. 316.

<sup>157</sup> James P. Smith, "Assimilation across the Latino Generations." *American Economic Review*, 93 (May 2003): 315-319,p.316.

With 25 year lag between generations, education of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation refers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Hispanics born 25 years after the birth-years indexed for immigrants in the first column. The same 25 years offset is drawn for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generations. Mexican schooling experience across generation is significantly advancing. Indeed, years of school is doubled from 4.3 years for Mexican immigrants born during 1905-1909 to 9.4 years of school for the American born sons, and their grandsons were high school graduates. During this period, the average education gain across the three generations of Mexican men outpaced seven years of school. Huntington commonplace claim that educational levels of Hispanic and particularly Mexican immigrants is continually falling behind that of native-born is unwarrantable. However, Mexicans have, in fact, made notable strides in narrowing the schooling gap with native white men.

Overall substantial educational gains and rapid improvement appear to be taking place among Mexican immigrants. Are such progress and achievements level of education connected intergenerationally with income and occupation? The study will take into account the factors which affect income mobility, and employment in the following point.

### **2-3-3- Occupation and Income**

While there are a number of factors affecting income mobility, the acquisition of the educational capital is undoubtedly the major factor promoting economic mobility in the American society. Employment mobility associated to higher income is affected by current characteristics of the U.S. labor market which requires an advanced level of education for higher earnings and salaries. However, Huntington claims that Mexican immigrants are facing prevalence of poverty with corresponding lower wages and fewer chances of economic mobility due to lower educational progress. He notes:

*“The economic position of Mexican immigrants parallels, as would expect, their educational attainment....Overall, Mexican immigrants are at the bottom of economic ladder....Few Mexican immigrants have been economically successful in Mexico; hence presumably relatively few are high likely to be economically successful in the United States. In addition, any significant improvement in economic status of Mexican-American depends on improvement of their educational level, and the ongoing influx of poorly educated people from Mexico makes that difficult.”<sup>158</sup>*

According to Huntington, Mexican immigrants are characterized by the smallest and poorest entrepreneurship and self employment which are typically accompanied by economic stagnation and widespread of poverty. However, the number of recent surveys and research

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<sup>158</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p. 235.

speak of themselves since they demonstrate Hispanic entrepreneurship with an appetite for growth and revitalization. Certainly, such growth is translated into wealth creation and job opportunities. As Census Bureau director, Louis Kincanon says: “The growth...in Hispanic-owned businesses illustrates the changing fabric of America’s business and industry. With Hispanic businesses among the fastest growing segments of...economy, this is a good indicator of how competitiveness is driving the American economy.”<sup>159</sup>

There were 1,508 Hispanic firms with 100 employees or more, which accounted for \$42 billion in gross receipts.

There were 29,184 Hispanic firms with receipts of \$1 million or more.<sup>160</sup>

Contrarily to Huntington’s assertion, it is worth to mention data and track changes and improvements of the economic position of Mexican immigrants. In fact, Mexican-owned businesses and entrepreneurship serve as a significant indicator of growing employment and revenues. In the same regard, Susan Sobott, president of OPEN from American express and the founding partner of the Make Mine a Million \$ Business program makes this prediction: “One million women at one million dollars in revenues by 2010 means a possible four million new jobs and \$700 billion to the U.S. economy.”<sup>161</sup> This shows with no doubt that there are promising opportunities, and rapid expansion in Latina-owned business sector.

### **2-3-4- Citizenship**

As with income and occupation which surely show signs of upward trends among Mexicans, becoming a U.S. citizen is another critical measure that determines belonging and becoming fully American, and a key to future participation in the American political body. But do Mexican immigrants show interest in obtaining citizenship? Huntington and immigration naysayers make, as with language and education, an alarmist case about Mexican naturalization percentages which they consider to be low in comparison to those other group immigrants.<sup>162</sup>

At first glance, this may not seem a reasonable point of view without stating statistics of the current realities of naturalization rates. Data presented by Huntington depicts past Mexican immigrants who have shown one of the lowest tendencies to naturalize of any national group in the United States. Such low naturalization rates are primary due to the fact

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<sup>159</sup> Cisneros G. Henry, *Latinos and the Nation’s Future* ( University of Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2009), p. 72.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.,p. 78.

<sup>162</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp. 238-239.

that so many of them entered as a source of cheap labor on temporary contract basis, often as seasonal circular migrants during harvest. Also many immigrants workers, specially youngster ones, cycle back and forth between the U.S.A. and Mexico due to economic reasons. Clearly, unauthorized immigrants are not eligible to naturalize, in other words, the increase of illegal immigration to the U.S.A. makes clear that immigrant's lives are enormously in disadvantageous positions which bar them from becoming citizens. However, securing better life chances for offsprings, whose success may serve the social purpose of minimizing the risk to the household, primary drives naturalization among Latinos and Mexicans in particular. The politician Henry G. Cisneros notes:

*“Still, for all the fears, the reality of Latino naturalization is also encouraging. Like other newcomers, most eligible Latino immigrants eventually become U.S citizens. Among those who arrived before 1980, 50 percent of Mexicans and nearly two-thirds of all Latinos have completed the process. And rates have gone up substantially in the past decade, more than doubling, even for Mexicans... for many Latino newcomers, naturalization is a critical tipping point. Not only is it the moment when many begin to say “we” rather than “they” and feel their fates are intertwined with America’s....According to a recent study published by the Merage Foundation, for example, the children of Mexican-born mothers who have become citizens are twice as likely to graduate from college as those born to women who have not naturalized.”<sup>163</sup>*

These upward trends will surely continue in the future as Latinos rush to become citizens. All in all, Mexicans and Latinos appear to be on a par with previous immigrant groups in their tendency to naturalize and if anything is slightly higher.

#### **2-3-4- Intermarriage**

The growth engine of Mexican business and entrepreneurship and the strong response to naturalization drives, dramatic as they are, quite take the measure of how deeply Mexicans are sinking roots in America. The other ultimate measure of acculturation and assimilation is intermarriage. Outmarriage is particularly crucial because there is no more intimate and consequential way by which newcomers can be incorporated into a society than for them and their offsprings to marry across racial lines, in other words, to marry individuals of the society into which they are supposed to acculturate. Ethnic intermixing has deep impact on groups, this is partly because ingroup marriages impede assimilation and reinforce the capacity to sustain social and economic life conducted under the umbrella of ethnic identity and cultural citizenship. Since intermarriage is often regarded as the litmus test of assimilation into the society mainstream, Huntington claims that Mexican are refusing to become part of the

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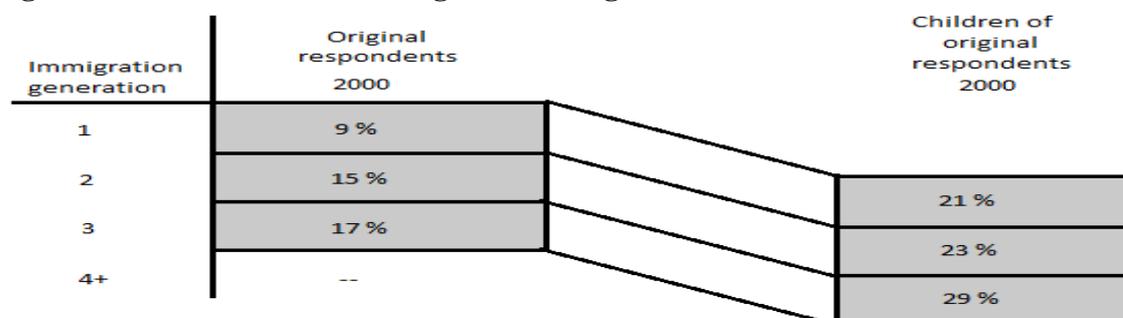
<sup>163</sup> Cisneros G. Henry, op.cit., p.46.

American society because they show no interest to marry outside their ethnic group.<sup>164</sup> The reluctance of Hispanics and Mexicans in particular, according to Huntington, to have non-Hispanic partners is simply another indication of Mexican immigrants' inability to acculturate, but according to recent research, Hispanics and Mexicans in particular bracket the intermarriage spectrum at the high end; the great majority of them have married outside the Hispanic population. As Henry G. Cisneros confirms:

*“Latino intermarriage rates are nothing short of breathtaking. Freshly arrived newcomers-first-generation immigrants-rarely marry outside the group. But their offspring do: nearly a third of second-generation Latinos and 57 percent in the third generation and higher marry a non-Latino....As a consequence of this intermarriage, there are now some two million children living in mixed Hispanic/non-Hispanic households, with many millions more sure to come. The good news is that these mixed families tend to be prosperous and well educated-more so than unmixed Latino families and closer to the norms for non-Latino whites.”*<sup>165</sup>

Both Professor Edward Telles and Vilma Ortiz bristle at Huntington's suggestion that Mexican immigrants show lower rates of outmarriage, confirming that such an assertion is irrelevant since their 2000 survey, which interviewed 15000 respondents, empirically shows that assimilation in terms of intermarriage will proceed pretty much across generations. Figure 3 shows rates of intermarriage of the original respondents and for their children. In fact, results in figure 3 indicate clear pattern of assimilation through intermarriage with other ethnic groups, both across time (column) and across generations (rows). Intermarriage rates among the original respondents increased from 9 percent in the immigration generation to 17 percent in the third generation. However, intermarriage proportion ranged from a low of 21 percent in the second generation to 29 percent in the fourth generation. In general, the probability of having a spouse who is a Mexican origin declines across generations.<sup>166</sup>

**Figure 3: Trends in Intermarriage: Percentage who Married outside their Ethnic Group**



Source: Edward Telles, “Mexican Americans and the American Nation: A Response to Professor Huntington.” *Journal of Chicano Studies*, 31:2, Fall 2006, <https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/87041/original/Telles%252C%2BResponse%2Bto%2BHuntington.pdf>.

<sup>164</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p. 241.

<sup>165</sup> Cisneros G. Henry, *Latinos and the Nation's Future*, op.cit., p. 50.

<sup>166</sup> Edward Telles, “Mexican Americans and the American Nation: A Response to Professor Huntington.” *Journal of Chicano Studies*, 31:2, Fall 2006, University of California Regents. <https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/87041/original/Telles%252C%2BResponse%2Bto%2BHuntington.pdf>.

## 2-3-5 -Identity

Huntington, like other nationalists, insists on promoting national identity over all other foci of affiliations, in other words, the logic assimilation model, according to Huntington, is frequently developed through the identification of what constitutes the U.S.A. as a country with no relevance to ethnic identification that sustains ethnic and racial identities. It seems clear that immigrants entering into a country whose cultural assumptions are fluid and contested will find it harder to incorporate in the mainstream, even if they wish to do so. In such circumstances, immigrants are more likely to maintain former cultural attachments and identifications. In this regard, Huntington's arguments, demonstrating the alleged inherent Mexican unwillingness and inability to assimilate, do not stand up to scrutiny. For example, he proposes the cricket test for national identity, proclaiming the failure of Mexican Americans to cheer the American team when it played the Mexican one. Such reaction means that Mexicans have strong identification with their mother country, and not with their physical or political home. As Huntington declares: "In 1998, as we saw, at a soccer game in Los Angeles between Mexican and American teams, Mexican-Americans booed "The Star-Spangled Banner", assaulted the U.S. players, and attacked a spectator who waved an American flag....Many Mexican immigrants and their offspring do not appear to identify primarily with the United States."<sup>167</sup> However, the economist Amartya Sen argues that fan's test does not prove that national identity and ethnic identity were competing each other, explaining that American immigrants can cheer for any soccer team; Mexican, British, Indian, or South Korean in the World Cup and still fulfill all duties and responsibilities of citizenship toward his country.<sup>168</sup>

The 2002 Pew Latino Survey asked respondents about their preference: to identify themselves primarily with their country of origin, such as Mexico, as a Latino/Hispanic, or as an American. The result shows that only 7 percent of foreign-born Hispanics identify themselves first as an American, compared to 68 percent who primarily indicate their identification with their country of ancestry. However, this disparity decreases among Hispanics born in the U.S. for foreign born parents: those who identify themselves as Americans share 1 percent, whereas 43 percent prefer to describe themselves primarily as someone from the country of ancestry. By the third generation, nearly 65 percent choose American as their primary identification, and only 23 percent of respondents prefer ancestral

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<sup>167</sup>Ibid., p. 243

<sup>168</sup>Sen Amartya, "Other people." *The British Academy Publications*, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2000, <http://people.cis.ksu.edu/~ab/Miscellany/otherpeople.html> (Accessed: January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010).

country as identification. If the ultimate criterion of assimilation is measured in terms of self-identification as an American, then the assimilation of Hispanics is proceeding apace.<sup>169</sup>

As with Hispanic immigrant generations, the length of time immigrant families had been in the United States increases the tendency to identify oneself as an American and reinforces his feeling as fully American. Significantly, most freshly arrived newcomers tag themselves first with the flag of their country of ancestry, however, their self description changes dramatically over time.

Huntington decries the low levels of socioeconomic and educational achievement, and describes Mexicans as “more likely to live in poverty and to be on welfare as most other groups.”<sup>170</sup> The reason, he drives, is the profound differences of values and characters that exist between Mexicans and Americans. He also asserts that declining acceptance of the Anglo-Protestant ethic is the major challenge to American national identity because he thinks that Mexicans show “lack of initiative, self reliance, and ambition; low priority for education; acceptance of poverty as a virtue necessary for entrance into heaven.”<sup>171</sup> They come to America lacking “the Christian religion, Protestant values and moralism, a work ethic, the English language, British traditions of laws, justice, and the limits of government power.”<sup>172</sup> Thus Huntington fears that they do not adopt them once in the United States.

In contrast to Huntington’s arguments, most statistics, especially the 2002 Pew Hispanic Survey, show that Hispanics possess the same “religious commitment” as other Americans, the 2002 Pew Hispanic Survey reveals no major ethnic divergence. Levels of religious commitment were high in both whites and blacks referring to religion as either “very important” or “the most important” thing in life. When asked, the Hispanic sample falls between the two, ranging from 70 percent in the 1<sup>st</sup> generation to 65 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation. Another measure of religiosity is church attendance which holds approximately the same patterns. Comparing to Blacks (29 percent) and whites (16.9), Hispanics as whole appear to attend church more than a week nearly as often as white respondents<sup>173</sup>.

But about all, one should not get sucked into accepting Huntington’s assertion that Hispanics show no interest to become Protestant, and thus “the challenge posed by this defection has, in turn, stimulated intense counter efforts by Catholics church to induce

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<sup>169</sup> Pew Hispanic Center, “National Survey of Latinos, 2002.”  
<http://search.sweetim.com/search.asp?q=pew+hispanic+center+2002+pdf&ln=ar&src=1010&crg=2.2001.75001>  
(Accessed: January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010).

<sup>170</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p. 235.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p.254.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>173</sup> Pew Hispanic Center, “National Survey of Latinos , 2002”, op.cit.

Hispanic immigrants to assimilate into American society by becoming American Catholics.<sup>174</sup> Contrary to Huntington's suggestion, the Large Longitudinal Survey, conducted by Professors Vilma Ortiz and Edward Telles and also by University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), looks at the experiences of four generations of Mexican Americans between 1965 and 2000. The survey indicates that the pace of acculturation in religion is startling (figure 4). There is a notable, steady, and rapid decrease in Catholicism across Mexican generations. The percentage of Catholicism among the flow of the fourth generation is just 57 percent. Mirroring the overall U.S. religious trend, the available evidence and the most significant manifestation for Mexican immigrants are their conversion to Evangelical or fundamentalist Protestant dominations, and the rejection of Catholicism and other more established religions.<sup>175</sup>

**Figure 4: Trends in Religious Affiliation: Percentage Identifying as Catholic**

Immigration generation	original respondents		Children of original respondents 2000
	1965	2000	
1	91%	81%	--
2	90%	82%	75%
3	86%	84%	68%
4+	--	--	57%

Source: Edward Telles, "Mexican Americans and the American Nation: A Response to Professor Huntington." *Journal of Chicano Studies*. 31:2, Fall 2006, <https://www.amherst.edu/media/view/87041/original/Telles%252C%2BResponse%2Bto%2BHuntington.pdf>.

Most Hispanics today know every possible variation on the theme of being successful in America. In turn, hard work and belief in this ideal by Mexican waves of immigrants help them to strengthen and invigorate the U.S.A. Hispanics, in general, put considerably more value on family, and the overwhelming majority of those who had been in the U.S.A. for long time enough to become English dominant feel they can work longer hours, plant and influence their future.<sup>176</sup> The 1994 study, conducted by the scholars Harry P. Pachon and Louis De Sipio, indicates that almost of Hispanic immigrants have full time employments, and they tend to eschew any form of governmental assistance and help.<sup>177</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p. 241.

<sup>175</sup> Edward Telles, "Mexican Americans and the American Nation: A Response to Professor Huntington.", op.cit., p. 16.

<sup>176</sup> Cisneros G. Henry, op.cit., p. 49.

<sup>177</sup> Harry Pachon, and Louis De Sipio, *New Americans by Choice: Political Perspectives of Latino Immigrants* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), pp. 33-34.

### **3- Historical Amnesia in *Who Are We? Challenges to America's National Identity***

In Search of a national identity, the author of *Who Are We? Challenges to America's National Identity* disregards totally the nativist factor in the history of the United States. Huntington fails to acknowledge that nativism has always been a key element defining America's national culture. As a powerful component of national identity, the literature on American nativism has tended to ascribe nativist agitation as a driving force behind the nation's immigration policies. Through retracing nativism, Americans have been able to perceive a sense of community, or national consciousness of belonging that shapes the image of the United States. They have defined themselves and their national belonging in exclusionary terms, excluding the undesirable, and separating the good from the bad. Therefore, Huntington has better to focus on nativism, racial exclusion and xenophobia as key elements defining American national identity rather than emphasizing on the four components of race, ethnicity, creed, and culture. In this part, the study will show that American identity is rooted in historical amnesia. One point worth making is that the forgetful narrative of American history decidedly enables nativists to imagine a hegemonic national community<sup>178</sup>. Huntington's perception of American identity is shaped by fundamental flaws. Firstly, the normative assertion that American nation was exclusively formed by the Anglo-Protestant principles and values of democracy and freedom entails a disavowal of hostility, violence, and conquest that legitimized the emergence of the nation. Secondly, the illusionary vision that the American society is characterized strictly by hegemonic white and Anglo-Protestant core culture since the first days of the birth of the nation, disregards that the American core culture has been fundamentally influenced by a variety of people with non-Anglo and non-Protestant backgrounds. Besides, immigrants of different ancestries have always retained some degree of their distinctive cultural heritage, giving the opportunity to the success of the Anglo conformity theory of assimilation which demands the reunification of the immigrants' ancestral cultures in favor of behaviors and values of the Anglo-Saxon core group, as advocated by Samuel Huntington. Thirdly, a cohesive American identity was not facilitated by culture, but by restriction, deportation, exclusion, and discrimination of racial minorities from the American mainstream.

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<sup>178</sup> Ali Behdad, op.cit., p. 10.

### 3-1- The Founding of the American Nation

In his famous address *“What is a Nation?”* delivered at the Sorbonne University in 1882, the French philosopher and historian Ernest Renan argued that a nation is a spiritual principle, it is “consent”. A nation, according to Renan, is constituted of two interrelated aspects: the possession of a glorious legacy of memories of the past and the desire to continue a common life together and to perpetuate that heritage.<sup>179</sup> American forefather’s success, their heroic deeds in the past, and their common desire in the present to build a specific democratic project into effect by a tangible fact can, thus, be said to constitute America as a nation. The French philosopher demonstrates that forgetful representation of the past are crucial in the formation of the nation and the creation of a sense of national belonging.<sup>180</sup> These forgetful representation, which are in a form of historical amnesia, are essential and fundamental in building a nation because in order to legitimize the founding of the nation and to imagine a homogeneous national community, the violent deeds through which the national unity of a community was achieved must be renounced. Brutality that lies at the foundation of a homogeneous nationhood is generally obscured and repressed in the glorious literature of official national histories.<sup>181</sup> The formation of a nation, usually presented in the form of a narrative, appears to have only one outcome, namely present day nationhood. However, such a presentation of the origins, continuity, and destiny of a nation seem to constitute a retrospective illusion, French philosopher Etienne Balibar notes that: “Project and destiny are two symmetrical figures of the illusion of national identity.”<sup>182</sup> Narratives of official national histories are similarly unmindful of the various means and ways of oppression through which the building of the American nation was achieved. Beginning from the eighteenth century onwards, well-established Anglo-Americans have viewed themselves as liberty lovers who are conscious to protect the new nation for the worthy part of mankind. They were inspired by the benign images that a nation was built by eighteenth and seventeenth pilgrims who were defined and united by their love, and commitment to the political principles of equality, liberty, and democracy. However, the legacy of two hundred years of slavery of Africans, the extermination, and the virtual genocide against native-Americans belie the idealization of American democracy and liberty. The ideology of a democratic founding was used internally to bolster the power and protect the status of the existing population and extremely refuses to acknowledge that the American republic was founded through the conquest and annexation of

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<sup>179</sup> Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?”, the original lecture was in 1882. Trans. Martin Thom. In *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), p.19.

<sup>180</sup> Ali Behdad, op.cit., p.11.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., pp.5-6.

<sup>182</sup> Etienne Balibar, “The Nation from: History and Ideology.” In *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar, and Immanuel Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991), p.86.

the sparsely populated areas of Native Americans, the tragic figure of blacks, the mercantile interests, and the racial affinity interpreted in the imperialist desire to annex Mexican and French territories in North America. These oppressions and violence are central debates in the narrative of official history, and have a long tradition with it because they cannot be easily denied or omitted, but rather stripped of their implication for the founding of the nation. White men usually blind themselves to their violence against racial others, thus these occurrences of violence have been disavowed and depreciated as an aberration from America's exceptional destiny in order to imagine the U.S. as the fulfillment of the seventeenth century democratic project.<sup>183</sup> The forgetful narrative of the democratic founding produces, using Ali Behdad's words, a retrospective illusion that "freedom and equality, not brutality and conquest, were the principles upon which the nation was founded."<sup>184</sup> Such kind of a retrospective illusion also characterizes the author of *Who Are We?* The theme that runs throughout his work is best characterized as a theory of fear that Mexican immigrants fail to assimilate. It is quite peculiar that Huntington pays little attention to the American territorial aggrandizement and conquest of the Mexican territory in the bloodiest and the costliest Mexican-American war of 1846-1848. The author takes it for granted that the ideology of Manifest Destiny is an advance of American civilization, because it would bring to Mexicans "the plough and the rifle...schools and colleges, courts and representative halls, mills and meeting houses."<sup>185</sup> Most of all, Manifest Destiny was an ideology through which Anglo-Saxon expansionists enthusiastically endorsed the idea that the Protestant culture and republican form of government were to be shaped by a separate, superior, and unique race imposing its will on a variety of inferior races. Given American disdain toward Mexicans, it was almost not surprising that Mexicans were envisioned as being outside of the destined realm. Across the American march to the West and South, the antipathy many Americans felt toward Mexicans was particularly a thorny issue. Americans had placed Mexicans firmly within the inferior races while Anglo-Saxons were depicted as the purest of the pure. In the opinion of the vocal East Texas Congressman John C. Box, Mexicans were perceived as mongrel race, unimprovable breed, deprived, backward, indolent, imbecile, degenerate, and defeated people who wasted land and resources. Nearly 80,000 Mexican citizens, who already lived in the coveted territory and had elected to become U.S. citizens under the terms of the peace treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, endured harsh time in this new country. Although the treaty offered Mexican Americans at least nominal protection of their rights of property, liberty, the retention of their non-English language, cultural heritage, and Catholic faith,

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<sup>183</sup> Ali Behdad, op.cit., pp. 5-6.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., p.7.

<sup>185</sup> Gutiérrez, David .G, op.cit., p. 15.

Mexicans were subjected to hatred, bitterness, discrimination, and segregation. The most dramatic manifestations of America's racist tendencies were interpreted in the gradual dispossession of the Mexican lands.<sup>186</sup>

Although bitterness and atrocities perpetrated against Native-Americans, African Americans, and Asians immigrants thoroughly discussed in Huntington's book, their relevance and importance for the founding of the American polity and national identity are reduced to a minimum. According to Huntington, the founding of the American nation had its origin in the values and customs of the pilgrims, his assertion is the premise that Anglo-Protestants alone founded and built the nation. The historical amnesia apparent in Huntington's narrative is a form of denial in which he takes a self-righteous position by consciously distorting and disavowing the truth about the nation's building. Huntington misrepresents the truth by asserting that America is a founded society created by pilgrims' vision of a democratic polity. The benign myth of democratic founding fails to acknowledge the importance of atrocities Anglo-Americans committed against blacks and Native-Americans, facts that impel many contemporary historians and social thinkers to characterize American expansion on the continent as invasion rather than settlement.<sup>187</sup> The ideological justification of Manifest Destiny and its rational representation for the imperialistic war against Mexico is deliberately obscured to endorse the democratic founding and to make the Anglo-American Southwest a reality and self-evidence. The forgetful representation that the American nation was exclusively founded by seventeenth and eighteenth pilgrims supports the additional falsehood that all Americans are collectively connected to a single, identifiable core culture that predominates in American society.

### **3-2- American National Identity and Racial Minorities**

Americans subscribe, at least in theory, to the ideal of civic nationalism. In practice national identity has revolved around race matter in understanding all forms of social conflicts. Although many philosophers and theorists have stressed race matters in understanding American society, race in the national imagination has been usually reserved to describe boundaries around white nation by excluding racial others. In the United States, while racial minorities have shaped a critical reconsideration of the drift toward discounting racial tensions as simply as a byproduct of class antagonism or cultural conflict, it also has largely remained limited to the discussion of the problematic relationship between white /non-white racial dichotomy. Even when other racial minorities are discussed, a binary relationship

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<sup>186</sup> Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols, and David M. Reimers, *Natives and Strangers: Ethnic Groups and the Building of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp.191-192.

<sup>187</sup> Benjamin Schwarz, "The Diversity Myth: America's Leading Export." *The Atlantic Monthly* 275, no.5 (1995): 64.

with the Anglo majority remains the central focus. Indeed, American citizenship has long been equated with whiteness as the first naturalization legislation in 1790 which stipulated that only free white person could be full-fledged Americans. Even after the Fourteenth Amendments to the constitution guaranteed formal citizenship rights in 1868, Jim Crow Law and official segregation ensured that blacks remained a subordinate caste until the 1960s. Anglo-Americans enslaved blacks, expropriated and exterminated Native-Americans whom they regarded as uncivilized and savage, and against whom they defined themselves.<sup>188</sup> In other words, white Anglo-Americans could not imagine a cohesive identity without subjecting and including voices of racial minorities in their collection of histories about races.

Even more importantly, the fact that subordination of racial minorities shaped the identity of Americans, giving nationhood a single identifiable and exclusionary dimension is nowhere explicitly formulated in *Who Are We?* As the author remembers and celebrates the halcyon days when Anglo-European settlers dominated, and the American community shared a cohesive and singular national identity. However, “he assumes away the existence of the groups who were deemed basic membership into the U.S society.”<sup>189</sup> Forgetful narrative leads to some peculiar observation. For instance, Huntington can claim that “America was a highly homogeneous society in terms of race, national origin, and religion.”<sup>190</sup> But how one should get sucked in accepting such claim.

Even if it were true that American society embraced a singular national identity, no one could imagine a unified national identity through excluding the deeply rooted black minority. In similar perspective, Huntington celebrated the devastating and the bloodiest Philip’s War in 1675-1676, and emphasized the positive outcome of the decimation of Native-Americans. The exclusion and extermination were, according to Anglo-Americans, the right policies to follow in the future for the survival of a homogeneous American identity. These policies afterwards enabled Anglos to define themselves as Americans in opposition to aliens.<sup>191</sup>

In one sense, it is not difficult to understand why the nature of treatment of Mexican immigrants by Anglos received too minimal attention by the author of *Who Are We?* If not to say, there is completely a lack of attention to the Anglos’ culture of segregation towards Mexican immigration. Mexican Americans, despite their active presence in the American society, are depicted as the only latest of immigrant groups to America. And they are

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<sup>188</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., pp. 53-55.

<sup>189</sup> Kevin R. Johnson, and Bill Ong Hing, “National Identity in a Multicultural Nation: The Challenges of Immigration Law and Immigrants.” *Michigan Law Review* 103, no.6 (2005) : 1363.

<sup>190</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p. 44.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p.53.

described as engaging in patterns which clearly separate them as a racial minority. Their history in the U.S.A. involved exploitation, deportation, and segregation at the hands of Anglo-Americans. Since the half of the nineteenth century, Mexican immigration has provided a disposable and dispensable labor force for the rapid expansion of the Southwest. The first Mexicans migrated to the United States during the gold rush in the mid-nineteenth century shortly after the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in February 1848. To accomplish such economic growth, Mexican unskilled and manual work was highly demanded by Anglo-Americans who wanted to strike it rich in the mines of California, and because the Anglo settlers refused to do the low-paying, back-breaking, and often dangerous work in the mining, ranching, agricultural, and railroad businesses.<sup>192</sup>

To reinforce their non-permanent presence because they were undesirable, the Dillingham Commission Immigration, which investigated immigrants' conditions for the U.S. Senate, invoked many negative racial sentiments, and argued in 1911 that Mexican immigrants had to be excluded from the American polity.<sup>193</sup> Though the commission expressed some reservation about Mexican labor, it nevertheless concluded that:

*“Mexican immigrants are providing a fairly acceptable supply of labor in a limited territory in which it is difficult to secure others, and their competitive ability is limited because of their more or less temporary residence and their personal qualities, so that their incoming does not involve the same detriment to labor conditions as it involved in the migration of other races who also work at comparatively low wages. While the Mexicans are not easily assimilated, this is not of very great importance as long as most of them return to their native land after a short time.”<sup>194</sup>*

If a straight-line was teased from entangled web of direction, the Anglo American dismissal of Mexican as inferior could be interpreted, in their opinion, as a racial conflict between a glorious Anglo-Saxon race and an inferior Mexican rabble. Since the first encounters between Anglos and Mexicans, the resurgence of anti-Mexican sentiment, that was prevalent during the World War I and after it, stemmed from the high level of xenophobia and nativism. The scathing denunciation of the Mexican race as inferiorly organized and endowed is associated with the idea that Mexicans are innately weak, and the essential element in their weakness is the mixed population. Anglos delighted in depicting the Mexicans as inferior barbarian race with a considerable Indian and black blood, the lawyer Lansford Hastings characterized Mexicans inhabitants of California as “scarcely a visible grade, in the scale of

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<sup>192</sup> Carrasco, Gilbert Paul, “Latinos in the United States : Invitation and Exile.” In *Immigrants Out! The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States*, ed. by Juan F. Perea, 190-204 (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p.191.

<sup>193</sup> United States Immigration Commission, “Brief Statement of the Immigration Commission with Conclusions and Recommendations and Views of the Minority.” Vol.5865. Washington, D.C., USA: *Government Printing Office*, 1911.  
<http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/6501037?n=1&imagesize=1200&jp2Res=.25&printThumbnails=no> (Accessed: June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>194</sup> Gutiérrez, David .G, op.cit., p 47.

intelligence, above the barbarous tribes by whom they are surrounded”, it was quite clear that, said Hastings, there had been an increase intermarriage rates and “ as most of the lower order of Mexicans, are Indians in fact whatever is said in reference to the one, will also be applicable to the other.”<sup>195</sup>

Various meanings of inferiority could generally be found together in segregationist statements, the harshest way of making the point was through the emphasis on the characterization of Mexican dirtiness. Acting on this basic assumption, Cameron County sheriff Emilio Forto estimated that: “Twenty five percent of the newcomers usually look upon the Mexican as filthy, unsanitary and sickly makeshift.”<sup>196</sup>

Restrictionists augmented such flagrantly racist sentiments by insisting that Mexican immigration was bound to create in the Southwest a race problem, many American immigration restrictionists blamed lenient U.S. immigration policies inevitably results in the occurrence of outbreak in the Southwest regions. If Mexican immigrants continued increasingly to enter the Labor market, American restrictionists would begin to clamor for even stringent restrictions on what may proceed as an invasion of foreign workers. Sentiments of fear and anxiety were explicitly expressed by southwestern industrial and agricultural spokesmen who recognized the need to agitate for restrictive federal immigration legislation.<sup>197</sup> Most of Mexican immigrants regarded the process of Americanization as a positive development. Despite their incorporation and assimilation into the American cultural and political mainstream, the experience of prejudice and discrimination helped Mexicans to expand existing American enclaves and to reinforce culturally, thus to create a sense of Americanness as the cornerstone of self consciousness. Mexicans minority population developed a new source of identity as a natural defense mechanism, a kind of abroad oppositional strategy against racism, prejudice, and discrimination to which they were subjected by the majority of Anglo-American groups. Another difficulty for Mexicans consisted in their relative isolation from mainstream American life. In Texas, Anglos applied specific mechanism of labor and policies of exclusion, since they “formed their own neighborhoods, built their own schools and churches, married their own.”<sup>198</sup> Mexican Americans endured virtual caste status in the rural towns and ranches. Farmer towns included separate quarters for Anglos and Mexican Americans. Mexicans were segregated and

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<sup>195</sup> Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 211.

<sup>196</sup> Montejano David, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, Fourth Printing, 1992), p. 225.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

confined to their own grocery stores, dry goods stores, meat market, tailor shops, cinemas, schools, banks, and restaurants.<sup>199</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that Anglo-Americans have long subjected, segregated, deported, and exploited Mexican Americans in particular and racial minorities in general, Huntington obscures the implication this has for the American identity. Thus, it was easier to imagine “oneness” in American identity. In imagining a cohesive and unified American national identity, Huntington represses the fact that non-whites like Mexican-Americans were subjected and never allowed to fully assimilate.

## **Conclusion**

Of the recent immigration groups into the United States, the Mexicans have longest record of significant continuous inflow. Mexican Americans are not all newcomers because most of them remained in the Southwest territory that the United States acquired by virtue of the treaty of Hidalgo Guadalupe. Legal and illegal immigration to the U.S.A. sprang up tremendously to the extent that it is impossible to know the number of immigrants because the border was highly porous and largely unmonitored.

Huntington’s claims have stirred up an acrimonious debate among scholars, journalists, and political activists who criticized the defiant way Huntington’s has approached the subject matter. His book, from the academic perspective, is weak with questionable data, combined with a lack of political correctness and the unwillingness to observe some of the current troublesome realities in the American society. Huntington is ultimately mistaken in the explanation of what constitutes the American national identity because of his insistence upon Protestantism as a key element identifying it, and ignoring Catholicism as a major body existing not only in the U.S.A but in the world. Huntington’s fear of hispanization, and detrimental consequences of Mexican immigration on the Southwest and the United States are highly overstated and exaggerated. His skepticism about the relevance of assimilation for Mexicans in terms of education, language, occupation and income, citizenship, identity, and intermarriage are inaccurate because the process of their assimilation is in ways reminiscent to that of European immigrants of past centuries.

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p. 167

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

# **Multiculturalism and Mexican Assimilation into the American Mainstream**

### **Introduction**

While the term Multiculturalism is of recent vintage, it is not a new social phenomenon despite prevailing beliefs that the United States was culturally homogeneous at its formation. The foundational facts of diversity and cultural pluralism are decidedly a formative power of contemporary multiculturalism in the U.S.A. Multiculturalism as a fact assumes to denote that ethnically diverse immigrants can keep their identities, can take pride of their ancestries, and have a sense of belonging. In this regard, Huntington believes that Multiculturalism is destroying and challenging the Anglo-Saxon culture, and therefore it is a threat to the cohesiveness of the American national identity. Huntington views today's assimilation as having dubious and skeptic relevance for Mexican immigration groups because they are undermining the Anglo-Saxon culture that unites the Americans, Mexican immigrants do so by refusing to assimilate into the American mainstream, to learn English, to become citizens, and most of all by keeping a segregated enclaves based on non-American values.

## 1-The Meaning of Multiculturalism

As derived from the adjective multicultural, multiculturalism first came into wide circulation in the 1970s in Canada and Australia as the name for a key plank of government policy in management of racial and cultural diversity within a national polity. Multiculturalism denotes different meanings and sparks varying emotions in debates over inclusionists and separationists issues with regards to politics, immigration, and social polity. In this context, the emergence of the term is strongly associated with a growing realization of social and cultural consequences of large scale immigration. In Canada where the term was coined by the Canadian Royal Commission in 1965, it has become a government policy in 1971 to support the preservation of the distinctive heritages of all minorities. It is, therefore, associated in principle with the values of equality, toleration, and inclusiveness towards immigrants of ethnically different backgrounds. Multiculturalism as a fact refers typically to the presence of people of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds within a single polity. This demographic heterogeneity and cultural diversity are a result of the influx of immigrants who can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging through connoting policies of recognition and citizenship rights.

Multiculturalism is a contested term which has been used in a variety of ways, the term can be used to describe government policies that promote cultural pluralism, and the demographic reality of cultural diversity that generally tends to precede these policies.<sup>200</sup> As an ideology, Multiculturalism is a political response which assumes differences in culture, in the sense of coherent clusters of beliefs, traditions, rituals, customs, food, dress, values, and observances, accompanying demographic diversity. In his influential book entitled: *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, sociologist Will Kymlicka develops a more nuanced understanding of cultural diversity.<sup>201</sup> And he shows that the source of cultural diversity is the coexistence of different nations in one polity. Kymlicka uses the term multiculturalism to describe the polity that includes all these sorts. Canada as a multinational nation was colonized by settlers (as was the case with Canada's aboriginal population), or invaded and conquered (as French Canada was conquered by the French). The other type of cultural diversity results when the members of a community emigrate from different nations with diverse cultural stocks, and are allowed and encouraged to maintain some of their ethnic partiality and multiple cultures while participating in the mainstream institution of the host society.

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<sup>200</sup> Thompson H. John, and Weinfeld Morton (1995), "Entry and Exit: Canadian Immigration Policy in Context." *Annals of the American Academy* 538, (1995):185-198, p. 195.

<sup>201</sup> Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.15.

Immigrants will often coalesce into loose association, which Kimlicka calls ethnic groups or immigrant groups. According to him, countries that host and contain various ethnic groups exhibit a cultural diversity that is best described as being polyethnic.<sup>202</sup>In this regard, the present study confines the attention to multiculturalism as a political formula in the United States, as a normative conception of national identity with derivative policy agenda. In the American context, multiculturalism came into wide public use during 1980s in the context of public school curriculum reform. The official recognition of multiculturalism as the bedrock upon which to build a society of equality is not far from a settled national objective because a wide range of policy proposals, dealing with bilingual education, defend minority cultures as an empowering measure on the road toward cultural integration of immigrant groups. The sociologist Nathan Glazer states:

*“Only very recently has the term multiculturalism been applied to these developments. The word has emerged and spread so rapidly, has been applied to so many phenomena in so many contexts, has been used in attack and in defense so often to cover such very different developments, that is not easy task to describe what one means by multiculturalism. It is not the spell-check dictionary of my word processor....That many have been the peak year, but over 1200 references in 1995 demonstrate the vigor of the issue. Of course the drop in the number of newspaper references since 1994 may reflect the fact that in many respects multiculturalism in the schools is no longer news, but quotidian reality....Almost every book in Harvard University libraries listed as containing the word “Multiculturalism” in its title in 1970s and 1980s is Canadian or Australian. It makes sense that the word would come to us from our neighbor to the north.”<sup>203</sup>*

The essence of multiculturalism is the ability to celebrate with the other unity in a manner that transcends all barriers and brings cohesiveness in diversity. It enables individuals to look upon the other as a profitable partner not as a potential predator. Overall, the burgeoning language of multiculturalism signals a heightened awareness and concern with the increasing problematic and disjunctive relationship between ethnicity, race, and national identity. These all account of why the term multiculturalism remains a controversial and a mutable concept, despite now wide spread circulation. While the precise meaning of the word is opaque, it refers generally to the dilemma of politics of difference. Nathan Glazer argues:

*“Multiculturalism is far from a neutral descriptive term, though it is possible to describe the reality of minority and ethnic diversity in this country neutrally. Multiculturalism covers a variety of ways of responding to this reality, some so mild that they would probably be acceptable to those who see themselves as the fiercest critics of multiculturalism. But for most of those who advocate multiculturalism, it is a position-taking stance on the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States...in which each ethnic and racial element in the population*

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., pp.10-15.

<sup>203</sup> Nathan Glazer, *We are all Multiculturalists Now* ( Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Fourth Printing, 2003), pp.7-8.

*maintains its distinctiveness....Multiculturalism, for its advocates, becomes a new image of a better America... ”<sup>204</sup>*

Multiculturalism, while fairly a newcomer, is not a new social phenomenon despite prevailing beliefs that the United States was culturally homogeneous at its formation. Because the term multiculturalism is of a recent vintage, most scholars consider it as a new social phenomenon, the product that has been used in attack and in defense of different developments of changing world policies.

Although the term multiculturalism has recently been applied to these developments, the fact that it has been an ongoing and a constant social reality, not just since the birth of the United States as a nation, but even in its primordial colonial cradle. Cultural pluralism in the colonial and early national periods was extensive, in many ways, surpassing the recent era. Many scholars in social sciences assume that the sociological facts of cultural diversity point the deepest truth about the meaning of multiculturalism in the U.S.A. Thus the term multiculturalism is used as a merely descriptive term, denoting an ethnically diverse population. Practically, it reopens the important question of intergroups' relations. More broadly, by engaging in new debates about diversity, multiculturalism forces to center the fundamental question of political life. Human diversity in America is a fundamental fact of life, but every political order must, though the authoritative commandments of the law, insist upon some limits to the diversity of wishes and aspirations of its citizens. This limitation can be more or less justified, but diversity as a fact is inescapable. There is, therefore, a need of a careful and comprehensive account of the multiculturalist vision of American democracy. But such need is immediately complicated by the fact that multiculturalism first came to sight a kind of a specific moral and political vision of the American unity which is in some tensions with its call for greater diversity of the American life. One of the primary concerns of this work and ever more puzzling is that contemporary debates of multiculturalism rise in the context of an older argument of diversity and cultural pluralism.

While multiculturalism and cultural pluralism are clearly allied and their simplest meanings are indistinguishable, they hold emphatically different political interpretations. The argument of principles set forth for such political difference leads to precise understanding. While cultural pluralism has begun from its traditional American framework of the liberal doctrine of religious toleration which extended liberal principles in order to deal with other realms of social and cultural diversity, contemporary multicultural understanding provides distinctively a different approach which politicizes a new moral vision arising out of the

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., pp.10-11.

American Civil Rights Movement and the broader phenomenon that encompasses and explains the understandable tendency of new commitment to anti-discrimination in the American life. Indeed, almost universe, the present interpretation of multiculturalism controversy seems to have much to do with the fact that it overlaps, in public debates and minds, with the vague language of diversity and cultural pluralism. The important aspect of multiculturalism debate is tied to the liberal hope of diversity as an inescapable political imperative to unity.<sup>205</sup> The study will probe further into the American past to scrutinize the foundational fact of diversity, and what one might term cultural pluralism which is decisively a formative power of contemporary multiculturalism. Such interpretation might seem a political logic, especially since multiculturalism operates in the realm of ethnicity, minorities, and seemingly other subpolitical concerns in the U.S.A.

Understanding the sociohistorical reality of racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity of colonial America show a more accurate belief and an incontrovertible fact that America was essentially a multicultural society from its first thread of birth. The image of America as a culturally homogeneous community, as Huntington claims, is a historic fallacy. The historic reality is that the thirteenth colonies were entirely populated by immigrants, and their offsprings functioned as an illustration of how minorities worked as a framework to understand the past and present reality of American diversity.

## **2-Diversity in the United States of America**

Diversity is a normative stance towards which most Americans express strong approval; it is as good, as a source of American pride, and thus as deserving for recognition and support. Considerable cultural diversity in colonial America existed among newcomers who came from different backgrounds and spoke different languages. These newcomer groups existed in different identity categories, and thus these identities are differentiated from one another according to attributes such as: language, culture, race, ethnicity, and religion. Indeed up to 1815, the number of newcomers had been small (never more than 10.000 a year), but after that, great waves of Europeans flooded to the new country during what was known as “the century of massive immigration” (1820-1920). More than 5 million arrivals were registered between 1815 and 1860 (the number exceeded the total American population as counted in the Census of 1970.<sup>206</sup> Most of them were born in the British Isles (2 million in Ireland and 150.000 in England and Scotland). Then came Germany with 1.5 million to which must be added 200.000 French-speaking Germans (from Alsace and Lorraine). In addition to

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<sup>205</sup> Michael V. Adams, *The Multicultural Imagination: Race, Color, and the Unconscious* (London: Routledge Press, 1996), pp. 6-10.

<sup>206</sup> Maldwyn A. John, *Limits of Liberty: American History, 1607-1980* (New York: Oxford University Press, Second Printing, 1995), p.21.

some scattering from other countries: Netherlands (20.000), Switzerland (40.000), Scandinavia- including Norway, Sweden, and Denmark (40.000)<sup>207</sup>. The American diversity had become an evidence after 1880 when “new immigration brought to the United States a bewildering variety of unfamiliar types: Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians; Finns, Ukrainians, Croats, Slovaks, and Ruthenians; east European Jews; Portuguese, Italians, and Greeks; Turks, Armenians, Syrians, and Lebanese.”<sup>208</sup> So it was evident that these immigrants presented one of the most varied racial picture. What is noticeable is that each ethnic group established its own social institutions, churches, schools, newspapers, and mutual aid societies in order to preserve its identity and find emotional security in the company of its own group mates. Each settlement was typically a separate minority enclave demonstrated by names of the country of origins such as: New England, New Belgium, New Netherland, New Sweden, New Smyrna, New Hamburg, New Iberia, or New Orleans.<sup>209</sup> Linguistic diversity was another significant component of cultural pluralism in colonial America, between 1884 and 1920, foreign speaking newspapers flourished. More than 3500 papers in the most diverse languages existed. By 1920, there were 276 papers in German, 118 publications in Spanish and Portuguese, 111 speaking Scandinavian, 98 Italian, 76 Polish, 51 Czech, 46 French, 42 Slovak, and 39 Yiddish, in addition to some others in Finn, Japanese, Greek, and Russian languages.<sup>210</sup> The greater concentration of cultural diversity was in New York where Germans, Italians, Irish, Chinese owed to their “distinctive historical experiences, their cultures and skills, the times of their arrival and the economic situation they met developed distinctive economic, political and cultural patterns,” these immigrants groups “provide some satisfaction to their members, and that the adoption of a totally new ethnic identity.”<sup>211</sup> New England colonies and southern colonies experienced an inflow of thousands of ethnic minorities where cultural diversity existed, as a matter of fact 18 languages were spoken on Manhattan Island as early as 1646.

Religious toleration is one legacy from America’s multicultural past as the proliferation of sects and religious groups created numerous sub-cultures. Estimates of the divergent religious beliefs are Anglican: 480; Baptist: 498; Catholic: 50; Congregational: 658; German and Dutch Reformed: 251; German Pietist: 250; Jewish: 2; Lutheran: 151; Presbyterian: 543; Quaker: 295.<sup>212</sup> American cultural and racial diversity has greatly increased as a result of immigration policies; immigration has been the primary cause of the growth of

<sup>207</sup> Rachel Ertel, Geneviève Fabre, and Élise Marienstras, op.cit., p.19.

<sup>208</sup> Maldwyn A. John, op.cit., p. 321.

<sup>209</sup> Vincent N. Parrillo, “Diversity in America: A Sociohistorical Analysis.” *Sociological Forum*, Vol.9, No.4 , Springer, December 1994. [http://cellotar.atw.hu/angol/diversity\\_in\\_america\\_-\\_a\\_sociohistorical\\_analysis.pdf](http://cellotar.atw.hu/angol/diversity_in_america_-_a_sociohistorical_analysis.pdf) (Accessed: May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011).

<sup>210</sup> Rachel Ertel, Geneviève Fabre, and Élise Marienstras , op.cit., p.24.

<sup>211</sup> Nathan Glazer, and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italian, and Irish of New York* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, Second Edition, 1970), p. xxxiii.

<sup>212</sup> Vincent N. Parrillo, op.cit.

the American population from a little 4 million in 1790 to over 270 million in 2000. By 1970, a new turning point in immigration had been reached, with third world newcomers outnumbering European-descent immigrants. With the renewal of immigration from 1970 to 2000, immigration witnessed a renaissance of new forms of population diversity, including accents of spoken English by immigrants from dozens of countries from around the globe. An important immigration trend occurring in the United States in recent decade, aside from their continued and explosive growth, is the increasing geographic dispersion of this population across the country. Initially confined to California, Texas, the New York region, Chicago, and Florida, the new immigration wave is now reaching across the country. From 1970 to 2000, the overall share of the national population composed of Americans, Indians, African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans who increased approximately from nearly 13% to over 30%. Latinos and Asians, residing in the U.S.A., have accounted for large minorities in the U.S. because the size of their population has increased by 7 and 4 percentages.<sup>213</sup> All these minority groups have become part of the national landscape, as well as a visible presence since they have established all the trademarks of American ethnic communities, including newspapers and periodicals in their own languages, popular cuisine, and music. Such projections and data serve as an evidence that the United States is a nation of cultural kaleidoscope of a variety of ethnic groups with changes in source of countries. That's why the U.S.A. has always marked its existence with diversity, and that's why it is often described as being multicultural.

### **3-Multiculturalism in the United States of America**

Multiculturalism has so solidly established itself in education, culture, women's studies, and racial minorities' relations in the United States of America. It has become an inescapable reality in the U.S.A. where change and diversity are indeed grounded in its history. As Nathan Glazer notes:

*“Multiculturalism is the price America is paying for its inability or unwillingness to incorporate into its society African Americans, in some way and to the same degree it has incorporated so many groups. Multiculturalism appears on the surface to encompass much more than that, and indeed it reflects and is responsive to a variety of other developments: the remarkable rise of women's movement and women's studies, the change in sexual mores and morality which makes gays and lesbians a visible and open presence in culture, politics, and education, the impact of new immigration, the declining self-confidence or arrogance of the United States as the best, as well as the richest and most*

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<sup>213</sup> Edmonston Barry, and Jeffrey Passel, *Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals* (Washington, D. C.: Urban Institute Press, 1994), p.61.

*powerful country. All these play a role how we conceive our past and our future, in how we educate our children, in how we speak to one another, and in how we conceive of the role of race and ethnicity in American society, government, and culture.*”<sup>214</sup>

In the United States, controversy about multiculturalism is primary to be found in the works of advocates of multicultural education and teaching; a group of educational reformers and historians promoting nothing less than a new civic education to reflect the diversity of public schools in the U.S.A where school curriculum and social studies were criticized. The so-called eurocentric bias that characterized the culture and institutions of the United States and European world fails to acknowledge the remarkable changes and achievement of women’s movement and studies, people of color who take the bottom victim position in the social class ladder, or the influx of identities from outside of the tradition of western civilizations. The most intense explosion over multiculturalism reached its peak, when conflicts over how much it has become a necessity to change the common understanding of the United States’ history and society which broke out in public schools, in both California and New York.

“No one has to argue the primacy of the fate and history of American blacks among the forces making for multiculturalism in America.”<sup>215</sup>The importance of blacks in initiating multiculturalism under afrocentrism movement was a clear response to the failure of American cultural nationalism to include people of color. The first public wrestling with multicultural education called for a distinctive education for each racial and ethnic group. Achievement has become an objective when it would cover not only social studies and humanities, but all fields of curriculum. Multiculturalism aimed to challenge all areas of curriculum in schools and colleges to reflect the diversity of the U.S.A. community. Most racial and ethnic groups, therefore, adhere steadfastly to their own way of life as much as possible, keeping the rich traditions of pluralism alive and well. These traditions of population are expressed by recognition of diversity through the U.S.A. and minority contributions to American literature, music, cuisine, art, scientific achievement, sport, and holiday celebrations. Various types of educational reform sought to document the centrality of African cultural traditions to the foundation of American and western history, and to celebrate the black power as a nation building movement. Afrocentrism stressed black pride and militancy so as to increase self-esteem and educational success of African American students. As a matter of fact, a curriculum of inclusion, which was a report of committee composed of black and Hispanic educators, denounced eurocentric education and called for a multiple

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<sup>214</sup> Nathan Glazer, *We are all Multiculturalists Now*, op.cit., p.147.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

perspective for racial and ethnic minorities to be taught to elementary and high school students.<sup>216</sup> As Nathan Glazer states:

*“The mass of materials...gave evidence of how well established multiculturalism already was in New York State. One of the documents...listed teachers’ guides available from the State Education Department, in addition to the social studies syllabi. Of the seven publications available, four dealt with minorities and women. The most substantial was a three-volume publication on the teaching of the Holocaust. A survey of in-service workshops taken by teachers in 1990-91 showed American history and European history work-shops had been taken by 156 participants, while workshops on African history, black studies, ethnic studies, multicultural education, and cultural diversity had been taken by 264.”<sup>217</sup>*

Multiculturalism discourses seek to demonstrate the myriad ways in which the language, philosophy and institutions of mainstream American culture have withheld recognition of American diversity, and have therefore served to marginalize and limit the achievement and self realization across vast stretches of population, namely women, blacks, and other non-white groups. Each specific group strives not only for political democracy, but also for a deeper form of social democracy, wherein freedom makes at least a modicum of equality among people sharing political, social, and economic life. Sparked by the Civil Rights Movement and fuelled by the overwhelming immigration from Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, people of color, and women raised their own grievances against the variety of ways in which the mainstream culture dominates them, thus demanding and insisting on the existence of specific identities and cultures.

The primary concern of multiculturalism has not simply the empowerment of women and cultural minorities, but rather the transformation of the dominant culture itself. Not only the debate over multiculturalism awakens the Americans to the possibility that the legacy of the Civil Right Movement was greater than they usually acknowledge, but the intense controversy over it is perhaps the best point of entry to the study of new commitment to anti-discrimination. As a center piece of a new vision of American democracy, anti-discrimination is in need of a sense of self-esteem and empowerment of the excluded and the marginalized, and it is this what multiculturalism, at its expansive spectrum, seeks to provide. Multiculturalism, which is worth understanding on a broader spectrum, turns out to be an important window on the meaning of the American anti-discrimination ambition. It is in the rejection of exclusionary practices of the dominant culture and the proclamation of cultural neutrality, in asserting that all cultures are given equal respect and weight, that multiculturalism appears to flirt with abyss of cultural relativism. To sum up, the basic

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid., pp.9-23.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., p.33.

parameters of multiculturalism in the United States assert that every minority has inherent rights to its own culture. In this regard, multiculturalism leads to the rejection of eurocentrism, and indeed of western cultural traditions that thought to be inherently riven with racism which stands as an obstacle to the assimilation of minorities in the United States of America.

#### **4- Assimilation in the United States of America**

Assimilation is a contested concept, especially in a diverse and an ethnically dynamic society as the United States of America. The contemporary debates over American national identity and the changing realities of the U.S.A. point to the need to consider the concept as a social process stemming from immigration. The sociologist Nathan Glazer describes assimilation in relation to the American experience, he says:

*“Assimilation is not a popular term. Recently I asked a group of Harvard students taking a class on race and ethnicity in the United States what their attitude was to the term “assimilation”. The large majority had a negative reaction to it. Had I asked what they thought of the term “Americanization”, the reaction I am sure would have been even more hostile. The melting pot” is no longer a uniformly praised metaphor for Americans society, as it once was... ethnic and racial reality...does not exhibit the effects of assimilation...social science should not expect it; and as an ideal it has become somewhat disreputable, opposed to the reality of both individual and group difference and to the claims that such differences should be recognized and celebrated....Yet assimilation, properly understood, is neither a dead hope nor a demanding concept. It is rather, I will argue, still the most powerful force affecting the ethnic and racial elements of the United States.”<sup>218</sup>*

With regard to the term assimilation, there is a certain amount of confusion and a compelling need for a systematic analysis of the concept assimilation which would be influenced by relevant factors or variables that could be arguably included under its rubrics. Despite the vastly increased and broad-ranging interest in assimilation, the concept itself remains, in now common circulation, something of an enigma. Compared to recent studies in both history and politics, social and political scientists remain laggards when it comes with discussions and debates on assimilation since the precise meaning of the word is never clear. Sociological and cultural anthropologists have attempted to describe the term of assimilation under the result of a setting of people’s meeting in an ethnically varied polity. In the American context, the terms assimilation and acculturation are allied. Indeed, in their simplest meaning, they are identical, overlapped and indistinguishable, but they are also somehow different, and they may indeed differ in usages. While psychologists are more likely to use assimilation, anthropologists have preferred the narrower and the consistent word of

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<sup>218</sup> Nathan Glazer, *We are all Multiculturalists Now*, op.cit., p.96.

acculturation. Given centrality of the concept to so much research in social sciences, one of the earliest and most influential definition of assimilation was given by the sociologist Robert E. Park in the Encyclopedia of Science, Park defines assimilation as: “The name given to the process or processes by which people of diverse racial origins and different cultural heritages, occupying a common territory, achieve a cultural solidarity sufficient at least to sustain a national existence.”<sup>219</sup> One can note here that the term assimilation is used to designate a social process of interpenetration and fusion of ethnic meeting of people with diverse cultural backgrounds, in the sense that the cultural patterns of behaviors and changes take place when either two or more groups adopt the culture of another social group or the two cultures of both groups are modified and changed through a reciprocal influence of behavioral interaction. In this regard, the sociologist Joseph Fichter defines assimilation as: “A social process through which two or more persons or groups accept and perform one another’s pattern of behavior... a person, or a minority category, being assimilated into a group or a society, but here again this must not be interpreted as “one sided” process. It is a relation of interaction in which both parties reciprocally even though one may be much more affected than the other.”<sup>220</sup> Assimilation is then the gradual process whereby newcomers are integrated into the host culture of their host country to such a complete extent that their cultural differences tend to appear without any identification or particular loyalties to their native culture. Different cultures of different ethnic groups are merged in the homogenous unity where the same body of sentiments, traditions, loyalties, and attitudes are shared. The matter of sharing experience and incorporation in a common life is limited. First, by the willingness of the host group which may erect social boundaries and barriers to social life participation, and second, by the wish of new immigrants to foster such social participation. As mentioned above, a number of sociologists have intended merely to equate assimilation with acculturation, or stipulated a definition of assimilation appropriate or useful to the idea of an extreme form of acculturation as parts of the assimilation process. Acculturation, according to the classical view of assimilation, means a substitute process in which immigrants acquired the culture of the native country, and thus they can get in the country and participate in its common life. The participation in the common life of the country evolves commensurate loss of their cultural inheritance.<sup>221</sup> Thus, by assimilation at its extreme form, it is referred to the process whereby groups with variety of cultures come to have a common culture. The present concept of assimilation is recent, or at least recent enough that social books and dictionaries attempt to cover its current usage. The dictionary of American history definition reports a definition of

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<sup>219</sup> Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p.63.

<sup>220</sup> Joseph H. Ficher, *Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago,1957), p. 229. Quoted in *ibid*, p.65.

<sup>221</sup> Richard Alba and Victor Nee, *op.cit.*, p.217.

assimilation as: “the absorption into a culture and being rendered similar”<sup>222</sup> is still used quite frequently in everyday discourse, nevertheless it is narrower than the more recent concept of assimilation. Thus through the more recent definition, it seems crucial that the assimilation process can be understood as two ways process, a dual effort by immigrants as well as the receiving country. In this regard and along with assimilation, acculturation is commonly used to describe the incorporation process of immigrants to a new society. It is “the process whereby individuals adopt traits from another group. Usually the adoption of material traits, language, and secular behavior is undertaken. Certain elements of the minority culture, however, may be maintained and practiced in subcultural fashion. Later cultural attitudes, values, and other non-material traits from the dominant culture are acquired.”<sup>223</sup>The major keys to the understanding of what assimilation has actually been like in the American experience are conceptualized by the pluralistic nature of the American society. Does multiculturalism, as a stone taken by pluralists, imperil the process of assimilation? The answer is basically no because multiculturalists would appear to be assimilationists. The concept of assimilation, according to assimilationist view, rests upon the belief in the importance of cultural differentiation within a framework of social unity. Assimilation, thus, approaches cultural pluralism not as if it were ethnic groups each standing under their own different-colored umbrella, but of all sharing only one multi-colored umbrella whose present strength stands under the diversity of its people’s backgrounds.

Different researchers, influenced variously by social sciences, politics, and psychology, have evoked different concepts regarding assimilation. Perhaps some of these scholars intend merely to stipulate different concepts appropriate or useful to their specific purposes. In fact, assimilation is used by many scholars and in different publications, but perhaps its definition sometimes really means integration. The most relevant entry for integration in the American Heritage Dictionary: “To absorb into an existing whole. To end the racial segregation of ethnic groups, give full, equal membership in group or society. To become racially integrated.”<sup>224</sup>Through simple comparison of the terms, it can be said that assimilation refers more to the concept of cultural adaptation of the dominant group while integration refers to the willingness and need of an ethnic group of equal recognition and treatment within the receiving society, while maintaining rivalries of the former culture. It is also relevant to mention that assimilation is used by conservative organizations to equate it with Americanization. The Dictionary of Multicultural Education states that: “Assimilation came

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<sup>222</sup> Philip Herbst, *The Color of Words: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States* (Intercultural Press, 1997), p.20.

<sup>223</sup> Jesse O. McKee, *Ethnicity in Contemporary America: A Geographical Appraisal* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), p.10.

<sup>224</sup> Teresa García Romero, “Mexican Immigrants in New York City: From Assimilation to Integration.”

[http://catarina.udlap.mx/u\\_dl\\_a/tales/documentos/mes/gonzalez\\_s\\_ae/capitulo1.pdf](http://catarina.udlap.mx/u_dl_a/tales/documentos/mes/gonzalez_s_ae/capitulo1.pdf) (Accessed: June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

to be equated with Americanization just as in Britain in the 1960s it was identified with Anglicization.”<sup>225</sup>

Recently, a variety of terms are still used to convey the meaning with slight differences. Sandra Lara, a Mexican-American psychologist and consultant in New York City, states that although Milton Gordon stated that assimilation and acculturation can be used synonymously, it is worthy to mention that acculturation was considered by Gordon himself and some scholars as the first steps towards assimilation in a continuum of other factors, and not as synonym of assimilation. New York City shows that the term acculturation is the most accurate to describe the process of incorporation of Mexicans in New York. In contrast, Liliana Rivera, a Mexican immigrant psychologist, states that neither assimilation nor acculturation describe the process of incorporation of recent waves of immigrants, therefore the term incorporation is the most recent and preferable term by scholars.<sup>226</sup> In this regard, the different meanings of assimilation serve well to consider the theories of assimilation which have arisen historically in the American experience.

#### **4-1-The Americanization Movement Approach**

Americanization is the process of integration by which immigrants accommodate themselves to the character, moral, and culture of the United States. In this regard, Americanization movement aimed at compelling immigrants and their offsprings to substitute all their own native traits, cultures, and loyalties for an exclusive American one. As the sociologist Nathan Glazer states:

*“Americanization is the science of racial relations in America, dealing with the assimilation and amalgamation of diverse races in equity into an integral part of the national life. By "assimilation" is meant the indistinguishable incorporation of the races into the substance of American life. By "amalgamation" is meant so perfect a blend that the absence or imperfection of any of the vital racial elements available, will impair the compound. By "an integral part" is meant that, once fused, separation of units is thereafter impossible. By "inequity" is meant impartiality among the races accepted into the blend with no imputations of inferiority and no bestowed favors.”<sup>227</sup>*

Whatever the precise word, concepts of assimilation have been central to the understanding of the American experience with immigration since the colonial period. The centrality on the sociological literature of assimilation for the scientific understanding of immigration is more recent, traceable to Chicago school of the twentieth century and

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Nathan Glazer, *We are all Multiculturalists Now*, op.cit., p.103.

particularly to the two prominent scholars: Robert Ezra Park and William Isaac Thomas who offered the best way to understand and describe the assimilation course among immigrant groups. Deficiencies and confusion among earlier formulations of assimilation have often been noted. Such confusion was not solved until the American sociologist Milton Gordon provided his attractive and multidimensional study on the notion of assimilation. Gordon's *Assimilation in American Life* was a systematic account, as well as an influential analysis of the assimilation process. It was Gordon Milton who left a more profound mark on the study of assimilation by describing a series of seven steps or sub-processes in which an immigrant has to pass through in order to fully assimilate in the receiving society. All of Gordon's seven dimensions occur in succession: acculturation, structural assimilation, marital assimilation, identificational assimilation, behavioral and receptional assimilation, and civic assimilation.<sup>228</sup> Milton's theory was criticized; a valid criticism comes from the fact that he only considered the reciprocal relation between the immigrants and the core society and not relations between immigrants and other groups, or relation between members of different ethnic minorities of the community.<sup>229</sup>

To be precise, in the Anglo-conformity or melting pot that subordinate groups will fully adopt the culture of the dominant group and become fully integrated into the larger society as described in Gordon's seven sub-processes. Yet when one decipher Frances Keller's quotation, he can admittedly make the argument that Americanization was the assimilation movement of the time. One major aim of this movement, in its benign form, was to incorporate immigrants of the great European immigration of the early 1900s because it strove "to make American in the sense of making American in character, assimilating to U.S. customs, or naturalizing as an American citizen."<sup>230</sup> It sought to make immigrants, arriving to the shores of Ellis Island, good Americans and encourage them to incorporate into the American life by means as: the English language teaching and classes in American customs, citizenship and American history. Despite the fact that the main purpose of Americanization was to welcome new immigrants and help them to assimilate in the American mainstream, it took increasingly a harsher and a stronger tone by disseminating educational program designed to teach them American political institutions, and make them embrace patriotic sentiments culminating into enormous pressures of 100 percent Americanism for immigrants who were asked to strip of their own cultures and attachments. Winds of Americanization programs continued to raise concerns of suspicion over the loyalty and assimilation of newcomers, John Higham's words show how harsh the Americanization movement was:

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<sup>228</sup> Milton M. Gordon, op.cit., pp.70-71.

<sup>229</sup> Richard Alba, and Victor Nee, op.cit., p.27.

<sup>230</sup> Philip Herbst, op.cit., p.10.

*“By threat and rhetoric 100 percent Americanizes opened a frontal assault on foreign influence in American life. They set about to stampede immigrants into citizenship, into adoption of the English language, and into an unquestioning reverence for existing American institutions. They bade them abandon entirely their Old World loyalties, customs, and memories. They used high-pressure, steam-roller tactics. They cajoled and they commanded.”*<sup>231</sup>

Such vigorous Americanization compains aimed at compelling newcomers and their offsprings to substitute all their native traits and loyalties for exclusive American one. This exclusive American is the result of the amalgamation of all immigrant races that are melted into a new race, into a new man. As so much quoted comment on what the American, in J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur *Letters from an American Farmer of 1782*: “What, then, is the American, this new man? He is neither a European nor the descendant of a European; hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds.”<sup>232</sup>

Such Crèvecoeurian image came to imagine the United States as a melting pot within which different old world groups of different social heritages, histories would coexist, blending that best that each had to offer in the assimilative process ways of producing the definite American. Furthermore, Israel Zangwill’s vision of the melting pot is expressed in his play of 1908 as such: “America is God’s crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand...in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries, but you won’t be long like that brothers, for these are the fires of God you’ve come to- the fires of God. A fig for your feuds and vendettas! German and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians - into the Crucible with you all. God is making the American.”<sup>233</sup> The melting pot was certainly an alluding symbol embraced and promoted as America’s destiny, however its realization was not entirely clear. Indeed, the scholar Philip Gleason draws attention to the paradox surrounding the melting pot by raising the question: “If the melting pot was a symbol of fusion or confusion.” Hence, the unclarity of the melting pot metaphor lies on the assumption

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<sup>231</sup>John Higham, op.cit., p.247. Quoted in Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins*, op.cit., p.100.

<sup>232</sup>J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (The work was originally published by E. P. Dutton and Co., New York, in 1912, then Dover Publications Inc. 2005), as quoted in Philip Gleason, “American Identity and Americanization.” In *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p.33.

The electronic book is available on: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/crev/letter03.html> (Accessed: September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>233</sup>Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, op.cit., pp.289-290.

of whether it was intended to achieve a homogeneous polity by embracing a single cultural dominance of the Anglo-Saxons or one with identifiable origins as a result of crossing racial traits through intermarriage that would inexorably give rise to an entirely new and unique culture. In fact, the melting pot was a deception and a way of encouraging immigrants to conform to the existing American norms through reciprocal changes and concerted efforts. It was clear that the melting pot was, from the outset, merely camouflaging Anglo-conformity. It was never intended to become a reality since the popular notion of America as a melting pot did not take into account non-white racial minorities, and because the melting accrued only among white ethnic minorities. Nowadays, proponents of Americanization attempt to clean up its meaning, and state that the Americanization movement does not mean stripping immigrants of their ethnic cultures, traditions, and native languages. Current proponents look to Americanization as a movement which does not mean to be coercive, harsh, threatening or violent, but rather it means adopting the American civic values and history as their own. Americanization movement cannot stand without criticism. Multiculturalists criticize it and state that it is, in fact, a threat to the ethnic minorities' cultural heritage and rivalries. Arguments dealing with ethnic diversity of the American community present an acute problem of Americanization, particularly because those who are not americanized witness the lowest end of socioeconomic spectrum. However socioeconomic advances can occur as long as ethnic groups have lived in the United States. This is another important perspective that leads itself to understand Herbert Gran's straight-line assimilation theory.

#### **4-2-Straight-line Assimilation Theory**

Another fundamental piece of the canon is the concept of "straight-line assimilation", as a notion popularized by the sociologist Herbert Gans to describe an idea stemming from the anthropologist William Lloyd Warner and the psychologist Leo Srole in their *Social system of American Ethnic Groups*. William Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole's study of ethnic groups in "Yankee City" remains the most complete discussion of the generational march of ethnic groups from initial poverty amidst occupational and residential segregation to residential, occupational, and identity integration and Americanization. Warner and Srole invoke cultural distance and racial categorization to explain the differential tempo of assimilation that ethnic minorities they themselves observe and predict. This orderly pattern of mobility has a common view of assimilation, namely that of a monotonic process during which immigrants or immigrant groups, as life or calendar time progresses or subsequent generations replace preceding ones, further and further adjust towards greater and greater assimilation. Such generational changes and orderly patterns of mobility have come to be called "the straight-line

model of assimilation” which means that: “Each consecutive ethnic generation pushes progressively farther out of the bottom level and into each of the successive layers above. That the class index of an ethnic group is related to the length of its settlement in the city is a manifestation of the continuous advance achieved in the hierarchy of each new generation.”<sup>234</sup>

Straight-line theory proposes one dimensional model of assimilation, for example eastern European Jews who remained among the least assimilated ethnic minority of European immigrants are often considered to be the archetype of immigrant success. Starting out of low socioeconomic and highly stigmatized status, they produced noticeable and substantial advances in education and economic mobility in one generation. Thus, they evinced clear signs of acculturation. Their straight-line model of assimilation predicts, interpreted in their rapid adoption of English language, their almost complete loss of Yiddish and residential immigration. Thus, this model adds a dynamic dimension to the state formulation of Gordon who canonized the view that there is some indirectional pathway to successfully assimilate into the nation’s socioeconomic life. Such dynamic dimension envisions a process unfolding in a sequential way of generational steps, a process which takes place across generations with each new generation presenting a new stage of adjustment to the host society and step closer to more complete assimilation.

The shortcomings of the model have partly to do with its imperfection in depicting the experiences of European immigrants, but also with its failure to account for the experiences of African Americans, as well as today’s immigrants. The idea of generational inevitability of straight-line assimilation has been criticized; some critics have been repeatedly claimed that the conceptualization of immigrant adjustment process as straight-line is flawed: ““Straight-line” theory...is much less successful in accounting for the experience of non-European origin groups.”” “The anomalies immediately question the applicability of straight-line assimilation.” “One cannot but...see that the process of “becoming American has been far from a uniform or straight-line march.”<sup>235</sup>As scholars and pundits lost confidence in America’s ability to overcome its racial and ethnic problems and as the Civil Rights Movement waned, one can perceive its weakness that assimilation had historically been for white only. Indeed, the straight-line model of assimilation fails to accurately characterize the integration pathways adopted by America’s new immigration waves, such as Asians, West-Indians, Hispanics, particularly Mexicans, as well as the possibility that immigrants might

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<sup>234</sup>Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway, *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2009), p.6.

<sup>235</sup> Arnout van de Rijt, “The Matthew Effect in Immigrant Assimilation.” Cornell University, *Center of the Study of Economy and Society*, May 2007. [http://www.economyandsociety.org/publications/wp40\\_Matthew\\_Effect\\_vandeRijt.pdf](http://www.economyandsociety.org/publications/wp40_Matthew_Effect_vandeRijt.pdf) (Accessed: September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

improve their prospects for upward socioeconomic mobility by maintaining their cultural heritage. In recognition of social scientists' criticism and skepticism if the contemporary second generation will follow the path of incorporation or not, sociologist Herbert Gans inverted the straight-line model of assimilation by suggesting what he termed "Second Generation Decline". Gans posited a "bumpy line" theory of ethnicity instead of the linearity feature of the straight-line model. This "bumpy line" shows that there is a generational dynamic, with tangents and bumps, toward assimilation. The debate does not revolve around the quantitative feature of linearity, however what is contested is the qualitative model property of an irreversible course with only one possible end point, complete assimilation. During some periods and over the course of some generations, certain immigrant groups do not assimilate or even reverse assimilation, Gans outlines ways in which members of the post 1965 second generation immigrants did not melt. He observes that immigrants from less-fortunate socioeconomic backgrounds have much harder time than other children of the middle class to succeed in school, moreover he notices that children of poor parents, especially blacks, can be trapped in permanent poverty because these children refuse to accept the low level and poorly paid jobs of their parents, thus they can face a difficult bind. "In adulthood, some members of the second generation, especially those whose parents did not themselves escape poverty, will end up in persistent poverty, because they will be reluctant to work at immigrant wages and hours like their parents, but lack the job opportunities and skills and connections to do better."<sup>236</sup> Having such negative reaction toward low level jobs as poor young Natives, Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics members of the second generation immigrants might risk sliding into permanent poverty. However, those second generation members who retain their ties to their parents, Gans suggest, may do better because they will work at immigrants' wages and hours like their parents while assimilating less since they maintain cultural heritages to their ethnic minorities. "The people who have secured an economically viable ethnic niche acculturating less than did the European 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations and those without such a niche escaping condemnation to dead end immigrant and other jobs mainly by becoming very poor and persistently jobless Americans."<sup>237</sup>

The question of ambiguities that these researches raise is: "If not a straight-line model which describes the assimilation process, then what model can expand these previous studies for better influential assimilation model?" In response to this counter-evidence, the Cuban-American sociologist Alejandro Portes and professor of sociology Min Zhou consider the straight-line notion of assimilation as one out of a number of possible trajectories that immigrants can face and follow, thus they proposed the idea of segmented assimilation which

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<sup>236</sup> Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway, *op.cit.*, p.8.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

is perhaps the single most influential and applicable concept in the recent study of the second generation.

### **4-3-Segmented Assimilation Theory**

Segmented assimilation theory is based on the recognition that American society is now extremely diverse and segmented, with an underclass residing in central cities where a large portion of new immigrant families first settle upon arrival. This theory has become a popular explanation for the diverse experiences among new waves of immigrants and their children who may take divergent assimilation paths. As sociologists Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut state:

*“To a greater extent than the beginning of the twentieth century, second-generation youth confront today a pluralistic, fragmented environment that simultaneously offers a wealth opportunities and major dangers to successful adaptation. In this situation, the central question is not whether the second generation will assimilate to the U.S. society but to what segment of that society it will assimilate.”<sup>238</sup>*

Over the past fifteen years, researches influenced by development in the new economy and sociology have shifted beyond the traditional linear view of assimilation which appears to elude numbers of immigrant groups, even as late as the third generation, to explain the differential level of educational and economic success among immigrants population, whereas the classical model was historically for white European immigrants casting off their skin in favor of absorbing the dominant groups' culture “WASP culture”. The development of the multidimensional model of segmented assimilation, as an alternative to the other assimilation theories, has been central to this advancement. While some members of immigrants become cut off from the socioeconomic mobility, others find multiple pathways to assimilation depending on their national ancestries, contexts of reception in the United States upon arrival, socioeconomic status, and finally social and financial resources. Consequently, scholars notice that the incorporation experiences of contemporary immigrant groups are variegated and diverse than the scenarios provided by earlier assimilation models. Seeking to distill general tendencies from multiplicity of trajectories, Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) greatly expanded previous notions of assimilation and amalgamated their elements into a framework they called segmented assimilation theory. As formulated by Alejandro Portes and

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<sup>238</sup> Alejandro Portes, and Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p.55.

his colleague, and further elaborated and tested empirically in Alejandro Portes and the Cuban-American sociologist Rubén Rumbaut's 2001 book: *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation*. This theory, as an echo of model for scholars' theories of immigration and incorporation, offers a more comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding and describing today's process of assimilation by second generation youth. This theory asserts that the United States is stratified and unequal society, so that different segments of society, at varying degrees and in various places, are available to which immigrants may incorporate. It is a theory which attempts to explain why diverse patterns of adaptation emerge among today's ethnic and racial minority groups and "how these patterns necessary lead to the destinies of convergence and divergence."<sup>239</sup> Segmented assimilation presents society as consisting of unequal and segregated segments which delineate three distinctive acculturation paths that immigration may take. It argues that starkly different outcomes are possible for the second generation, its members can end up "ascending into the ranks of prosperous middle class or join in large numbers the ranks of racialized, permanently impoverished population at the bottom of society."<sup>240</sup> Segmented assimilation posits three possible pathways for second generation immigrants' incorporation: selective, constant, and discontent acculturation. These three acculturation patterns can lead to three possible outcomes: upward assimilation combined with persistent biculturalism, mostly upward assimilation that may be blocked by discrimination and downward assimilation, poverty and downward mobility due to acculturation and assimilation into the urban underclass, and economic integration, accompanied by deliberate maintenance of the immigrant's culture and values. These three distinct patterns or paths correspond to three processes that summarize the relations between immigrant children, their parents, and the wider ethnic community. Constant acculturation occurs when both parents and their children follow the classical assimilation "the straight-line assimilation" into the white middle class; children and their parents adhere to the American culture and norms, and gradually lose their mother language, as well as former country ways of life at about the same pace. When those second generation children enter the American mainstream, they achieve upward mobility with the support of their parents. Dissonant acculturation refers to the opposite situation, it occurs when the children learn English and adopt the American culture far faster than do their immigrant parents. This situation happens especially among parents who possess limited human capital. As a result, they cannot keep up with the cultural advancement of their children. This process,

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<sup>239</sup> Min Zhou, "Segmented Assimilation: Issues, Controversies, and Recent Research on the New Second Generation." *International Migration Review*, Vol. 31, No. 4, Winter 1997, pp.975-1008.

<sup>240</sup> Alejandro Portes, Patricia Fernández-Kelly, and William J. Haller, "Segmented Assimilation on the Ground: The New Second Generation in Early Adulthood." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Vol. 28, No. 6, 2005, p. 1004. See also: Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway, *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age*, op.cit., p.347.

as Portes and Rumbaut argue, can increase the vulnerability of immigrants, and lead to downward assimilation. Dissonant acculturation is generally the assimilation into the minority underclass, without strong parental authority or community support. The third, selective acculturation in which parents and children both gradually adopt American culture and values while remain immersed at least in part in the ethnic community and preserve their communities' values and solidarity as a mean to achieve upward mobility. In selective assimilation, children of the second generation can preserve their former language and become fluent bilingual which could provide more resources for upward mobility. Portes and Rumbaut predict that selective assimilation is important for ethnic groups who are subject to discrimination and prejudice "because individuals and families do not face the strains of acculturation alone but rather within the framework of their own communities. This situation slows down the process while placing the acquisition of new cultural knowledge and language within a supportive context."<sup>241</sup>

"One of them replicates the time-honored portrayal of growing acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle-class; a second leads straight in the opposite direction to permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass; still a third associates rapid economic advancement with deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's values and tight solidarity."<sup>242</sup>Portes and Rumbaut further expand segmented assimilation theory by dressing the importance of factors that influence these three disparate acculturative outcomes. They stress on human capital (including parent's education and income), modes of incorporation into the receiving society (state definition of immigrant groups, eligibility for welfare, degree of discrimination, and antipathy toward immigrant groups), and family structure (single vs. married, couple, females). While the theory inspires a large volume of work on immigrants' incorporation since it provides an insightful and in some sense necessary perspective on the experience of recent ethnic group immigrants and their offsprings, it suffers from acculturating some intergenerational ambiguities since it has some limitation. The major critique of segmented assimilation is that contemporary proponents of straight-line assimilation argue that the experience of modern immigrants and their offsprings are very much like early European waves of 1890 and 1920. For example, Richard Alba and Victor Nee (1997- 2003) argue that earlier European immigrants and their children often did not fully assimilate with the third and fourth generations, thus the realities of limited assimilation on the part of recent second generation immigrants should not be surprising. Recent immigrants, according to Richard Alba and Victor Nee, still experience assimilation at

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<sup>241</sup> Alejandro Portes, and Rubén G. Rumbaut, op.cit., p.54.

<sup>242</sup>Portes Alejandro, and Zhou Min, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 530 (1993): 74-96.

varying degree, as early European immigrants. Another critique of segmented assimilation is the relative advantages and disadvantages of deliberately limiting assimilation and retaining strong ethnic social ties, thus in order to achieve success in the American society, according to Alba and Nee, it is important to assimilate, regardless whether or not immigrants intend to.

Finally, it is also criticized as it “risks essentializing central city black culture in the image of underclass, which the American mainstream views as undeserving poor.”<sup>243</sup> Thus, assimilation into the black culture is necessary a downward assimilation into the underclass. All in all, segmented assimilation theory provides a theoretical explanation of different experiences and incorporation paths of upward and downward social mobility for today’s immigrant groups. However, there are relatively little efforts to test the theory rigorously on empirical grounds due to the unavailable or incomplete data on children of immigrants. Recent research has supported segmented assimilation theory in explaining experiences of many of newcomers. For example, Mexican immigrants adopt a path of selective acculturation which leads to upward socioeconomic mobility based on cultural, economic, and political assimilation, along with English language acquisition. Like many before them, Mexican immigrants in the U.S.A. want to obtain a piece of the American dream, which, whether they want it or not, many indeed imply a certain degree of assimilation in the American mainstream.

## **5-Mexican Assimilation into the American Mainstream**

Behind the skepticism of the relevance of assimilation of new immigrants, there is of course a mythic conception of its course among Mexican immigrant groups: that assimilation is unproblematic for them because a mix of collectivist and individualist mechanisms helps to shape the trajectory of adaptation into the American mainstream in term of culture, language, economy, and politics.

### **5-1-Cultural Assimilation of Mexicans**

The issue of cultural assimilation is important to the ongoing debate regarding immigration and the influx of Latinos and particularly Mexicans into the United States. Before proceeding, it is important to become clear with regard to the meaning of the word culture. “The difficulty is trying to pinpoint what... mean by culture. It is not simply language, community, the arts, religion, history....It is a little of each, and all at the same time... all know what is it, but can’t explain it. It makes us closer to our brothers, sisters, it ...

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<sup>243</sup> Richard Alba, and Victor Nee, op.cit., p.8.

disregards differences when it comes to the tough things of life; it is like a unity within the difference.”<sup>244</sup> Culture gives the sense of unity, a vision of identity, a feeling of entitlement. Though culture changes over time and with experience of generations, it generally provides a common basis of understanding. What is notable about this argument is that it rests on an empirical claim: “Does massive immigration undermine such culture or not?” “Does immigration threaten societal culture, in terms of norms, values, and symbols?” Is it more likely, thus, to defend the right to protect such societal culture? It is sometimes argued that massive Mexican immigration to the U.S. is different in kind. It is important to notice that those who worry about the cultural anti-assimilationist attitude of Mexicans and about how many recent debates make it worth discussing, have nothing to fear regarding cultural values of Mexicans in the United States because the influence of the American culture over Mexicans in this regard is automatically much stronger. While there is skepticism about the genuine threat to the American culture from Mexican immigration, today activists as well as Huntington have articulated the opinion that Mexicans lack the essential qualities needed to be good Americans, Huntington argues this cultural claim most bluntly in his Foreign Policy article: “The Hispanic Challenge” from his book *Who Are We?* Huntington asserts that Mexican immigration fails to accept the Anglo-Protestant ethic and culture, thus it threatens to transform the U.S. from “Anglo-Protestant culture” to “Hispanic-Catholic culture” since Mexican are not willing to adhere and assimilate into such Anglo-Saxon culture. The complaints are based on the belief that Mexican immigrants bring values and norms that are different from the American culture. Relating their cultural heritage, immigrants supposedly fail to incorporate into the American mainstream and become real Americans. They cause a cultural fragmentation of the American nation which will weaken or even destroy its national identity. Thereby, the cultural differences, Huntington emphasizes, are exaggerated. He argues that profound and irreconcilable differences exist between the attitudes of Mexicans and those of Americans. Derived from Spanish and Indian Catholics, Mexican culture is said to be different from American culture which has a Protestant heritage from Martin Luther.<sup>245</sup> The American culture, for Huntington, is not a malleable fusion of a variety of cultural influences as the melting pot theory of multiculturalism would suggest, but rather a reflection of the Anglo-Protestant culture and values that include the English language, Christianity, Protestant values, moralism, a work ethic, the limits of government power, and British tradition of justice and law.

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<sup>244</sup> William V. Flores, and Rina Benmayor, *Latino Cultural Citizenship: Claiming Identity, Space, and Rights* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), p.43.

<sup>245</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, op.cit., p.254.

Huntington argues that Mexican immigrants share values that both differ and conflict with the American culture, and fears that such lack of American commitment and characteristics will challenge the traditional national identity. Latinos' values in general change rapidly as long as they live in the United States. The 2002 Pew Hispanic Center posed a battery of questions about the basic values and work ethic of immigrants and other Americans, when respondents were asked: "Are you willing to work long hours at the expense of your personal life." The overwhelming majority of newly arrived immigrants and those who are still enough in the United States to Spanish dominant respond with no. But approximately half of the English dominant say yes. Moreover, the belief that working hard at the experience of family would help one succeed and get ahead was strongly and closely related to Hispanic immigrants' status and generation. In this regard, answers shift considerably from the first generation to the third one: only 21 percent of immigrants agreed with the statement by saying yes, compared to the 40 percent of the third generation of Hispanic immigrants. Another remarkable shift on a deep related value, and again an answer conforming to hard work for Hispanic immigrants. On the other hand, when the same Pew Hispanic Survey asked respondents if their success at home in the U.S.A. comes from doing "what is best for yourself rather than what is best for others", as an indication of the belief in the virtue of self-interest. Among whites in general, only 50 percent agreed with this statement compared to 50 percent of Hispanics. Another additional evidence comes from data of Waldinger Roger 1997, in his research conducted in a series of interviews with living personal at 170 firms in Los Angeles city indicates that Hispanic were considered more hardworking than either blacks or whites employees; they are deemed hard working employees in their dedication, attitudes and work ethic.<sup>246</sup>

Though Mexicans retain strong bonds of their ethnic cultural identity which gives them a distinctive conception of unity and a sense of belonging, Tells and Ortiz found that the use of Spanish first names, which can be an indicator of ethnic culture among Mexican immigrants and their descendents, faded by generation, falling from 84 percent among first generation original respondents, as shown in figure 5, to 53 percent for third generation original respondents.

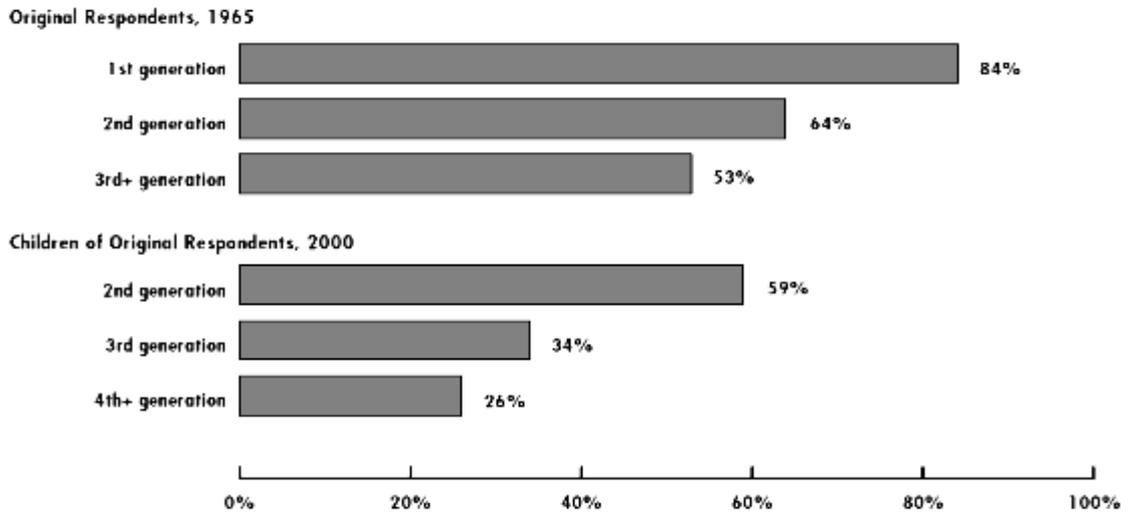
This generational shift continued among the children of original respondents. Only 26 percent of the fourth generation reported the use of Spanish first names on their birth

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<sup>246</sup> Jack Citrin, Amy Lerman, Michael Murakami, and Kathryn Pearson, "Testing Huntington: Is Hispanic Immigration a Threat to American Identity?" *APSA journals*, Cambridge University Press 5 (1) (March 2007): 31-48. [http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/perspectivesmar07citrin\\_etal.pdf](http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/perspectivesmar07citrin_etal.pdf) ( Accessed : September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

certificates like (María or Juan), however the majority were English first names like (Mary or John).

**Figure 5: Percentage with Spanish First Names at Birth**

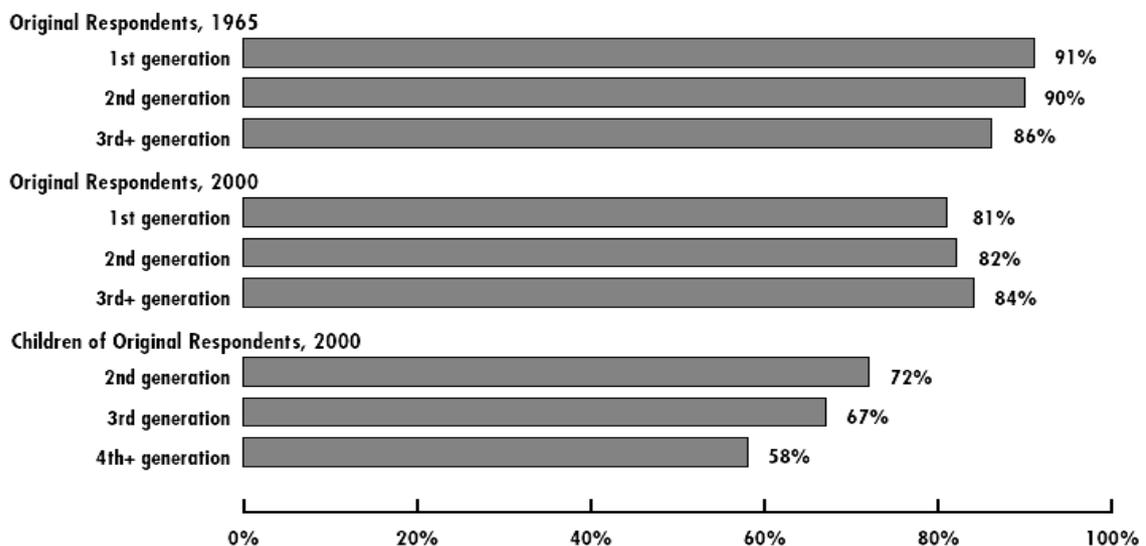


Source: Telles and Ortiz 2008.

Note: Third and fourth generations respondents include subsequent generations.

Similarly, preferences of religion are inexorably shifting to the preferences and attitudes predominant in the United State. Mexicans new religious faiths as critical to their participation in the American society and to their self identity, Catholicism have long been predominant religious faith for Mexicans. Figure 6 shows that in 1965, most original respondents of the first generation were Catholics. However, Catholicism witnesses considerable decline among the children of the original respondents who become increasingly evangelical Protestants or non denominational Christians.

**Figure 6: Percentage that are Catholic**

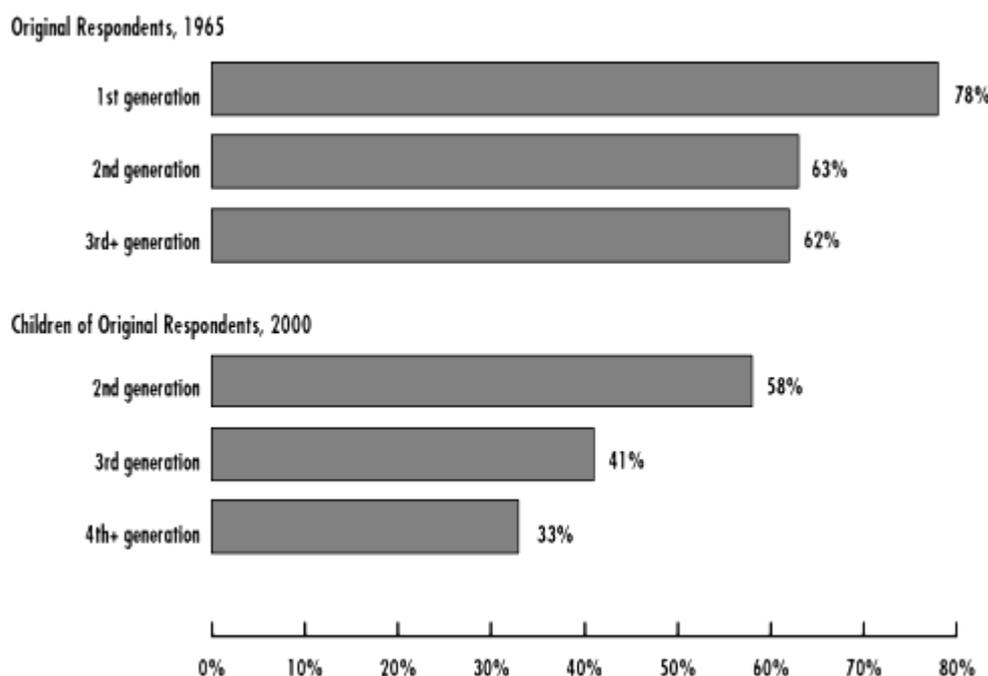


Source: Telles and Ortiz 2008.

Note: Third and fourth generations respondents include subsequent generations.

A patriarchal hierarchy prescribed a system of male dominance in the Mexican close-knit family unit where young girls are taught the tasks and skills of their mothers from an early age and spend much of the time at home. Such traditional roles are thought to be prevalent characteristics of Mexican Americans. When asked female respondents, if they should live in their parents' home until they marry, first generation respondents reported the most traditional gender attitudes as figure 7 indicates. But agreement dropped considerably among second and third generation original respondents.

**Figure 7: Percentage Agreeing those Girls should Live at Home until they Marry**



Source :Telles and Ortiz 2008.

Note: Third-and fourth generation respondents include subsequent generations.

Only one third of the fourth generation replied that girls should remain at home until they marry. Another evident prediction suggests that elements of the given ethnic Mexican culture will seep into new stream culture.

The preference of Mexican music, as strong indicator of a cultural connection, declined from 74 percent for the first generation to approximately 10 percent for the offsprings of original respondents. 60 percent of the children of original respondents prefer American music such as Jazz, Country, Pop, and Rock. Nevertheless, a significant minority of children (25 percent) identified themselves with Chicano music, showing an ongoing adherence to ethnic cultural rivalries, also more than half of respondents reported their recognition to holidays celebrated by Mexicans, another indication of a sense of belonging which reinforces for many Mexicans a sense of ethnic brotherhood. Above all, there is an

unshielded belief and a strong evidence of cultural assimilation as well as the adoption of the American societal practices without having to denigrate sacred traditions.<sup>247</sup>

## 5-2-Linguistic Assimilation of Mexicans

Nothing is more central to becoming American or succeeding in the United States than the ability to speak, read, and write the English language. Current evidence shows that Mexican immigrants and their children make the transition from the Spanish language to the English one. Sociologists Ruben G. Rumbaut, Douglas S. Massey, and Frank D. Bean contradict Huntington's claims. As they argue:

*"...Huntington's assertion that Spanish is unlikely to go the way of other immigrant languages in the United States by succumbing to English-language dominance across the generations. Southern California offers an ideal test of his hypothesis because it is the largest Spanish-speaking enclave in the United States and houses some of the oldest and largest Mexican neighborhoods in the country, as well as the country's largest concentration of immigrants....Findings directly contradict Huntington's assertions. The United States has aptly been described as a "graveyard" for languages because of its historical ability to absorb immigrants by the millions and extinguish their mother tongues within a few generations... and Spanish appears to offer no threat to this reputation. Owing to the number and density of Spanish speakers in metropolitan Southern California, Mexicans and other Latin American immigrants retain a greater ability to speak their mother tongue very well compared with other groups, but, by the third generation at the latest, ability drops sharply and converges toward the pattern observed for white Europeans."<sup>248</sup>*

In his controversial book *Who Are WE? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, Huntington argues that Latin American immigrants, especially Mexicans influence the core American national identity and culture. Much of the threat that Huntington perceives in the Hispanic challenge is closely linked to the notion that Hispanics in general and Mexicans in particular are much likely to speak English than earlier generations of European immigrants because they are regionally concentrated within Spanish-speaking enclaves near the Mexican border which reinforces their capacity to sustain social and economic life in Spanish. Huntington is particularly upset and pessimistic about the prospect of Mexican cultural and linguistic assimilation; he argues that the lack of linguistic assimilation could eventually establish a Spanish-speaking based society on the U.S. soil: "If the second generation does not

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<sup>247</sup> Edward E. Telles, and Vilma Ortiz, "Mexican American Culture and Language." *UCLA Chicano Studies Research*, N O. 21 July 2008. A report drawn from: *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race* (2008), an update of the classic *The Mexican American People* (1970), a longitudinal and intergenerational study on the extent of assimilation among Mexican Americans over four generations.

<http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/briefs/documents/PB21.pdf> (Accessed: September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>248</sup> Ruben G. Rumbaut, Douglas S. Massey, and Frank D. Bean, "Linguistic Life Expectancies: Immigrant Language Retention in Southern California." *Population and Development Review* 32(3): 447-460, September 2006.

<http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/councilarticles/pdr/PDR323Rumbaut.pdf> (Accessed: September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

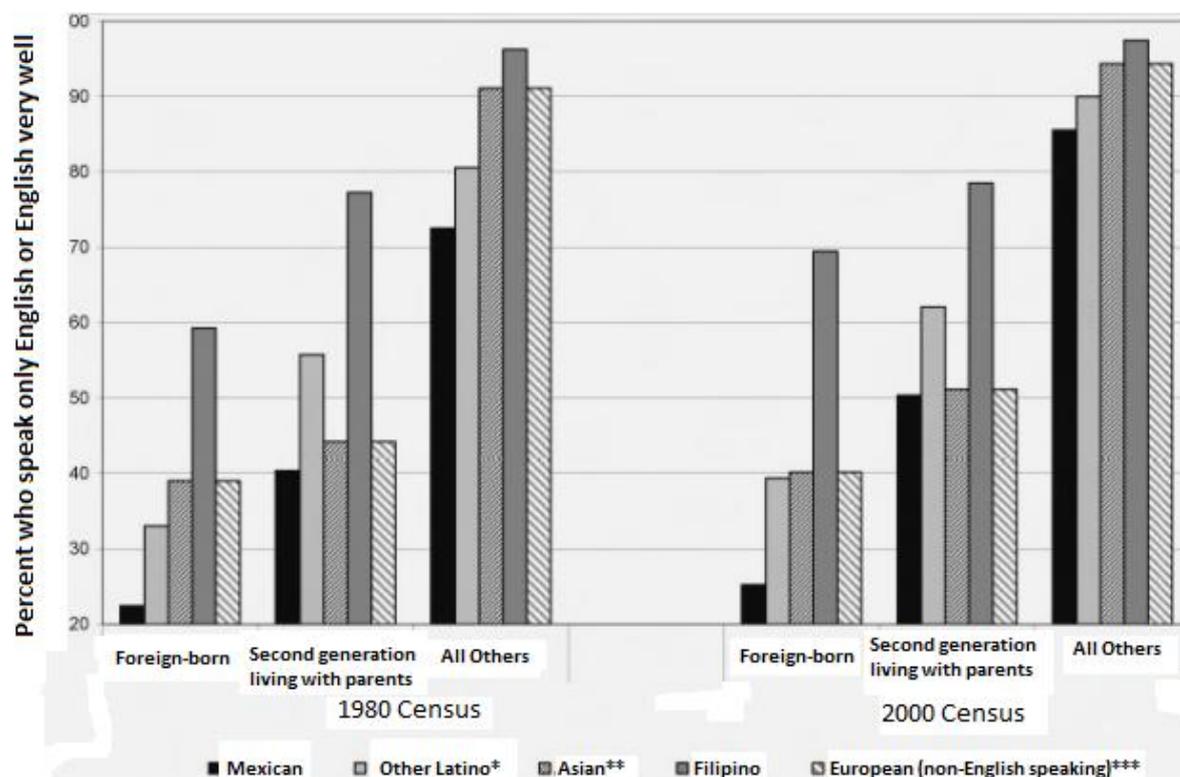
reject Spanish outright, the third generation is also likely to be bilingual, and fluency in both languages is likely to become institutionalized in the Mexican-American community.”<sup>249</sup>Huntington’s arguments are widely dismissed by scholars (Massey, Bean, Brown, Rumbaut, Jack Citrin, Richard Alba and Victor Nee) since his assertions overlook the reality of language assimilation among Hispanics, including Mexicans. And they fail to provide a sociological analysis and data to make a heuristic point that those who worry about the linguistic balkanization, because of heavy immigration from Spanish-speaking countries, have nothing to fear because the use of Spanish, even in highly concentrated Hispanic immigrants, dies out rapidly over time and across generations. In their article “Testing Huntington: Is Hispanic Immigration a Threat to American Identity”, scholars: Jack Citrin, Amy Lerman, Michael Murakami, and Kathryn Pearson examined the evidence regarding language use and the rate of linguistic assimilation among Mexicans and other ethnic groups in the U.S.A. by using figures reporting the proportions who either speak only English or speak English very well in 1980 and 2000 Censuses. Respondents are grouped in terms of ancestral country of origin and whether they are foreign-born, native-born living within immigrant’s parents, or native-born living outside immigrant’s household. Immigrants and their children from English speaking countries are excluded from this analysis. More importantly, both the 1980 and 2000 Censuses data show that the overall knowledge of English is much lower among residents born in Mexico (24%) than among other ethnic groups (39%) as shown in figure 8. However, offsprings of Mexican immigrants learn English quickly. As the 2000 Census shows, the pace of linguistic assimilation among native-born living in households of Mexican-born immigrants seems to be more rapid; 50 percent of native-born living in household spoke only English or spoke English very well. This intergenerational assimilation among offsprings of Mexican immigrants surpassed that of every other immigrant group. Comparing all other category which includes 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations or 4<sup>th</sup> generation immigrants, it shows how Mexican generations closed linguistic assimilation gap making it very small and slight comparing to other ethnic groups: 86 percent of Mexican families speak only English or speak English very well, compared to 94 percent of people of Asian origin. Indeed and in contrast to Huntington, the pace of linguistic assimilation among recent Mexican immigrants portrayed in the 2000 Census seems to be rapid than in the past. This indicates that two decades of steady and large scale immigration have not slowed the rate of linguistic assimilation. Even though newly arrived Mexican Americans to the U.S.A. may know less English than newcomers entering the U.S., but their

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<sup>249</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We ? The Challenges to America’s National Identity*, op.cit., p.57.

offsprings' assimilation is much pretty since it resembles somehow to that of earlier European Immigrants.<sup>250</sup>

**Figure 8: Linguistic Assimilation of Mexicans and other Immigrants**



Bars indicate the percentages who speak only English at home or who speak English “very well”.

“All others” indicates all respondents of a given ancestry who are neither foreign-born nor of the second generation living with immigrants parents.

\*Other Latino includes those of South American, Puerto Rican, and Cuban ancestry.

\*\*Asian includes those of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese ancestry. Indians were excluded due to the extremely high English proficiency among first-generation immigrants.

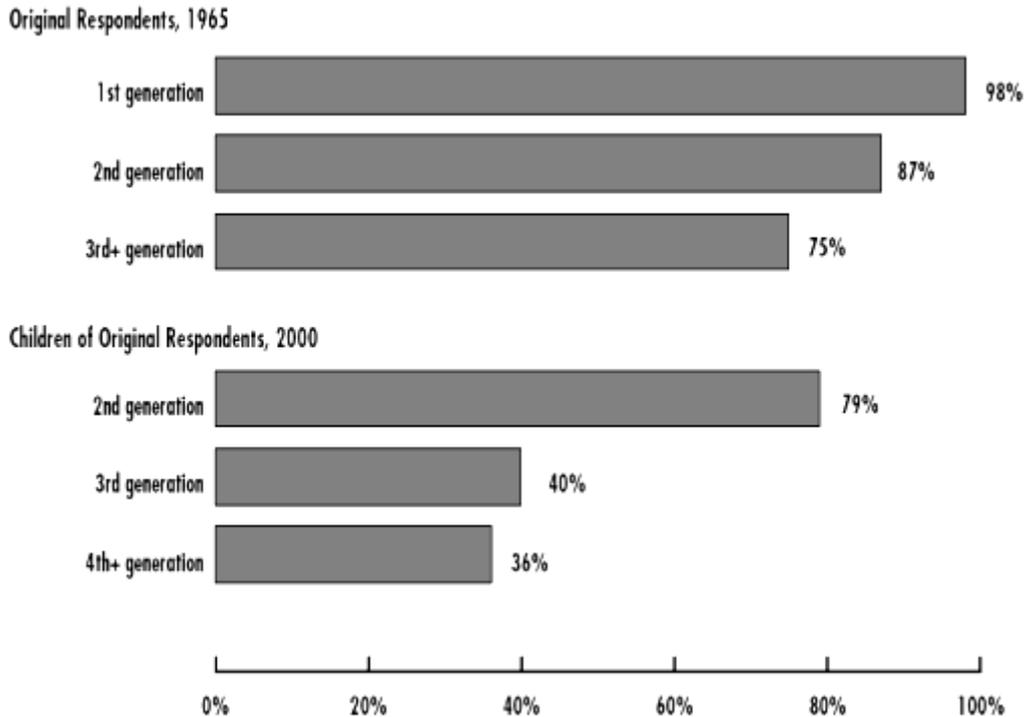
\*\*\*European (non-English speaking) includes those of German, Italian, Polish, and Russian ancestry.

Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, 1980 and 2000 Census 1% samples.

Further evidence that Mexican Americans, in terms of learning English, are following the assimilation pattern established by European immigrants in previous centuries is shown in the Longitudinal and Intergenerational Study of Mexican American assimilation conducted by professors of sociology: Edward E. Telles and Vilma Ortiz at the University of California. Their research indicates that Spanish fluency concurrently declines across generations, as figure 9 shows:

<sup>250</sup> Jack Citrin, Amy Lerman, Michael Murakami, and Kathryn Pearson, “Testing Huntington: Is Hispanic Immigration a Threat to American Identity?”, op.cit.

**Figure 9: Percentage that Speak Spanish well or very well**



Source: Telles and Ortiz 2008.

Note: Third and fourth generation respondents include subsequent generations.

Though almost all first generation original respondents were fluent Spanish speakers (98 %), such fluency has decreased dramatically by the fourth generation to 36 percent. This indicates that fluency of English for subsequent generations was very high. In 2000, most of the U.S. born spoke fluent English, and in 1965 about half of the third generation original respondents reported that they spoke English very well. It is worth mentioning that what makes Spanish alive is the continuing influx of Mexican immigrants in Mexican American communities.<sup>251</sup>The skeptic views in *Who Are We?* about English language acquisition by Mexican immigrant generations is inaccurate. While Huntington’ alarm about the potential Spanish language takeover is highly exaggerated, most of researches and studies show that virtually all second generation immigrants, including Mexicans grow up proficient in English, and that a substantial segment speaks English by the third generation.<sup>252</sup>The Pew Hispanic Center conducted a national survey in 2002 among Hispanic Americans and concluded that even though almost foreign-born Latinos were fluent Spanish speakers, only a fraction of the

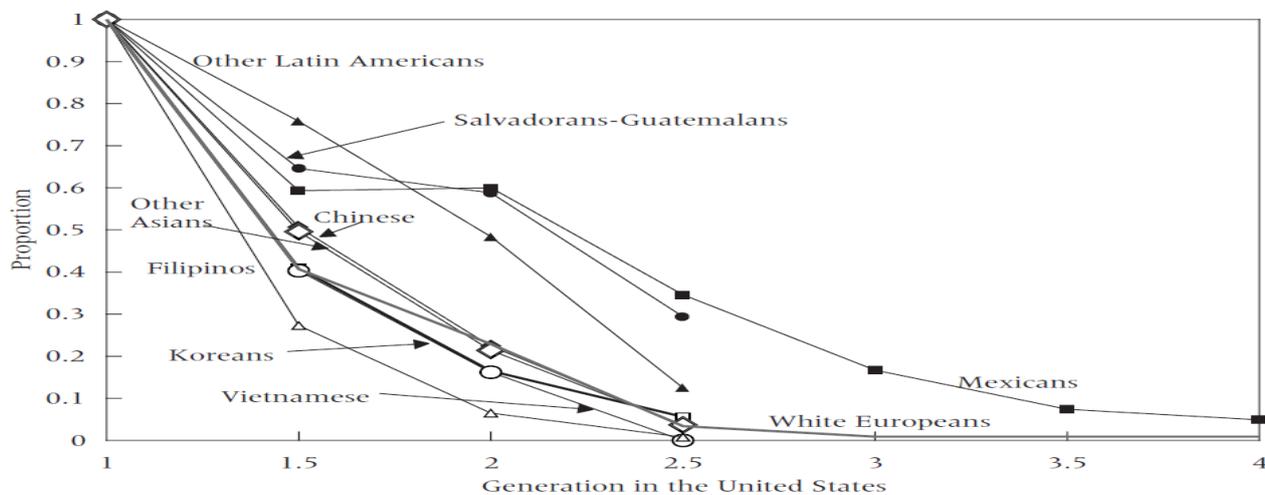
<sup>251</sup>Edward E. Telles, and Vilma Ortiz, “Mexican American Culture and Language.” *UCLA Chicano Studies Research*, N O. 21 July 2008, op.cit.

<sup>252</sup>Tamar Jacoby, op.cit.

second and the third generation remained so; half of the second generation and three quarters of the third generation are dominant English speakers.<sup>253</sup>

The death of immigrant’s languages in the United States is not only an empirical fact, but rather a reality of a larger process of language death. Indeed Ruben G. Rumbaut, Douglass S. Massey, and Frank D. Bean have proved such reality when they have conducted research and drawn their data from two sources: the Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA) and the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Survey Study (CILS). These researchers used two survey questions in order to measure the survival or death of the mother tongue: the first asked how well respondents spoke the language of their ancestors, and the second asked which language the respondents preferred to speak in the household. In fact data from IIMMLA and CILS survey show reasonable predictors of language death across generations, as the following figure 10 indicates, the X axis specifies generations spent in the United States in increment of 0.5, and the Y axis indicates the proportion of group members among whom language fluency has survived. The graph level shows that in generation 2.5 just 35 percent of Mexicans express a preference for Spanish. In the third generation and beyond, the survival curves begin to converge. At generation three only 17 percent of Mexicans still speak fluent Spanish and at 3.5 the figure drops to 7 percent. Over time, the percentage of Mexicans who speak Spanish very well in the fourth generation is just 5 percent, in comparison to 1 percent of white Europeans who speak their mother tongue. And this is an indicator that the Spanish language death rates among descendants of Mexican immigrants prevail across generations.<sup>254</sup>

**Figure 10: Proportion of Immigration Groups Members who Speak Mother**



Source: Ruben G. Rumbaut, Douglas S. Massey, and Frank D. Bean, “Linguistic Life Expectancies: Immigrant Language Retention in Southern California.” *Population and Development Review* 32(3): 447–460, September 2006. <http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/councilarticles/pdr/PDR323Rumbaut.pdf> (Accessed: September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>253</sup> Pew Hispanic Center and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, “National Survey of Latino, 2002.” <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/15.pdf> (Accessed: September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>254</sup> Ruben G. Rumbaut, Douglas S. Massey, and Frank D. Bean, op.cit.

In Huntington view, there is simply no room for language assimilation, and this is a false assumption that immigrants are, like Peter Rau says, “forever frozen in their status as newcomers, never aging, never advancing economically, and never assimilating.”<sup>255</sup> Furthermore, understanding the rapid process of globalization influence in the world leads to understand the influence of the English language that has reached far beyond the frontier of the United States. In many cases, the rapid influence of globalization makes Mexican immigrants acquire some degree of English even before they intend making the journey north to the United States as they have been exposed to the American television, programs, and the U.S. companies settled on their country. Once they arrived to the United States, most Mexicans become conscious and realize, in response to Huntington’s claim that they show no interest to learn English, that proficiency in English is indispensable for success in the United States. That’s why they make long waiting lists at adult English language programs and English as a second language centers.<sup>256</sup> And in response to Huntington charge that Mexicans can share the American dream only if they dream in English, professor Lawrence H. Fuchs responds that the offsprings of Latino immigrants can never dream in Spanish even if they want to do so. The fact that Sergeant Jimmy Lopez, who was one of the Americans held hostage by Iranian militants between 1979 and 1980, wrote his homage to the United States in Spanish, did not make him less of an American.<sup>257</sup> In this regard, President Ronald Reagan, at the welcoming ceremony in 1981 for the released American hostages after the Iran hostage crisis, said: “I’m told that Sergeant Lopez here put up a sign in his cell, a sign that normally would have been torn down by those guards. But this one was written in Spanish, and his guards didn’t know that “Viva la roja, blanco, y azul,” means “Long live the red, white, and blue.” They may not understand what that means in Iran, but we do, Sergeant Lopez, and you’ve filled our hearts with pride. Muchas gracias.”<sup>258</sup>

### 5-3-Economic Assimilation of Mexicans

Another encouraging sign of America’s continuing capacity to absorb Mexican newcomers is the evidence of economic mobility. Such mobility has a significant influence on both income and employment. As the professor of politics Peter skerry states:

*“This is not to say that Mexican Americans have experienced no gains whatsoever. There is evidence that even during the latter decades of the*

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<sup>255</sup> Dowell Myers, *Immigrants and Boomers: Forging a New Social Contract for the Future of America* (New York: The Russell Sage Foundation, 2008), p. 166.

<sup>256</sup> Kevin R. Johnson, and Bill Ong Hing, “National Identity in a Multicultural Nation: The Challenges of Immigration Law and Immigration.” *Michigan Law Review* 103, n.6, May 2005, p.1379.

<sup>257</sup> Lawrence H. Fuchs, “Mr. Huntington’s Nightmare”, op.cit.

<sup>258</sup> Ronald Reagan, “Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for the Freed American Hostages.” *The American Presidency Project, January 27, 1981*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?PID=43879> (Accessed: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

*nineteenth century, Mexicans experienced some upward occupational mobility....Mexican Americans conform to this nonlinear pattern. Mexican immigrants progress such that, after about fifteen years in this country, their earnings equal those of native-born Mexican American with similar characteristics. Socioeconomic advancement continues with the second generation....The attitudinal responses to this socioeconomic trajectory similarly reflect the general pattern for immigrant ethnic groups. As we have seen, the evidence is that immigrants themselves are content. As for their children and grandchildren, a good deal of evidence indicates that over time Mexican Americans come to voice positions almost indistinguishable from those of the rest of the population.*<sup>259</sup>

Throughout the American history, the promise of economic opportunities and the prospect of immigrants' upward mobility have formed the bedrock upon which the story of the American dream has been anchored. However, recent economic debates reflect the concern many Americans have about the scale and character of immigration into the United States, and how recent immigrants are continuing in widening income inequality. Broadly defined, such economic inequality among recent immigrants and slower growth suggest that it is an important moment now to raise and review facts about economic opportunities and mobility in the United States attempting to answer the basic questions: "Is there really a high degree of economic mobility?" "Does America still continue to be a luring force and land of economic opportunity?" With new data and analysis, the study addresses such questions by measuring how much economic mobility actually exists in the United States today. America's pride in their immigrant's heritages often seems tempted by the nagging fear that the most recent arrivals are somehow different, that the latest worries of foreigners will not assimilate economically into the mainstream U.S. society. Of particular concern are Mexican immigrants and their descendents. Mexicans assume a central role in current discussion of immigrants' intergenerational progress, and the outlook for the so-called new second generation. The considerable skepticism and divergent conclusions about whether the process of economic assimilation will operate in ways reminiscent to the European immigrants of past centuries or not, is still alive. The issue of how Mexican immigration fares or fails in the host country, especially in terms of labor force participation, income, earning, occupies the minds of general public, political and social scientists. Huntington, among them, is decidedly pessimistic about the economic advancement of Mexicans. The economic assimilation question of Mexicans, however, if it is addressed through the lens of recent studies and research demonstrates that Huntington claim is unduly pessimistic since Mexican generations

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<sup>259</sup> Peter Skerry, op.cit., pp.38-358

imagine the economy as a ladder upon which they are all perched at some level. Taking into account generational cohort, recent studies show that Mexican Americans make significant intergenerational progress where income and earnings are concerned. The economist Barry R. Chiswick's well-known study on immigrants in the United States, as well as others scholars who followed his lead show that assimilation rates are the net results of several offspring factors; the earnings of newly arrived immigrants are significantly lower than those of their native counterparts with the same observed socioeconomic characteristics, mainly because many immigrants lack host-country specific skills which are not perfectly transferable to the host country's labor market. However, as new immigrants gain information and know about the functioning of the new labor market, they are assumed to invest these skills in human capital in the new country, therefore their earnings increase rapidly and can converge and even exceed earning of those natives. When the catching up of earning occurs, the economic assimilation of immigrants is achieved, this means that immigrants and their counterpart natives are indistinguishable in terms of earning and income. Thus economic assimilation occurs when the earning of immigrants reach the earning of comparable natives due to their accumulation of human capital in the host country's labor market with longer years of residence. More complete pictures of economic assimilation, in contrast to Huntington's arguments, include larger dynamic examination of what happens to immigrants after several years of residence, as well as true intergenerational comparisons between parents and their offspring.<sup>260</sup>

Senior scholar and director of the Institute of Immigration, Ethnicity, and Social Structure research program Joel Perlmann (2005), in contrast to Samuel Huntington, contends that economic parity within the U.S. mainstream is largely inevitable by the third or the fourth generation, therefore he offers a cautiously optimistic assessment of the prospect of incorporation by Mexican immigrants. A comparison of intergenerational mobility, between the low skill European immigrants arriving to the United States in 1900 with recent Mexicans immigrants, reveals another aspect of opportunity to get ahead, Perlmann (2005) concludes that the economic assimilation of Mexicans can take more time-four or five generations rather than three or four, but the pace and extent of such assimilation nevertheless is occurring. Hence, the experience of Mexicans integration may not turn out ill that differently from successful stories of incorporation recounted for earlier immigrant waves into the United States.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> Amelie F. Constant, and Klaus F. Zimmermann, "Migration, Ethnicity and Economic Integration." Discussion Paper No. 4620, the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), December 2009.  
<http://ftp.iza.org/dp4620.pdf> (Accessed: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

<sup>261</sup> Brian Duncan, and Stephen J. Trejo, "The Complexity of Immigrant Generations: Implications for Assessing the Socioeconomic Integration of Hispanics and Asians." Discussion Paper No. 6276, the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), January 2012.  
<http://ftp.iza.org/dp6276.pdf> (Accessed: February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

Intergenerational mobility is to assure that each generation is expected to do better than the previous one. Indeed, similar work of the economist George Jesus Borjas who has examined the intergenerational mobility of different immigrant groups by computing the selective wages of these immigrants from selected nations in 1979 based on the U.S. Census Bureau data, provides a rational reality that Mexican immigrants may well have an uphill climb to continue reaching economic parity with non-immigrants, the following (table 5) indicates that economic assimilation among Mexican generations appears to be working well. Mexicans immigrant's earning is almost 32 percent less than those non-immigrants in 1979. Second generation immigrants, after 30 years, had moved closer to the average wages of natives, relative wages move from 32 percent less than non-immigrant workers in the first generation to only 15 percent less than non-immigrants cohorts in the second generation.<sup>262</sup>

**Table 5: Age-Adjusted Relative Wages of Immigrants from Selected Countries**

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Relative Wage of Immigrants in 1979</b>	<b>Relative Wage of Second Generation in 2000</b>	<b>Wage Improvement or Decline in Second Generation (Percentage Points)</b>
<b>Canada</b>	18.5	16.8	-1.7
<b>France</b>	19.8	5.9	-13.9
<b>India</b>	30.8	27.1	-3.7
<b>Germany</b>	24.9	19.5	-5.4
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	-37.0	-18.9	18.1
<b>Haiti</b>	-21.7	10.6	32.3
<b>Mexico</b>	-31.6	-14.7	16.9
<b>Jamaica</b>	-22.8	1.2	24.0

Source: George Jesus Borjas, 2006, p.62.

To gain a better understanding of Mexican economic assimilation, The Toms Rivera Institution indicates that Mexicans born in the U.S.A. exhibit higher earnings than comparable Mexicans born in Mexico in the paid employment sector. The average income of Mexicans born in the U.S.A. in 1998 was 50.423, compared to 38.172 for those Mexicans born immigrants. This indicates that domestic born Mexicans are prosperous, an additional argument to justify economic incorporation.

<sup>262</sup> Ron Haskins, "The Economic Mobility of Immigrants in the United States." *Economic Mobility Project: An Initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts*. The Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA). [http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Economic\\_Mobility/Pew\\_Economic\\_Mobility\\_Immigrants.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Economic_Mobility/Pew_Economic_Mobility_Immigrants.pdf) (Accessed: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

Moreover, several recent studies have explored the economic assimilation among Mexicans. The data from Census Content Reinterview Study demonstrates that selective ethnic attrition creates potentially serious problems for hacking the economic process of Mexican immigrant's offsprings. As children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants assimilate into the American mainstream and often intermarry within non-Mexicans, selective ethnic identity identification weakens and attachment to the minority group declines across generations, particularly among the children produced by Mexican intermarriages. This dynamic suggests that only small proportion continues to self-identify as Mexicans. Thus, there is a complete gap in which the relevant Mexican descendents no longer identify as Mexican. In this regard, such process of ethnic leakage is wholly selective, because Mexican Americans who intermarry are more likely to have much better and higher education and earnings than those who do not intermarry. Consequently, the existing data for third and later generations of Mexicans, who generally no longer identify as Mexicans in Census data, understate the socioeconomic attainment of this population. Despite of the selective intermarriage and ethnic identification by large share of later generations, some of the most successful descendents of Mexican immigrants assimilate into the American society that they fade from empirical observation. To the extent that the selective intermarriages intersect with intergenerational transmission of human capital and ethnic identity, the potential becomes greater for existing data to give inaccurate representations of third and later Mexican generations since it may omit an increasingly large share of the most successful descendents of Mexican immigrants.<sup>263</sup> Indeed, this argument is consistent with the evidence presented in data from 1970 Census Content Study, that self-identified samples of U.S. Hispanics omit large share of later generation individuals of Hispanic ancestry, e.g. over half of Mexican descendents beyond the third generation were missing, thus they were largely omitted as Mexicans in Census data, and that marriage is primarily the main source of such intergenerational ethnic attention. Data from 2002 Census indicates that intermarriage is wide spread among Mexican Americans, more than a third of Mexicans have non-Mexican spouses, and having a non-Mexican parent largely determines that children of Mexican descent seem to lose their distant ethnic ties. And they, therefore, display higher levels of education and earnings. In general, children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants are in fact becoming economically incorporated, this would add more support to the idea that more optimistic outlooks regarding the political assimilation prospects of Mexican immigrants are warranted.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Brian Duncan, and Stephen J. Trejo, *op.,cit.*

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

## 5-4-Political Assimilation of Mexicans

Still, for all fears, the reality of Mexican political assimilation is also encouraging. The increasing rates of naturalization and voter turnout seem a fairly reliable and straightforward index of political strength among Mexicans in the United States. As Edward E. Telles, and Vilma Ortiz note:

*“By the end of the 1980s, there was abundant evidence that Mexican Americans were participating extensively in mainstream American politics. In every city and state where they became active in electoral politics, Mexican Americans extended their political agenda beyond their first concern [for example civil rights, immigration and bilingual education] and elected representatives who entered coalitions with others.”*<sup>265</sup>

Dramatic increases in Mexican immigration into the United States during the past twenty years, as well as the growing public and academic debate surrounding the political involvement among these immigrants have uncovered a dearth in the understanding of new immigrants in terms of their participation in the American politics. Although the United States celebrates its immigrants' roots, the sheer number of arrivals from Mexico has usually triggered widespread fears that these newcomers and their children will resist adopting political practices and values of their new homeland. Indeed, it is not surprising for Huntington to raise concerns that young arrivals of Mexicans appear to have receding political incorporation and greater apathy through generations. Despite the intense political debate, particularly from Huntington, that has merged in response to newly arrived Mexicans, evidence from a variety of research sources underscore how the status of attainment in regard of political participation, is undistinguishable from that of other national groups in the U.S.A. However, it is worthy to note that a sober assessment of how and whether these new immigrants will successfully incorporate into the political community is complicated by several gaps in the empirical literature. Indeed, much has been written on immigrants and politics, but only few studies that do focus specifically on immigrants from Mexico. Researchers mostly have either looked at the population in isolation (Gracia 1987) or collapsed Mexican respondents into a single category with other Latino groups (Ramakrishman 2005). Still, for all fears, the reality of Mexican political incorporation is also encouraging. Like many generations of European immigrants who preceded them, most Mexican immigrants seek out a political path of incorporation.

Frequently used as an outcome measure of political incorporation, voter turnout data are worth examining. First because they appear to challenge the common sense impression of

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<sup>265</sup> Edward E. Telles, and Vilma Ortiz, *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race*, op.cit., pp.240-241.

Mexican American politics with regards to the relative success of their Anglo colleagues. Several researches reveal that Mexican generations have been more politically efficacious. Indeed, data tabulated in (table 6) indicates that voter registration in 1965 was between 61 and 71 percent for all generation groups, however the overall voter registration rates increased to more than 80 percent between 1965 and 2000. At the same level, the table shows additional evidence that children of the original respondents appeared to have more willingness to register to vote than their parents, at roughly the same age, were in 1965. Voting, like registration to vote, is overreported. While Mexican Americans constitute more than half (54 to 62%) of the eligible original respondents reported voting in 1964. However, 78 percent only or more reported voting in 1996, but only 59 to 65 percent of Mexican offspring did. Thus, it is quite obvious that parents were more likely to vote than their children, in both elections. Such findings indicate that 80 to 90 percent reported voting out of those registered to vote. Rates of actual voting do not, therefore, appear to be as exaggerated as those for registration simply because data based on the exit data indicated that more than 80 percent of registered Latino voted in the election of 1996.<sup>266</sup>

**Table 6: Registered and Voted in Last Presidential Election by Generation-Since-Immigration, 1965-2000<sup>a</sup>.**

	Original Respondents,1965			Original Respondents,2000			Children		
	Gen.1	Gen.2	Gen.3	Gen.1	Gen.2	Gen.3	Gen.2	Gen.3	Gen.4+
<b>Registered</b>	61%	71%	67%	91%	88%	85%	81%	82%	81%
<b>Voted<sup>b</sup></b>	54	62	57	87	82	78	61	65	59

Source: Mexican American Study Project.

<sup>a</sup>Among citizens.

<sup>b</sup>1964 presidential election in 1965 survey and 1996 presidential election in 2000 survey.

The relevant consideration is not simply turnout but a generational pattern which is not well defined. A multivariate analysis of political participation among Mexican immigrants shows that traditional forms of participation such as: voting and registration are not adequate tests of civic engagement for a population including 7 million non-citizens. Census data are suggestive, but they fail to reveal other factors that undermine the political incorporation in the United States. For example, because these data include only individuals eligible to vote, they exclude from consideration a huge segment of non-citizens of Mexican ancestry. These

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., p.240

inequalities are another factor contributing to low levels of voting among Mexican Americans, thereby reinforcing a false image of political weakness.<sup>267</sup>

Many studies have focused on marginalization and voter turnout to measure political participation, but few have focused on noncitizen traditional forms of participation. Among these researches is the National Survey on Latinos which was administered by the Washington Post, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Harvard University, and conducted by telephone between June and August of 1999. This research focuses solely on a national sample of Mexican ancestry, including immigrants and noncitizens, and it examines non-electoral participation. By analyzing these three measures of political participation, the researchers find that noncitizen Mexican immigrants are politically active in the United States. Immigrants are just as likely to participate as native-born Mexican Americans. Furthermore, among the foreign-born, noncitizens are just as likely to participate as naturalized citizens. The survey's results show that there is no reason to suspect that Mexican immigrants and noncitizens are not active in the American political life since the majority of them plan to apply for citizenship. Such findings offer viable option and useful insights into those non-traditional forms of participation. All in all, Mexican immigrants and noncitizens are expected to react to the political environment rather than withdraw.<sup>268</sup> This political participation will surely continue in the future. As Latinos in general and Mexicans in particular share the population growth, more and more Mexicans become citizens.

Both naturalization rates and political participation depend significantly on the political environment. When American politics seem hostile towards immigrants, Latinos wish to become citizens in order to defend themselves against attacks, such as: California's Proposition 187 which explicitly targeted undocumented Mexican immigrants. The enormous flow of immigrants from Mexico is a political benefit as well as a cost to the American society. The recent immigration from Mexico directly and indirectly encourages political innovation since it provides the United States with energetic new participants who may enter politics with new ideas or at least new prospective on prevailing practices.

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<sup>267</sup> Peter Skerry, *op.cit.*, pp. 95-100.

<sup>268</sup> Matt A. Barreto, and José A. Muñoz, "Reexamining the "Politics of In-Between": Political Participation among Mexican Immigrants in the United States." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 25 No. 4, 427-447, Sage Publications, November 2003. <http://faculty.washington.edu/mbarreto/papers/munoz.pdf> (Accessed: September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

Multiculturalism remains an ongoing and a constant social reality, not just since the birth of the United States as a nation, but even in its primordial colonial cradle. Contemporary multicultural understanding provides distinctively a different approach which politicizes a new social vision arriving out of the American Civil Right Movement, women studies, racial minorities' relations, and particularly multicultural education and teaching. Thus, the image of the United States as culturally homogeneous society, as Huntington claims, is a historic fallacy because eurocentric bias fails to acknowledge and incorporate people of color within a variety of developments and changes of contemporary American society. Since Huntington fails to provide significant insights to how American national identity can be forged in a multicultural society, he manufactures a state of emergency in which he blames Mexicans for all the ills that ail the U.S.A. society.

Multiculturalism and assimilation have been dual realities throughout the history of the United States of America. In this regard, Huntington's skepticism of Mexican non-assimilation is rooted in outmoded views of assimilation which fail to explain the divergent pathways of segmented assimilation. As a matter of fact, there is an impressive evidence, and powerful tide of assimilation among Mexican immigrants.

## CONCLUSION

Currently, the United States is in the midst of an alarming nativist movement plainly reflected in a series of federal and state immigration reform and propositions. These initiatives potently capitalizing on the tight of sociopolitical and economic climate to promote hostility, prejudice and xenophobia-a basic worries of outsiders or strangers-in the name of ritual purification of the American society, and also in the name of protecting red-blooded, law abiding, real Americans, seek to deny education in public schools and health care, and welfare benefits to persons who illegally enter the United States. While drawing on much broader cultural antipathies and ethnocentric judgments, nativism translates such unproven and unfounded premise underlying these actions and attitudes into a zeal to destroy those deemed enemies of a distinctively American way of life. The tendency to condemn and vilify undesirable immigrants, particularly those identifiable exposes an animus against the persons at whom it is aimed and the intent to create another category to reinforce the “us” versus “their” in the American society. Among the most visible events signaling the flaring of new nativism is the renascent presence of the official language movement, which seems to be linked as much today as during the height of nativist hysteria in the aftermath of the World War I. This official English language is already an indicator that latest manifestations of nativism would eventuate as a broader anti-foreign backlash. Even the Fourteenth Amendment is under attack. American restrictionists have declared legislation and broader war because several resolutions introduced in Congress have sought an unprecedented amendment to the first sentence of the Fourteenth Amendments, to change entitlement to birth right citizenship. On October 2006, the Secure Fence Act was signed into law, this act directed Department of Home Security to construct two-layered reinforced fencing along five stretches of 700 miles to provide a clamp down on illegal immigration. Until the actual construction, thousands of American citizens have organized a vigilant border-watch using additional physical barriers, roads, lightening, cameras, and sensors. The volunteers refrain from actual confrontation with “illegal-aliens”, but report unlawful activity to the U.S. Border Patrol.

Contemporary attacks on immigrants do not represent a new social phenomenon with no relation to the past. Anti-immigration nativism in the U.S.A. is at least two centuries old. One exponent of the new nativist movement is *Who Are We?* At the core of Huntington’s nativist agenda lies the principle of protecting the American nation or more specifically the cultural landscape of the United States. The American culture which has been transmitted generation after generation for four centuries and has defined what is meant to be an

American is now being challenged by the immense and the continuing immigration from Latin America, especially from Mexico. As shown in this study, several flaws of forgetfulness underlie this perception of American identity. The normative claim that freedom and liberty loving Anglo settlers founded the American polity ignores centuries of blood-soaked history, the tremendous moral burden of brutal conquest, enslavement, and exploitation of non-Anglo minorities. The Anglo-Americans inspired by their white pride and consciousness, disavow deliberately their predilection of violence and carnage, such as the aggressive and the imperial war against Mexico, or by denying its implication for the founding of America. Huntington endorses the strictly democratic founding of the American polity, thus defining American national identity in terms of Anglo Protestantism seriously underestimates diversity in the U.S.A. Obviously, no one can deny that Protestantism in America had a great influence on the founding of American national identity, however it was no longer necessary to subscribe to the Protestant version of Christianity to be real American, or possess an authentic American national identity. Huntington's insistence upon Protestantism as a key element defining American identity today is greatly unwarranted since he would deliberately limit the meaning of Christianity by ignoring and excluding Catholicism as a major Christian body existing not only in U.S.A., but in the world. Evidently Protestantism that inspired America's early settlers is not the same Protestantism of today's America, simply because America at its founding is not America of today.

It is multiculturalism, Huntington fervently believes, that is destroying and challenging the nation he loves, and the Anglo-Saxon culture he cherished. In fact, multiculturalism can be thought of a mirror image of the U.S. because diversity has been an ongoing social reality in the United States, not just since its inception as a nation, but even in its primeval colonial cradle. As an undeniable fact, Multiculturalism is neither new nor a threat to the cohesiveness and integration of the American society which was actually more multicultural than today. It is an old reality and an optimal continuing presence that enriches not diminishes, strengthens not weakens, nourishes not drains, a nation whose national character and temperament have long reflected the diverse picture of its immigrants. Today, American Mexicans are the fastest growing and youngest population segment, such rapid growth of youthfulness should be seen as positive rather than negative, as an opportunity rather than a threat. Just like millions of immigrants before them, Mexicans will bring new energy, impulses and tastes to the U.S.A. which will broaden not destroy the cultural life of the nation.

Huntington's phenomenon which has been called the "Hispanization of the United States" is a mistaken concept which assumes to mean that the United States will become a

Hispanic nation. Instead of that, I believe that the Mexican presence in the United States will be so pervasive that it can be a major asset to its future, staffing the workforce, fueling the growth of markets, generating fast growing levels of economic attainment. These positive dynamic of youthful energy, the hunger of ambition, and willingness to work stand in dramatic contrast to the alarming demographic problems of other industrial countries, such as: France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. The inaccurate relationship between the subjection of social minorities and a perceived culture needs to be explicated. In fact, the path of exclusion of ethnic minorities from the American mainstream (e.g. through enslavement, discrimination, and deportation) might have underpinned a homogeneous cohesive culture and national identity remains implicit in *Who Are We?* Indeed, the American community consisted of a more coherent national identity in time when subordinated minorities were excluded from the American mainstream. Thus, it is easier to enforce oneness in American identity. Today, a renewed salience of national identity defined strictly in Anglo-Protestant view is more difficult to recreate because freedom and equality are fundamental values.

A thorough consideration of the American history reveals ethnocentric biases which have come to the fore at pivotal moments, but which also have been extremely challenged by powerful momentum of migration flux. Thereby, the discernment between past and present migrations enables nativists to imagine a homogeneous society. For the sake of cohesiveness of national identity, Huntington takes a myopic stance by derogating contemporary Mexican immigration while romanticizing immigrants in past centuries. The differential mode of identity formation disregards the historical circumstances that white Americans have always perceived immigrants as un-American and detrimental to American nationhood ideal. The view that the pathway to a cohesive American identity was smoothed by white racial identification is an anachronism which is inappropriately linking contemporary racial perception to the past. There is an ample evidence that white Americans perceived even racial white European immigrants as foreign and racially distinct from themselves, thus such sentiments flowered into full blown racism theorizing during the high water period of great immigration. In my opinion, this proves that every new coming wave of immigrants into the U.S.A. has been judged according to the criteria stated by the people who were already there and most often there was something disliked in those newcomers. The absurd and paradoxical aspect of the phenomenon is that immigrants who were first labeled as alien and distinctive somehow became equal to white boundary. Once their perceived distinctiveness from the majority faded, they started to judge immigrants who arrived later according to the same patterns. As a matter of fact, the alarm expressed by old immigrants about the swelling number of Germans has a very contemporary rising; those old immigrants expressed a

mounting hostility toward German immigrants not only as a reaction to their noticeable sheer number, but also as a fear of establishing their language and manner. But as Germans climbed the socioeconomic ladder and assimilated with other whites, they started explicitly to express their rabid arguments on coming immigrants too. They altogether with the former old immigrants then dispraised the new immigrants from southern European ethnics like the Italians, then because the Italians were incorporated and accepted somehow, they began to disparage newly arriving immigrants from eastern Europe together with the immigrants who had disliked themselves first. The crux of such realities shows how immigrants thought American immigration history has the urge to belong to something and how they define the thing they wonder to belong to by defining what they do not want to belong to.

Rather than an aberration in American history, nativism has entered common parlance as a powerful component of national identity construction, and as a driving force behind the nation's immigration backlash. Native-born Americans have persistently distinguished themselves from the newly arrived, whatever the character of the immigrants. Every historical period demanded a new representation of the threatening other as a source of subversion to the American community, nation, and economy as well as a new answer to the question: "Who is an American?" The Americans unquestionably construct a more coherent national identity and imagine a sense of belonging when they create a strain of nativism that may prove longer lasting, perhaps more volatile and divisive. Huntington completely fails to acknowledge the close relationship between cohesive national identity and nativism that the nation embraced for more of its first two centuries of existence.

The author of *Who Are We?* never explicitly states that a coherent national identity was achieved by the productive power of nativism, hard exclusion, and subordination of others. He presents, instead, a forgetful perspective of American history in which he selectively discusses only the aspects of history that support his arguments and claims. Thus, he is entirely ahistorical in his analysis because there is a cursory mention of the ongoing prejudice and discrimination of African Americans, Latinos, Asians, and Natives. In Huntington's narrow formulation of American national identity, Mexican immigrants provide the menacing other. By labeling an outsider status to Mexican immigrants, and Mexican Americans and by blaming them for all the myriad ills that ail the United States, he rearticulates what he believes constitute the American identity: Anglo-Protestant culture. Thereby, Huntington's definition of national identity, as closely linked to the Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture, fails to comport with contemporary realities of the American life, simply because cultures slowly but surely change over time, as well as demographic mobility is

already occurring and cannot realistically be reversed. Ironically, the undesirable Mexican is necessary for Huntington to imagine a national cohesiveness and to emphasize the salience and substance of American identity.

Since Huntington fails to provide true insights or answers to how American national identity can successfully be forged in a multicultural United States, he manufactures a state of emergency in which white Anglo-Saxon culture is under attack by Mexican others as to bolster an exclusionary and defensive sense of national belonging. Huntington's ungrounded theoretical speculations and detrimental consequences of Mexican immigration on the Southwest and the United States in general are highly overstated and exaggerated.

Both multiculturalism and assimilation have been dual realities throughout the often raucous history of minorities' relations in the U.S.A. What is witnessed today in contemporary America, in many ways, is continuous of those dual processes, that the social dynamics are not new social phenomenon with no connection to past events. Huntington views today's assimilation as having dubious and skeptic relevance for Mexican immigrant groups. This skepticism is partly rooted in outmoded versions of assimilation and simplistic accounts of what has since become known as the whiteness paradigm, which holds that groups should swallow intact the existing Anglo-Saxon culture by being redefined as unambiguously white. In this regard, ethnocentric biases and whiteness model, that have come into the fore at pivotal moments, are not the right ones for possible shifts in racial perceptions of the future. Study after study shows that there is impressive and abundant evidence predicting that assimilation will be a powerful tide, a master trend, and a major import, in fact, among the descendents of Mexican immigrants. They exhibit telltale signs of advanced stages of assimilation, all the evidence reveals a powerful linguistic gravitational pull that has produced conversion to English monolingualism and implosion of Spanish language. Most compelling evidence of assimilation, as a litmus test and a visible tip of a denser mass of interracial contacts, comes from data on intermarriage which occurs in a robust level. The Mexican social mobility virtually guaranteed that Mexican immigrants would be drained from their ethnic communities, thus the cultures they sheltered would be steadily weakened over time.

As the evidence of powerful currents of acculturation is simply undeniable in the realm of language, intermarriage and social mobility, there is also more plausible optimism, and even more crucial realities to recognize and spotlight the fact that Mexican immigrants constitute a rapidly growing segment of the American middle class. Much of this increase is

due to the upward socioeconomic mobility. There is already every indication that Mexican entrepreneurs are embarked on a growth trajectory with an appetite to succeed through hard work. Mexican fast growing levels of economic attainment, vaulting into the middle class, moving into positions of leaderships, and making rich contributions to the American cultural life, demonstrate undoubtedly that contemporary Mexicans are reminiscent to earlier European immigrants in having a strong work ethic; a set of values deeply rooted in faith; family life; and country; representative government; and unbreakable optimism. The available empirical evidence of the Mexican absorption of the U.S. social life in terms of occupation, income, educational attainment, and naturalization rates indicate that Huntington fails to recognize the emerging literature on segmented assimilation which attempts to chart slow and safe route to the American mainstream. Consequently, any suggestion that aggressive measures should be made to restrict Mexican immigration, and that an attempt at pressure cooking assimilation are necessary to strip Mexican from their cultural heritage and Catholicism and to force them to adopt Protestant values, is undoubtedly misplaced. Cultural change, as well as change brought by immigrants in general, unfolds as a normal and natural process that simply cannot be halted in its tracks by harshly curtailing immigration or stampeding immigrants to become Americans. Ultimately, I disagree with Huntington jeremiad against multiculturalism, and his narrow analysis which demonstrates the serious tension between assimilation and multiculturalism. In fact, the recognition of multiculturalism is the way to secure the deeper structural cohesion of the nation that assimilation and integration had failed to secure over time. Thus crapping multiculturalism as an alternative to the one-sidedness of assimilation is a mystification by white Anglo-Saxons who still entertain images of themselves as sob omnipotent shapers of the American landscape. There would still be an irremovable cultural diversity, there would still be a need to acknowledge such cultural pluralism, and there would still be even more newcomers eager to participate with a faster pace into the American mainstream. Thus, the set of arguments of Huntington are insufficiently respectful of the American cultural strength to create an irresistible magnet for inclusion because opportunities for mobility and the siren call for assimilation are still abundant.

Although Huntington's work is interesting in interrelating immigration issues, national identity, and Civil Rights, his worries about the splintered national identity is unwarranted. Defining national identity in eurocentric terms rested on the belief in racial superiority and the suppression of minority groups from the American polity, and consequently this leads to discrimination and subjection. Despite the fact that Huntington partly acknowledges America's violent history towards ethnic groups, he fails to address the

outcomes of the American nation embracing a narrow definition of national identity based on culture. Instead of solely concentrating on race, ethnicity, the creed and culture as key components of American national identity and the ties which bind the American people, Huntington should have considered America's nativist history and multiculturalism as cornerstones to define what it means to be an American and to acknowledge that America's sense of community was based on exclusion and xenophobia. Alternatively, if there is a real concern with national identity, the question is what can be done as measures to expedite the full integration of Mexican immigrants into the American society. This is the attention that the nation needs desperately. Integration requires affirmative policies to keep open the doors to opportunity, to keep in place the ladder of upward mobility, to publicly invest in the industrial ambitions for self empowerment and assimilation, not policies that seek to halt increased diversity by restricting immigration. Huntington's nativist vision as argumentation leaves little feasible solution to bolster a sense of unity in a country where continuing immigration, intercultural communities, transnational cooperation, and cross-cultural coalitions all testify to the fact that the United States has entered without hesitation the age of multiculturalism. As it has thrived in the American society since the first days of colonial settlement, the concept of American national identity must respect rather than disregards diversity. The definition of national identity must be couched in inclusionist terms rather than exclusive ones, must set forth different non-exclusionist concepts of common values as a defining element of its core. In this perspective, all Americans can welcome the prospect of a nation that continues its trajectory of progress, growth, and greatness in partly sustaining its exceptional ideals of an inclusive community that invest in preparing the coming generations of Americans, including Mexican Americans, to meet all conflicts, ambivalences, and challenges.

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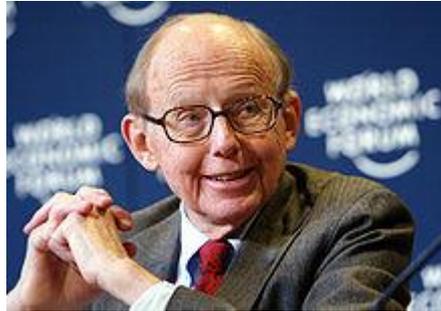
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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

### Samuel Phillips Huntington's biography



Samuel Phillips Huntington was a prominent political scientist. He was born on April 18, 1927, in New York City, the son of Dorothy Sanborn (née Phillips), a short-story writer, and Richard Thomas Huntington, a publisher of hotel trade journals. Huntington earned a bachelor's degree with distinction from Yale University in 1946 and then served in the U.S. Army. Afterward he attended the University of Chicago, where he received a master's degree in 1948, and completed his Ph.D. at Harvard University where he began teaching at age 23. Huntington was a member of Harvard's department of government from 1950 until he was denied tenure in 1959. Between 1959 and 1962, he was an associate professor of government at Columbia University where he was also Deputy Director of The Institute for War and Peace Studies. Huntington was invited to return to Harvard with tenure in 1963 and remained there until his death. He was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1965. Huntington and Warren Demian Manshel co-founded and co-edited *Foreign Policy*.

As Huntington held several high-level leadership positions in academy, he wrote also a number of major works. His first major book was *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, (1957). He became so prominent with his *Political Order in Changing Societies* and *Clash of Civilizations* (1968), in which he demonstrated that people's cultural and religious identities will be the primary source of conflict in the post-Cold War world. As a consultant to the U.S. Department of State, and in an influential 1968 article in *Foreign Affairs*, he advocated the concentration of the rural population of South Vietnam as a means of isolating the Viet Cong. He also was co-author of *The Crisis of Democracy: On the Governability of Democracies*, a report issued by the Trilateral Commission in 1976. During 1977 and 1978, in the administration of Jimmy Carter, he was the White House Coordinator of Security Planning for the National Security Council. His last book was *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*, published in 2004, in which he advances arguments about the deconstruction of the American National Identity due to the great influx of the Mexican immigration to the United States of America. Huntington died on December 24, 2008, at age 81 in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.



## Appendix 3

### Southwest Region of the United States



Source: [www.United-States-Map.com](http://www.United-States-Map.com).

## RÉSUMÉ

Le présent travail consiste à explorer la relation entre l'identité nationale, le multiculturalisme et le nativisme aux États Unis d'Amérique. Il souligne en toute particularité la notion de l'identité nationale qui a donné ouverture à des critiques de longs termes. Des critiques récentes ont suggéré qu'en dépit du degré de validité qui aurait pu revêtir les notions de l'identité nationale jadis, il n'en est pas de même de nos temps. Par conséquent, la thèse prendra pour problématique : « À quel point les menaces actuelles sont-elles nouvelles pour l'identité nationale américaine ? » et ce, en mettant au jour le livre du professeur Samuel Phillips Huntington intitulé : Qui Sommes-Nous ? Les Défis à l'Encontre de l'Identité Nationale Américaine.

Samuel P. Huntington fait valoir que le nombre des Mexicains, leur concentration, leur homogénéité linguistique et autres caractéristiques aboutiront à l'érosion de la langue anglaise qui est une langue visant l'unité nationale, et causeront, en outre, l'affaiblissement des valeurs Anglo-Saxonnes qui dominent le pays ; favorisant ainsi, l'allégeance ethnique et les identités au dépend de l'identification primaire qui est américaine. Avec l'investigation émanant de ces hypothèses accompagnées d'informations recueillies d'une variété de recherches, études et sondages, une démonstration sera faite ayant pour objet d'exposer que les mexicains manifestent des signes révélateurs d'une assimilation assez avancée. Toute l'évidence prouve une énergie linguistique et une attraction gravitationnelle qui ont produit la conversion vers le monolinguisme de l'anglais et l'implosion de l'espagnole.

La plupart des jeunes mexicains ont une vision de l'économie se rapportant à une échelle sur laquelle ils sont tous perchés quelques parts. Par ailleurs, une majorité flagrante de mexicains rejette l'idée d'une identification ethnique purement et simplement ; et le sentiment de patriotisme ne fait que s'accroître d'une génération à une autre. Actuellement, ils encouragent d'une façon directe ou indirecte l'innovation, en prenant compte de la qualité des participants qu'ils offrent aux États Unis et qui sont énergiques et susceptibles d'avoir accès au monde de la politique avec des idées toutes fraîches ou au moins une perspective nouvelle de ce qui pourraient être les pratiques régnant sur une société à diversité culturelle.

## ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى البحث في العلاقات التي تربط الهوية الوطنية بالتعدد الثقافي وروح التأصل القومي بالولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. و هي تركز خصوصا على مفهوم الهوية الوطنية التي تعد موضوع انتقادات بعيدة المدى.

يرى بعض المنتقدين ان مفهوم الهوية الذي ارتقى عبر الأزمنة الى درجة المصادقية و الشرعية اصبح يفتقر الى هذا المكسب في الوقت الراهن. وعليه سوف يتمحور بحثي حول إشكالية : " ما مدى حداثة التهديدات الحالية التي تهمز الهوية الوطنية الأمريكية؟ " ، و ذلك بتسليط الضوء على كتاب البروفيسور والعالم في السياسة بجامعة هارفارد هانتينجتون فيليبس صموئيل "من نحن؟ التحديات التي تواجهها الهوية الوطنية الأمريكية " .

يبين هانتينجتون صموئيل أن العدد الهائل للمهاجرين المكسيكيين إلى الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية و كثافتهم و تجانسهم اللغوي و خصائص اخرى تميزهم سوف ينخر صرح اللغة الإنجليزية و هيمنتها باعتبارها لغة وطنية موحدة و يضعف القيم الأنجلوسكسونية المهيمنة على الوطن، لتحي روح الولاء و الوفاء للعرق و الهوية على حساب التعريف الاولي كأمركي.

و تحريا لهذه الفرضية و بوجود المعلومات المتوخاة من العديد من الابحاث و الدراسات و الاستطلاعات ، نظهر ونبين أن المكسيكيين يبرزون ارهاصات لمراحل استيعاب متقدمة في المجتمع الأمريكي، كما تكشف كل الدلائل عن جاذبية لغوية قوية ترتب عنها تحول الى لغة انجليزية أحادية، وانهيار اللغة الإسبانية.

يتصور معظم المكسيكيين الشباب أن الاقتصاد عبارة عن سُلم يرتفعون كلهم فوقه الى مستويات معينة كما أن غالبية المكسيكيين البارزين يتخلون عن التعريف العرقي المحض لدرجة أن روح الوطنية في نمو متواصل من جيل الى آخر. و هم في الوقت الحاضر يشجعون بشكل مباشر و غير مباشر التجديد السياسي، لأنهم يزودون الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بمشاركين جدد مفعمين بالحوية والنشاط . و الذين قد يدخلون ساحة السياسة بأفكار جديدة او على الاقل بتطلع مستقبلي للممارسات السائدة في مجتمع متعدد الثقافات.