Immigrants and Change
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By

Roger Sherman
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ABSTRACT

This text argues that a religious world view or a religious subcultural identity as expressed by the theory of Moral Cosmology is only one of many subcultural identities that the immigrant utilizes in their assimilation to a new host environment. It offers two alternative theories, a multiple subcultural identity formulation and the theory of inter-sectionality to explain changes in immigrant opinions as they transition from immigrant generation, to 1.5 to 2.0 generation. Relying upon data available through the General Social Survey (waves 2006, 2008, 2010), this study conducted a comparative analysis of the post1965 immigrant group and their expressed opinions on substantive issues of social and economic concerns to capture shifts in immigrant opinion. These opinion shifts are perceived as being driven by a multiplicity of salient subcultural identities implemented by the immigrant as tools to problem solve in the real world. Findings suggest that immigrant generational stage, gender and respondents self-identified religious tradition are more significant in the development of motivation and justification for the immigrant stances on substantive issues than a religious world view or respondent’s religious orthodoxy. This study was unable to identify a significant linear correlation between religious orthodoxy and expressed opinions on substantive issues of social and economic concerns.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the Annie E Casey Foundation whose financial support made this project possible.

To Carlos Forment whose critical reading of this work was essential.

To Pyong Gap Min whose mentorship instilled in me my curiosity about immigration.

To Andrew Arato for his guidance and continuous support during the many years I have labored on this life project.

To my wife Barbara and daughter Amanda, who have encouraged and supported me in too many ways to describe.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Main Objective

This text is about immigrants and changes they experience as they adjust to living in a new country. It is about theoretical explanations and how best to understand these changes. Most importantly it is a comparative intergenerational study of the post1965 new immigrant groups. How I came to write about the post1965 immigrant was a journey in itself. This study developed over time as an outgrowth of two significant albeit quite different socio-theoretical interests. The first being an interest in the political – theoretical tensions surrounding the first amendment issue of separation of church and state; in a liberal democracy should restraint be required in the use of religious thinking for political justification and the opposing position that religious arguments as justification for political opinions are legitimate justification for expressing opinions in the public sphere of civil society (Audi 1993).¹ I had initially thought to focus upon what should or should not be the basis of a citizen’s political opinion cast in the public sphere. The analysis of opinion justification; what do citizens really think when it comes time to cast their opinion and is this process different for the immigrant citizen? I came to realize that the study I wanted to undertake was both less political in nature and broader in sociological scope, yet still addressing the issue of what lays beneath public opinion.

The second formative interest was my growing passion for understanding the process of immigrant adaptation and the significance of religion in the production and maintenance of ethnicity and identity in immigrant groups. My realization that there are multiple pathways by which assimilation can occur and that significant difference exists not only amongst immigrant ethnic groups but between immigrant generational stages as to how they experience the process of assimilation.

To summarize this study combines my interest in the cognitive processes that exist for justification of opinions expressed in the public sphere with the issue of immigrant adaptation to a new host environment. Like a camera obscura I plan to utilize the opinions expressed publically by immigrants on substantive issues of economic and social concerns to develop an understanding of immigrant adaptation and the changes that occur over time and within the process of assimilation.

At a manifest level this work is about the post1965 immigrant and the stances they take on substantive issues of social and economic concerns. It is also about religion, specifically religious orthodoxy and the relationship of beliefs, praxis, and the subjective opinion immigrants have about their own religious identity to their expressed attitudes on key social and economic issues.

At a more significant and interpretive level it is about capturing the changes which take place within the new immigrant population as the immigrant group transitions to mainstream American life. This study intends to use the data gathered from immigrant responders by the University of Chicago through their General Social Survey to measure differences in religious orthodoxy (religious intensity), authoritarianism and communitarianism, between immigrant generational stages to capture changes that occur within the process of adaptation for the new immigrant group.

In summary my goal for this work is simple: to provide an opportunity for readers to think a bit about immigrants and the complex processes of adaptation. To contemplate how the immigrant may differ from the American mainstream and how they are similar. If this work challenges what we believe we know for a fact about the new immigrants and what we believe to be true but is in reality based upon our biases, so much for the better. In the final analysis we are all immigrants and this in many ways is a study about all of us.

**Significance of Study**

This study will enrich our understanding of the changes or identity shifts that the immigrant experiences as part of the process of assimilation and accommodation as they transition from immigrant generation, to 1.5 generation, to second generation. It will augment our existing knowledge about the new immigrants and hopefully motivate other scholars to research their own questions about the post1965 immigrant population.

During the past 20 years researchers of religion, immigration, and ethnicity have studied how religion influences the lives of post 1965
immigrants in the United States. The majority of this research has been case studies of institutional religious practice focusing upon individual religious groups and organizations. According to Cadge and Eckland (2007)\(^2\), the greatest strengths of this research are also its greatest weaknesses: a reliance on richly descriptive individual case studies and an absence of systematic analytic comparisons and synthesis of large data sets. Cage and Eklund believe that in the analysis of the relationship between religion and immigration, religion must be considered a powerful variable that influences immigrant economic mobility and civic and political participation. This study attempts to fill in the knowledge gaps that Cage and Eklund have identified by focusing on religious orthodoxy (religious intensity) and what has been theorized as its potentially causative relationship to the development of opinions on substantive issues of social and economic concern. The findings of this research study will lead the reader to broaden their view as to what acts as motivation and justification for opinion formation to include a multiplicity of sub-cultural identities as problem solving tool.

Formally the main objectives of this text are two-fold.

1. Through the process of a comparative analysis of the immigrant generational stages and a critical reflection upon the accompanying changes in expression of opinions on substantive issues of social and economic concerns I will add to our knowledge of the new immigrant groups and how their changes in opinion reflect changes in life values that occur as part of their adaptation to a new host environment.

2. The study will demonstrate the theoretical significance of a religious world view (religious orthodoxy) and intersecting subcultural identities as explanatory theories in the creation of life lenses; life lenses, being instrumental in creating direction and pathways for action in the real world. This study will answer the question whether religious orthodoxy (religious intensity) is the primary, most salient and consistent life lenses or moral compass for opinion formation across immigrant generational stages or only one of a multiplicity of salient subcultural identities that is accessed to justify action.

In this work I will use attitudes expressed in public on substantive issues of social and economic concerns to highlight significant changes

along two separate continuums that will be interpreted as demonstrating changes in identity:

1. authoritarian – modernism (the extent to which opinions are formed based upon religious principles or individual choice).
2. Communitarianism – individualism (a sense of economic mutual support or individualism whereby the poor are responsible for their own fates).

At a secondary level, this work is also comparing two theoretical lenses, religious worldview or religious orthodoxy and multiple subcultural identities -intersectionality, to assess which has the greater explanatory power, in understanding immigrant identity changes.

To paraphrase Jurgen Habermas, all action is both symbolic and communicative. The task of this study is to interpret the symbolic and understand what is being communicated by immigrants in their adjustment to a new country. To successfully achieve this task, beliefs and practices must be situated within the context of culture and civil society. This study will analyze the complex relationship between religious orthodoxy (religious intensity), immigrant generational status and subcultural identities in the formation of opinions on key social and economic issues in order to capture immigrant identity changes. It will utilize two anchoring points to accomplish this task; i.e., immigration and secondly, the role of religious orthodoxy and sub-cultural identities in value transmission. It is my contention that by doing so, beliefs and practices, as measured by opinions, will be placed in an interpretive context.

This text will add to the existing knowledge about the post1965 immigrant groups by addressing several essential questions. 1) How does religious expression in the public sphere co-relate to sub cultural identities? 2) In combination with each other, how do they create expressed opinions within new immigrant groups? 3) Is there variability between immigrant generational stages for expressed opinions and if so what explains this variability? 4). How does immigrant generational stage influence the relationship between religious orthodoxy, sub-cultural identities and opinion formation? A recent study (Davis and Robinson1996b:758) has addressed the significance of religious identity and the intersection of social class and race as independent variables in opinion formation. However unlike this work, the study did not focus upon new immigrant groups as a part of their study sample.

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At this point I will comment briefly upon the conceptual differences between personality and identity, the explanatory theories associated with each and how these constructs relate to this study. I will then close with a few salient comments taken from the works of Pierre Bourdieu that I believe are admonitions worth contemplating.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Health (2000:826)\(^4\), personality is “an enduring pattern or patterns of perceiving, relating to and thinking about the environment and oneself”. Personality makes the individual unique, arises from within and remains fairly constant throughout one's life. There are numerous theoretical explanations for the development of one's personality ranging from classical Freudian theory to the behaviorism of John Watson (Mitchell and Black 1995).\(^5\) A more in-depth discussion of personality is beyond the scope of this book and not germane to the focus of this work.

I take identity to be a broader and more fluid construct than personality. Identity is a collection of aspects or a set of characteristics by which a person is known or is recognized as a member of a group (Webster Collegiate 2003).\(^6\) Identity is often used as a category of human experience (Wren 2002).\(^7\) It can be thought of as cultural identity forged in a social and political context. Identities are narratives fashioned in discourse and located within specific historical or institutional sites with specific discourse functions and practices (Hall 1996).\(^8\) Simply put, personality is consistent, located within the individual and gives greater acknowledgment to psychological factors. Identity is fluid and located within a cultural-historical context and gives greater acknowledgment to sociological and collective factors. It is changes of identity that will be the focus of our attention. I will revisit the issue of identity and its relationship to the theory of sub-cultural identity later in the study.

I will address in detail in the following literature review, the two explanatory lenses that I will use to gage changes between immigrant generational stages. However, for the moment in keeping with setting the frame of this work, I will present them briefly.

The first, the theory of moral cosmology posits that the creation of a religious worldview, based upon an individual’s religious orthodoxy or religious intensity, leads to specific attitude formation in the life world.

This is so irrespective of the individual’s self-identified religious tradition. In a true Weberian sense looking to ideas as the explanation for action. Traditional literature on religion and subcultural identity development has been based primarily on studies of Christian immigrant groups at the turn of the 20th century. These studies emphasized religious rituals, especially those practiced in congregations, as the major mechanism for preserving ethnic culture and identity (Min 2010). Davis and Robinson (2006), as well as Starks and Robinson (2009), broaden the above traditional focus by connecting the religious worldview, as expressed through cultural beliefs and practices, to issues of social and economic justice through an analysis of moral cosmology. The theory of Moral Cosmology explains the formation and justification of political opinion by an individual’s adherence to religious orthodoxy or modernism; that is their religious beliefs, belongings, and behaviors. It posits that the religiously orthodox are theological communitarian in perceiving individuals as belonging to a larger community of believers and subject to god’s law and greater plan. The religiously orthodox, irrespective of religious tradition, are disposed towards economic communitarianism whereby the state should provide for the poor, reduce inequality, and meet society’s needs through economic interventions. Modernists are theologically individualistic in seeing individuals as having to make moral decisions in a temporal context and as responsible for their own destinies. Modernists are inclined to economic individualism whereby the poor are responsible for their own fates. In the domain of cultural issues the religiously orthodox are found to be more conservative than the modernists and inclined to take an authoritarian position on socio-cultural issues; one which enforces what they believe to be god’s divinely mandated stand on moral issues.

The second, the theory of multiple sub-cultural identities, focuses upon identity (collective) rather than a religious worldview in its attempt to explain attitude formation. It recognizes the salience of identity roles and their stability across time and situations but acknowledges that the salience of a given role can diminish and be superseded by another role more significant for the individual (collective) at that given moment in time. It

views society as: “a mosaic of relatively durable patterned interactions and relationships, differentiated yet organized, embedded in an array of groups, organizations, communities and institutions, and intersected by crosscutting boundaries of class, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, and other variables”. It is these salient sub-cultural identities that motivates and justifies individual and collective action. (Stryker and Burke 2000:285).12

The multiple sub-cultural identity model has its origins in seeing religious movements among Protestants as creating identity spaces (world view) from which they define themselves relative to other groups (Stark and Robinson 2009).13 The sub-cultural identities approach is an alternative- theoretical reply to Berger (1967)14 who conceptualized religion as a “sacred canopy” under which religious believers developed their own unique systems of meaning. Berger hypothesized that with the spread of secularization as a consequence of modern pluralism, there would develop an erosion of the viability of a single sacred canopy. Smith et al., (1997)15 replies, that the development of communities of meaning has been altered with the spread of modern pluralism but that the outcome is not simply secularization. Instead as the society- wide sacred canopy of belief (world view) disintegrates, smaller communities will create their own sacred umbrellas under which their believers will develop their own systems of belief. This will lead to the establishment of religious sub-cultural identities which allowed adherents to develop identity spaces which are unique and associated with their own vocabulary, expectations, and systems of symbolic meaning. I am broadening Smith’s position in that I believe that the construct of sub-cultural identity is not exclusive to religious traditions but extends to other communities of meaning (symbolic) which I hypothesize are relevant to opinion formation. Communities whose boundaries are defined by gender, ethnicity, social class and immigrant generation.

I believe that unlike the structuralists that Bourdieu critiqued (1994:4-5)\textsuperscript{16}, I am not “creating a grand theory without agents in a reaction against existentialism”. For as Bourdieu admonishes, social agents (people): “are not automata regulated like clocks, acting in accordance with laws which they do not understand”. In this light the study takes the position that a religious world view or one’s religious orthodoxy is not sufficient to explain opinion formation in the public sphere. In reality a multiplicity of subcultural identities exist as salient forces in opinion formation.

**Overall Research Design**

Data from the General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago was used for this study; specifically waves 2006, 2008 and 2010. The GSS was the most suitable data survey for our purposes as it included questions which allowed for the measurement of religious orthodoxy/modernism, identify respondent’s religious tradition, gender, and contained questions addressing key economic and social issues. It also allowed analysis across the three target groups that we wished to study (immigrant generation, 1.5 generation, second-generation). The total number of respondents by group was as follows: immigrants (604), 1.5 generation (209), 2.0 generation (271) and multiple generation reference (5483). Please see Appendix E.1 for the demographic profile by main groups.

**Measurement and Data Collection**

Independent Variables: There are three independent variables in this research study that are the focus of attention: 1. immigrant generational stage, 2. religious traditions (Protestant and Catholic), 3. gender.

In addition there are three dependent variables; 1. religious orthodoxy, 2. economic communitarianism/individualism and 3. social authoritarianism/modernism.

The first independent variable was immigrant generational stage. Respondents were assigned as follows: first generation immigrant stage, respondents not born in the United States; the 1.5 generation consisted of respondents who were not born in the United States but who immigrated to the United States before the age of 16. The second immigrant generational stage was comprised of respondents who were born in this  

country but whose parents were immigrants. The reference group functioned as a comparison or control group. In order to be a respondent assigned to the reference group, the respondent and both parents needed to be born in the United States, thus making the reference group the third immigrant generation.

The second independent variable was religious tradition. Religious tradition was based upon respondent’s self-selection. In this study in order to obtain healthy cell size for analysis, we were able to analyze data from only Protestants and Roman Catholics respondents. Again for statistical reason we were not able to separate protestant responders into denominations or separate them into evangelical and mainline traditions. Roman Catholics respondents were also aggregated for healthy cell size. Analysis was conducted both across religious traditions and within religious tradition and between immigrant generational stages.

The third independent variable was gender of the respondent. Analysis was conducted both across gender and within gender between immigrant generational stages.

Dependent Variables: The first dependent variable was religious orthodoxy or intensity of religiosity. Religious orthodoxy was measured by using a 12 item weighted scale comprised of three core dimensions: biblical literalism, practice and subjective religiosity. Similar to Davis and Robinson (2006) I prefer a measure that classifies individuals based upon their beliefs and practice rather than relying solely on a self-assessment scale. Again following the path set by Davis and Robinson, I use the labels modernist and orthodoxy to avoid potential political connotations often associated with the terms progressive and conservative. All twelve questions were asked in all three of the GSS data waves. See appendix A for the questions comprising the indices of religious orthodoxy.

The second and third dependent variables were issues of economic and social concerns. There were 10 weighted items that comprise the indices of social and economic issues. Seven items comprise the indices assessing social issues and three items comprise the indices assessing economic issues. All 10 questions were asked in each of the three GSS data waves. Please see appendix B for the questions that comprise the indices of social and economic issues.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: This study measures how different generations of recent immigrants to the U.S. (post1965) vary in their religious orthodoxy (intensity of religiosity) and in their stances on social and economic issues. This is an in-direct observational study based upon self-reported data. I rely upon three different waves (2006, 2008, and

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17 Davis, Nancy and Robinson, Robert, ibid.
of the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by the University of Chicago for the respondent pool. Multiple waves are necessary in order to assure ample sample sizes. To gauge religious orthodoxy or the intensity of religiosity and differences in attitudes for economic and social issues, indices are used (3). Indices are re-expressions made by combining the specific questions addressing each of our three dependent variables. The re-expressions for each indices are interval or scale data. The higher scores equate to a higher religiosity or religious orthodoxy, and a greater sense of individualism and authoritativeness on economic and social issues. See appendix C.1, C.2 and C.3 for dependent variable indices.

The first stage of data analysis utilized the indices of religious orthodoxy to measure and compare religious orthodoxy between all groups; capturing changes/shifts in beliefs, practice and subjective religiosity for the immigrant generational stage, 1.5 generation and second generation.

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) methodology was employed to discern the levels of religious orthodoxy (intensity of religiosity) between the four main groups (Immigrant, 1.5 generation, Second generation and Reference). The One-way ANOVA determines the main effects of the groups. The main groups are nominal data. The strength of ANOVA is that in addition to denoting significant statistical difference it allows for statistical comparison between groups.

The text also studied the intersection of specific reference groups or subcultural identities for their interaction with the main groups. By overlaying these interactions with the four groups, immigrant generational stage, 1.5 generation, second generation and reference group (each group has one level of analysis and each intersect has two levels; Gender-Male and Female; Religious Tradition-Catholic and Protestant) a two-way cross design was created to assess this intersection.

To prevent a Type I error (find a significant difference where there is none) in the Two-way ANOVA, post hoc-tests were utilized. In the analysis of intersection of gender and immigrant generational stage I selected the ‘least significant difference’ method (LSD) as being the most liberal and statistically powerful of the post hoc tests. In the analysis of the intersection of religious tradition and immigrant generational stages (which did not attain normality with the index data), I selected the ‘Scheffe’ post hoc test as it is a conservative analytic tool that effectively controls for the overall error rate.
Introduction

Formulation and Hypothesis

Through the review of the literature I will have demonstrated that religion matters and is significant to the immigrant in their adaptation to a new host environment. I will have demonstrated that religion is a salient subcultural identity but not the only subcultural identity in the motivation and justification of opinion formation on a wide range of social and economic issues. I will show that the adaptation process for the immigrant necessitates change; the immigrant is not the same at the time of his/her migration as when they are fully integrated into mainstream society. The questions before the contemporary researcher of immigration are important and numerous. What are the changes taking place within the immigrant population as part of their adaptation to the new host society and what are the variables that are influencing these changes? Does the immigrant become more individualistic and modernistic through the process of adaptation and integration? What are the variables that are driving these changes? Is religious orthodoxy or a multiplicity of subcultural identities most significant for the immigrant in the change process and their opinion formation on substantive issues? What is the effect of intersection of other subcultural identities with religion on opinions addressing important contemporary concerns? Can we observe patterns within these changes that will lead to viable predictions?

The following hypotheses are framed by my belief that immigrants begin as traditionalists and develop into modernists in their positions addressing both social and economic issues. They become less communitarian on economic issues and less religiously orthodox as part of the process of acculturation and assimilation. In effect, over multiple generations, their identity shifts to mirror the identity of the mainstream population.

Specifically for this research study, I predict that significant variability will be found to exist between the immigrant generational stage and the other target groups (1.5 generation, 2.0 generation) as well as between the immigrant generational stage and the reference group for all three of our dependent variables; religious orthodoxy, social concerns, economic concerns. However the variability will not follow patterns predicted by the theoretical paradigm of religious worldview or the theory Moral Cosmology. In point, the theoretical view of multiple subcultural identities and intersectionality will be of greater benefit to our understanding of the immigrant adaption process.

Based upon the literature review I have crafted my hypothesis in a traditional theoretical direction, expressing the significance of a religious
world view or religious orthodoxy in the justification and motivation for opinion formation. As the reader will see, these hypotheses were not supported. I have left them crafted in this direction so that their rejection makes a stronger case for the need to develop a wider and less hegemonic perspective for opinion formation in the public sphere.

**Hypothesis 1:** The immigrant generational stage will be more religiously orthodox than the reference group and all other target group. Research demonstrates that religion is both an anchor for new immigrants and a means of maintaining ethnic identity. The immigrant generational stage’s religious worldview (religious orthodoxy) will lead them to be more literal in their biblical interpretation, more active in their religious practice, and to experience a greater sense of religiosity than all other target groups and reference group.

**Hypothesis 2:** The immigrant generational stage will be more communitarian on economic issues and more authoritarian on social issues (looking towards religious doctrine to define economic and acceptable social behavior) then any other target group or the reference group.

**Hypothesis 3:** A religious worldview or religious orthodoxy, as expressed by the theory of Moral Cosmology is viable and the most salient explanatory theory in predicting the stances on economic and social issues for the post 1965 immigrant population.

**Hypotheses 4:** Significant variability will be found across religious traditions (Protestant and Catholic), for the dependent variables, religious orthodoxy and social and economic issues. However, the variability on social and economic issues will be correlated to degree of religious orthodoxy (religious intensity) and not correlated to a religious tradition (Catholic/Protestant).

**Hypothesis 5:** Significant variability will be found across gender for the dependent variables, religious orthodoxy and social and economic issues. However, variability on social and economic issues will be correlated to degree of religious orthodoxy (religious intensity) and not correlated to gender.

**Organization of Text**

The literature review consists of four chapters (chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5) each presenting part of the frame for this text. Chapter 2 addresses the changing face of immigration in the United States by presenting a brief demographic overview of the post 1965 immigrant population and a
comparison of the post-1965 immigrant flow to previous periods of immigration. Chapter 2 concludes with a review of the theoretical changes which have occurred in immigration theory. Chapter 3 presents an overview of the significance of religious practices and institutional religion to immigration. Chapter 4 introduces the relationship between religion and politics in the United States and makes the case for culture as a bridge between the two. The literature review concludes with chapter 5 which presents the theoretical frames of moral cosmology (religious world view) and subcultural identity and intersectionality.

The results section is presented in three separate but related chapters (chapter 6, 7 and 8). Chapter 6 presents data for the comparison between immigrant generational stages for the effect of religious orthodoxy upon economic and social issues. Chapter 7 adds the variable of religious traditions and presents the data analyzing the comparisons between religious traditions (Catholic/Protestant) for the combined effect of religious orthodoxy and immigrant generational stages upon economic and social issues. Chapter 8 introduces gender as a variable and presents the analysis of the comparison between gender for the combined effect of religious orthodoxy and immigrant generational stages upon economic and social issues. The work concludes with the discussion of the data (chapter 9) and summary remarks in (chapter 10). I have provided the list of GSS questions used to construct the indices of religious orthodoxy and economic and social concerns in appendices A and B. The indices scores are located in appendices C.1, C.2 and C.3. Pearson Rho correlations can be found in appendices D.1, D.2 and D.3. Finally demographic profiles are to be found in appendices E.1, E.2, and E.3.
CHAPTER TWO

THE CHANGING FACE OF IMMIGRATION
IN AMERICA

Chapter Overview

I begin chapter 2 by setting the frame for our conversation of immigration and religion by providing a demographic perspective of the post-1965 immigrant flow. Where did they originate? What do we know about them socio-economically? What religions do they identify with? These questions are essential to our descriptive frame. I will then present the major theoretical issues concerning immigrant adaptation to the new host country by focusing upon the integrated processes of acculturation and assimilation.

Section 1:
Demographic Overview of the Post 1965 Immigrant Flow

Historically there have been three major immigrant flows to the United States in the last 150 years (Alba and Nee 2000). The first between 1840 and 1880 was comprised of immigrants from the United Kingdom, Germany and Ireland. The high point of this immigration flow was at the end of this period of immigration when slightly less than 800,000 immigrants came to our shores. Some 96.5% of these immigrants were from Northwestern Europe, slightly under 5% from southeastern Europe. The second immigrant wave occurred between 1891 and 1930 and was comprised primarily of Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Polish and southern and eastern European immigrants. The high point of this immigrant flow was 1905 when slightly over 1.2 million immigrants arrived during that year. Some 46% of these immigrants were from Northwestern Europe, 45% from southeastern Europe, 6% from Latin America and the Caribbean and just under 3% from Asia and the Middle East. The post-1965 immigrants had a high point of immigration in 1990 when over 1.8 million

1 Alba and Nee, ibid, p. 170, table 5.1, legal immigration to the United States, 1820 through 2000.
immigrants arrived. Demographically the population was quite different from the preceding immigrant flows. 6.5% of the immigrants were from North Western Europe, 8.5% were from southeastern Europe, 45% were from Latin America and the Caribbean and some 35% from Asia and the Middle East (Min 2002).  

A large share of the demographic diversification is attributable to the Immigration Act of 1965. This act abolished the discriminatory 1920’s era country-of-origin quotas and substituted occupational preference and family reunification provisions through which legislators hoped for an infusion of skilled workers into the US economy and an end to the separation of families which had been a byproduct of previous immigration policy. What we now recognize to be among the main effects of the law, the brain drain of professionals from Asia and the multiplier effect, the subsequent reunification of their families in the United States, was largely unanticipated (Warner 2000).  

In addition the legalization of some 2.7 million former undocumented immigrants in special agricultural workers under the amnesty provision of the 1986 immigration reform and control contributed to their record. According to the 2010 census data, there are some 40 million foreign-born legal residents in the United States. 55% of these or approximately 21 million originate in Latin America or the Caribbean. An additional one third roughly 13 million are from Central America with Mexico comprising some 25% (3 million) of this group. Asia comprises an additional 15% or 6 million of the current legal resident population. 

Recent estimates suggest that approximately 23% of the American population is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant; 1.5 and second generation (Alba and Nee 2003). Based on data presented in the first wave of the New Immigrant Survey, a nationally representative survey of post 1965 legal immigrants to the United States, the new immigrants are increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of America, as well as bringing larger numbers of adherents of non-Christian religions to the United States (National Immigration Survey, Princeton University).

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5 http://nis.princeton.edu
Jasso et al., (2003) studied the religious preferences among new immigrants aged 18 or over at time of admission to permanent residence. Some two thirds 64.7% expressed a preference for a Christian religion. Not surprisingly, given the high percentage of immigrants from Mexico, Latin America and the Philippines, the largest preference expressed was for Catholicism 42%. The proportions reporting a preference for orthodox or Protestant religions were 4.2% and 18.6% respectively. 8% of immigrants identified as Muslim.

Again citing Jasso et al., the religious preferences among recent immigrants is significantly different from the native born population in the United States. The proportion of native born residents that identify as Christian is 85% significantly larger than the 65% for the immigrant group. Secondly the proportion of Catholics is almost twice as large among the immigrants as among native born; 42% versus 22%. The proportion reporting religion outside the classical Judeo-Christian tradition is more than four times greater among recent immigrants than among native born; 16.7% versus 4%.

Jasso et al. also analyzed the average years of schooling completed among recent immigrants 25 and over by religious preference. Among men, years of education ranged from 12.1 years (Catholics) to a high of 16.4 years (Buddhists). Among women, this span was from 10.8 for Muslims to 15.4 for Hindus. According to Jasso educational differential across religious preference groups is more than four years among men (approximately the difference between high school and college graduation). Among women the years of education differential is slightly larger, 4.6 years. The most educated immigrants are among men, Buddhists and Muslims 16.4 and 15.1 average years respectively. Among women the most educated are Hindus and Orthodox Christians, which averaged 15.4 and 15 years respectively. Those immigrants with the lowest years of education were Catholic men 12.1 years, followed closely by Hindus 12.2 years. On average Jewish immigrants obtained 13.1 years of schooling for men. Among women those with the least years of education were Muslims (10.8) years followed by Catholic (11.4) years and Protestants (12.1) years.

Zhou (2003) tells us that there are five major distinctive features between previous immigrant flows and contemporary immigration. The first addresses the issue of absorption rates. Despite the similarity in the

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absolute numbers the rate of contemporary immigration relative to the total US population is much lower than that of earlier immigration flows. The US population has more than tripled during the course of the 20th century. The comparatively low rate of contemporary immigration implies a more modest overall impact on the US population today than in the past. This impact is disproportionately localized in areas of high immigration not only in the historic gateway cities but also in smaller urban or suburban areas in which few immigrants had settled in the past.

The second distinctive feature addresses the rate of immigrant return to sending country. Contemporary immigration rates are considerably lower today than in the past. It was estimated that for every 100 immigrants during the past decades of high immigration (previous two major immigrant flows), 36 had returned to their homelands. In contrast between 1971 and 1990, less than a quarter had returned. This trend indicates a steadier growth for post 1965 immigrants than for previous immigrant groups; demonstrating also that contemporary immigrants are more likely than earlier immigrants to remain in the United States.

The third feature is that unlike immigration in the past contemporary immigration is accompanied by a much larger number of undocumented immigrants. This event has partially been created by our reliance on Mexican immigration for cheap agriculture labor, as well as the operation of migrant networks that assist undocumented immigration entering and staying in the United States (Massey 1995).

The fourth compared to immigration in the past, today's inflows consist of immigrants of color, which are much more visible. The newcomers are predominantly from non-European countries. Since 1980 more than 85% of the immigrants admitted to the United States come from Asia and the Americas and only 10% from Europe compared to more than 90% of the earlier peak. In particular, the share of immigrants from the Americas as a proportion of total legal immigrant admissions has risen substantially from 25% of the 1950 moving to 39% in the 1960s and jumping up to 50% since the 1980s. Similarly the share of immigrants from Asia as a proportion of the total admissions grew from a tiny 5% in the 1950s, to 11% in the 1960s and 33% in the 70s and stayed at roughly 35% since 1980.

The fifth distinctive feature of post 1965 immigration is the all-time high of non-immigrants arriving in the states temporarily as tourists, students, temporary workers and traders or investors. This group of non-immigrants contains a significant pool of potential immigrants.

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summation a lower rate of emigration, greater numbers of undocumented immigrants and refugees and an increasing pool of potential immigrants among non-immigrants add to the complexity of contemporary immigration. In 1995 almost half of the legal immigrants admitted to the United States had their non-immigrant visas adjusted to remain in the United States. Approximately 40% of the total number of undocumented immigrants is comprised by immigrants who overstayed their legal time in country (Zhou).

Spatially, the turn-of-the-century immigrants were highly concentrated along the northeastern seaboard and in the Midwest. For them the top five most preferred state destinations were New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Massachusetts and New Jersey. In contrast today's newcomers are highly concentrated not only in states or urban areas traditionally attracting most immigrants but also in states or urban areas that had few immigrants in the past. Since 1971, the top five states of immigrant intended residence have been California, New York, Florida, Texas and New Jersey accounting for almost 2 out of every three newly admitted immigrants (Zhou 2003).9

Finally, the new immigrants differ significantly from the turn-of-the-century immigrant population as well as amongst themselves in the range of variability of their social and economic capital. The image of a poor uneducated and unskilled immigrant is not generalizable to the entire post1965 immigrant flow.

Section 2:
The Changing Theory of Immigration:
Theoretical Perspectives upon the Dual and Integrated Processes of Acculturation and Assimilation

This section through a historical presentation of the theoretical perspectives of the processes of immigrant adaptation captures both the shifting social view towards the process of immigrant adaptation and the increased awareness of the complexity of immigrant adaptation to the host environment. I present this section to expand our awareness of the breadth of the immigrant assimilation processes and to emphasize the life-world demands that are embedded within this process. This theoretical section posits that the change in the majoritarian perspective of immigration and the shift towards a multi-trajectory and context bound conceptual frame is indicative of societal acceptance of diversity and social construction as a viable way of knowing. It is my contention that by presenting both the

9 Zhou, Min, ibid, pp. 69.