THE NEW SECOND GENERATION

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sively of "minorities" and the third of "nonminorities" (non-Hispanic whites). Instead, all these ethnic categories, on which official and institutional data are currently reported, include cross-sections of immigrant children, children of immigrants, and children born of native parents in unknown proportions. This adds to the confusion about how to study these children and contributes to the frequency with which spurious findings arise from such data.

By focusing on the second generation only (children of immigrants), the studies in this collection seek to overcome these taxonomical blinders and call attention to a clearly defined segment of the American adolescent population whose experiences are both important and problematic. Second-generation children are arguably the fastest growing segment of their age cohort. Moreover, their process of maturation in school and at home cannot be extrapolated from the experiences of their native peers, or from those of children of earlier European immigrants.

Growing up bicultural and bilingual is a trying process, even under the best of circumstances. Doing so in today's America is a still greater challenge. For reasons explained in the coming chapters, serious obstacles now imperil the promise long held out to our country's newcomers: successful adaptation will be rewarded with a middle-class American life. The relative success of different immigrant communities in confronting these challenges and the effects of alternative outcomes on these groups represent a guiding concern in this research. The following studies illustrate and extend this analytic concern.

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Introduction: Immigration and Its Aftermath

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THE CHAPTERS in this volume offer the reader a wealth of information on a topic of increasing visibility in the field of immigration. For a variety of reasons, the growth and adaptation of the second generation have not been subjects of great concern for researchers in this field during the recent past. Reasons include the relative youth of the "new" second generation spawned by post-1965 immigration to the United States and the difficulties of studying it on the basis of census and other official data. Scholarly attention in this field has remained focused on adult immigrants, who are more visible and whose progress through the labor market and through the immigration bureaucracy can be traced more easily.

Social scientists whose professional concern is with children, such as sociologists of education, have noted the surge of foreign-origin and, for the most part, nonwhite students in the nation's schools. However, the manner in which data on this new phenomenon have been packaged has hopelessly obscured their character and implications. School records and scholarly surveys most frequently use a classificatory scheme for students based on the panethnic labels Hispanic, Asian, non-Hispanic, black, and white. Such data are nearly useless for the study of the second generation because they mix children of native and foreign parentage as well as those from the most diverse nationalities. The ethnic category Hispanic, for example, combines children whose ancestors were living in the country at the time of the Civil War with those who arrived recently as unauthorized aliens. The category Asian is still more egregious because the children grouped under it

do not even share a parental language (Portes and Truelove, 1987; Massey, 1993).

The dearth of accessible census data and the compressing of second-generation youth into a classificatory scheme that obliterates their history have obscured a major phenomenon in the recent evolution of American society. This result is unfortunate because the adaptation of the second generation will be decisive in establishing the long-term outlook for contemporary immigration. It is indeed among the second generation, not the first, where such issues as the continuing dominance of English, the growth of a welfare-dependent population, the resilience of culturally distinct urban enclaves, and the decline or growth of ethnic intermarriages will be decided permanently. For example, the much-debated issue of the loss of English hegemony in certain areas heavily affected by immigration will not be decided by first-generation immigrants but by their descendants. Loyalty to their home language among the foreign born is a time-honored and normal pattern; in the past the key linguistic shift has consistently taken place among their U.S.-born offspring. Whether this is occurring today represents the key question in the future linguistic evolution of these areas (Lieberson, Dalto, and Johnston, 1975; see also chapter 2).

Similarly, the issue of whether immigrants from the West Indies and Africa will succeed in maintaining independent cultural identities or whether they simply will augment the American black population will not be decided by the first generation. As Mary Waters makes clear in chapter 8, most immigrants strive to maintain social distance and a separate identity from native-born blacks. The self-image of second-generation Haitians, Jamaicans, Nigerians, and other African and West Indian–origin youth are another matter and the outcome is far less certain.

Between 1980 and 1990, immigration contributed a full 39 percent of the population growth of the country (Rumbaut, 1994). Rising immigration and the relatively high levels of fertility of many immigrant groups will push the second generation past its former peak of 28 million, reached by the children of earlier European immigrants in the 1940s (Passel and Edmonston, 1992). The new record, which will be reached sometime during this decade, is already adumbrated in results from Charles Hirschman (chapter 4, tables 4.2 and 4.3) that put the total U.S.-born population of Latin American and Asian origin in 1990 at 16.4 million.[1]

Sheer numbers plus the concentration of the second generation in a few states and cities are sufficient reason to assign significance to its study. More important still is that its adaptation and, hence, its long-term effects on society are anything but clear. Borrowing from the historical record of earlier European immigration, scholars and lay writers have commonly settled on the belief in an orderly sequence of assimilation: The struggles and common poverty of first-generation immigrants will be superseded by the gradual entry of their offspring into mainstream social and economic circles. The loss of "ethnic" linguistic and cultural traits, as well as the disappearance of earlier labor market disadvantages, will be complete, for the most part, by the third generation (Sowell, 1981; Alba, 1985).

As the chapters in this volume make abundantly clear, there are serious reasons to question this comfortable expectation. The second generation is the key to establishing the long-term consequences of immigration, but the course of its adaptation is uncertain at present. The questions of shifts in language and ethnic identities, used above as specific examples of uncertainty, are part of a more general puzzle. This puzzle is whether today's children of immigrants will follow their European predecessors and move steadily into the middle-class mainstream or whether, on the contrary, their ascent will be blocked and they will join children of earlier black and Puerto Rican migrants as part of an expanded multiethnic underclass. As the deteriorating conditions of life in American cities suggest, the question is of more than passing significance for the future of American society.

Human Consequences of Immigration

The answer to that key question is related to the long-term role that immigration has played in the structure of the American economy. The countless literary sagas of immigration portray it as the journey of people who struggle to leave political oppression and destitution behind and who seek, and eventually succeed, in rebuilding their lives on freedom's shores. The saga reflects accurately many individual experiences, but it is only part of the story. While individual motivations are undoubtedly important, a political economy analysis shows that what drives the process is not the dreams and needs of immigrants but the interests and plans of their prospective employers. Although geopolitical and other considerations have played roles in granting to certain foreign groups access to American territory, the fundamental reason for sustained immigration, at least since the post–Civil War period, has been the labor needs of the economy (Rosenblum, 1973; Portes, 1978; Piore, 1979).

Employer associations played a decisive role in recruiting European and Asian labor during the nineteenth century. They organized de-

pendable labor flows from Asia, southeastern Europe, and Mexico at the turn of the century and then succeeded in keeping the immigration door open against nativist opposition until World War I. During the interwar period, growers and corporate interests organized the massive recruitment and resettlement of southern blacks and Puerto Rican migrants to replace a dwindling European labor pool. After World War II, the same interests returned to the recruitment and use of foreign labor, this time through the *bracero* program with Mexico and through legal loopholes that preserved a porous border. During the last decade, rising popular opposition to immigration was answered by a massive legalization program for unauthorized immigrants and by a new set of loopholes to the Immigration "Reform and Control" Act of 1986 that allowed the continuation of the clandestine flow. This last outcome attests to the resilient political power of the same economic groups (Bach, 1978; Barrera, 1980; Sassen, 1988).

The overriding interest underlying an open-door immigration policy has been for an abundant source of labor to fuel growing sectors of the economy and restrain the power of domestic labor. Before World War I, railroad construction, mining, and heavy manufacturing were the growth sectors attracting immigrant workers; today, agriculture and urban personal and business services play a similar role. Although skilled and even professional labor has been at times in short supply and has been recruited abroad, immigration has, for the most part, played the role of increasing the pool of unskilled labor. Today, needed skilled and professional immigrants generally arrive through legal entry provisions of the 1990 immigration law, while the bulk of needed unskilled labor arrives through clandestine channels and legal loopholes (Portes and Rumbaut, 1990: chaps. 1–2; Smith, 1992; Zhou, 1992; Margolis, 1994).

Although a political economy analysis clarifies the fundamental underpinnings of the immigration open door, it commonly neglects an equally important fact, namely, that employers hire immigrant workers but assume no responsibility for their offspring. Put differently, the benefits flowing from the abundance and low cost of immigrant labor are privatized by the individuals and firms that hire them, but the potential costs associated with the growth and maturation of the second generation are shifted onto third parties. For example, today's growers and urban service firms employ unskilled Third World workers, many of them unauthorized. The economic benefits of this strategy are self-evident. On the other hand, the employers do not assume the costs related to the potential maladjustment of children of immigrants growing up under such conditions of disadvantage. They are shifted instead onto the immigrant family and, if necessary, onto society at large (Gans, 1992).

In broad strokes, results of this long-term policy can be summarized as follows: The nation takes care of its immediate labor needs, as defined by powerful economic interests, and lets the future take care of itself. A fortunate combination of circumstances, including an expanding economy, a scarcity of labor due to a new global conflict, and other factors, allowed the European second generation to move steadily up in the American economic and social ladders. Their generally successful experience was subsequently captured in academic theories, including the concept of a linear process of assimilation. Children of southern black and Puerto Rican migrants arriving later in the century were less fortunate. A different set of circumstances, including widespread racial discrimination and a changing economy, blocked the mobility of these migrants' children and confined many to the same inferior jobs held by their parents. The perpetuation of these negative conditions eventually led to an interrelated set of urban pathologies. These experiences gave rise to different academic theories, including the concepts of a culture of poverty and the urban underclass (Moynihan, 1969; Wilson, 1987; Gans, 1990; Jencks, 1992).

Today's second generation finds itself somewhere between these extremes. Its members confront the same reduced circumstances in the American labor market affecting domestic minorities. Most second-generation youth are also nonwhite and hence subject to the same discrimination endured by their predecessors (Jensen, 1990; Passel and Edmonston, 1992). On the other hand, immigrant families and communities commonly possess material and moral resources that confer advantages on their young as they seek avenues for successful adaptation. In the new "hourglass" economy shaped by the industrial restructuring of the American labor market, the path toward economic success consists of traversing the narrowing "middle" between dead-end menial jobs at the bottom and the growing pool of managerial and professional occupations requiring advanced degrees at the top (Waldinger, 1992; see also chapter 9).

For mostly nonwhite and poor second-generation youth, the ability to make this journey depends decisively on the resources that their families and ethnic communities can bring to bear. At this specific juncture, the analysis of second-generation adaptation must shift theoretical gears. If political economy clarifies the broad structural framework in which the adaptation process occurs, other less abstract conceptual approaches are necessary to understand how the process unfolds in everyday reality. For this purpose, notions borrowed from economic anthropology and economic sociology are especially relevant. Not surprisingly, the chapters in this volume that focus on questions of ethnic identity, educational attainment, and career prospects

make liberal use of concepts such as embeddedness, social networks, and social capital borrowed from the "new" economic sociology (Granovetter, 1985; see also chapter 3).

Data Sources and Results

A profound gap thus exists between the strategic importance of the immigrant second generation and current knowledge about its condition. As seen previously, this is due largely to the dearth of official sources dealing specifically with the topic and to the obscuring of this population into broad statistical categories. Not surprisingly, the information on which the following chapters are based come mostly from original sources.

Five different data sets are brought to address our general topic. Chapter 4 by Charles Hirschman and chapter 5 by Leif Jensen and Yoshimi Chitose scrutinize census sources to find out what they can tell us about the second generation. Jensen and Chitose extract information from the 1990 Census Public Use Microdata Sample to identify households with children of foreign-born parents; Hirschman uses published census tabulations on the foreign born and on the Hispanic and Asian populations to arrive at some preliminary estimates of children of immigrants in 1990. He also uses special tabulations to examine the influence of years of U.S. residence on second-generation school attendance and premarital fertility.

In chapter 8, Mary Waters bases her analysis of second-generation ethnic identities on an intensive observational study and survey of West Indian black immigrants in New York City. In chapter 9, Min Zhou and Carl Bankston draw on their survey of Vietnamese teenagers in New Orleans as well as on their interviews with informants from that immigrant community to examine the self-images and educational attainment of Vietnamese American youth.

Patricia Fernández Kelly and Richard Schauffler, in chapter 3, draw on another original data source based on intensive interviews with 120 immigrant parents to examine similar processes among children of Cuban, Haitian, and Nicaraguan origin in Miami and among Mexican- and Vietnamese-origin youth in San Diego. This parental sample is actually a subset of a much larger survey of second-generation high school students in south Florida and southern California. The survey interviewed a total of 5,266 eighth and ninth graders in forty-two schools in the metropolitan areas of Miami/Fort Lauderdale and San Diego in 1992. Respondents came from seventy-seven different foreign nationalities, although the samples' distribution reflect the dominance of certain immigrant groups in each region. Chapter 6 by Lisandro Pérez and Chapter 2 by myself and Richard Schauffler make use of the South Florida segment of this survey. Chapter 7 by Rubén Rumbaut analyzes ethnic identities, social relationships, and indicators of psychological well-being in the full sample.

Together these studies contribute to the present knowledge on this subject. They offer broad overviews of the geographical distribution and demographic characteristics of the new second generation and detailed descriptions of the dilemmas that their members face and the social and psychological challenges that they must overcome. In substantive terms, the chapters divide fairly evenly between analyses of sociodemographic traits, linguistic knowledge and preferences, self-identity and self-esteem, and the role of immigrant communities in school performance and career plans.

Still, a great deal remains to be done. The substantive scope of this collection omits a number of significant topics. None of the data sets, for example, including those based on the census, accurately describes the full second-generation universe. The survey of children of immigrants in California and Florida, albeit the largest study of the topic to date, is limited to three metropolitan areas and to a subset of immigrant nationalities. Despite these and other limitations, the combined results of the studies presented in this volume forcefully convey two conclusions: first, the apparent absence of a modal social and economic adaptation among today's second generation; and second, the likelihood that, in some instances at least, the process may lead to downward assimilation. Both conclusions offer a strong stimulus for continuing research and analysis on the topic.

Notes

1. As an estimate of the second generation, this figure is inflated by the presence of Puerto Ricans (2.6 million), who are U.S. citizens of native parentage, Spaniards (an unknown number), and, primarily, third- and higher-generation Mexican Americans and other nationalities. The figure is deflated by the exclusion of the "1.5 generation," that is, foreign-born persons who arrived in the United States as children and whose socialization experience is akin to that of the native born of foreign parentage. Since there is no way to correct for these biases on the basis of the available data, the figure represents a very rough approximation.