Migration in a Global Age

Diaspora and Transnationalism
Globalization

• Universalism, Imperialism and Capitalism…

• The global trend towards modern economic organization and developed market economies has been accompanied by a process of cultural transformation
Changing Material Conditions

• A **key change** is towards a transformation of economic organization:

• The **great majority** of individuals migrate to generate income through employment or running businesses,

• Rather than from **economic bonds** with family and community
Modern world-post industrial

• In the modern world, there is great ease of international communication and interaction between cultures.

• Sociologists have generally focused attention on the global impact of the capitalist western world on other societies.
Global Transformations and Identity

• Each society may experiences a unique process of cultural and economic transformation.

• There are some **common trends** that appear to be linked to the development of a complex sense of identity.
Influencers of Identity

- Social roles and socialization are shaped by norms and values that are largely foreign influences media.
- Educational and occupational experiences are the primary agents of the individual's acculturation process.
Learning and absorbing

- Sociologists use the term to refer simply to the process of learning and absorbing a culture, making it synonymous with socialization, but ‘enculturation’ is a more appropriate word for that meaning.
See A. Richmond

- His discussion is about how the first world works to control migration patterns to protect the interests of the rich.

- He calls this “Global Apartheid”
  - Global Apartheid: Refugees, Racism, and the New World Order
  - by Anthony H. Richmond (1994)
DIASPORA AND
TRANSNATIONALISM

See R. Cohen (2011)
NEW CONCEPTS

• RARELY FOUND IN THE LITERATURE BEFORE 1980.

• THE REASON. Early migration theories were unidirectional.

• Cohen argues immigrants are hyper-mobile.
• The terms **ethnicity and race**...have focused upon processes of assimilation, integration, and accommodation. See R. Park’s **Race Relations Cycle**.

• Rather than on the ways ethnic groups are shaped by **forces outside** particular borders.
Cohen Argues that historically studies

- “turned analytical gaze to processes of inter-group relations within a particular territorial boundary…

- ..rather than on the ways that inter-group relations are shaped by forces and conditions outside particular national borders”
Today

• **Immigrants develop:**
  • networks,
  • activities,
  • patterns of living,
  • ideologies
• that span both their home and their host society.
For example,

- The structure and dynamics of groups such as the Croations, Sikhs, or Muslims in Canada must be understood **in terms of 3 factors:**
• 1. Where the groups come from

• 2. How they maintain contact with their ancestral homelands

• 3. How they relate to their respective communities in other countries
• Earlier theories of ethnicity and race are static...thus diaspora and transnationalism are valid and useful...

• They point to the new dynamics of immigration patterns.
Question

• Q. What has caused the **new dynamic**?

• A. Media, technology, global interdependency,
Definitions

• **Diaspora** – a Greek word meaning dispersion.

• Refers to members of ethnic groups who have left their homeland in large numbers or have been **forced out**
• **Transnationalism** - a process by which immigrants build multiple social, economic and cultural relations **across** geographic and or political boundaries.
• **DIASPORA**-the forcible and traumatic dispersal from the ancestral home…
• Mass movements for both economic and political reasons.
• **TRANSNATIONALISM**-multiple identities now possessed by immigrants through global connectedness.
The Two Concepts

• **Diaspora**- has had popularity, it is elastic,

• Eg, gay and lesbian diaspora, pro-biker diaspora.

• Immigrant groups such as Ukrainians *wrap themselves in a diaspora flag.*
• ETHNIC GROUPS such as Sikh’s use diaspora because they do not feel they are full and equal members of their countries of settlement.
• **Diaspora** serves a role... in boundaries, speaks of traumatic dispersal, potential victimization of earlier generations.

• **Diaspora** helps community leaders to mobilize groups in their sense of alienation.

• See R. Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*
Types of Diaspora include:
1. Victim diaspora
2. Imperial diaspora
3. Labour diaspora
4. Trade diaspora
5. Cultural diaspora
In contrast to Diaspora

• The concept of transnationalism is not saturated with the same deep historical narrative about trauma, victimization, and survival.
Transnationalism

• The processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link their societies of origin and settlement.
Transnationalism

• The ways immigrants build social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders…

• These are “trans-immigrants” who develop subjectivities and identities that connect them to two or more nation-states.
i.e Harney examines Italians in Canada

- He finds Italian Canadians are transnational
- Their **connections include:**
  - tour groups,
  - sports teams,
  - student exchange
  - and ethnic voluntary programs.
• Italians who have been in Canada for thirty years working in construction, for example….Invest in land and build new homes back in Italy.

• Some living abroad can participate in national elections.
Transnationalism

• Is a type of consciousness that refers to the multiple and overlapping identities that individuals in this global society now possess
Transnationalism

- Is defined as a way of describing certain practices in which immigrants appear to be increasingly engaged...

- By which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations
Transnationalism

• **Transnationalism** refers to social relations that link together societies of origin and settlement.

• Immigrants build social fields that cross geographic, cultural and political borders.

• Immigrants maintain multiple relationships—familial, economic, and political.
Transnationalism is

• 1. A new kind of community
• 2. A type of consciousness
• 3. A mode of cultural reproduction
• 4. An avenue of capital
• 5. A site of political engagement
Communities

• Similar to Cohen’s idea of diaspora

• However,
Transnationalists

- Hybrid identities, multiple and overlapping,

- Co-ethnic transnational identities, code switching, contemporary fluidity of cultural styles, social institutions and cultural practices..
Diaspora and Transnationalism

• Each point social scientists in useful directions
• Earlier research on immigrants emphasized the up-rootedness and permanent rupture of homeland,
New dialogues

• Points to the new communications, new technologies, have made transnational practices more intense, more immediate, more systematic than in the past.
• **Old** = telex, trains, and ships
• **New** = faxes, emails, Skype etc…
Summary

• Both concepts share critiques of the existing literature that emphasizes internal struggle.

• They point to the changing nature of ethnic groups, activities, practices and community life.
• **Diaspora** should be thought of as one kind of transnational

• **Transnationalism** is defined as a set of practices in which diasporas, immigrants and other engage.