

E Pluribus Unum: The Assimilation Paradigm Revisited



Melvin G. Holli

*"Assimilation theory has not lost its utility for the study of immigration to the United States."
Richard Alba, Victor Nee, 1997.*

Is there unity in diversity? Will the central core of civic culture hold? Or does the road to multiculturalism lead to exaggerated pluralism, hyper-pluralism and even "street-fighting pluralism?" Will America become another former disintegrating mega state such as the Soviet Union, or even in its more benign form, a language-divided Switzerland?

A tentative response to that issue was provided by James Olson (1994), who argues that "At any given point in American history the society seems quite diverse, apparently confirming the opinions of cultural pluralists about the continuing vitality of racial, religious, nationality, and linguistic differences. Despite appearances, however, the processes of modernization, acculturation, and assimilation have been inexorable, constantly working to transform minority values and loyal-

ties and bring them in line with those of the large society."

More recently a concept called Trans-Nationalism has emerged to challenge the classical three-generation assimilation model, a model that has proved a powerful explanatory tool in accounting for America's nationhood. The trans-national model rests heavily on the first generation and only partly on the second generation experience, and therein may be its fatal flaw. (Alba, Nee, 849) Only when these newcomer groups have experience the full three-generation time span in the U.S. can the classical model be judged for these non-European immigrants.

The work of recent scholar study by Dr. Padma Rangaswamy explicates the trans-national model. The model argues that the 1965 immigration law significantly altered origins of newcomers from Europe to primarily Latin lands and Asia, with potentially far reaching consequences. Accompanying that the 1990 family reunification law has increased the number of newcomers to about a

million a year, and is in effect a quota controlled not by governmental policy but by individuals and groups of immigrants, who will decide how many or how few of their kinfolk to bring to America. The ethnic refreshing that comes with the arrival of younger children and brothers and sisters brought in by aging parents will slow the assimilation process argue the trans-national proponents. The inflow of large numbers is potentially continuous and non ending, and thus Euro-American assimilation which was speeded up by the ending of mass migration in 1924, has no counterpart with the new Asian and Latin-American migrations.

Thus the model's exponents assert that the classical three-generation assimilation model derived from the European immigration epic is not applicable to Asian Indians, many with their high incomes and educations, extensive family connections, easy air travel back and forth to India: they will not assimilate in the classical sense but remains at the core Indians living in a high-paying Amer-

Dr. Melvin G. Holli is Professor of history in University of Illinois at Chicago and author of 13 books. He was a Fulbright Professor in Finland in 1978 and 1989.

ican Diaspora. Asian Indians, Rangaswamy concludes, "will not merge into American society or assimilate in the conventional sense any more than they have done in other parts of the world. They will retain their right to identify with different aspects of Indian or American culture, thus creating a unique Indian-American, trans-national culture of their own." (Rangaswamy xix)

What are some of implications of trans-nationalism? Will the non-assimilated import trans-national bone-deep and age-old animosities such as Hindu-Muslim style conflict, Serbo-Croatian brawling or a semi-permanent Arab-Isreali -style jihad? Will the road to multiculturalism lead to the end of the American experiment in assimilation? Is "street-fighting pluralism?" the joker in the multi-cultural deck of cards? No one knows for certain. No one has a crystal ball to predict the future? Our prognosticators peer through a glass darkly. Even so our best guide to the future is the past and the immediate past. We go forward in history like a person rowing a boat – he looks backward while rowing forward. With that metaphor let's row forward by looking backward through the (historic) lens of E Pluribus Unum: the Latin phrase that means one from many and which has been for the past three centuries a reasonable description of the making of a nation through a set of shared values that are generally called American.

That calls for some examples from the immediate past to test the trans-national model. To cite only one example, Chicago is a poly-

glot, multiethnic city reflecting dozens of ethnicities and nationalities drawn from Europe, Asia, and Africa and yet the first, second, and third generation descendants of these ethno-nationalists behave quite differently in the American environment than in their home environments.

In December 1992 a terrible act of ethno-religious conflict occurred in India when Hindu nationalists tore down and destroyed a sacred Muslim mosque which triggered property destruction, killing and bloody massacres for weeks thereafter. In Chicago on the other hand the kinfolk and in some cases brothers of sisters of the Hindu-Muslim combatants marched down Devon Street together pledging friendship and solidarity to each other and condemning the rioting in their homeland. (Chicago Tribune, Rangaswamy xiv, Buruma, 16) Another example can be drawn from the Southside of Chicago where second and third generation Croatians, Serbs and Slovenians have worked together in the same steel mills, drank beer sometimes in the same taverns, bowled in the same leagues, but have not engaged in shelling, killing, maiming and raping each other as has been the case in their ancestral homeland. Similarly African-American conflict and violence, though it does exist, is not tribal in the Hutu-Tutsi sense nor in any pronounced ethno cultural sense.

Nor do Irish and Protestant Catholics in Chicago or many Northern and Eastern cities carry on war and terrorism against each other. No bombs explode in Chicago's Irish Catholic Bridgeport

neighborhood (the home of many of the city's Irish Catholic mayors) Political relations between Protestants and Catholics are amiable and friendly. in the Windy City When one sees the initials IRA emblazoned on a wall they do not signify the terrorist group, the Irish Republican Army: in Chicago they mean Individual Retirement Accounts which banks and employers encourage workers to buy for comfort in their golden years. An astonished and shocked Princess Margaret visiting Chicago had to have that explained to her by then Mayor Jane Byrne.

Even Arab and Jew in Chicago get along well. They are not stoning each other, bouncing rubber bullets of each other or exploding infernal devices in crowded markets or streets. Chicago has no counterpart to the Dr. Baruch Goldstein affair – an Israeli nationalist who massacred 29 Muslims at prayer at a holy shrine... No PLO terrorists ambush Jewish buses or engage in acts of violence against one another. (Chicago Tribune 26 September 1994). In fact just the contrary has been the case. Many aging and retiring Chicago Jewish businessmen have sold their enterprises to entrepreneurial Arabs and Middle Easterners (who have become an important part of the inner city business community.)

Why is the American ethnic cultural and national experience so different from that of much of the rest of the world? Could it be that Israel Zangwill in his 1908 melodrama, the Melting Pot was more right than wrong when he wrote: "Here you stand with your fifty groups, your fifty languages

and histories, your fifty blood feuds and hatreds and rivalries... A fig for your feuds and vendettas, Germans and Frenchman, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians – into the Crucible with you all. God is making the American.” (I. Zangwill 17) In the light of the sad and bloody history of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity in the modern world, it may be that Zangwill was more right than wrong. But then critics say that is exceptional and perhaps even transitory. And one can respond by saying there is more exceptionalism than street-fighting pluralism in the streets of America. In fact there is more exceptionalism on the streets of Ethnic America than there is in its universities. In the academy exceptionalism is a dirty word and in disfavor. Thank God it is not in the streets of America.

Classical Model Re-visited

Perhaps we need to accept the advice of social scientist Ewa Morawska who wrote recently: "It is time, I think, to resuscitate the old assimilation model and see whether, renovated, it could be useful after all." She continues "this model should be made more complex and, most of all, historicized, i.e., made time-and-place specific and embedded into multi-dimensional contexts" and as an "explanatory" framework of how the immigrants adapted to the host American society. (Morawska 76).

What is the process or processes then that have cooled down these "blood feuds and vendettas" in America? The process exam-

ined under the historic lens indicates something very different has been happening in America for the past three centuries compared to what has happened in Russia, Asia and Africa. Whether one wishes to call this process Acculturation as part of the Assimilation cycle, or social and economic Modernization, or the politically incorrect "Exceptionalism," or as the Marxists might prefer, capitalist Hegemony – whatever it is it has worked in the U.S. and some other advanced Western societies, but not in third and second world societies in Asia, Africa or the Soviet Empire.

What are the processes underway that turned sometimes unfriendly and even blood-enemy Europeans into peaceable Americans? What spurred their relatively rapid absorption into the American mainstream culture? When I say rapid, I don't mean weeks, or months or even years, but rather generations, three generations in fact.

The European newcomer underwent a three generation process that transformed him from an immigrant into an American. The first generation lived mostly as a colony of foreigners planted on alien soil and who in a few, but not very many cases, achieved a stage of adaptation that Milton Gordon called acculturation. (Gordon 71 f.) Very few became fully fluent in the their adopted land's language or felt completely at home in the new world society. The second stage of adaptation often occurred in the second generation, who sometimes remained "marginal" men, in a sociological sense, living between two cultures but

adopting much of the language and material and political culture of their new homeland. It is in the third generation where one finds the full transformation from the immigrant generation to ethnics, who are generally well advanced on the road to assimilation and who fully embrace the public and civic aspects of the new culture as their own. Higher education rapidly attenuates the ethnic link when individuals find their marriage partners not from their own ethnic groups, but from educational and occupational affinity groups.

What are the processes that bring about this advanced stage of assimilation in the third generation and are there any indexes that measure or record that process of change from immigrant to ethnic to American? The answer is happily that there are indexes that can measure this change as it occurs (or alternately if it does not occur). These indexes drawn from literally dozens of studies over more than a half century and they all more or less approximate each other. In the American experience they all appear to be progressive or little backsliding or regression.

Marriage Patterns

The best single index for measuring integration into the host culture (in this case Americanization) is intermarriage or exogamy whereby individuals cross nationality or ethno-linguistic lines in choosing marriage partners. The general pattern, derived from marriage data on German, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, and Romanian-Americans, indicates that the

foreign-born immigrants marry at the 80 to 90 % level to their own nationality or nativity group. The second generation sees some deterioration in this aspect and endogamy or marriage to their own ethnic types falls into the 40 to 60 % range. The ethno-marriage link attenuates even more in the third generation and endogamy falls into the 20 to 40 % range. (Bernard 117–19) Polzin 167)

The 1980 census showed from national samples that some 75 % of Italian-Americans and 80 % of those of Czech and Portuguese ancestries married people outside of their ethnic groups. (Alba, 14) Even among the most recent newcomers, Hispanics and Asians, outside marriages range from 1/6 to 1/3 of all marriages with sansei (third generation) Japanese-Americans leading the way with more than 60 % not marrying their fellow Japanese and not even fellow Asians but into the majority American-born white stock. This has led one scholar researcher to conclude that Japanese Americans will be the first Asian-American group to assimilate not only culturally but biologically into the majority American culture. (Osako 437, Wattenberg) Today then mixed ancestry marriage is much more common than same ancestry marriage in the third generation.

Overall the marriage melting pot has been bubbling along at a good clip. The meaning of this is that national and ethnic identities are clearly weakened in mixed marriages, and for children who share two, three and even more identities, generally call themselves Americans. Intermarriage

then remains a good index of assimilation into the mainstream culture and society.

Residential Dispersion

A second reliable index of absorption into the host society is residential dispersion by which the closely clustered ghettos, colonies, neighborhoods, or farm towns with people mostly of the same ethnic nationality begins to disperse and scatter. This usually occurs as the sons and daughters of the immigrants (or their grandchildren) move out of the ethnic colonies into areas that are characterized as less ethnic or non-ethnic. (Waters 97–98) The German-towns, Swedetowns and Polonias of yesteryear have been depopulated as the younger generation has moved on. Chicago's Polish "downtown" still has Polish churches, fraternal lodges, and restaurants but relatively few Polish-Americans. Most of the new residents are Latinos or of Hispanic extraction. The Polish third generation has moved mostly to the suburbs. Similarly the formerly Czech-named and Czech-dominated community of Pilsen (a Chicago neighborhood) now forms the central core of Chicago's Mexican-American community with the Czechs scattered in the third and fourth generation into the suburbs. And further west, Chicago's Lawndale community, once the vital core of Russian Jewry, is now predominantly an African American community. Ethnic colonies appear to have gone through a three-generational process which disperses them and thus residential dispersion has

historically functioned as reasonable proxy and index for attenuating ethnic ties and growing assimilation into American life. (Ethnic Chicago 122f, 173f, 346f)

An notable exception to this European-ethnic pattern can be seen in many of the post-1965 Asian immigrants (and also some Latinos) is that they have not clustered in ghettos or ethnic colonies as did their European predecessors. The only evidence of clustering of these first generation immigrants in Chicago has been as shopkeepers, small grocers, restaurant owners in Chicago commercial areas called "Koreatown", "Gandhi Marg", and in black districts such as Westside Madison Street and Southside Englewood shopping center. Yet few Korean or Arab Americans live where their businesses are located. Most live in upscale suburbs 10 to 15 miles away. (Ethnic Chicago 378f., 438f., 563f)

In summary, despite the Asian immigration exceptions, residential dispersion has served in the past as a solid and reliable index of weakening ethnic ties, socio-economic progress and assimilation into American society.

Social Mobility

A third reliable index of assimilation has been social and economic mobility. As Elliot Barkan noted recently: "the attractions of American society in terms of status, respectability, belonging, and mobility continue to exert their magnetic pull on individuals of all ethnic groups." (Barkan, 69) Movement up the job ladder from unskilled worker to skilled work-

er; from blue-collar to white collar work; from jobs requiring very little formal education to work requiring specialized training or college degrees – has been a dependable benchmark for measuring movement from the immigrant culture into the American mainstream. Upward job mobility has not only been a measure, but a cause of the very phenomenon being measured. And that is because movement into the front office or up the job ladder has required of the individual great familiarity with the host culture (its language, its habits, its ways of working and doing business) all in themselves elements of assimilation. Upward job mobility has been both a cause and a measure of assimilation.

Language

A fourth index of absorption into the new society is the steady deterioration of immigrant languages, which progressively diminish from the first through the third generation. The first generation was often fluent only in the European homeland language, and only in a few cases developed any great fluency with English. The second generation could often speak the language of their parents quite well, but in the schools, the playgrounds, and in the streets increasingly used the language of their host culture, English, more than their old world parents language. The third generation became mostly monolingual with only bits and snippets of their grand parents language left with them. In a few cases Sunday schools, private church-related

parochial schools did extend some language fluency into the third generation, but only as a second and seldom used language. (Polzin 146–47, Fishman 254, Reaves)

Even among newcomer Hispanics the trends in the second generation seems to be following the European pattern. A study by Alejandro Portes of 2,800 second-generation Hispanic eighth and ninth graders in South Florida's Miami concluded that the "children of immigrants not only possess widespread competence in English but also demonstrate an unambiguous preference for it in everyday communication." "What is at risk," observed Portes is not English in South Florida but Spanish in the second and third generation and that "linguistic assimilation is leading to a steady shift to English," the lingua franca of the majority society. (Portes 28)

Language loss is critical, for as Richard Alba observed: "culture is embedded in language; thus large portions of the ethnic culture is lost to those who do not know the mother tongue." Movement toward a common language is a giant step toward assimilation into the host society. (Alba b 10)

These four dimensions (three generation) model of the immigrant-ethnic experience, – marriage patterns, residential dispersion, socio-economic progress, and adoption of the host society's language have functioned as the best measures of either the persistence or the withering away of immigrant and ethnic cultures in the New World. The end result of this process has been the assimilation of most newcomers into the host

society, and in those cases where ethnicity has persisted, it has resulted in what Herbert Gans calls "symbolic ethnicity." That is an ethnicity which is optional and which does not direct one's life course; one's choice of residence, one's occupation or even the choice of a marriage partner or religion. (Gans 425–449) Symbolic ethnicity is mostly a nostalgically recalled past remembered on ritual occasions as a St. Patrick's Day parade, Octoberfests, St. Rocco's Day picnics or Finnfests, church ceremonies, or in the cooking and serving of food cooked from grandparents old country recipes. (Kivisto 283–84)

Advanced Host Societies and Assimilation

The paradigm or the bet model for explaining the adaptation of European ethnic groups to American society is to be found in these four dimensions mentioned above. They function as both powerful measures as well as predictors of assimilation. Yet that formulation is not perfect for explaining assimilation. "Admittedly Alba and Nee noted, "the causes of this assimilation of European ancestry ethnic groups are much less well understood than is the result." There seems to be something missing before these four dimensions can do their work. There seems to be yet another powerful force that operates best in Western European and New World societies and less effectively in East European and less developed third world societies. The proposition advanced here argues that as-

similation occurs most easily in Advanced host societies and most poorly in Backward host societies. (If the word backward offends the reader then substitute some politically correct euphemism as developing, underdeveloped or third world. But I will use the word Backward because it implies direction or movement, and because that is the perception that immigrants have of their host societies – either Advanced or Backward societies.) (Ravenstein) In any event my hypothesis is that assimilation moves forward best in Advanced host societies – those which are socially, economically and politically more advanced than the Sending society. When the sending society is relatively Backward and the receiving society is relatively Advanced – the direction of the immigrant group will be toward adaptation, acculturation and assimilation into the more Advanced host. The corollary is that when the Sending society is just as Advanced (or more advanced) than the receiving society – then assimilation of the newcomers will occur very slowly and very poorly, if at all. Assimilation then moves in a direction toward the more progressive society and the immigrant like iron filings, is powerfully attracted to the magnet of modernization that Advanced societies display. This seems to be universally true that people, in the absence of coercion, are attracted to progressive advance.

What about some examples to illustrate the Advanced-Backward thesis? German immigrants serve as a good example of this Advanced-Backward process.

German immigrants were invited in the 18th century by Catherine the Great to modernize a backward Russian agriculture. Despite their centuries of living there, they never fully assimilated and into the late 20th century retained their (now quaint) German customs and language. They remained separate ethnically and linguistically have returned to large numbers to Germany in the post World War II period. (Sheehy and Mahaylo 22–24) Their preservation of out-of-date and fossilized language forms have made them a subject of ridicule by modern Germans but also a source of study by language scholars. The point, however, is that German immigrants from a more advanced society resisted being assimilated into a Backward society, despite Czarist pressures and brutal Stalinist repression.

German immigrant miners and tradesmen, with superior skills, who, after the 16th century, moved into the Transylvanian mountains also remained ethnically and linguistically separate from their host Slavic and Magyar societies, which they perceive as less advanced than their sending society. They remained so separate, unintegrated and distinctive, that the host Rumanians expelled them as foreigners and enemies in the days after World War II and even into the 1990s remnants of these German diasporas have been trickling back to their ancestral homeland. (Humphrey, Groenendijk, 461 f) For centuries Germans in the Balkans resisted assimilation into what they perceived as a backward society. Robert Park, one of the founders of the Chicago

School of Sociology observed this behavioral pattern in his classic 1921 study of "old world traits," in which he wrote: "There are frequent cases where a people of a superior culture, remains indefinitely separate in a culturally inferior group. The English of India and the Saxons of Transylvania have remained separate for centuries." (Park 305, Morais 45)

We can also draw examples from New World societies that shed light on the Advanced-Backward thesis. German immigrants who went to Brazil in the 19th century integrated very poorly into Brazilian society. They retained strong German language colonies, lived apart from Brazilians in segregated settings, and most cases refused to learn the language of Brazil, Portuguese, and viewed Brazilians as a somewhat backward, barefooted people, a strange mixture of Indian and Portuguese culture. "German levels of literacy" Professor Fred Luebke writes: "were higher than those of the receiving Brazilian society," and the lack of a public school system, which the German immigrants had to provide for themselves, "combined to produce among Teuto-Brazilians attitudes of cultural superiority and disdain for Luso-Brazilian culture, at least among their leaders." (One German leader wrote that Brazil is a state "that has produced nothing memorable in science, technology, or high culture or economic development." (Luebke b 205) The process of assimilation was thus slowed, compared to the rate generally experienced in the United States." The average German in Brazil, because he was better edu-

cated and better off economically, had a full complement of cultural institutions including the press, produced a "general sense of cultural superiority that had no equal in the United States." writes Luebke. Then came world War I and a vicious and repressive persecution campaign and much property destruction and violence . But even after this "kristalnacht" in Brazil, as Luebke notes: "the Germans of Brazil quickly returned to their old patterns of cultural chauvinism and self-imposed separation ... the cultural distance between Teuto-Brazilians and the rest of society , enhanced by a strong sense of cultural superiority , remained greater in Brazil than in the United States, where the decline of German ethnicity was almost precipitous." (Luebke a 104, 119, 133)

In North American contexts such as the United States German assimilation proceeded on a much smoother course, and the four dimension, three-generation model worked well in Wisconsin, one of the most German states, and in cities such as Milwaukee, Chicago, and St. Louis. Although German-Americans did face some Americanization coercion during W.W.I., by then their assimilation went easier because they were assimilating into an Advancing society. As early as the turn of the century, travelers and comparative studies noted that the material abundance of the U.S. speeded up assimilation whether it was cultural or ideological: in the latter instance Werner Sombart observed that it was "great reefs or roast beef and apple pie" that sank old world socialist ideologies and

seduced Germans into becoming Americans. (Sombart, 106) Material abundance was one of the hallmarks of an Advanced progressive society. Wisconsin never became a Volga German state nor did Milwaukee ever become a Balkan Siebenberg. By the 1920s decade the German language press, theater and culture in general was in serious decline as the second and third generation adapted to Americanization and even before German-Americans had the misfortune to be on the "wrong side" in a second war. (Holli 93f; Carpenter 263, Ripplley 224-233)

The Advanced-Backward thesis also helps to explain the failure of major nation-states such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia to assimilate their nationalities and ethno-linguistic groups. The Russians failed to create the "Soviet man" (and woman) out of its 100 nationalities, and neither could the Serbs assimilate the Slovenes or Croats who saw themselves as culturally and more European than the Serbs. Newcomers and immigrants into francophone Quebec displayed the same affinity for affiliation with an Advanced English speaking society when they overwhelmingly voted against secession from English-speaking Canada and defeated the francophone separatist movement. They knew English was the language passport to Advanced societies. The key to how an Advanced liberal progressive society practicing tolerance could assimilate millions with relatively little coercion was captured by Robert Park in 1921 when he both described and prescribed: "If we

give the immigrants a favorable milieu, if we tolerate their strangeness during their period of adjustment, if we give them freedom to make their connections between the old and new experiences, if we help them to find points of contact, then we hasten their assimilation." (Park 308) Such a formula would of course work best in an Advanced or Advancing society and poorest in a Backward society.

Jewish adaptation in the United States also illustrates the case of an easier assimilation to an Advanced progressive society. Russian Jews resisted assimilation into Slavic Russian society for three centuries but were absorbed into America in just three generations. In the Pale Jews never or rarely assimilated and often refused to learn the Russian language beyond its most elemental forms necessary for peddling and selling. (Heinze 43) Yet in America and especially New York City they flocked to the night schools and avidly studied English: no immigrant group made more use of the English language night schools than did Russian Jews in America. In the Old World Slavic sea they preserved their Yiddish language and Orthodox Jewish religion for 300 years. No Cossack whips or deadly pogroms of the Kishiniv type could force their assimilation in Russia, yet they voluntarily assimilated in America. (Goren 7, 8, 40, 104) In an Advanced progressive society Russian Jews lost their language Yiddish: the Yiddish language Forward subscribers dropped from nearly one-third of a million to a mere 10,000 in just three genera-

tions and 90% percent of the descendants of Russian Jews have rejected religious Orthodoxy, and replaced with milder religious forms called Conservative, Reformed or become non-affiliated Jews). (Grossman)

The Orthodox Russian-Jewish community has been eroding and assimilating not from hate but from love. Hate kept it alive for 300 years in Eastern Europe and Russia – with its customs, religion, separate language and ethnic practices. Tolerance, freedom from state coercion and programs and religious persecution in the West – in England (Endelman, 209) and especially the United States dissolved most of it in three generations. As Jonathan Levine, the Midwest director of the American Jewish Committee observed: "The United States ... is a place that has accepted Jews in all aspects of American life. That makes it harder for people to maintain their Jewish identity." (Levine) What hate and persecution could not do in three centuries in Russia, tolerance and love could do in three generations in America. Some 52 % of the Jewish Love

matches or marriages are made to non-Jews or gentiles in the 1990s. Just 30 years ago (pre-1965) the exogamy rate of Jews was only 9%). (Steinfelds) Inter-marriage is as we have stressed a leading index of assimilation and third and fourth generation Jewish-Americans have taken to it with avidity. Thus what hate and persecution could not do in Russia in three centuries, tolerance and love could do in an Advanced progressive society in three generations.

The result is not the end of ethnicity but a livable tolerable ethnicity which is optional and exists mostly in private settings and no longer determines your marriage partner, the part of town you live in, your occupation, or even your religion or personal friends. It is what Herbert Gans labeled "symbolic ethnicity." This benign form of acculturation and its counterpart assimilation flourish best in Advanced societies and flounder in less advanced and comparatively backward societies as the examples of Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and many parts of Africa and Asia demonstrate.

Summary

This article proposes an answer for the question of why do some societies assimilate their immigrants relatively easily (U.S.A.) and why some fail (e.g. Russian and the Soviet Union). The author first undertakes to review the classical three-generation, four-dimension assimilation model with evidence of how it has functioned in the U.S. and elsewhere. The article then focuses on German and Jewish immigrants and proposes a model to explain the ease or difficulty of assimilation which he calls the Advanced Society model of assimilation. Assimilation occurs most easily in advanced (developed) host societies and more slowly and sometimes not at all in backward (undeveloped) host societies. Advanced Societies are defined as those having tendencies toward liberal political systems, developed or developing economic systems, which are often free market, have relatively relaxed social class systems and where economic abundance is available.

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Amerikankiviä instituutin näyttelyyn

Siirtolaisuusinstituutin näyttelyyn hankitut rautamalmilohka-reet *Hull Rust Mine*, Hibbing, Minnesotasta saapuivat viljalaiva *Federal Mcenziellä* Naantaliin. Isompi rautamalmilohkare painaa 160 kg ja pienempi 45 kg.

Kivet lähetti *Minnesotan Suomalaisen Historia Seuran* Hibbingin osaston puheenjohtaja Robert Schmid ja laivauksesta huolehti suomalaissukuinen satamajohtaja Davis Hellberg Duluthissa. – *Robert Schmid*.

