ALBANIAN IMMIGRANTS AND ETHNICS: PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

By

Linda Gjokaj

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Sociology – Doctor of Philosophy

2013

ABSTRACT

ALBANIAN IMMIGRANTS AND ETHNICS: PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

By

Linda Gjokaj

This study used symbolic interactionism as a lens to identify, define and explore the ethnic identity and assimilation experiences of Albanian immigrants and the 1.5 and second generation of ethnic Albanians growing up in the United States. In particular, this research investigated conceptions of white ethnic identity, assimilation, shared culture, and meaning among Albanians who live in Michigan. The meaning of ethnic identity, the focus of this research, is an important dimension of the experience of assimilation for immigrants and ethnic groups wherein I reexamine the meaning of ethnic distinction and ethnic categories in the everyday lives of one particular White immigrant and ethnic group. As well, there is an exploration of gender and family issues to address some of the common tensions that immigrants and their offspring face in adjusting to US society over time. I collected information from a variety of individuals and settings, using multiple data collection techniques to check my results, also best described as triangulation. I used in-depth interviews, participant observations, one focus group interview, and have designated a "greater-than-usual" weight to insight based on personal experiences (Glaser and Strauss 1968:351). Interviews investigated family relationships, generational tensions, and the construction (and perceptions) of community and identities among Albanians. I focused on asking questions about family relationships and experiences growing up in an Albanian family, probing into the gendered character of these relationships. The second key area I addressed related to race, ethnic and identity by attempting

to capture the nature of belonging and membership in the Albanian community, as well as how participants view ethnic and racial identity. The third key aspect of the interview related to their perceptions of and experiences within the Albanian community itself. Participant observations were made at various places. I visited local establishments (e.g., restaurants, stores, coffee shops), attended organized activities (e.g., Albanian Flag Day, weddings, informal gatherings), and any meetings hosted by Albanians. My sample consisted of 25 1.5 and second generation individuals many of which are either born in the US or Albania, a smaller percentage were born in Montenegro, Kosovo or Macedonia, and 10 community leaders for a total of 35 individuals.

Findings are framed by one central sociological concern– the ongoing problems of cultural continuity and change. It is common to study white ethnics as if their assimilation is already complete, inevitable, and desirable, which blocks out other possible ways in which to understand the experiences of white ethnic groups in the US. Instead of focusing on whether Albanians assimilate or not and assuming that optional ethnicity means the lack of ethnicity, I uncovered the struggles involved in maintaining and dealing with changes in ethnic meaning and affiliations and found out in what ways one can be ethnic and claim ethnic difference while still easily being ascribed by others to a white "American" category. Three main themes emerged: 1) Cultural continuity: The importance of being Albanian; 2) Problems of change: Struggling to define Albanian identity, and 3) Problems of continuity and change: "Costs" of being Albanian. The overall story told of white ethnic identity over the last few decades or so has been one in which ethnic distinctiveness and importance is declining. This dissertation is a counter-example to that story because the Albanians in my study seem to have a stronger identification with being ethnic than being only white.

DEDICATION

For my nieces, Alexsandra Gjokaj, Liliana Gegaj and Sophia Gjokaj, and my nephew Damjon Gegaj, who are part of the third generation of Albanians growing up in Metro Detroit. It is my hope that one day they too will choose to follow and fulfill their dreams. I love you all so much!

And for my husband, Ardian Bzhetaj, thank you for being the best life partner I could ever have asked for. Looking forward to many, many wonderful years together!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

"No matter what your accomplishments, somebody helped you."

I have been so blessed to have many people helping and supporting me, which made this dissertation possible. This dissertation would certainly not be possible without the love and support of my family. My husband, Ardian Bzhetaj, unconditionally supported and encouraged me throughout this arduous process, for which I am forever grateful. I could not have asked for a better partner in life. I would like to give special thanks my parents Nikola and Victoria who have been a source of constant support and love. I would also like to thank my brother and sisters, sister-in-law, nieces and nephew, aunts, uncles, and cousins who all have been some of my biggest fans. I am deeply grateful for the love and support of all of my family members. I am thankful to my friends for their continuous support and encouragement, and for allowing me to vent whenever I needed. Thank you to the "Renegade Sociologists" (Jessica Garcia, Elisha Marr, Lori Baralt, Amy Fitzgerald, Julie Hartman, Karijn Nijhoff, Cathy Kuhn, Rachael Shwom-Evelich), Cristián Doña Reveco, Naomi Glogower, Maggie Rabb, Breanne Grace, Leigh-Anne Goins, and many others! Dr. Doña Reveco, I extend to you a million thanks for all of your help with this dissertation. I would also like to express my very great appreciation to my mentor and friend, David Maines, for his valuable guidance and feedback during the planning and development of this dissertation as well as his mentorship throughout my undergraduate and graduate careers. His willingness to give his time so generously has been and always will be very much appreciated.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Stephanie Nawyn, my committee chair and mentor for the entire time I was a graduate student, for her guidance, enthusiastic

encouragement, unwavering support, and valuable feedback on my work. Thank you, thank you, and thank you! My grateful thanks are also extended to my dissertation committee members, Drs. Steven Gold, Maxine Baca Zinn and Leslie Moch for their invaluable guidance, support and encouragement throughout the years, insightful suggestions made during my dissertation proposal defense, and feedback on this dissertation. I am honored to have worked with and/or engaged in insightful, helpful conversations with such amazing faculty at Michigan State University, which also includes Drs. Alesia Montgomery, Toby Ten Eyck, Maryhelen MacInnes, Carl Taylor, Jualynne Dodson, Isabel Ayala, Soma Chaudhuri, and Aaron McCright. I would also like to thank the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University for providing some financial support for this study.

I am very grateful to my research participants who generously gave their time and shared their stories. Thank you for helping me finish this dissertation! I am very grateful to the various members of the Albanian community who also have helped me to understand Albanians better and to locate resources and people so I could have a rich study. I have been so lucky to make several Albanian friends throughout the course of this dissertation and I cherish those friendships today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The study of ethnicity shows that ethnic identity for whites of European origin[1] is largely the result of choice, and not exclusion or restriction, and this is further amplified when there is generational distance from the immigrant generation. Some scholars argue that when ethnicity does arise among the descendants of European immigrants, especially their descendants, it is primarily "symbolic" or "optional," occurring within "personal" or "private" contexts and situations, such as within families and occasional cultural events (Alba and Nee 2003; Gans, 1997, 2007; Waters 1996). This benign choice brings individual pleasure rather than pain or restriction in individual and group experiences. The boundaries that make or have made European whites ethnically distinct, and socially and culturally different from the mainstream have or purportedly will decline over time, making ethnicity less salient to the everyday lives of the various white European ethnics today. This dissertation builds upon the contention that when one confines the experiences of white European immigrants and ethnics to the story of "the assimilated" or the "inevitably assimilated," we miss out on other possible avenues of understanding ethnically derived experiences, especially when notions of ethnic change are elucidated from the perspective of the ethnic members themselves.

Ethnicity involves people who share a common ancestry, a culture and a history. An ethnic group is "a collective within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood" (Schermerhorn quoted in Cornell and Hartman 2007,

[1] Throughout the manuscript I use the shorthand term "white ethnic" or "mainstream American" to mean "whites of European origin," excluding those of Hispanic origin.

p. 19). Previous research on ethnicity has demonstrated how it is not a static concept that individuals experience (Jimenez 2010; Vazquez 2011). Ethnic identity and culture in some cases may be perceived as declining in significance for some groups at one particular time, but resurfacing at other times when there is a perceived external group threat (Portes and Rumbaut 2001) or social movements that reactivate ethnic group belonging (Nagel 1997). Ethnicity can range from "thick" to "thin" (Cornell and Hartman 1998) or "hard" and "soft" (Yinger 1994) depending on the situation, with thick or hard ethnicity having a direct impact on the everyday lives of its members, and thin or soft ethnicity being marginal to the everyday lives of individuals. Some research published in the last few years has started to enlarge understandings of white ethnicity to include concepts of "affiliative ethnic identity" (Jimenez 2010) and "hegemonic ethnicity" (Sasson-Levy 2013). Jimenez (2010b) argued that multiculturalism has given people regardless of their actual ancestry the possibility to affiliate with an ethnic culture as a way to be different from the undefined white mainstream. The idea too is that ethnicity and ethnic difference is something to venerate, celebrate and be proud of. Ethnicity becomes important because people attach meaning and significance to incorporating elements of ethnic culture into their sense of self, their identity (Jimenez 2010b) and not because ethnicity has some inherent attachment to the individual.

Other research has highlighted how whiteness itself shapes ethnic identification (Sasson-Levy 2013). Sasson-Levy's (2013:30) research shows that white ethnicity is socially constructed in order to maintain ethnic boundaries between the white dominant ethnic group and other groups who have lower social and class status. Her research shows how individuals also use that same privilege of whiteness to unmark themselves so they maintain a belonging to the "universal norm, the unmarked marker." What it means to be part of the hegemonic group or the dominant

ethnic group takes on new significance when strategies are employed to both create sameness with the racially privileged group, but also difference from other groups in the system of ethnic stratification. The contribution of this research is that it challenges the normative assimilationist notion that white ethnicity is only an option chosen by an individual as part of their private lives, which blocks understandings of the ongoing group power relations embedded in hegemonic ethnicity (Sasson-Levy 2013) and dominant group ethnic identity (Doane Jr., 1997). There may be something more to being white and simultaneously claiming and constructing ethnic difference. This qualitative study set out to explore the experiences of white ethnic identity and assimilation for a select group of Albanians who live in Metropolitan Detroit. At the heart of this research is the concern regarding the feeling and meaning of assimilation, ethnic distinctiveness, and identity, and more broadly, the struggle over change and continuity of culture in that process. In my approach to identity, white ethnicity and assimilation, I draw upon Symbolic Interactionism as my lens through which to examine the dynamics of being and becoming ethnic and American among Albanians. By looking at assimilation and identity in this way, one can understand more clearly how even the most assimilated groups are "ongoing projects" (Cornell and Hartmann 2007:83).

It is common to study white ethnics as if their assimilation is already complete, inevitable, and desirable, which blocks out other possible ways in which to understand the experiences of white ethnic groups in the US. Instead of focusing on whether Albanians assimilate or not and assuming that optional ethnicity means the lack of ethnicity, I examine the struggle involving maintaining and dealing with changes in ethnic meaning and affiliations in order to find out in what ways one can be ethnic and claim ethnic difference while still easily being ascribed by others to a white "American" category. This pursuit allows for an

understanding of how individuals negotiate meanings of white ethnic identity and the dynamics of selective acculturation more fully. In this chapter, I explain the research problem and questions, purpose and goals of the study, and a brief overview of chapters is given.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

To a large extent the rise of assimilation theory in the United States was a scholarly response to and curiosity about the large-scale US immigration of predominately Southern and Eastern European groups, as well as the rapid growth of cities and industrialization (Park and Burgess 1971; Park 1950; Warner and Srole 1945). Over the past few decades, however, there has been a widespread distaste for the assimilation canon (Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993). Sociologists and others have argued that classic models of assimilation are 'ideologically laden residue of worn-out notions" and a form of "Eurocentric hegemony" (Alba and Nee 2003:1) in which immigrants and their descendants will shed their cultures and gradually assume the norms and values of the "core" Anglo-American culture. Put simply, assimilation meant becoming the same as the mainstream. In recent decades, new assimilation theories have critically assessed the normative assumption that assimilation is a one-way process in which immigrants and their offspring become the same as the easily definable, unchanging mainstream (Alba and Nee 2005). Still, debates about assimilation and immigrant integration, its meaning and utility for understanding contemporary immigrant groups are likely to flourish for decades to come because of increasing racial, ethnic, (trans)national, and socio-economic diversities of immigrants and ethnics.

The study of white immigrant and ethnic groups in particular has been a significant part of the racial and ethnic and immigration literatures in the past and was in response to the massive waves migration of the Irish, Southern and Eastern Europeans **(**Thomas and Znaniecki, 1918-

1920; Warner and Srole 1945). This literature has highlighted the social construction of white racial identity and brought forth the idea that assimilation was not a uncomplicated process initially for turn-of-the-century white immigrants and their descendants such as the Irish, Italians and Jews who went through a process of becoming white, but still experienced lighter hardships compared to African Americans (Roediger 2005, Thomas and Znaniecki 1972, Whyte 1943, Gans 1962). The link between whiteness and European American became stronger over time. This early literature on assimilation set out to ascertain the process of becoming white and the desirability of assimilation for white ethnics, and for decades charted the decreasing role of ethnicity in the everyday lives of white. A wave of more racially, nationally and ethnic diverse immigrants after 1960s in the US changed the focus of scholars who now had the problem of trying to understand how a largely non-white immigrants would assimilate, which resulted in a plethora of research challenging previous linear, normative models of assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 1996). At the same time, immigration scholarship shifted the focus away from examining the experiences of white immigrants and ethnics, with the exception of an important segment of research that examined white ethnic revival (Novak 1972; Greeley 1974). The immigration scholarship that examined US white Europeans ethnics largely focused on them as experiencing a voluntary, symbolic and optional ethnicity (Waters 1990). There have been some notable, but small number of studies that have countered the declining significance of ethnicity for whites which has shown that even those who are externally defined as white and select the white racial category in the US census have a stronger attachment to ethnic and national origins than to a white racial identity (Ajrouch 2000, 2004). But we still know little about this dynamic of white racial identity and ethnicity for contemporary immigrants and their descendants.

Research has already established that, compared to contemporary non-white immigrants and ethnics, white immigrants and their descendants today experience greater ease in entering the mainstream and can choose when and how they will assert their ethnic identities, (Waters 1990; Vasquez 2011), even though they face some of the same tensions with which all immigrants deal. Unlike visibly distinct minority racial and ethnic groups, whites are neither regularly reminded of their social and cultural differences nor are their identity "choices" constrained by US racial structure (Waters 1994; Doane Jr. 1997). Instead whites have to engage in a process of showing their ethnic difference if they desire to not blend into the white mainstream of US society (Jimenez 2010b). In other words, they must work to selectively assimilate in order to maintain ethnic difference by drawing from ethnically related symbols and practices, and that is the issue I grapple with in this dissertation. Since the 1980s and 1990s when studying white ethnics was prevalent (Alba 1990; Ignatiev 1995; Barrett and Roediger 1997; Brodkin 1998), contemporary racial and ethnic relations sociological literature, particularly immigration sociological literature, has overlooked the less visible groups or dominant group ethnicity in which whites are used primarily as a comparison group to which all other non-white immigrant and ethnic groups are measured.[2] In my view, on a substantive level, this is an important time to study the complex, situational character of dominant group ethnicity in ways that move beyond conventional understandings of white ethnic assimilation. The increasing complexity of national, ethnic and racial identity in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-racial societies, and the effects of increasing diversity across North America and Europe create a context in which tensions between sameness and difference come into high relief.

[2] There are some notable exceptions (see Perry 2001; Gallagher 2003 and Gugliemo 2003).

RESEARCH QUESTION

Using Albanians as a particular case, this dissertation centers the following research question: How do Albanians maintain an ethnic/immigrant culture when phenotypically they can pass as white "mainstream" American?[3] When there is nothing keeping Albanians from blending in to the "core" of white American mainstream, the necessity for Albanians to be Albanian is greater than for visibly distinct minority racial and ethnic groups (e.g., Latino/as, Asians, Afro-Caribbean). The question highlights tensions surrounding the racial and ethnic identity claimed by the people themselves and those that are assigned to them by others. The research question involves a number of issues, such as the meaning and importance of, and the struggles and "costs" associated with an Albanian identity in the United States, the power relationships within families and ethnic communities, how ethnic community spaces shape and are shaped by co-ethnic group relations, and changes that must be made as they live in contexts of "American culture." I argue that rather than disidentifying as ethnic or constituting their white identity as they could choose to do so, Albanians seek to identify with ethnicity so as not to lose individual and group identity to a category of "plain white Americaness" (Rumbaut 2008). As mentioned

[3] There is debate evident in immigration research over what is or who is the "mainstream." In classical models of assimilation (Warner and Srole 1945; Parks and Burgess 1971) it was clear that the mainstream consisted of White-Anglo Saxon Protestants (WASP) or the Anglo conformity model. Scholars of contemporary assimilation critiqued the Anglo conformity model arguing that it is a form of "Eurocentric hegemony" (Alba and Nee 2003:1) because it uses WASPs as the yardstick by which all other groups are measured. Alba and Nee (2003) have introduced the idea that the mainstream itself is shifting due to the demographic changes stimulated by new immigration (Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, and Waters 2004), which will likely incorporate ethnic minorities into the mainstream (Alba and Nee 2001), but whites still maintain dominant group power. The question of "assimilation to what?" (Abramson1980) has specified multiple pathways, which still includes "Anglo conformity" as a possibly pathway or more recently in segmented assimilation theory "mainstream" refers to middle-class mainstream (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Here I refer to mainstream in the conventional sense to mean white (Anglo European) American because I think that is how my participants also perceive it.

above, scholars have argued that ethnicity for whites is a choice, but not identifying solely as "white American" is also a choice, and involves a set of meanings and actions on part of individuals and groups. This dissertation centers on examining the underlying processes that make up that dynamic. That is, I look at how ethnic group affiliations are made meaningful by actors and why in the context of the larger problems of continuity and change that are brought into high relief through processes of immigration and settlement, such as intergenerational relations.

The interests in the above research question stem from knowledge of the often-overlooked category of immigrants and ethnics today – dominant ethnic group construction. If ethnicity is viewed as optional and not a significant part of ones everyday life, we cease to study and understand groups for who at different times and different reasons and in various contexts and situations, assert and (re)construct ethnicity. The assimilation story of white immigrants and ethnics seems to be destined, its future already configured – assimilation into white dominant society and optional ethnicity. This ignores that ethnic group affiliations and identity are ongoing projects, how unmarked groups make an effort to become marked in their own way, and are made possible through white privilege or a seemingly effortless belonging to an ethnic group. Viewing white ethnicity with a determined future also ignores memory – how the past influences the present – and how it too can figure into shaping ethnic identity and affiliations.

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE STUDY

Maxwell (2012:15) distinguishes between three different kinds of purposes for conducting a study: personal purposes, practical purposes and research purposes. My purposes for this study are both personal and research oriented. Since the beginning of my graduate career I have been interested in examining processes of immigrant incorporation by first studying the

incorporation of refugees. I was also interested in the assimilation processes of second generation individuals, especially as it relates to gender and intergenerational tensions. As a second generation individual of Albanian immigrant parents, I had a curiosity about how research on Albanians could illuminate contemporary debates about assimilation and white ethnic identity since much of the contemporary research on assimilation is regarding non-white immigrants and second generation groups, which has revealed important insights on assimilation, race, family, gender and second generation issues. Thus, my personal purpose derives from my own experiences with previous research and my life experiences as a child of immigrants.

Mills's (1959) asserts that scholarly research and personal lives can enrich one's research endeavors. In his own words Mills explains: "The most admirable scholars within the scholarly community…do not split their work from their lives. They seem to take both too seriously to allow such dissociation, and they want to use each for the enrichment of the other" (p. 195). I endeavor to understand the way ethnic group members live out their lives and attach meaning to their experiences. I believe that my research background and personal experiences have provided me with a quality of awareness that otherwise would not have been accessible to me. For instance, I brought experiential knowledge to the field as an "insider" as I was privy to happenings that allowed me to form deeper questions, observations and interactions that might not have been accessible to outsiders to the same extent. For example, I was reminded in the field of the importance of knowing the Albanian language as I was told by some Albanians to not forget the Albanian language. The purposes I have identified here have helped me decide on a dissertation topic, and I have framed my research questions in ways that help to advance my purpose, which is to gain insight into what is going on with Albanian immigrants in terms of ethnic identity and assimilation.

This dissertation contributes to the existing literature on ethnicity and assimilation by examining dominant group ethnic relations through my focus on a single white immigrant and ethnic group. My dissertation presents a counter-example to the usual story of white ethnic assimilation, as Albanians seem to affiliate more strongly with being ethnic than being only "white," whereas for other groups (e.g., Mexican Americans), ethnicity is not yet an option Vasquez 2011:7). Along with this, my dissertation offers one possible understanding of what is driving immigrants and ethnics to construct and reconstruct ethnic identity. I also offer a nuanced perspective on white ethnicity, identity and assimilation by viewing these processes through the lens of Symbolic Interactionism rather than the more structural approaches present in existing immigration scholarship. For instance, my examination of assimilation is not based on external measures of immigrant and ethnic success and inclusion in US society, but rather emic perspectives that allow for an internal understanding of the elements of so-called assimilation. With this, I include the notion of memory and time or the social construction of the past that individuals and groups draw from to understand their present and future. Memory and time are still underdeveloped concepts in migration scholarship, and here I seek to improve that weakness in immigration research.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is divided into eight chapters, including this introduction and the conclusion. In chapter two, I describe the theoretical framework and draw upon existing literatures in migration and racial and ethnic relations that will elucidate theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of this research. In the third chapter I detail my methods of data gathering and delve into the inside-outsider tensions that manifested during the research process. This chapter highlights and describes the design of the research including the setting and

experiences in the field, and the methods for subject recruitment. It also describes the procedures and instruments for data collection, data analysis including analytic memos along with field and transcription notes, coding approaches and analysis used in this study. The fourth chapter is a descriptive one that provides a foundational understanding of the Albanian populations in the United States, charting the pre-migration contexts, and group histories using existing available literatures in the English language. I also discuss the social characteristics of the Albanian-born and those who identify their first ancestry as Albanian and who live in the United States and Michigan using US census and American Community Survey (ACS) data. Chapters five, six and seven are purely qualitative chapters and are the results sections of the dissertation. Chapter five examines issues of cultural continuity by examining the importance of being Albanian. I describe how my participants frame the pleasures of an Albanian identity, how ethnic difference gives one a sense of purpose and how the family and ethnic community are sustaining in that process. Chapter six looks at the problems of change by focusing on the struggles to define an Albanian identity in the "American" context. Chapter seven focuses more on the tensions between cultural continuity and change by focusing the perceived costs of being Albanian, including constraining gender norms. In the final chapter, I conclude by discussing the overall contribution of this dissertation and implications for future research. The first contribution pertains to research on white immigrants and ethnics. The second contribution relates to immigration in terms of both the theoretical approach I take – symbolic interaction – which provides a different perspective on immigrant assimilation and ethnic identity formation processes. With this I bring on the relevance of meaning, time, and action.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Assimilation, adaptation, incorporation, integration, and acculturation are some of the more common concepts used to describe the consequences of immigration (Massey, et al. 1998). In particular, assimilation is a complex and contentious concept that has been generally used by US immigration and race and ethnic scholars to explain a process by which immigrants and American racial ethnic groups become similar to or converge with the norms, values, beliefs and characteristics of the dominant US native-born population along various social spheres of the "host-society" (Alba and Nee 2003; Bean and Stevens 2003; Bloemraad 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 1996).[1] United States immigrations scholarship at the turn of the twentieth century focused on how a largely white Southern and Eastern European immigrant and ethnic populations assimilated into the existing white, Anglo-Saxon mainstream US society. The "new" (post-1965[2]) era of US immigration inspired revised theories of assimilation as the population shift from a largely bi-racial society, with a large white European-descended populations and small Black and Native American populations, to a multiracial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural

[1] Ewa Morawska (2009:227) has noted that the concept "integration" in Western European studies is most conceptually similar to the notion of assimilation as used by US immigration scholars.

[2] The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act removed national origin quotas that had restricted the entry of immigrants to Europeans and made family reunification the cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy (Daniels 2002). Additionally, the U.S. government's shifting orientation toward refugee policy and national-origin groups, with the creation of the 1980 Refugee Act, also "opened the door" to diverse refugee groups. That is, prior to the 1970s refugees of European ancestry dominated United States admissions, but with the failures of the Vietnam War, the U.S. shifted its attention to the notion human rights which reshaped the U.S. commitment to refugees (Newland, Tanaka and Barker 2007).

society (Bean and Stevens 2003:20). This change urged scholars to recognize that the "core" of US society is (and has been) changing (Alba and Nee 2003).

Beyond the increasing race and ethnic diversity of new immigrants, other shifting features include the development of an "hour-glass" US economy, the persistence of economic disadvantage over time, and the continued discrimination based on race, skin color, and ethnicity which have altered the way scholars theorize and investigate the experiences of immigrants and their descendants in the United States. Global-level changes in technologies, affordable travel, and easier, quicker communications and physical movements challenge the "either/or" conceptions of assimilation (Kasinitz 2004; Smith 2005). A significant contribution made by several scholars of contemporary immigrant assimilation is that it is important to understand immigrants and their offspring's multiple national and transnational linkages and patterns of relationships and belonging that cross cultures, space and time as well as the identities that form and change in the process (Smith 2005; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2008). These and other new emergent situations require new understandings of assimilation and a reinvention of ideas about ethnic identity that incorporates the problems of cultural continuity and change, which are ongoing issues for immigrants and ethnics, such as challenges in family and gender relations.

IMMIGRATION, ASSIMILATION AND ETHNICITY

Assimilation was the "hegemonic theory in the study of ethnic and race relations from Robert E. Park's lifetime until the late 1960s" (Kivisto 2002:29). Parks and colleagues first introduced conceptualizations of what we now know as the *classic assimilation model* (Park and Burgess 1971; Park 1950). They developed *an ecological model* of assimilation by positing that when two groups find themselves forced to interact due to the migration of one or both groups, the relations between the groups proceed through a four stage "race relations cycle": 1) contact,

2) conflict, 3) accommodation, and 4) assimilation (Park and Burgess 1971; Park 1950:150). This model framed assimilation as a natural, inevitable process with an end point that was assumed to be available to all groups in a supposedly egalitarian US society (Park 1950; Warner and Srole 1945). In other words, classic assimilation theory posited that immigrants/ethnic groups of the late 19th and early 20th centuries would become more similar to or converge with the norms, values and belief of mainstream US society and the dominant group (i.e. WASP), which would create an American "melting pot" (Warner and Srole 1945). For some groups, such as Black Americans and Puerto Ricans, racial marginalization would slow the pace of assimilation but, as Parks (1950:150) asserted, institutionalized racism and prejudice "cannot change its direction; cannot at any rate, reverse it." While Gordon (1964) also acknowledged that there are institutional barriers (e.g., segregation and discrimination) that hinder the acculturation process for some groups (e.g., American Indians and African Americans), he maintained that over time acculturation would eventually occur, particularly beginning with the U.S.-born children of immigrants. Moreover, this classic model of assimilation also assumed that the "end point" of assimilation would actually be good or beneficial for immigrants, particularly for their children (Portes 2002).

Like Parks and colleagues, Glazer and Moynihan's (1963) classic study of five American ethnic groups (Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish) during the 1950s and 1960s in New York City argued that the pace of the assimilation process was much slower for some groups; particularly for Blacks and Puerto Ricans. They recognized that, "American blacks do not have equal footing in education and occupation as white" (p. 43). For many of the descendants of immigrants, however, language and culture would erode because of the "powerful assimilatory influences of American society operates on all who come into it, making the

children of immigrants and even immigrants themselves a very different people from those they left behind" (p. 12). Debates ensued however among scholars about whether, if, how and when American ethnic groups would lose their ethnic-distinctiveness (Waters 1990). Glazer and Moynihan (1963) acknowledged the retention of ethnic distinctiveness, and that the assimilation process varied for ethnic groups. They also critiqued the promise of an American "melting pot" in which processes of assimilation did not absorb all racial ethnic groups into what would become a homogenous U.S. society. Revised thinking of assimilation suggests that some contemporary immigrant groups, like those of the past, are assimilating economically, linguistically and martially through intermarriage, but in "bumpy" (Gans 1992), "new" (Alba and Nee 2003), and "segmented" ways (Portes and Zhou 1993). It became increasingly apparent in immigration scholarship, particularly within sociology, that assimilation did not always mean upward social mobility, as classic theories had posited (Brettell and Hollifield 2000; Portes and Zhou 1993:16). Under the label of "racial/ethnic disadvantage" (Brown and Bean 2006), researchers showed that for some immigrant groups and their descendants assimilation may not occur; in fact, the children of racialized immigrant groups in particular, would assimilate in a downward fashion (Fernandez-Kelly and Schauffler 1994; Portes and Zhou 1993).

The classic assimilation model also failed to adequately explain contemporary immigration groups, their descendants, continued race and ethnic conflicts and the "resurgence" of ethnicity (Brettell and Hollifield 2000). Following the white ethnic revival of the early 1970s, there were a growing number of scholars who theorized about the importance and resurgence of white ethnicity (Novak 1972, 1983; Greeley 1974), the processes of ethnic group creation (Roosens 1989), and the distinct experiences of white ethnics compared to non-white immigrants (Greeley 1974; Waters 1990). Novak (1972, 1983) referred to ethnic revival as the "new

ethnicity" characterized by the "rise of unmeltable ethnics" as the third and fourth generations descendants of white immigrants demonstrated a raised consciousness about their own ethnic group, which goes against the logic of straight-line assimilation. Roosen's (1989) work also demonstrates the flexibility of ethnicity and how new forms of ethnic behaviors can emerge for specific social and political purposes. He specified that leaders from various ethnic groups and ethnic minorities can and do deliberately unite members as a collective for a certain purpose. Scholars examining the experiences of "old" and "new" white immigrants (foreign-born) and ethnics (U.S. native-born) have illuminated the various ways that ethnicity and immigrant and ethnic communities continue to matter (Colic-Peisker 2008; Erdmans 1998; Sengstock 1999). For instance, Colic-Peisker's (2008) research on two migration cohorts of Croatians in Australia and America is notable because it challenges "ethnicity only" models by examining the intersection of class and ethnicity, emphasizing that people can have different relationships to ethnicity and the country of settlement based on their migration cohort and socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g., educational and occupational level, middle versus working class). These works provide insight for this study because they demonstrate that ethnicity is flexible and socially constructed, that there is a diversity of ethnic experiences, and illustrate the more "bumpy" nature of white ethnic assimilation experiences that cannot be predicted using a linear model of assimilation.

Segmented assimilation theory provides one of the strongest challenge to classical linear models (Park 1950; Gordon 1964) of assimilation by positing that the second generation, in particular, follow divergent, contradictory paths of "assimilating" to various segments of US society, with some immigrant and second generation groups rejecting assimilation altogether (Fernandez-Kelly and Schauffler 1994; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; 1996; Portes and Zhou 1993).

Portes and Zhou (1993) specify three pathways of second generation segmented assimilation: straight line assimilation into mainstream middle-class; downward assimilation and selective assimilation (or "accommodation without assimilation"). These pathways are shaped by governmental policies (legal entry, resettlement assistance is receptive), host country reception (e.g., receptive, indifferent, hostile-prejudiced/no prejudiced) and the kind of co-ethnic community (e.g. small numbers, concentrated in low-skill employment) (p. 84). This model still holds the straight-line framework as its basis for understanding segmented assimilation. That is, the descendants are moving away from or towards straight-line assimilation depending on the context of reception and the social and economic characteristics of the immigrant group.

These US assimilation models of the late 20th and early 21th century frame assimilation as a process that occurs over time, although unevenly and along different paths for contemporary immigration groups in a racially and ethnically diverse mainstream U.S society (Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993). Alba and Nee (2003) define assimilation as, "the decline of an ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural and social differences" (p. 11). This means that people who are assimilated are less likely to consider themselves in terms of ethnic categories, and the social boundaries between "us" and "them" become less salient in individual's everyday lives and, thus, have minimal impact on life chances. This line of thinking dominates understandings of the assimilation and ethnic experiences of white European immigrant and ethnics in the United States. However, several migration scholars have illustrated how ethnic communities and ethnic enclaves are important settings for incorporating immigrants and ethnics in US society, which demonstrate models of ethnic resilience and cooperation (Gold 1992;

Reiboldt and Goldstein 2000; Zhou and Bankston III 1998).[3] The concept of ethnicity itself has recently received notable attention. For example, Jiménez (2010) ethnographic study shows how ethnicity for Mexican Americans is "replenished" through the continued flow of (and contact with) Mexican immigrants into the US and the discourse of multiculturalism, making "ethnic raw materials" available on a regular basis for the later generation. Even though he finds strong evidence that the classic assimilation story applies to his later generation Mexican American participants, the continual flow Mexican immigrants to the US is the key factor in the ethnic identity formation processes such that it derails the possibility of ethnicity becoming a purely symbolic or inconsequential aspect of one's identity in later generations.[4] From Jimenez's other work on ethnic identity and ancestry and Yinger's (1994) work that investigates disassimilation and ethnic attachment we know that there are other elements to ethnic identity which need to be reexamined and refreshed especially, I argue, when it comes to white ethnic groups whose ethnic attachments are more strongly subject to decreasing salience in everyday life, as other scholars have noted (Alba 1990; Waters 1990). Yinger notes that in rapidly changing and increasingly multiethnic/cultural/racial societies individuals could feel more compelled to reestablish ethnic attachments because it "helps to preserve some sense of community, to know who one is, to overcome the dealing of being a cipher in an anonymous world" (p. 46). While Jimenez does not draw from Yinger's work on assimilation and ethnicity, he shows that there are situations in which ethnic affiliations becomes important – enacted and expressed even by white with no

[3] Notwithstanding the conflicts and problems within ethnic communities and enclaves that groups can experience as well (see Lai 1980).

[4] I view ethnicity as socially constructed, negotiated and expressed by individuals who belong to social groups, albeit unevenly and with varying degrees of expression which are based on one's positionality within a systems of class, gender, race and national origin.

connection to ethnic culture to which they are affiliating with. He calls this, "affiliative ethnic identity." Jimenez writes,

> "Individuals are no longer confined to their own ethnic ancestry in forming an ethnic identity. They are now accessing culture connected to other ethnic ancestries in developing affiliative ethnic identities: individual identities rooted in knowledge, regular consumption and deployment of ethnic culture that is unconnected to an individual's ethnic ancestry until that individual regards herself, and may be regarded by others, as an affiliate of a particular ethnic group" (p. 1757).

This work represents a notable contribution of studies of assimilation and ethnic identity because when some immigration scholars talk about ethnic belonging, they often only refer to how people identify ethnically rather than the meaning-making process that is involved, including how it is possible for people to move away from assimilation by reclaiming ethnic distinction in certain situations (Yinger 1994), but also uncovering the continued importance and flexible character of ethnic identifications and the practices of creating new ethnic cultural forms and ancestral differences.

The meaning of ethnic identity, the focus of this research, is an important dimension of the experience of assimilation for a group of immigrants and ethnic groups wherein I reexamine the meaning of ethnic distinction and ethnic categories in the everyday lives of one particular white immigrant and ethnic group. The problem with theories of "new" assimilation and segmented assimilation, for instance, is that they are more focused on economic theories of immigrant incorporation into the labor market. Unlike current assimilation theories, early assimilation theories addressed more explicitly issues of culture, notwithstanding the problems with this model as I have noted above. I argue that the economic aspects and outcomes are relevant, but do not explain away the story of assimilation and white ethnicity. While there is research that does address cultural issues (Gold 1992; Levitt 2001; Espiritu 2001; Wolf 2002; Morawska 2009), they are not covered to the same extent as the recent work that focuses on

economics. Additionally, it is common in work on assimilation to examine how various structural factors (socioeconomic attainment, academic achievement and educational expectations, earnings, residential mobility, labor force participation, family structure, cultural attributes, and attitudes) play upon immigrants and their descendants. For instance, the above-mentioned sets of factors cause the descendants of immigrants to identify a particular way (Waters 1994) or go down a particular assimilative path (Rumbaut 1994, 2006; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Mollenkopf 2005). The problem with this is that assimilation researchers largely use external measures of belonging and meaning or "outsider" measures instead of "insider" definitions and interpretations of assimilation in the US. The meanings of such factors in the lives of actors are sidestepped such that we can only see the causative structural factors and the resulting behaviors or outcomes. Symbolic interactionist theory, however, explicitly provides insights about meanings and how people act in relation to those meanings as central to human behavior in its own right (Shibutani 1986). Along with the notion of meaning, other critical concepts that interactionists privilege are human action, situations and time (Blumer 1990; Strauss 1993; Maines 2001**)**, which serve as important conceptual guides to understanding the dynamics of the ongoing activity among Albanians in various situations and contexts, such as family, religious spaces and non-secular community spaces. I use symbolic interactionism as a lens through which to see assimilation through a different source of understanding, one that concerns emic perspectives (Pike 1967) of meaning and belonging or what is meaningful by and from the perspectives of the participants themselves. I am not concerned with testing theory. Instead, I am using symbolic interaction as a lens in order to gain a nuanced comprehension of assimilation, white ethnicity and gender. For this study, symbolic interactionism provides a set of

concepts[5] that are useful for refashioning understandings of the ethnic aspects of incorporating into and experiencing a new society.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Identity and culture are the basic ingredients of ethnicity, which are both socially constructed (Nagel 1994). Ethnicity is also one way in which culture is expressed and transmitted across generations, shaping notions of "who am I?" and "who are we?" There are difficulties and ambiguities in defining and using the concept of culture. Generally, culture refers to a group or society's shared beliefs, values, norms and behaviors. In the essence of symbolic interactionism, "culture is meaning" (Maines 1984), and emerges from what people do (Blumer 1969). Swidler's (1986) conception of culture emphasizes both meaning and action in which she defines culture as consisting of "symbolic vehicles of meaning, including beliefs, ritual practices, art forms, and ceremonies, as well as informal cultural practices such as language, gossip, stories and rituals of daily life." (p. 273). From this perspective, culture is our "tool kit," providing people with tools that then individuals can use to create "strategies of action" (Swidler, 1986). The emphasis on culture as a verb rather than a noun is important contribution interactionists make to the analysis of culture (Maines 1984). Rather than focusing on people merely *having a culture* or *being in a culture*, an interactionist perspective sharpens my comprehension of culture to include culture as activity (Maines 1984) because it focuses on actions of individuals and

[5] Blumer (1954) distinguishes between sensitizing concepts and definitive concepts. Definitive means that there is a direct relationship between the concept and the observations. In contrast, sensitizing concepts lacks such precision in which some of the observations will fit the definitions. So, sensitizing concepts direct you towards phenomena, but there is a measure of imprecision in it. Blumer (1954) argues that all concepts in sociology are sensitizing in part because things often change in social life.

groups. In his essay clarifying the conception of culture within symbolic interactionists thought, Maines (1984:80) refers to cultural activity as,

> …meanings embedded in standard practices and taken for granted assumptions common to a group. Culture emanates from and rests in the meanings which transform material objects into culture objects. Cultural activity, in turn, rests in the processes of interpretation through which cultural objects are used in a meaningful manner.

Colic-Peisker (2008) challenges conceptions of culture within some migration research. She states (192-193), "Culture is sometimes understood as a single entity, a package or "container" of skills, attitudes, and values that migrants "carry over" to another country." She argues that this conception "freezes" the notion of culture in migration research, and the concept should instead be understood as consisting of a "multitude of practices and discourses that only exist through people's actions and social interactions" (p. 193). The shared meaning and content of culture is also created through group interaction within particular situations and contexts. I also draw from Fine's (1979) notion of "idioculture,"[6] which refers to culture as originating in a small group context, which is useful for me to conceptualize Albanian culture within small group situations. Fine combines idio and culture to emphasize the processes in which small groups form their "own" culture. He explains,

> Idioculture consists of a system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and customs shared by members of an interacting group to which members can refer and employ as a basis of further interaction. Members recognize that they share experiences in common and these experiences can be referred to with the expectation that they will be understood by other members, and further can be employed to construct reality (p. 734).

The importance of this conceptualization of culture lies in its emphasis on the construction of cultural meanings, the content of small group interactions, the creation of culture through interaction processes, and the situated character of cultural meanings. Given a set of constraints, group members negotiate the meaning and content of culture, and this negotiation shapes the

[6] "Idio" derives from idios, the Greek root for "own."

culture of group life, which is why as Fine posits it is important to understand the "content of talk and behavior" of a group (p. 737).

As a component of the self, identity has been described by symbolic interactionists in situational (Foote 1951; Stone 1962) and structural (Stryker 1968) terms, challenging the more psychological approaches developed by psychologists such as Erik Erikson (1950; 1968). Vryan and colleagues (2003), for instance, summarized symbolic interactionist conceptions of identity in three general forms: situational, social and personal.[7] Situational identities emerge and change to some extent depending on the social situations in which we find ourselves (e.g., student) and through the course of our interactions. Social identities, however, are more transsituational (e.g., race). Our social identities are our "identifications with socially constructed groups or categories of others and our positions within structured social arrangements" (Vryan et al. 2003:371). These forms of identity are not mutually exclusive, and their salience can change within and between social contexts and situations.

Migration and race and ethnicity scholars have discovered that ethnic identity can be optional in that one can choose to be ethnic (Waters 1990), and that ethnic identity is also symbolic (Alba 1990; Gans 1979). Being ethnic depends on the situation and for many descendent of Europeans; ethnic identity is celebrated occasionally (e.g., St. Patrick's Day) and is neither an important aspect of one's everyday life nor carries significant social consequences for one's life chances (Alba 1990). The experiences of non-White immigrants and ethnic minorities are not the same as those who are non-Hispanic European white as they confront a US racial structure in which their identity "choices" are constrained. I found Stone's (1962) definition of identity as situated useful to work with throughout this dissertation because:

[7] For example, a person's name defines who one is as a unique individual.

> Almost all writers using the term imply that identity establishes what and where the person is in social terms. It is not a substitute for the word 'self.' Instead, when one has an identity, he is *situated* – that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of his participation or membership in social relations. One's identity is established when others place him as a social object by assigning him the same words of identity that he appropriates for himself or announces. It is in the coincidence of placements and announcements that identity becomes a meaning of the self, and often such placements and announcements are aroused by apparent symbols (p. 93; emphasis in original).

For Stone, identity is established through two mutual processes: placement and announcement, where others place him or her as belonging to others and he or she also announces such belonging. With this perspective, to have an identity is to "join with some and depart with others" (Stone 1962:94) or "a bringing together and setting apart" (Stone 2009:143). Difference and similarity are key features of identity, and central to the way scholars talk about people's experiences with change after migration and during settlement.

In the following sections I discuss in somewhat greater detail the main concepts of symbolic interactionism that are most relevant to this research. The main concepts are: meaning, situation, actions, and time. Interactionists theorize meanings, situations and time as forms of action. Empirically these concepts occur simultaneously. That is, people deal with dimensions of time in situations in terms of the meaning that things have for them. Other important interactionist concepts include action, interaction, culture and identity. Throughout this remainder of this chapter, I will weave in select scholarship from on immigration, gender and family and racial and ethnic relations.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism[8] emerged out of the philosophical tradition of pragmatism (Sandstrom, Martin and Fine 2001). Maines (2001:10) contends that pragmatism "broke the tie" between pure idealisim and pure realism whereby reality resides only in human experiences or independent of human experiences, respectively. Pragmatism posits, as Maines (2001:10) states, "…the external world exists independently of experiencing subjects but it becomes socially relevant at the point that it is mediated through human attention." Pragmatism centers on social processes and their consequences (James 1948) and the idea of the subject and object as dichotomous is replaced with the knower and known as they are realized through and within ongoing social experiences (Maines 1992). Maines (2001:xii) and Ritzer (2011:352) contend that symbolic interactionism represents the application of these pragmatist principles to sociological investigation because symbolic interactionism focuses on how reality is actively created through the interaction between the actor and the world and the actor's interpretation of the social world. And for this study, symbolic interaction provides valuable insights for this study because it focuses on the ongoing activity among people within their ongoing social experiences, the situations and contexts that may shape human behaviors, and the meanings and definitions of situations that emerge out of interaction.

Meaning

One of the guiding principles of symbolic interactionism is that the social relations and social structures are not fixed or unchanging arrangements, but are subject to negotiation and change through social interactions and adjustment to situations. Blumer (1962) identified three key principles of symbolic interactionism:

[8] While there are different perspectives within symbolic interactionism, I will focus primarily on the views that emerged from the early Chicago School, those of Mead and Blumer in particular, and sociologists who have taken up the work of further articulating these perspectives.

> The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them…the second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he[/she] encounters (p. 2)

The first and second premises are closely linked in that meaning derives from processes of social interaction. The formation of meaning is central to interactionist thought – the meaning that people give to things is fundamental to human behavior. The interactions of individuals are important, and meanings emerge out of processes of interaction between people, which would not if it were the individual alone. Thus, meanings are social creations. Blumer (1969:4) wrote, "The meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing." Social meaning is meaning that is shared; to be shared it has to be developed and created through symbolic interaction. The symbolic refers to something that people attach meaning to and then use to communicate with others.[9] Interaction involves an awareness of at least one other individual and response from individual(s) which is achieved through role-taking. The third premise describes how a person uses meanings. Meanings are created and modified through an interpretive process. Blumer writes that this interpretive process consists of two steps. In the first step, the actor makes indications to him or herself and then interprets those indications, selecting the things that have meaning. He (1969:5) refers to this self-indication social process as an internalized one where the individual communicates with him or herself. The second step involves the handling meanings, which involves more of the transformation of meanings. According to Blumer, "the actor selects checks, suspects, regroups

[9] According to Mead, symbols give us a sense of history. We become aware of our own past and the past we share with others. We can also construct imagined futures to which we respond in the present. In short, the use of symbols presumes the existence of a social and cultural system—a network of values, meanings, interests, concerns, and labeling that is wrapped up in language.

and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he [or she] is placed and the direction of his [or her] actions (p. 5). This interpretive process is what organizes human action or plays a part in forming and guiding human action.[10] Following Mead, Blumer (1962:184) notes that meanings guide human action through a process of taking the role of a particular person or group or through individuals taking "each other into account" (Blumer 1953: 194). By taking on the role of the other, the individual can reflect back on his/her behavior as seen by the other and thus be both the subject and object of the action at the same time. However, this process does not mean that individuals merely automatically respond to others, but it is a self-reflexive process in which individuals interpret the meanings of other's actions and construct a line of action based upon those interpretations. Blumer (1966: 535) describes it this way:

> To indicate something is to stand over against it and to put oneself in the position of acting toward it instead of automatically responding to it. In the face of something which one indicates, one can withhold action toward it, inspect it, judge it, ascertain its meaning, determine its possibilities, and direct one's action with regard to it.

Blumer not only articulated that an individual aligns her/his interaction with another individual, but individual actions can also form into what he calls "joint action," which involves the behaviors of groups, organizations, and institutions.[11]

Joint Actions, Family and Gendered Institutions

The interweaving of ongoing, recurrent patterns of social actions involves organizations and institutions.[12] In Blumer's perspective, institutions structure the ways in which individuals

[10] Blumer (1969:6) defines actions as consisting of various "activities that individuals perform in their life as they encounter one another and as they deal with the succession of situations confronting them"

[11] Blumer (1969) also refers to individual and joint (i.e. collective) actions together as "social actions."

interact, but institutions do not cause individuals to interact in a particular way. Rather, processes of interaction develop individual and joint actions and conflicting actions are organized within the frame of institutions. That is, individuals and groups interpret the situations that form within institutions and adjust to and respond to those ongoing situations (Blumer 1990). The concept of joint action sheds light on how individuals and social structures are not dualistic, but operate in a dialectical fashion (Maines 1982; Strauss, 1959, 1978, Maines and Charelton 1985). One of the main "facts" of symbolic interactionist thought, as articulated by Maines (2001:3) is that,

> Human behavior must occur somewhere, and if that behavior is overtly social then human activity happens in situations, within a cultural, institutional, gendered, national, racial, economic and/or historical context.

This view is important as I examine family as a gendered institution with the view that institutions too are the result of social interactions imbued with power relations. Several migration scholars have investigated conflict and power relations within families by examining parent-child relations as patterned by ethnicity, race, culture, sexuality and age (Espiritu 2001; Gabbacia 1994; Gonzalez-Lopez 2004; Thorne 2003; Toro-Morn and Alicea 1999; Valenzuela Jr 2009).

Intergenerational conflict is one line of research most relevant to this study because it emphasizes how immigrant parents exert more pressure on their daughters than sons to exemplify conventional ideals of behavior in part because parents and family members worry that their daughters would adopt the sexual mores of American culture. Research has uncovered how some immigrant parents tend to exercise stricter control over their daughters' behaviors and

---

[12] Since this dissertation applies an interationist view of time, it is important to note here that Blumer (1969:60) viewed joint action as being "temporally linked with previous joint action." He goes on to argue that; "One shuts a major door to the understanding of any form or instance of joint action if one ignores this connection."

movements compared to sons as they worry about their daughters adopting the gendered and sexualized norms of American youth culture (e.g., sexual promiscuity, unwed teen pregnancy) (Dion and Dion 2001; Espiritu 2001; Qin 2009). This double standard also emerges as a way for immigrant parents to resist race and class inequalities by, for instance, employing "gendered notions of home" (Toro-Morn and Alicea 1999) or creating and maintaining transnational ties to raise, control and socialize their children, and to resist Americanization and racialization (Espiritu 2001; Thorne et al. 1999). This process is not only gendered, but also structured by intersection of race, ethnicity, class and sexuality (Espiritu 2001; Gonzalez-Lopez 2004; Lee 2001). Espiritu (2001) study examined the relationship between Filipino immigrant parents and their US born daughters (second generation). Filipino mother's exercise more control over their daughter's because they do not want them to adopt what they perceived as liberalized American sexual norms of white femininity by "sleep[ing] around like white girls do." Deconstructing heteronormativity among Mexican immigrants, Gonzalez-Lopez (2005) shows how women and girls bodies and sexuality are regulated through constant heteronormative-based family relations, religious and cultural norms and practices. For instance, she describes how virginity is socially constructed as an element of respect, and family honor. Virginity, she writes "takes on a social exchange value that Mexican women, a subordinate group in a patriarchal society, use to improve and maximize their life conditions and opportunities" (pp. 38).[13]

The major contribution of this line of immigration research is that it uncovers the existence and techniques of social control and the repercussions of control. However, scholars have paid less attention to how daughters negotiate sexual norms, and thus we know less about

[13] She also provides ample evidence for how women and men negotiate their sexual experiences and changes to their sexual lives through migration and settlement (e.g., women's social networks and groups).

when daughters choose to adopt their parents' norms and when they choose to discard and/or rebel against them, and what the consequences are for those choices. My study seeks to address this issue by focusing on the actions of primarily the daughters of Albanian immigrant parents, and the meanings they attribute to the negotiations of and potential consequences for challenging parental and community norms.

Situations

A point made clear by early interactionist thinkers is that situations are where interactions and activities occur and are important in fashioning human behavior (Goffman 1963; McHugh 1968; Mead 1934, Thomas and Znaniecki 1918-1920). Situations (e.g., immigrant status, does an immigrant move into an immigrant community, have family in the "host" country or not) are important because the peoples' relations with various situations may affect their behaviors, beliefs, and/or life chances. It is also particularly important to comprehend the new situations that continually emerge as part of the process of adjustment in the lives of people and groups because situations can revise old "rules," which may require new individual and joint actions. With this perspective, group life entails people adjusting to ongoing situations (Blumer 1960). Immigrant settlement and assimilation processes introduce immigrants and their offspring to new situations, but the importance lies in how immigrants and their descendants define and interpret the situations. For example, Blumer (1990) highlighted that industrialization introduced new situations (e.g., factory life) that people had to deal with, but that the importance of situations

was in how they were defined[14] and interpreted by people within them, which could include multiple definitions and interpretations and actions based on those understandings. He wrote,

> The definition and not the situation are crucial. It is the definition that determines the response. The situation does not set the definition; instead the definition comes from what the people bring to the situation (p. 121).

The key idea that early interactionists were elucidating was that the social situations in which human activity occurs and, more importantly, people's definitions of them are vital to understanding human behavior. While identifying exactly what constitutes a "situation"[15] can be tricky, I use it generally to refer to a set of broader social conditions that can vary in scale (i.e. micro to macro) where actors[16] experience and deal with the affairs of their lives, and where human activity occurs. I use this perspective to highlight the importance of viewing immigrants as entering into varying situations and not just as individuals who emigrate and settle in another country and ultimately face assimilation or processes of inclusion and exclusion. With this view, (im)migration introduces situations within which people, using Blumer's (1990: 150) words, "develop their activity, their relations, and their institutions." Using this perspective, individuals and groups encounter and deal with situations presented by immigration and settlement

[14] Even before Blumer, W.I. Thomas (1923) advanced the concept of the "definition of the situation." Thomas (1923:32) wrote, "Preliminary to any self-determined act of behavior there is always a stage of examination and deliberation which we may call the definition of the situation." Waller (1970:162) later defined it as a "process in which the individual explores the behavior possibilities of a situation, marking out particularly the limitations which the situation imposes on his behavior with the final result that the individual forms an attitude toward the situation, or, more exactly, in the situation."

[15] Situations and contexts are overlapping, but different. For instance, a context can frame a particular situation. But, empirically one can use them interchangeably.

[16] According to Blumer (1990), "actors" and "individuals" are not synonymous. Actors can also be ethnic groups, corporations or any other kind of collective.

processes, and may do so with various definitions, interpretations, expectations and understandings as they fashion their actions within the pressures of continuity and change. I tackle social and cultural continuity and change by concentrating on time and memory in the assimilation process.

Time, Memory and Assimilation

Assimilation deals directly with time. That is, scholars study assimilation by examining an individual or group's progress over time, using time (e.g., generations) as a tool for assessing how migrants and their descendants fare in a new society along the different dimensions of assimilation (Alba 1988). Approaching this issue from a symbolic interactionist view allows us to see that assimilation theories fail to adequately account for how people perceive time (the past, present and future) and a group's perceptions of their own progress over time or how people socially reconstruct the past in such a way that it has meaning in the present in ways that guides individual and collective actions. This means that assimilation tends to be a future oriented project rather than an on-going emergent one.[17] When the past is considered in sociological immigration research, it is usually the past associated with pre-migration contexts or the social and human capital individuals come with when they enter a new country which tells us about one's assimilation path and what their assimilation experiences might be like. Viewing this process, however, through a symbolic interactionist lens involves taking seriously the concept of time that goes beyond assessing assimilative outcomes to understand the dynamic of cultural continuity and discontinuity.

[17] i.e. when immigrants arrive in the "host" country, the story involves uncovering how they will or will not assimilate or how they are assimilating on particular measures over time based on certain human capital characteristics.

Mead posits that even though the present suggests a past and a future, the past and future can only be experienced in the situations of the present. Mead argues that one cannot experience time directly, but one can only experience time as reconstructed phenomena. Individuals interpret within the present context and so meanings of events depend upon the situations of the present. This understanding of the present allows for a comprehension of the past. Mead (1929) discussed the past and the social and temporal character of the present as a dialectical process of discontinuity and continuity.[18] In his analysis of Mead's theory of time, Maines (1983) writes,

> "Mead's theory of time provides a way of theorizing agency and the actual processes through which collective memories operate. By focusing on the dialectics of continuity and discontinuity, Mead gives us a framework that at once can contribution to the analysis of enduring elements of culture while identifying processes through which cultural meanings change" (p. 32).

According to Maines, there are three central dimensions of Mead's theory of time: the symbolically reconstructed past, the implied objective past, and the social structural past, which demonstrate the dynamic relationship between the past, present and future. The symbolically reconstructed past is the meaning dimension of the past; this is the meaning we create and hold on to about the past (Maines et al. 1983: 169). Maine's (1983:44) writes, "The symbolic reconstruction of the past thus involves redefining the meaning of past events in such a way that they have meaning in and for the present." The past is thus symbolically reconstructed and located in memory. The social structural past refers to how you construct futures. The implied objective past refers to the facts of the past or "what must have been, or that which had to have been given what exists now" (p. 169). However, present realities shape what people actually remember.

[18] While Mead's theory of time has been scrutinized for its usefulness in understanding sociological concerns (Maines et al. 1983), interactionist sociologists have demonstrated its relevance to sociology.

One of the way key ways in which Mead talks about the past is through continuity and discontinuity. In order to have continuity, the past must be reconstructed. It also involves actors who recognize and understand the succession of events such that it advances an acting person's goals, plans, or intentions. Maines (2001:38) writes, "Continuity is found in a sequence of interlinked events that are interpreted as functionally related and perhaps experienced as inevitable and taken-for-granted." People interpret this continuous process such that they create meanings of the interrelated events in ways that might have implications for the future. As Mead (1929:237) writes, "we are engaged in spreading backward what is going on so that the steps we are taking will be a continuity in advance to the goals of our conduct." As interrelated processes, continuity also gives rise to discontinuity. Continuity and discontinuity interact wherein shifts in groups relations and new interpretations can bring about new and problematic issues that modify previous continuity of events and understandings in which the existing rules might be deemed inadequate (Blumer 1969; Maines 2001:39). About the future, Maines and Hardesty (1987) write,

> The future, therefore, is never guaranteed, although individuals attempt to instill some measure of consistency in their futures. The process of guaranteeing the future takes place in emergent events through which individuals deal with and adjust to new situations (p. 105)

This perspective informs my analysis of immigrant and ethnic group experiences and immigrant families, and gives me the tools to comprehend how people experience both cultural continuity and change and adjust to new situations. It provides an insight that is useful for this study because it focuses on the social process of reconstructing the past so it has meaning in the present in any given situation, but also so that futures can be constructed and imagined. Ethnic group members can legitimize particular power relations through past experiences and then use those past experiences to frame their present situations. It is the meaning of the past (the

symbolically reconstructed past); the facts of the past (i.e. what actually happened, implied objective past) that allows ethnic group members to make claims about how future situations will be defined (i.e. social structural past). If the past is not seen as legitimate, however, conflicts emerge.

SUMMARY

Although the notion of assimilation has been a topic of considerable scholarly interest for almost a century, the diversification of approaches and alternative theories to assimilation reflects an expansion of the concept, seemingly of its definition, conceptualization, and utility for understanding (and impact on) various immigrant and ethnic groups. Even though concepts that are central to symbolic interactionism are evident in immigration scholarship,[19] the explicit use of symbolic interactionism is almost entirely divorced from contemporary migration research.[20] My work seeks to make this connection and make it more explicit because symbolic interactionism allows me to see more clearly the indeterminate character of assimilation by portraying reality as an ongoing and emergent process that is characterized by adjustment. Combined with symbolic interactionism from a Blumerian perspective, and Mead's notion of time, I conceptualize the actions and process that create continuity as well as discontinuity in the lives of Albanians as a white immigrant and ethnic group in the 21st century. The basic idea of

[19] I have documented above Jimenez's (2010) work on "Replenished Ethnicity" which focuses on the meaning of being a later generation Mexican American. Meaning, as I have discussed in this chapter, is one of the key concepts of symbolic interactionism.

[20] Two notable exception should be mentioned: Kusow (1998) who used symbolic interactionist concepts (such as action and social identity and Blumer's theory of race relations) to investigate the migration and settlement processes of Somali refugees in Canada; and Vazquez's (2011) who studied Mexican Americans across generations. She wrote that she uses the "interactionist approach that holds that culture occurs and identity ('presentation of self') is manufactured in social interaction" (p. 12).

the symbolic interactionist perspective (and one that grounds this research) is that one can comprehend the process of people "engaged in living" (Blumer 1986:20). Symbolic interaction concerns itself with meaning, process, and the importance of social situations (and their definitions) where interactions take place, identity, human action and acting units. I view Albanians as consisting of smaller scale acting units within the larger scales of the Albanian community. For instance, Albanian religious institutions, Albanian school, Albanian organized groups and clubs, and Albanian families all consist of smaller scale acting units. One important element of the dissertation is to understand how Albanians act toward situations and interpret them, and how new situations require new forms of action that are embedded in conflictual generational relations.

My dissertation centers on what it means to be Albanian and in that meaning-making process, how is the past reconstructed in order to make sense of being Albanian in the present, especially as 1.5 and second generation have grown up in US contexts and are now adults, and as a new third generation is forming. The ongoing process of creating, and interpreting Albanianess varies by situation. By studying, observing and analyzing the meaning-making process and interactions of Albanians, and their adjustments to situations, this approach has the potential to yield valuable knowledge of immigrant and ethnic human group life and behavior. The meanings we continually construct and the contexts and situations within which that process occurs have power to shape our everyday lives.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

In this study I explore how ethnic identity and culture are maintained, interpreted and changed by studying Albanian immigrants and their adult children in Metropolitan Detroit through qualitative field research. I collected information from a variety of individuals and settings, using multiple data collection techniques to check my results, also best described as triangulation. I used in-depth interviews, participant observations, one focus group interview,[1] and have designated a "greater-than-usual" weight to insight based on personal experiences (Glaser and Strauss 1968:351) in attempt to understand Albanians. Qualitative research is the best approach to gathering data for this study because I am interested in capturing meanings by drawing from participant perspectives, and emphasizing process rather than outcomes. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodological approach and data collection techniques I used in this study. First I consider my positionality in the research process, focusing the tensions surrounding my "insiderness," and issues of reflexivity. This will be followed by a description of my experiences entering the field, sampling techniques, and participant recruitment issues, the characteristics of my sample, and a description of my research site. I then describe the sources of data, including my interview schedule and participant observation strategies, and quantitative data. Finally, I detail my approach to data management and analysis, and research design limitations.

Qualitative research is especially appropriate to understand meanings that participants attach to events, actions, situations and experiences, and the contexts in which they occur. In this research, I adopt the "interpretive" approach to social science (Geertz 1973), which views

[1] Later in the chapter I write about why I only conducted one focus group interview.

meaning as central to social inquiry and the creation of meaning as an intersubjective process or, as Schutz (1973:62) puts it, "…the subjective meaning of the action of human beings." Qualitative research is also a method of inquiry that is well equipped to deal with capturing the processes by which situations and events occur rather than attempting to reach a set of outcomes. A qualitative research design allows for flexibility such that researchers can uncover and explore new discoveries and relationships as they occur in the research process (Maxwell 1996). With this inductive, open-ended strategy, I was prepared to generate findings that are, as Maxwell says, "understandable and experientially credible, both to the people you are studying and to others" (p. 21).

INSIDER/OUTSIDER: AN "INCOMPLETE ALBANIAN"

My fieldwork experiences were fascinating in that my role as a researcher became almost inseparable from my ethnic identity as an Albanian. In my conversations with my mentor David Maines about my dissertation, he so aptly put it when it he said, "You are your data!" My positionality would suggest that I would have easy access to the population since I had belonged to that community my entire life. Indeed having an Albanian background helped quite a bit initially. Most people were very eager to help another Albanian succeed, and they expressed how glad they were to see me, a young Albanian woman, accomplishing such an arduous task. However, some people warned me about "entering the field." One person said, "Good luck! Albanians are difficult people to organize!" I was not trying to organize Albanians, even though this study did initially involved organizing Albanians into focus groups, which did not work out too well, and other participants have brought this up in interviews or in casual conversations while in the field. For instance, I had a phone conversation with a potential participant who exclaimed, "Albanians are not organized!" All of my childhood memories attested to the notion

that Albanians are organized—families "stuck" together, the Catholic church did various religious and cultural activities that brought together hundreds of Albanians. The Albanian Catholic church was built for about 1,000 people and on most Sundays it is usually full with congregants. Albanian Catholics celebrated the various saints on particular days (called feasts) where many Albanian foods were served and was attended by immediate and extended family members. I grew up going to Albanian "Saturday School," was forced to learn my prayers in Albanian as part of my communion and confirmation classes and still know all of my prayers in Albanian, and today I do not know those same prayers in English. In my experience, Albanians were organized. What she and others meant by this was that Albanians - regardless region and religion – are not very organized in Michigan. Methodologically, the important thing here was the realization that the "Albanian community" was not the one I thought I understood.

Living near where most Albanians are geographically concentrated in Michigan, and my Albanian background did help me ease into my fieldwork setting. For instance, if someone wanted to speak Albanian to me, they could because I understood them unless the dialect was very different from what I am used to, which happened on only one occasion. I was even able to respond to others in Albanian as well, even if it was not perfect. Some of the groups and organizations I contacted were designed to support Albanians and raise ethnic awareness, so since I was a graduate student of Albanian descent who needed their help, being of Albanian origin was obviously important and helpful. However, that sense of closeness—as an Albanian with other Albanians – led to some "work" for me. The community in a way enveloped me. I was asked to do various speeches at community events, to host one of the biggest Albanian events (Albanian Independence Day 2012), and even to teach (as a volunteer) a semester-long course to Albanian adolescents and teens about character building. I went from attending

community events to being a part of the program of such events.

As my fieldwork progressed, I was becoming more mindful of the possibility that researching the Albanian community is not that simple in part because of the diversity among Albanians. As the research progressed it became clear to me that my "insiderness," and the understanding that emerged out of such positionality were a bit more complicated. The "insider" can be an outsider in some situations or both at the same time (Kusow 2003). I grew up in and was most familiar with one Albanian community—Albanian Catholics from Montenegro, who are a significant part of the Metro Detroit population (Trix 2001). So part of "entering the field" and "making contact" with participants involved reaching out to communities that were different from my own "insider" experiences and understandings, thus making me an "outsider" among Albanians who are not Catholic or from the region (Montenegro) where my parents are from. Because of this, my assumptions about having considerable knowledge about Albanians and being Albanian at the onset of this study were challenged within the first few weeks of my fieldwork. For instance, this became clear when Albanians from different parts of Albania began speaking to me in Albanian**.** I realized that I did not know as much of the Albanian language as I thought I did. At the very beginning of this research as I interacted with community leaders, I felt the pressure to speak Albanian. In fact, almost everyone I encountered in the field assumed that I could speak it and expected the conversation to be in Albanian. When I went to an immigrant rights event organized by and for Albanians, I overheard one of the women say to the Albanian intern that he should know Albanian and study it because he is Albanian. He said that he knew a little bit and came up with a similar excuse that I have used (although I was born here); he said, "I came here when I was young, 2 years old," which reminded me of the Albanian guy who said to me, it's "gabim" [mistake] that you did not learn to speak Albanian, as I will explain in more

detail later. Only until I began to speak to diverse groups of Albanians did I learn new words and cultural meanings in ways that I had never known before.[2] In some ways, as my mentor Maines stated so persuasively, I was an "incomplete Albanian," and felt as such with an overwhelming feeling of disappointment. I was not born in Albania, Malesia region of Montenegro, or Kosova. I had never visited, only spoke the language in an informal conversational manner, and knew considerably more about one Albanian community – the Malesor (Montenegro Albanians) Catholics. But then later on in the research process, I began to feel more Albanian, knowing more about Albanian history, immigration, language, and culture in ways I had never know before.

Reflexivity

Frustrated by the tensions I experienced growing up in an Albanian immigrant family and community, I became interested in pursuing this line of research on immigrant communities and families, particularly the experiences of the second generation. As a self-reflexive researcher, I remained conscious of my own feminist-informed perspectives and experiences as well as my inspiration for pursuing this research during the course of this study and in my interactions with informants. Constant journal practices allowed me to be reflexive throughout the research process. Guba and Lincoln (2005:210) state, "Reflexivity forces us to come to terms not only with our choice of research problem and with whom we engage in the research process, but with ourselves and the multiple identities that represent the fluid self in the research setting." Feminist scholarship in particular advocates that researchers be conscious of their own positionality in the research process and how that informs the kinds of research questions we ask, the assumptions

[2] For instance, I had learned how some of the words I grew up learning about are actually Turkish ("muhabet," which means small talk) or Serbian ("slika," which means photo).

we make about the social world, our interpretation of the research setting, and of our informants and the data we collect. I draw from the feminist research tradition (Harding, 1991) that upholds the practice of engaging in reflective and self-reflexive work as my degree of "insiderness" has shaped how I came to study this group and topic in the first place.

Reflexivity allowed me to be conscious of my possible researcher biases and how my standpoint as a woman of Albanian descent might influence the research process and analysis of data. For instance, as I acknowledged above, I had to constantly work on "not being native." This both strengthened my insight into Albanian relations and traditions, but it also made "not being native" a challenge. I entered this dissertation as a young, single, educated woman of Albanian origin. I had just met the people in the field who were trying to set me up with other Albanian men. This was not that surprising since, as an insider, this has happened to me before but it usually was through family. Because I was seen as an "insider," some potential participants, who were not my family members, tried to set me up with Albanian men I could date (and eventually marry). However, reflexivity helped me to keep that in check initially so I could focus on observing other happenings in the field. While in the field, however, a family member introduced me to an Albanian man that I then married. That experience shaped how I understood my data because I had been brought even closer into Albanian relations, experiencing for myself the courtship and marriage process to an Albanian-born man. It was an interesting process to go through while at the same time several of the Albanian women in my study described their ambivalence about dating and marrying Albanian men, as I will discuss in a later chapter. After a conversation with one of my mentors, I decided to read and watch things about Albanians that were produced by non-Albanians and discuss my emerging findings with people who were not Albanian. This practice helped me to create a distance between myself and the people I wrote

about.

ENTERING THE FIELD

Since I had connections in the community, entering the field did not present a problem. I was already a part of the field that I was supposedly "entering." But I indeed was entering in a different position, as a doctoral candidate and researcher. I first sought out individuals who were not a part of my network of friends and family in order to initially create the mindset that I am a researcher in the field who is attempting to learn about Albanians, and to reach out to communities of Albanians that were not part of my original network. Initially I had no difficulty obtaining participants or getting quick responses from people who were interested in the study. It also helped that I was an Albanian myself – identifiable by my Albanian last name, my speaking Albanian during the first in-person contact. Several potential participants were very interested in helping out another Albanian succeed and were also interested in knowing what I was researching about Albanians and in reading my results. The very first person I interviewed was one of the Catholic Albanian religious leaders who I had never met before. He was introduced to me by one of my relatives who told me I had to talk to him because he knew a lot about Albanians and had an interesting story to tell about his journey from Northern Albania to Michigan. I had learned about the history and politics of Albania and communism and its relation to the different waves of Albanian migration to the US, and his struggle as a refugee to make the migration journey from Albania to the US.

Sampling Techniques and Making Contact

I began my sample purposively by attempting to recruit diverse groups of second generation adult children and community leaders, and then engaged in snowball sampling (Babbie 2012), which led to people, and information that was significant for diversifying my

sample. I also drew from my own networks. I attempted to diversify my sample as much as possible by recruiting participants from various sites: church, online communities, community-based organizations and referrals. I posted recruitment advertisements on the Facebook pages of Albanian student organizations, and received several participants through that network. Those people provided me with names of other people who I could interview or they forwarded my recruitment flyer to people in their e-mail contacts. The Albanian college student organizations in Michigan were a great way of making contact with a diverse group of Albanians, albeit all are college-educated. Some people who expressed interest in participating did not fit the selection criteria (e.g., they came to the US when they were teenagers or much older). I also mailed out letters to organizations I had identified in the Albanian Yellow and White pages, and followed up with some of them to get an interview. I used the Albanian Yellow and White Pages in order to identify organizations and Albanian-identified institutions in Michigan. A little more than half of the organizations listed in the book are located in the Michigan and New York areas.[3] I made contact with people who were members or leaders within social-cultural and religious organizations. Contact with people associated with these organizations ranged from casual conversations in the field to formal interviews.[4] I also met several people by just hanging around a local community center where Albanians visit.

I contacted all of my participants by phone and/or email, and explained that I was doing research on the Albanian community in Michigan. Because some potential respondents would not know what a dissertation was, I explained that I was writing a book about the Albanian

[3] This information is available upon request.

[4] "Formal interview" means that I scheduled a semi-structured interview for a later date, and the participant signed a consent form before the interview began.

community in Metro Detroit.[5] Initially, I did not have much trouble recruiting research participants, especially the 1.5 and second generation interviews. However, more women than men contacted me to participate. Some were reluctant, particularly men, because of the group format, but once I changed the group to individual interviews they promised to eventually talk to me. One of my interviewees told me that I was probably not getting enough people to participate because Albanians might not want to get together in groups to share their stories. No one directly refused to participate, but some just did not get back to me, even after I had made a few attempts at contacting them again. One of my informants told me that I have to be assertive with Albanians in order to get them to participate in my research. She said to me that with the "Albanian community you have to work so hard and know their mentality to fit it." I asked, "What is their mentality?" She said, "hardheaded, they want to be god and the boss." They are not very "punctual" people, she said. Based on my conversations with her, I learned I would have to be pushy with potential participants and tell them four or five times what I want, and that I would have to call them quickly in order to get the interview. She said do not contact them by email because sending emails is "the American way." My informant said that I have to make phone calls because people are not going to call me for my research. I quickly learned that I had to shift my strategy and begin making more phone calls rather than relying on e-mailing, even though that is how several of my participants initially contacted me. Once I stopped receiving calls or emails from people willing to participate or did not hear back from people who said they would participate, I had to reach out into my own network of Albanians, which produced several more interviews.

[5] I got this idea from Vibha Bhalla (2002) who studied Indian immigrants in Metro Detroit.

Some of my most difficult interviews to get were with Albanian men who were heads of organizations. I went to two meetings with Albanian men, who were leaders of two different organizations to do an interview, but they wanted to know what I was about before they agreed to do a formal interview; something I did not expect. However, those meetings were interesting and insightful. In one of my first encounters with an Albanian man who was probably in his 50s, he was talking to another Albanian on the phone. He explained to the person on the phone that he was busy because he had a visitor. While on the phone, he turned to me and then asked me, "Where is your family from?" [or "c'far fisit?" which in Albanian means, what tribe?], and I said, "Triesh." He chuckled with the man on the phone and said "oh I have a visitor here from Trieshi who wants to do an interview with me." He had located my family within the Albanian community, but also within the tribe where my family is from in Montenegro. He knew people from Trieshi, and that provided some relief for me because he had made a connection between he and I (or my family), and I had felt somehow more accepted in that interaction. However, he told me in Albanian that it is a mistake[6] that I did not know how to speak Albanian that well, most likely provoked by prefacing our conversation by saying, "Sorry, I do not know Albanian that well." He said he would teach me and then directed me sit and watch some videos in Albanian that were designed to teach children the Albanian alphabet, even though I already knew the Albanian alphabet. I never returned to formally interview him because he intimidated me and I felt a lot of pressure to conduct the entire interview in Albanian. I felt less confident in conducting the interview in Albanian after he had already pointed out one of my flaws – I did not learn to speak Albanian very well. However, I did see him again at an event and the interaction was cordial. In that initial interaction knowing Albanian well was very important, as the potential

[6] The word he used in Albanian was "gabim" which means mistake, error or fault.

participant did not speak English well or at least he presented himself that way to me. Later on in the research process, I learned from another interviewee that he does in fact speak English.[7] We both wanted to and felt more comfortable in that research interaction using our first languages. I had felt that language was the tool of power in this research interaction, but one that was woven into gendered power relations. Because I was viewed as a member of the community, I was required to behave according to the norms of the community. The fact that I am an insider is a source of collecting data that otherwise would not emerge if I was not Albanian or used an interpreter. For instance, the language issues and the expectation to speak Albanian would not have emerged otherwise if I could fluently speak Albanian, was not Albanian or had an interpreter with me. Albanians expect their members to be Albanian and they do so in part by requiring members to speak the Albanian language. What I have been observing in some of my interactions with Albanians at community events is this "forced Albanianism" in which they expect me to speak Albanian and are teaching their little kids to speak Albanian, dress in Albanian traditional costumes at events and to dance Albanian, and to hang out with other Albanians.

The other leader "interview" I conducted on July 29, 2011 at a coffee shop did not turn out to be a formal interview, but rather a conversation about how I should write a book about Albanians since he has written extensively about Albanians. I wanted to interview him because he had founded an Albanian cultural organization that focused on cultural (re)productions by Albanians (e.g., literature). When we first met, I gave him the consent form translated in Albanian. From him I learned about how Albanians have a long history in the United States, with the arrival of people like Fan Noli who established the first Albanian Orthodox church in

[7] He also insisted that an interpreter was not necessary.

Massachusetts. One of the most interesting things he said about the Albanians in the US was about the two opposing ideologies: nationalism and communism. He described to me that nationalism meant saying one is Albanian, and is proud to be Albanian. Albanians in the US, he stated, were concerned with the flag, the language and traditions (e.g., carrying an Albanian flag alongside an US one at weddings), but they were anti-communism. He said communists had fixed minds, but you could not have nationalism without a space to do that so the Albanian Roman Catholic Church was built in the US. He noted that much of the organization of the Albanian community happens around religious organizations, and that is problematic because then it is more fractured. Related to this, what I found most intriguing is what he said about place and space in community in which he specified some of the spaces that are lacking in the Albanian community in Michigan. He said, we have "too many [Albanian] writers, but no library"; "we have teachers, but no [Albanian] school"; we have all these Albanians (he estimated 120,000 Albanians) and talents (e.g., singers), but no cultural center. We continued our conversations over the phone, and I did meet with him in person at another cultural activity (e.g., presentation on Albanian literature) he had planned at the Albanian Catholic church.

It was not difficult to gain rapport with Albanians once I had their consent to participate in the research, especially since I was perceived an Albanian myself, even though I was born in the US. The only time I felt I had to "prove" myself was with some of the older Albanian men. This challenge I faced in my fieldwork had to do with the power relations between men and women in the community, but also in relation to age. I was a young, woman asking older, married men to do an interview with me for my book on Albanians. In each encounter with these men, I was asked if I was married, who my parents are and where they are from. In the field setting, I had to be located by some of my participants. That is, I was not just "Linda Gjokaj, the

researcher" who was simply interested in learning about Albanians, but an Albanian who had an Albanian family with some kind of history and reputation.

My sampling strategy was not intended to obtain a random sample, nor is generalization the goal of this research. Instead, I selected key informants along categories of generation since immigration, gender and family, community and religious leadership in order to achieve maximum understanding of the Albanian community in America, especially in the local, qualitative context of Metropolitan Detroit. Thus, this dissertation involves a non-representative subset of Albanians in Metro Detroit. I risk biasing my interviews toward those who are closely attached to the Albanian community, but I am precisely interested in exploring the making of the Albanian community so speaking with people who have that knowledge will be most helpful. However, through snowball sampling and my own connections to the community, I have been able to recruit those who also have limited attachment or those who belong to and experience the Albanian community in different ways.

Characteristics of the Study Sample

My sample consists of 25 1.5 and second generation individuals many of which are either born in the US (48%) or Albania (40%), a smaller percentage were born in Montenegro, Kosovo or Macedonia, and 10 community leaders for a total of 35 individuals.[8] I focused my recruitment efforts on the second generation or the generation born or mostly raised in US contexts in order to capture how the "new" generation understands and experiences white ethnic identity. Most of my participants are second generation (64%) individuals who were either born in the US or came to the US when they were 4 years old or less. Thirty-six percent of the "generations" sample belongs to the 1.5 generations category, which describes those who came to the US as pre-

[8] See Table 14 in Appendix A

adolescents. Out of those who were born in Albania, half of them were born in cities or villages in Southern Albania and another 40 percent were born in either Northern or Central Albania. The majority of all of the 25 participants of my "generations" sample had a parent (their mother) who was either born in Albania or Montenegro. The typical case for the foreign born 1.5ers is that both parents were born in the country of origin their child was born (i.e. Albania), whereas, for the US native-born, most of their parents were born in Montenegro. The majority of the US native-born participants were children of parents who were ethnic Albanians from Montenegro. There were a few cases where one parent was not born in the same country as their children because their parents (grandparents of the second generation) emigrated from either Albania or Montenegro to places like Italy and Egypt[9] on route to the US, or for economic reasons, respectively. In my conversations with those whose parents were from Montenegro, I learned that it was not uncommon for ethnic Albanians from Montenegro to first migrate to Italy in the 1960s as they were on route to the United States.

Almost half of my "generations" sample is not born in the United States, but those who entered the US as an immigrant came to the US since 1991, since the fall of Albanian communism. The median age of my generation respondents is 24 years old, over half of the respondents fall into the 20-24-age category and about one-third fall into the 25-30-age category, and many of them are also female (72%). The majority of my respondents were also unmarried/single, and most had some college (56%) or a college degree (40%), an Associate's, Bachelor's or Master's degrees. Many (40%) of my participants worked in service occupations such as in food services, social and human services, health or retail. The majority of my

[9] In the 19th and 20th centuries, Albanians had migrated for political and economic to surrounding countries nearby and far, which included countries such as Egypt.

respondents are also either Catholic (44%) or Muslim (32%).

Another category of my overall sample is "leaders." This group contains a small part of the overall sample (10 individuals) because my focus was on the "generations" group. Although, there is some overlap in that there are four people in my "generations" group who also engage in leadership activities within the Albanian community. There were ten respondents[10] who were specifically recruited for their leadership role in the community, regardless of their "generation." All of them were foreign born, and most were born in Albania with the exception of two individuals who were born in Montenegro and Kosova. Similar to the other sample, most came to the US since 1991. Unlike the previous sample, this one is made primarily of men (8 out of 10 were men) and half of them fall under the category of "religious" leaders, which means they either were the head of their religious organization or had significant roles as part of the churches, Mosque or Teqe (e.g., religious council, religious education). I spoke with two individuals from the Muslim Albanian communities, two from the Catholic Albanian community, and one from the Orthodox Albanian community. The others leaders were part of groups or organizations that emphasize the more the social-cultural aspects of community relations, except for one person whose was part of an organization for immigrant rights. The former organizations involved offering classes for Albanian language learning, Albanian dancing, a space or forum to interact with fellow co-ethnics and co-nationals, and/or learning of and passing on Albanian culture and information pertaining to Albanians in general. The categories of "religious" and "social" and "cultural," however, are not mutually exclusive. For example, religious institutions are also in many ways cultural institutions in the Albanian

[10] Instead of a formal, semi-structured interview, I had face-to-face individual casual conversations with two individuals from this group.

community. The space serves both as a place of worship as well as a context for learning Albanian language, and dance, and socializing with other Albanians. Many cultural events are also held at religious institutions, such as Albanian language classes.

Defining Generations

I use the concept of generation to mean generation since immigration. That is, the first generation is foreign-born parents, born outside of the United States. The second generation includes the children of the first generation who were born and raised in the United States, and the 1.5-generation who came to the US at ten years old or younger, and who were largely raised in US contexts. Some scholars distinguish between the two groups, arguing that most generational migration research is either done on the first or second generation which misses the distinct experiences among those who are "neither immigrants nor native born" (Danico 2004:24). I planned on interviewing only the second generation or those born in the US, but the design I constructed before I went into the field was not realistic in terms of the actual field. If I had focused solely on the second generation adults in Michigan, I would have biased my findings to Catholic Albanians from Montenegro who came to Michigan in the late 1960s and 1970s and now have a young adult and adult, US born generation children. The other major wave of Albanians I interviewed who are Muslim came to Michigan about a few decades later. However, I made attempts to contact the generation (1960s-1980 migration wave) of Muslim Albanians who came to Michigan, but after repeated attempts to interview at least one of them, I never heard back. An Albanian woman who is part of a well-known Muslim family in Michigan told me in an email exchange that she could put me in touch with elderly Albanian Muslims in Michigan, but that was not the focus on my study. Instead, I recruited through my networks Albanian Muslims, mostly non-practicing who were born in Albania but came to Michigan at ten

years old or younger. I followed the reality of the field and it led to some very fruitful information that I would have otherwise not captured if I had stuck to studying only the "true" second generation. Based on how other immigration scholars (Zhou and Bankston 1998) have defined the 1.5 and second generation, I classified my participants as either belonging to 1.5 or second generation. The 1.5-generation are those who came to the United States between the ages of 5 and 10, as pre-adolescents. The second generation is defined as those who were born in the US or are the foreign-born adult children of immigrants who came to the US when they were four years old or younger. I consider those who came to the US at four years and younger as part of the second generation because unlike those who came later, they do not have a good memory of their country of birth as they were an infant or toddler when they emigrated. However, one of the key differences between this group and the US born-second generation is that the individuals who were not born in the US are at first not US citizens. However, none of these participants mentioned or brought up the naturalization process as an issue. Another difference is that those who were not born in the US, have been socialized to some extent in both the US and Albania. Unlike the second generation, the 1.5-generation also could make stronger comparisons between what life was and is like in Albania compared to those who were born in the US. Those who are older can somewhat relate to being an immigrant, including not knowing English very well at first, and also what their country of birth was like when they left to come the US. However, even US born second generation participants described entering kindergarten with limited English language speaking abilities because their parents were new immigrants and did not speak English very well, and spoke primarily Albanian in the home. So in some cases, 1.5 and second generation participants shared what is part of the "immigrant experience" in the US for non-English language speakers.

DATA COLLECTION

As mentioned earlier, I used two primary ethnographic techniques: individual face-to-face, semi-structured interviews and participant observations. I also used a single group interview with a group of four 1.5 and second generation Albanian women. These techniques allow me to gather interpretive data to get at the various symbolic interactionist concepts I use, such as meaning. I also used the US Census and American Community Survey in order to capture a quantitative description of the Albanian community in Michigan and the US. Overall I conducted 28 individual interviews and one group interview composed of four people for an overall total of 32 people.[11] This dissertation is largely based on information gathered through in-depth, individual interviews with second generation adult women and men, and first generation leaders, including religious, within the Albanian community. However, the observations in the field provided valuable insights, and details not captured in interview data. In some instances, interviews and observations worked together, aiding to validate the other, but each provided a way of gathering primary data.

The Single Focus Group

I began the research with the intention of conducting focus groups with the second generation. Contrary to what I expected from focus groups, it did not really help people to share more such that an honest rich discussion could emerge out of the group interaction. Because of issues of co-ethnic[12] gossip, I am not certain that the focus group format allowed participants to be self-disclosing, and non-judgmental so they can say what they really think rather than feeling

[11] I used pseudonyms in place of my participants' actual names, and changed some identifying information in order to ensure the confidentiality of my participants.

[12] Co-ethnic refers to members of the same ethnic group.

they needed to conform to what I or the participants wanted to hear. In this dissertation I talk about how co-ethnic gossip works in ways that deter people from being around other Albanians, especially when comes to sharing stories about their personal life.

The first (and only) focus group I conducted was composed of four women, but having a same sex focus group did not necessarily help them share more and openly, which goes against the logic of focus groups. As I mentioned above, my attempt to recruit men to participant in a focus group failed as well in part because of the issue of co-ethnic gossip. One of my participants suggested that I contact one of her male relatives to participant in the group interview. I called him to explain the study, and to recruit him as a group interview participant. He had this to say, "I want to help you, but not in a group with other guys. I don't like interviews with other Albanians – they are big mouths, talk shit." Another potential (female) participant said, "People might not want to be in a group with someone they do not know. Some Albanian girls might not. I don't mind, but others might." Thus, I decided to do individual, in-depth interviews instead of group interviews. The discovery that focus groups were not the best research technique for this study is in and of itself an important research finding, an indication of how people in the community - no matter their degree of attachment or belonging to the ethnic community - may relate to each other when they are brought together. Reputation is an important element of community relations –such as, who you marry, who your family is and if they have a "good name" or good standing in the community are some of the features that make up a reputation. What came out of that one focus group is worth using where it validates much of what the women said in individual interviews, and the way in which gossip and also gender operates.

The Interviews: Recorded and Otherwise

Generation interviews

A majority of the individual interviews were with 1.5 and second generation individuals. Overall, 18[13] women and seven men constitute the "generations" portion of this study for a total of 25 individuals. My focus was largely on data gathered through the generation born and raised in the United States in order to capture issues of generational experiences of ethnic community, ethnicity and identity among white ethnic groups. Through these interviews, I explored family relationships, generational tensions, and the construction (and perceptions) of community and identities among Albanians. I focused on asking questions about family relationships and experiences growing up in an Albanian family, probing into the gendered character of these relationships. The second key area I addressed related to race, ethnic and identity by attempting to capture the nature of belonging and membership in the Albanian community, as well as how participants view ethnic and racial identity. The third key aspect of the interview related to their perceptions of and experiences within the Albanian community itself. Here I focused on asking participants to describe what the Albanian community in Metro Detroit is like in order to get at perceptions and meanings of community, and probed into spaces of divisions and unity between and among Albanians. Questions about identity, and generational tensions and assimilation issues allowed me to delve into issues of time – particularly memory – in an interactionist way. While I focused on Metro Detroit area contexts, I inquired about participant's engagement in or knowledge about transnational experiences and relationships. Lastly, in order to get a sense of their knowledge of their family's migration and background prior to migration, I asked participants to describe how they or their family members came to the US and what the country of origin was like when they left.

[13] In this total of 18 women, I included the four women who were part of the focus group interview because they were also part of the "generations" focus of this study.

The purpose of interviewing leaders within the community was to understand "the community." I use leaders in a broad sense to mean anyone who is directly and formally focused on creating, advancing, and leading the Albanian community in the US and/or abroad. I conducted interviews with ten leaders. This number does not include some of the people from my generations sample who overlap with the leader sample in that they also had leadership positions in Albanian organizations. The individuals I interviewed belong to or are representatives of particular institutions that are Albanian-operated or in some way serve the Albanian population in Metro Detroit. In these interviews, I focused on the organization or institution itself to which they belong; its goals, the role of the organization in developing and advancing community interests and probing what are those interests and the reasons behind them. I altered questions and shifted foci according to each type of organization or institution. For instance, interviewing a religious leader and a director of the Albanian television program required me to ask different kinds of questions with regard to how these organizations and institutions play out in the community.

Many of my interviews were more formal in that I arranged a meeting, used an interview guide and were digitally recorded. These are the interviews that comprise the bulk of the data documented in this dissertation. The interviews were directed by the questions I developed, but I remained flexible throughout the interview process so that the data are more participant driven. Sometimes the interviewees went at length answering certain questions and we did not have time to get to other questions. But, I did do follow up interviews with some of my participants when I needed additional detail or to verify certain information, also known as doing a "member check."

Altogether, I gathered 32-recorded interviews.[14] They ranged from about 1. 5 to 3 hours in length and were usually held in coffee shops or bookstore cafes around the Metro Detroit area. In some cases, I also met at the offices where the community leaders worked. I had learned how significant coffee shops were to Albanians in this area, especially Albanian men. I knew they were Albanian because I heard them speak to each other in Albanian. Some times I would run into Albanians I know and they would approach me to shake my hand and say hello. Throughout the research I had heard about one particular Starbucks shop in the Metro Detroit area being referred to as "Starbania" because so many Albanians, especially men, hang out there. Altogether, speaking with different second generation adults of different age cohorts and sexes, and community and religious leaders allowed me to capture and discover patterns across a variety perspectives and vantage points. I am able to draw upon the richness of different bases of knowledge from which my informants will draw.

Fieldwork and Participant Observations

In the field, I acted as an "interested inquirer" (Maines 1973), casually observing and asking questions at parties, in restaurants, and coffee shops. I observed and made notes of, for instance, the physical attributes of the event or situation (e.g., location), how people were interacting with others and me and the demographic characteristics (e.g., approximate age composition of the group) of the people in the setting. Observations allowed me to capture meanings and perspectives that I could not obtain by relying only on interviews. I was able to observe the relationship between "saying" and "doing." That is, I could observe if (and in what contexts) Albanians actually do what people in my interviews said Albanians do (or do not do).

[14] This includes interviews with the 1.5 and second generations and community leaders. I was not able to record one interview because of equipment failure, but I reconstructed the interview by writing notes right after the initial contact.

During each stage of the research project, I documented in a field research journal activities, methodological notes, decision making procedures, my own intentions and reactions, personal notes about my experiences with informants, revisions to group and individual interview questions and any changes to research design as the process unfolds. I was open to alternative explanations, redesigning the study and following information that would lead me to alternative or new ideas and issues. I triangulate interview data with the information I collected via the participant-observations, which were documented in field notes from memory. During the data collection stage, I lived in one of the counties of Michigan, Macomb, where many Albanian families live, and where I had access to my participants and Albanian organized events. I visited local establishments (e.g., restaurants, stores), attended organized activities (e.g., Albanian Flag Day, weddings, informal gatherings), and any meetings hosted by Albanians. My first experience in the field was at a coffee shop on April 12, 2011 with a group of Albanian college students (all Albanian-born women, 1.5 generation) who were getting together to discuss organizing events for the Albanian student community. For an entire fall 2011 semester, I taught "character building"[15] to teenage Albania girls (one boy showed up occasionally) once a week as part of an organization designed to help individuals from Balkan countries to nurture their ethnic affiliation, but also integrate into US society.[16] This gave me the opportunity to observe how Albanian culture is passed onto the younger generation (kindergarten to 10th grade), and also how they are taught to be Albanian. I attended Albanian language classes and got to work one on one with an Albanian language teacher, which helped me gain greater insight into the language,

[15] Some of the topics discussed in this class were peer pressure, friendships, body image, and respect.

[16] One of the community leaders referred to this as "integration without assimilation."

and in doing so I felt "more Albanian." I also attended Albanian and Kosovo Independence Day parties, and was even invited (and accepted) to be the co-host for the celebration of the 99th year of Albanian independence, which was held at the Albanian Catholic Church on November 27, 2011. My fieldwork officially ended with my Albanian wedding celebration on October 27th 2012, when I got to become personally familiar with what I had seen so many Catholic Albanian brides before me experience. Attending various events, interviewing leaders, and the 1.5 and second generation allowed me to capture the different situations in which meanings of ethnic identity and assimilation unfold and understood.

Quantitative Data

The quantitative data are documented in chapter four of this dissertation are intended to give readers a simple summary of the Albanian population in the US and Michigan using basic descriptive statistics with select variables, such as average income and I cross-tabulated various demographic variables with birthplace, ancestry and place of residence – Albanian-born in the US, Albanian Ancestry (first response) in the US, Albanian-born in Michigan and Albanian Ancestry (first response) in Michigan. In doing so, I compared the different demographic variables for each population of Albanians. I used the US decennial census and the 5-year, 5% sample of the American Community Survey (2007-2011). These data came from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) of the Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota.[17] These data include individual records with demographic information on persons and households. The limitation of this data is the small sample size of the Albanian-born and Ancestry population compared to larger immigration groups, for instance, the Mexican immigrant population so the effect of sample size is greater in the case of Albanians. I use the

[17] These data are available at http://usa.ipums.org/usa/index.shtml.

US census (1920-2000) to only capture intercensus growth of the foreign-born population in the US and Michigan, including Albanians and Yugoslavians.[18]

Research Sites

Albanians in Michigan are geographically concentrated in predominately three counties: Macomb, Oakland and Wayne (Trix 2001). Because I am most familiar with the Albanian community in Michigan, identifying a location for this study was based on both first-hand knowledge of and personal connections within the Albanian community in Michigan, especially individuals from Montenegro. I also chose this site because according to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, Michigan (after New York) contains the second largest population of Albanian-born and those who identify their first ancestry as Albanian in the United States. New York's various immigrant groups have been studied extensively, but Michigan provides an excellent opportunity to study immigration populations in non-traditional immigrant settlement areas that have less racially, ethnically and culturally diverse populations compared to places like New York. But, Metro Detroit contains the diversity that exists within the Albanian community, especially including the large group of Catholic and Muslim Albanians (Trix 2001).

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

I did not wait until I completed all of my interviews and observations to do analysis. Using a research journal and progressively coming up with conceptual categories to understand my interviews and observations as I did them were helpful when I reached final analysis. I utilized "grounded theory" as my analytical guideline for this research. My strategy is *grounded* only in that I gave "priority to developing rather than to verifying analytic propositions" based

[18] Yugoslavians could include ethnic Albanians who emigrated from the Former Yugoslavia and thus entered the US with Yugoslavian passports.

on what the research participants said (Emerson et al. 1995:143). Drawing from the Chicago School tradition, the grounded theory approach emphasizes that in order for researchers to achieve an understanding of the lives of their researcher participants we must understand how people in social groups define and interpret the situations and events of their lives. As proposed by Charmaz (2005), the grounded theory approach calls upon the researcher to engage simultaneously in data collection and analyses of empirical materials. This approach requires the researcher to remain close to the social world of their participants and to "develop an integrated set of theoretical concepts from their empirical materials that not only synthesize and interpret them but also show processual relationships" (Charmaz 2005:508). Thus, analyzing my data from the "ground up" will allow me to build codes directly from the data that relate to and/or contradict existing set of theories and concepts in a more "open-minded and context-sensitive" fashion (Miles and Huberman 1994:58). In the results chapters of this dissertation (chapters 5-7) I used verbatim quotations quite heavily in the reporting of some of my findings so as to emphasize the participants' words and thoughts on a given topic, but also so the reader can gain a greater sense of the interpretations I made by being able to read the original data for themselves.

The Coding Process

In the initial stages of analysis, I read through all of my interview transcripts, and notes, and listened to my interviewing recordings multiple times prior to transcribing them. The transcripts ranged from 14 to 45 pages single-space pages. During my reading and listening, I wrote preliminary notes and codes regarding what I saw and heard during that research interaction, and developed ideas about what was going on in the data. I analyzed, interview transcripts and field notes using open coding process by going through each transcript line by line. I then used a focused coding process (Emerson, et al. 1995). I coded for events, activities

involving other people within particular situations, relationships, interactions, definitions, and meanings (i.e. what concepts and symbols do people use to construct and understand their world). In some instances I used *in vivo* coding where I thought the wording the participant used was best for conveying a particular meaning regarding a situation. In doing so I was able to capture certain metaphors and analogies respondents used to indicate the way they feel about Albanian culture and the community (e.g., Albanian culture as "thick soup"). I used qualitative data analysis software (NVivo9) in order to manage the data and use the software as a tool for discovering patterns and major themes in the data based on what my participants said. For instance, in my focused coding process, I discovered that when they spoke about being Albanian they related closely to themes of family cohesion and national pride. I also wrote analytical memos related to the main topics that emerged throughout the data collection process. For example, I wrote memos on creating an Albanian identity, gendered relations, community engagement, Albanian language, the responsibility of respect, as well as methodological issues. My memos related mostly to reflecting on emergent themes and methods.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND LIMITATIONS

Like many studies, this research design has limitations. The results based on this study are localized to one particular group of the Albanian population within a localized geographical area. Because of the number of participants, any generalizations about the larger population of Albanians should be done with caution. A cross-national comparative, mixed methods (i.e. quantitative and qualitative strategies) research study could add representativeness and richness to my findings. However, future researchers might be able to use insights from this research and examine them in broader quantitative research or apply them to different groups, thus enlarging the sample size and representativeness. The sampling strategies I used, however, might bias my

findings to a particular group of Albanians. For instance, many of my participants were college-educated, single, and also women. Another possible limitation is the actual interview protocol, which could be viewed as insufficient as there might be other topics that shape Albanian identity, community and families that were not included in the protocol. However, if we could do more studies in the way I have and enlarge the sample size, it is possible that similar issues and themes would emerge. Despite the limitations, this study in Michigan allowed me to answer the questions I have posed and served as a good location for exploring possibilities for comparative and mixed methods research - national and international work.

CHAPTER FOUR

BACKGROUND ON ALBANIANS

For 45 years under the policies of isolationism under the Hoxha dictatorship, the Albanian-born Albanians were legally and politically prevented from migrating. The fall of Albanian communism in 1991 marked a new era for Albanians, and the beginning of what would be a significant point in the migration story of Albanian-born Albanians. Scholars have referred to this moment as a "migration explosion" (Barjaba and King 2005:2). However, Albanian migration to the US can be traced back to the 19th century with the migration stream being composed of a largely Orthodox and Muslim male communities, then more diverse Albanian migrants followed after World War II with new arrivals of ethnic Albanians[1] to the United States.[2] This chapter is descriptive of the Albanian population, and is intended to give the reader an understanding of the background of Albanians. This chapter includes a brief and selective overview of the history of Albanians, and Albanian identities prior to migration. This is followed by a description of the patterns of Albanian migration to the United States, and an overview of the settlement experiences of Albanians in other parts in the world. I use data derived from a 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS hereafter), and also US census data in order to present a basic, descriptive statistics regarding the population of Albanian-born and individuals

[1] By ethnic Albanians I mean Albanians who resided outside of the late 19th century political redrawing of the borders of Albania as we know it today: Yugoslavs, Kosovars, Montenegro and Macedonia.

[2] A table on different waves of Albanian migration to the US is available upon request.

of Albanian-Ancestry (first response[3]) in the United States and Michigan, as well as the characteristics of the sample used in this study. The chapter is based on knowledge derived from my examination of historical, political, sociological and anthropological research as well as US census and ACS data.

BACKGROUND OF THE ALBANIAN POPULATION

In order to understand the findings on Albanian immigrants and their children in the chapters that follow, readers must have a contextual understanding Albanians prior to migration.[4] Young (2001) asserts that Albania today is one of the most ethnically homogenous nations in all of the Balkans where 91 percent of its population is ethnic Albanian, 7 percent is Greek, and 2 percent Vlach, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Roma and Serb.[5] According to the 2011 Albanian Population and Housing Census[6] figures, the total population of Albania is 2,831,741. The Albanian Institute of Statistics notes that compared to the 2001 Population and

---

[3] According to the American Community Survey, the variable ancestry, first response is a question that is based on "self-identification; the data on ancestry represent self-classification by people according to the ancestry group(s) with which they most closely identify. Ancestry refers to a person's ethnic origin or descent, "roots," or heritage or the place of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States (http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/cgi-bin/virtcdlib/index.cgi/4291881/FID2/acs_html/html/meth_doc/datadef/ancestry.htm). It should be noted that even if the respondent self-identified as, for instance, "Albanian-American," the "American" portion was dropped. "American" was only kept if it was used alone.

[4] This dissertation does not attempt to present a wide-ranging and in-depth discussion of what is a deep, complex history of Albanians. I selectively chose elements of the Albanian background that are most relevant to this dissertation.

[5] It is important to note that official Census figures are disputed, particularly by non-ethnic Albanian minority populations like Greeks who estimate Greeks in Albanian to have a larger share of the population, particularly in the South, than is officially reported by the Albanian government (Barajarba 2004).

[6] See http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_phc/Albania/Albania.pdf. The document was based on preliminary results, and produced by the Albanian Institute of Statistics.

Housing Census, the population of Albania was estimated to be a little over 3 million people. Comparing these figures show a decline in the population over 10 years, which is likely due to emigration and decline in fertility (Albanian Population and Housing Census 2011).

Because of the historical political redrawing of its borders, many of Albanians also live outside the current border of Albania in Montenegro, Kosovo, and Macedonia. Large segments of Albanian territories were annexed to Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Greece by the other European powers through the Treaties of San Stefano (1878) and Berlin (1878). This stirred a strong sense of nationalism among Albanians who then developed the Prizren League[7] in 1878, an Albanian political organization set up in order to protect Albanian lands from foreign influences. The organization did not fulfill its promise of Albanian unity, which is that it would reclaim all of the Albanian-inhabited territories. However, the League did succeed in some respects. Jelavich (1983:366) writes, "Despite the final failures, The League of Prizren had accomplished a great deal. Both Montenegro and Greece received significantly less Albanian territory than they would have gained without the organized protest. Moreover, the Great Powers were made aware of the existence and separate national interests of the Albanian people." Even though the Prizren League disintegrated as an organization, the ideas of political and Albanian cultural autonomy remained within the Ottoman empire through the development of Albanian language newspapers and journals, and "secret schools" to teach the Albanian language (which was forbidden under the Empire) in the late 18th century. Albanian revolts and uprisings in the

[7] Also called the "Albanian League for the Defense of the Rights of the Albanian Nation. Prizren is a town in Kosovo. The Prizren League was a defense against the Treaty of San Stefano and Berlin, which gave Albanian-inhabited territory to Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria provinces (Jelavich 1983). The organization sought to define and defend the boundaries of the Albanian territories, but also to create an autonomous organization on behalf of the Albanians under Ottoman rule, but found it difficult to define an Albanian nationality as opposed to an Ottoman identity (Vickers 1995).

early 19th century further contributed to the decay and eventual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire (Vickers 1995).

After the first and second Balkan Wars (1912-1913), which were infused with conflicts over which territories went to which country, Albania had its own state, claiming independence from the Ottoman Empire that ruled them for about 500 years. A significant part of the Albanian population was still left outside of the boundaries of the newly independent Albania in 1912 (Vikers 1995; Misha 2002). Noting the boundary changes in the early 20th century, Vickers (2001:70) writes,

> A major part of northern and western Albanian went to Serbia and Montenegro while Greece received the large southern region of Chameria, leaving the Albanian state reduced to the central regions together with the town of Shkoder and its surrounding territory. Over half of the Albanian population was thus left outside the borders of the new Albanian state.

The new state of Albania was set on a course of political instability and deep poverty by the 1920s, and would then be ruled by Ahmed Zogu (1925-1930)[8] who led an "authoritarian and conservative regime, the primary aim of which was the maintenance of stability and order" (Vickers 1995:118). The US had established diplomatic relations with Albania in 1922 after Albanian's independence from the Ottoman Empire until it was occupied by Italy (1939-1943) and then Germany (1943-1944) during World War II.[9] After the two short lived Kingdoms under Italy and then Germany, a pro-fascist leader came into power in 1944, with Enver Hoxha as its leader as part of the Party Labour of Albania for about 40 years. Under his rule, Hoxha closed the doors of Albania to the rest of the world, and did not allow anyone to leave and allowed only

[8] During his reign, he was first a Prime Minister, then President and then King of Albania.

[9] See: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3235.htm

limited entry of foreign nationals (Draper 1997; Vickers 1995). Scholars of the period (Abraham 1996; Draper 1997) describe Hoxha's regime as oppressive. Abraham 1996[10] describes Albania under Hoxha's communism in this way:

> For nearly half a century Albania experienced a brand of communism unknown to the rest of Eastern Europe. A fateful blend of isolationism and dictatorship kept this tiny Balkan country the poorest and most repressive in all of Europe. During his forty-year reign, the Albanian leader Enver Hoxha banned religion, forbade travel and outlawed private property. Any resistance to his rule was met with severe retribution, including internal exile, long-term imprisonment and execution. His domination of Albania's political, economic and social life was absolute.

Hoxha led the country until his death in 1985, and was succeeded by Ramiz Alia who was the last communist leader of Albania. After periods of violent unrest, protests, worker strikes, the rise of independent political parties, dire economic conditions, and other political crises (Vicker 2001), communist Albania dissolved between 1991-1992, during which a transitional government was in place under the socialist (Labour Party of Albania) leadership of President Ramiz Alia and Prime Minister Fatos Nanos.[11] The Democrat Party won the parliamentary elections in 1992 with Sali Berisha elected as Albania's first non-communist president since Zog, and served from 1992 until 1997. Under his leadership, the economic crisis in Albanian persisted, which was characterized best by the 1996-1997 "pyramid banking crisis" that resulted in an armed rebellion against the Berisha regime and the country entering into anarchy (i.e., violence by local militia gangs, demonstrations, uprisings) (Vickers 2001). This economic and political turmoil led to another wave of Albanian migration to neighboring countries (e.g., Italy, Greece) and North America. In 1997 elections, the Socialist Party defeated Berisha who was

[10] See: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,HRW,COUNTRYREP,ALB,,3ae6a7f30,0.html

[11] Fatos Nano remained the leader of the Socialist Party until 1995 after which Edi Rama became the party's leader. Edi Rama is now the Socialist Party Candidate for Prime Minister against the Democratic Party's leader, Sali Berisha. The election will be held on June 23, 2013.

succeeded by Rexhep Meidani.[12] Today the Albanian government is led by the Democratic Party with Bujar Nishani as the President and Sali Berisha as the Prime Minister.[13] Alongside the political and economic upheavals occurring in Albania, there are other elements of Albanian social and political history that has shaped their migration and diversity in North America, such as the breakup of Yugoslavia during the early 1990s, the treatment of ethnic Albanians by Serbia, and the Kosovo War in 1999, during which the United States had provided military assistance to Albanians in fighting Yugoslavia.

Albanians in Albania and abroad idolize their national hero Skanderbeg or Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu who led Albanian forces in their defeat of the Ottomans. In many of the places I visited during fieldwork or offices where I did interviews, I would see some image of Skanderbeg. For example, in one interview, the male respondent had a bust of Skanderbeg in his office. At one of the Albanian Catholic Churches in Michigan, you will see a large statue of Skanderbeg when you enter the church grounds and a massive portrait of him in the hall of the church.[14] As I will discuss later, even one of my second generation male participants had a tattoo of Skanderbeg on his arm. The image and idea of Skanderbeg as defeating the Ottomans with his Albanian army evokes a strong sense of perseverance, struggle, and power that gets infused into an all-encompassing Albanian national identity (Vickers 1995; Draper 1997).

---

[12] Who was succeeded by Alfred Moisiu (Independent politician favored by both Socialist leader Fatos Nana and Democratic leader Sali Berisha) in 2002, then Bamir Topi (Democratic Party), and today's president of Albania Bujar Nishani (Democratic Party).

[13] I wrote this chapter before the most recent Albanian election. Albania very recently held elections in June 2013, and the Socialist Party won the election so the new Prime Minister of Albania will be Edi Rama.

[14] See Appendix B, Figures 3 and 4 of Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu (Skanderbeg) at an Albanian Catholic Church.

Vickers (1995) writes:

> Skenderbeg's most significant achievement was his ability to weld the various Albanian tribes together, for the first time, into a force capable of checking the Ottoman advance towards the Adriatic and Italy. Over four hundred years later the name of Skenderbeg was to become a symbol of unity and strength to Albanians as they struggled to confirm their national identity (p. 9).

The symbol of Skanderbeg (Muslim name) or Gjergj Katrioti (his Illyrian[15] Christian name) (Lubonja 2002) was part of the narrative that had passed down for generations about how Albanians attempted to defend and maintain their identity and culture under (and beyond) centuries of Ottoman rule. Alongside this idea of Albanian unity first forged under Skanderbeg's leadership against the Ottomans, there exist important diversities that have long been and still remain a problem for Albanians in terms of forging a single national identity.

Albanian Diversities

There are historically[16] two primary ethnic/regional/linguistic sub-groups among the ethnic Albanian population, which differ in their language dialect, history, and religious characteristics. The Albanians in the North (including Kosovar Albanians) generally belong to the Ghegs and the Tosk group is found in the South. North and South Albania are demarcated by the Shkumbin River, which flows through the Elbasan, a city in Central Albania.[17]

---

[15] Illyrian is the ancient name for the areas that are presently include in the current borders of Albania (Vickers 1995).

[16] Vickers (2001) discusses these two distinct groups around the arrival of the Ottomans into the Balkan Peninsula, particularly in the early 1400s. She does not discuss in any great detail how these two distinct groups came to be, only saying that, "natural barriers had divided the Albanian people into two distinct groups with different dialects and great variations in their social structures" (p. 5).

[17] See the US Central Intelligence Agency at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/cia-maps-publications/Albania.html for a map of Albania. It is a political map that shows cities of origin and surrounding countries.

Babuna (2000:67) describes their differences this way:

> The overwhelming majority of the Albanians in Kosovo, Montenegro, and western Macedonia are also Gegs. Geg society in Albanian was traditionally based on a tribal structure, but the communist regime in Albanian tried to integrate the two tribes and the terms Geg and Tosk disappeared in political vocabulary. In time, the tribal structure in northern Albanian largely disappeared, while the Gegs [ethnic Albanians] of the former Yugoslavia have preserved some elements of their patriarchal culture to the present day.

As Babuna points out, the northern rural areas of Albanian maintain patriarchal emphasis to some extent today. The rural north, including Kosovo, tends to be more male-dominated and patrilineal than other places in Albania (Young 2001). The Ghegs were organized by tightly knit clan system. Even today these clan systems of perpetuated and celebrated by the ethnic-Albanians from southeastern Montenegro and northern parts of Albania (referred to as "Malesia e Madhe," which is the highland region of northern Albanian and southeastern Montenegro and Ulqin, which is in southern Montenegro) who live in the US. The organization of the clan system was so strong that those relations carried over into US society. According to Vickers (2001), the "Tosks constituted the bulk of the landless and subsistence-level peasantry," whose social organization was a more village-based (Vickers 2001:5). Even though Albanians would not identify themselves (especially to outsiders) based on these broad categories today, there are differences between the north (which includes Kosovars) and the south (e.g., language dialect, types of dance, music and traditional clothing), even though under communist Albania ethnic differences were supposed to be eliminated.

Albanian Nationalism

The fact that many ethnic Albanians lived outside the newly independent state was one of the obstacles Albanians faced to solidifying a national identity. Not only did many ethnic Albanians live outside of the political borders of Albania, but also there were internal differences

that were solidified over time.[18] For instance, Albanians are divided regionally, and religiously. Draper (1997) asserts that it was not until the end of the Second World War, when the Albanian communists came into power, that the idea of creating and practice to make a single Albanian identity began to take form. The Albanian communists attempted to solidify a single national identity by connecting and highlight Albanian nationalism back to the 15th century Albanian hero, Skanderbeg. In addition to this, the communists sought to balance the standard of living to get rid of differences between urban and rural, standardize the Albanian language, suppressed a 1947 rebellion among the peasant northern Catholics that then led to their persecution (Draper 1997:10). They also, "established a comprehensive state schooling system; normalized the disparate local and non-written cultures of the country into a single high culture; isolated the Albanians from other peoples; and, succeeded in standardizing the Albanian language" Draper 2002:9). Language in particular was one of the elements that could also bring together the disparate groups of Albanians. In talking about the politics of 'Albanianism' since the nineteenth century, Duijzing (2002:61) writes,

> Since none of the faiths was in the position to bring all Albanians together on a religious platform, language became the main vehicle for national unity: the Albanian language – very distinct from the language of its direct (Slav and Greek) neighbors – was the only element at hand that could bridge the differences between various religious and regional identities.

Religion remained a problematic difference for the communist leadership even as language was a potential unifying force and other strategies had been used for eliminating differences. National ideologists attempted to hide religious differences under the blanket of 'civil religion' (Duijzing

[18] Especially since Ottoman rule when Albanians were strategically isolated in different territories called vilayets. Each vilayet was created to be ethnically homogenous (Misha 2002). Ottomans attempted to keep Albanians isolated and as such they created these territorial divisions that kept any sense of national consciousness among Albanians at bay.

2002). This was embodied by Pashko Vasa's famous national poem that the faith of Albanians is Albanianism and the saying that "Ky eshte shpata eshte feja" (Where the sword is, there lies religion") (Skendi 1967:20). Under the communist rule of Hoxha, this idea of the religion of Albanians is Albanianism was taken seriously and to the extreme. Hoxha outlawed the practice of religion in 1967, making Albania one of the first atheist states as it was prohibited by the constitution (Duijzing 2002; Draper 1997). During this time, people practicing their religion were persecuted, and many religious institutions were destroyed and shut down.

Religious conflict is buried in the national rhetoric that the faith of Albanians is Albanianism. Duijzing (2002) argues that extant Albanian historiography tends to ignore the reality of religious conflict among Albanians. He writes, "Well-known examples are the Sunni hostility towards the Bektashis in southern Albania, and the conflicts between Catholics and Muslims in the north, as in the towns of Gjakova and Shkodra" (p. 62). However, ethnic conflicts also existed *within* religious populations such as between the Greek and Albanian Orthodox. However, religious differences became less important when Albanians Muslims and Catholics in the north cooperated with each other against the Slavs as rifts between Albanians and Slavs intensified. Thus, Albanians religious and ethnic tensions are more complex than is suggested by the unified notion of Albanianism. In my interviews, discussions emerged over which comes first - being Albanian or being of a particular religion.

Despite the attempts of the Albanian communist state, Albanians could not unite under one religion because of the perpetuation of three (arguably four with the Bektashi order) different religious communities. According to the 2011 Albanian census, a significant portion of the population in Albania is Muslim[19] (56.7%) while 10.03 percent of the population is Catholic;

[19] Mostly Sunni, but also includes Sufi Muslims.

6.75% Orthodox, 2.09 percent Bektashi, and 0.14 percent define themselves as evangelical, about 8% are either atheist or undefined believers and 13.79 percent of the total population did not answer the religion question.[20] These figures represent a failure of the atheist state in that religion could not be eliminated from Albania. However, Haxhia and Gurakuqi (2011) suggest that religious identity among Albanians is difficult to capture because of the history of religious suppression in Albania. They write, "After fifty years of Communist rule (during twenty four of which religion could not be practiced openly), significant numbers are either atheist or, while retaining their faith, do not attend places of worship. Only people over sixty and certain families have kept the tradition alive" (p. 94). One of the challenges Albania has faced since the collapse of communism is, as Draper (1997:7) states, the "reintegration of religion into Albanian national conceptions…" All of the religious groups that are contained within Albanian and among the populations of Albanians who live in Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia are also represented in Michigan. There is a thriving Bektashi and Sunni Muslim communities (Trix 1994) as well as Roman Catholic and Orthodox in Michigan, with the Muslim Albanian community having a longer history of settlement in Michigan than Catholic Albanians. Trix (1994:359) states that:

> And whereas Boston became the center for Orthodox Christian Albanians, and New York eventually the political center of all Albanians, Detroit became the organizational center for Muslim Albanians. It was in Detroit that the first Albanian Mosque in America was organized in 1949, and in the Detroit area that an Albanian Bektashi Tekke, a Sufi center of the Bektashi order, was founded in 1953.

While Metro-Detroit area of Michigan has been the organizational center for the Muslim Albanian community, it has also been the center of the Catholic Albanian population since the late 1970s, particularly those who emigrated from the Former Yugoslavia where they have two

[20] See http://www.instat.gov.al/media/177358/njoftim_per_media_-_fjala_e_drejtorit_te_instat_ines_nurja_per_rezultatet_finale_te_census_2011.pdf

Albanian Catholic Churches in a northern suburb of Detroit (city of Beverley Hills and now in Southfield) and another in an eastern suburb of Detroit (city of Warren). The church on the east side has moved to an affluent northeastern suburb (city of Rochester Hills) where the Albanians[21] have built a brand new church which can seat 1,000 parishioners on any given Sunday, complemented with a banquet hall, classrooms and a restaurant. There is an Albanian Orthodox church, but the organizational center of the Orthodox Albanian community in the United States is in Massachusetts.

ALBANIANS IN THE UNITED STATES AND MICHIGAN

Several writers have noted that it is difficult to capture the actual number of Albanians in the US because those who arrived in the US during 1960s came from areas outside of Albania (e.g., former Yugoslavia) (Pano 2008; Trix 2001). I used Albanian-born and Albanian-ancestry (first response) in order to provide a broad picture of the Albanian community in the United States and Michigan. The purpose is to give readers a broader picture of the Albanian-born and Albanian ancestry populations in the United States and Michigan before I begin to focus qualitatively on a select part of that community. According to the American Community Survey (2007-2011), there are 168,653 individuals living in the United States who define their first ancestry as Albanian (this includes foreign-born[22] and US born individuals), and the majority of the Albanian-born identify their ancestry as Albanian (99.5% of Albanian-born in the US; 100% of Albanian-born in Michigan). These same data show that there are also 76,611 Albanian-born individuals living in the United States. The United States census data show that the Albanian-

[21] I do not have any details about if this was a solely Catholic undertaking or if the Albanian Catholics received assistance from other non-Catholic Albanians like they did in the past.

[22] Born outside the US and its territories.

born population, in particular, living in the United States increased steadily from 1920 to 1960, except for a very minor decrease between 1930 and 1940. After 1960 there is steady decrease in the Albanian born population living in the United States for the next 30 years, most likely due to the effects of Enver Hoxha's rule when Albanian nationals were not permitted to leave Albania. Between 1990 and 2000, there is a significant increase in the Albanian-born population living in the United States, which is most likely due to the fall of communism and transition to democracy when the borders of Albanian opened up after a half-century of isolation from the rest of the world, coupled with an economic and unemployment crisis in Albania. Barjaba (2004) highlighted that,

> By the present day, approximately 25 percent of the total population, or over 35 percent of the labor force, has emigrated. The country has approximately 900,000 emigrants, now residing mainly in Greece (600,000), Italy (200,000), and most of the remained in other Western European countries, the US, and Canada. Albanians migration flow has, since the early 1990s, been five times higher than the average migration flow in developing countries (p. 3).

Census and ACS data (1920-ACS 2010) show that while Albanians represent a very small share of the foreign-born in the United States,[23] there are three major historical moments of Albanian migration: 1) During the construction of the Albanian state in the 1920s; 2) The end of World War II, and 3) At the end of the Cold War when there is also a notable an increase of refugees as a result of ethnic conflicts around the world (Castles and Miller 2009). Albanians are just one group that was part of the massive population flows of that happened all over the world (e.g., migration of Russians to Germany) and to North America in the aftermath of the Cold War (Castles and Miller 2009). Table 1a shows that 2000 represented the largest numbers of Albanians ever counted by the United States, with a growth of more than 1,000 percent from the

[23] Of every one thousand foreign born (immigrants) in the US in 2010, almost two were born in Albania (1.75 per mill). See Table 1a in Appendix A for the number of Albanian foreign-born, and Table 1c in Appendix A for the number of foreign-born in the US by census year since 1920.

previous decade, from 5,524 Albanian-born individuals in 1990 to about 81,000 in 2000 or about 14 times more Albanian-born individuals were living in the US in 2000 than in the previous decade. Table 1a also illustrates that the population born in Albania and living in the United States between 1990-2000 represents the highest growth compared to other population of foreign-born ethnic Albanians (who lived outside of Albania), mainly from the former Yugoslavia, as Albanian communities in Eastern Europe are generally spread across Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia (Pano 2008). There is a small decline (.08%) in the population of Albanian-born in the following 10 years, from 2000 to 2010. In 2010, there were 74,335 people born in Albanian were living in the United States and slightly increased in 2011 to 78,284 people. Michigan, the study site, is second major place of residence in the United States after New York for Albanian-born and those who define their ancestry as Albanian after New York. ACS data (2006-2011) show that a little over 11,000 Albanians (or 14 percent of all Albanian-born in the United States) live in Michigan, and over 23,000 (or 14.4% of those) who define their first ancestry as Albanian.[24]

As Table 1a shows, the largest increase in the population of Albanian-born in Michigan occurred at the same time frame as the Albanian-born in the United States in general, with about over a 900 percent increase from the previous decade, from only 620 Albanian-born individuals in 1990 to almost 6,500 in 2000. The latest ACS 2011 figures show that there are almost 11,000 Albanian-born individuals who live in Michigan, still more than all other Yugoslavian-born who live in Michigan. Table 1b[25] demonstrates that those who identified as Yugoslavian decreased quite a bit (32 percent in the US and 29 percent in Michigan) after 1990. This is most likely due

[24] See Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix B.

[25] See Figure 2 in Appendix B.

to people entering the US with non-Yugoslavian passports and a change in nationality due to the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.

It follows then that the year or period of arrival when most Albanians came to the United States was after 1991 when most of the Albanian-born entered the United States and only slightly more men than women.[26] For the purposes of this dissertation, I organized Albanian migration into four general waves: 1) Late 19th to early 20th century; 2) After WWII, 1945-1959; 3) After WWII (1960-1989), 4) After 1990s - after the fall of communism. Albanians who emigrated before 1945 were predominately Orthodox Christians and Muslim males from Southeastern Albania (region of Korce). They had limited education and few skills (Schaefer, 2008). Many of them left Albanian because of poor economic conditions, but also left to escape because of political conflicts and nationalistic movements in the Balkans (Barjaba 2004). Anticommunists from all regions of the country, including Albanians from Yugoslavia emigrated after World War II. The1960s is when the Albanian-American community's solidarity was challenged by an influx of ethnic Albanians from outside of Albania (Pano 2008). The period after the 1990s, following the collapse of the Albanian communist regime, and the breakup of the former Yugoslavia and Kosovo crisis facilitated Albanian migration to North America. Those who emigrated after the 1990s were mainly from Albania, and Kosovo, and many are political asylum seekers from Albania. These migrants were not closely religiously affiliated as religion was outlawed in Albanian since 1967 (Trix 2001), but there are groups of both Christians and Muslims. The majority of Kosovars who came to Michigan are Muslim, but are more diverse in age and socioeconomic position than in pervious waves (Trix, 2001). In this wave, we also see

[26] See Table 2 in Appendix A.

more skilled and educated migrants from Albania going to US and Canada (as well as other parts of Europe, particularly Italy and Greece). The waves could also be broken down into different streams based on country of origin conditions. For instance, between 1996-1997 Albanians left Albanian as a result of the collapse of various pyramid schemes when thousands of people lost their savings (Barjaba 2004). While those different streams within the 1990s wave are important, I define the last wave generally to include all of those who emigrated for political reasons tied to the collapse of communism, the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Kosovo war, poor economic conditions and lack of educational opportunities in country of origin. I will only make fine distinctions if it becomes important for understanding my participants' stories.

Social Characteristics of Albanians in the US and Michigan

Most of the Albanian-born population in the United States is of working age, but the Albanian ancestry population has a higher percentage of those who are under 18 years of age. In Michigan, there are a higher percentage of those who are of working age (18-64) compared to Albanian-born and Albanian ancestry in the United States, with no major differences between men and women in any case.[27] Most Albanian-born and Albanian ancestry also identify as white across the United States and in Michigan. However, there is a very small percentage of Albanian-born and Albanian ancestry who live in the United States that identify as other race or two or more races; whereas for the Albanian-born in Michigan, all identify as white. When it comes to those who identify their ancestry as Albanian and live in Michigan, a very small percentage also identify with two or more races, but most still identify as white. It is evident that campaigns to identify Albanians as "other race" has not translated into large-scales "other race"

[27] See Tables 3 and 4 in Appendix A.

identification among the Albanian-born as well as those who identify their first ancestry as Albanian.[28]

When it come to citizenship, almost half of the Albanian-born who live in the United States are not US citizens while a little over half are naturalized citizens, with no real major differences between men and women. A very small percentage are born abroad of American parents. With the Albanian-born in Michigan, we see the opposite situation where a little more than half are not citizens and a little less than half are naturalized citizens, with a slightly higher percentage of women who are not citizens compared to men.[29]

In addition to citizenship status, language is another important variable that is used to understand immigrant integration process and serves as an important indicator of identity. It is significant that among the Albanian-born and those who identify their ancestry as Albanian the Albanian language has not faded in the household. This could be the result of the fact that a significant portion of the Albanian population is still foreign-born. In fact, the language spoken in the home other than English is overwhelmingly Albanian. The majority of Albanian-born and those who identify their ancestry as Albanian across the United States and in Michigan who use Albanian language at home. Literature on native language retention demonstrates that it declines with each generation (Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993). Research has also shown that that low parental education level is linked to the retention of native language (Telles and Ortiz 2009:209). Vasquez (2011:79) confirms this in her study of Mexican Americans across generations, which revealed that college education was linked to

[28] See Tables 5 and 6 in Appendix A.

[29] See Tables 7 and 8 in Appendix A.

"rapid English language acquisition and loss of Spanish skills."[30]

Educational level and occupation are also key variables in understanding the social makeup of a population, serving as a proxy for income and social class. I recoded the variable education to only include those who are 25 years of age and older because at least by the age of 25 people would have at least had the time to complete a bachelors degree. Among the Albanian-born in the United States, more women than men have 8 years of school or less, but only slightly more men than women have nine to twelve years of education with no diploma or a high school diploma with some college. When it comes completion of post-secondary education we begin to see women with slightly more education than men in the categories of associates (5.5% women versus 3.8% men) and bachelors degrees (22.8% women 21.7% men). Only in the completion of a professional degree do Albanian men surpass women, and even that is not a major gap (8.1% men versus 6.7% women). In Michigan, while a higher percent of Albanian-born people (both men and women) have completed a high school degree, they have a higher percent of those who also have eight years of education or less and nine to twelve years of education with no diploma. In post-secondary education, the overall Albanian-born population in Michigan is less educated than those in the United States. For instance, 14 percent of those who live in Michigan have completed a bachelor's degree compared to 22 percent of those in the United States. Although the Albanian-born in the United States overall are more educated than those who live in Michigan, the sex patterns remain with women slightly more educated than men until you get to the professional degree category.[31]

Those who identify their first ancestry as Albanian do not necessarily fare that much

[30] See Tables 9 and 10 in Appendix A.

[31] See Tables 11 and 12 in Appendix A.

better than the Albanian-born in terms of educational attainment, especially when it comes to grade school and high school completion. Compared with the Albanian-born, those who identify their ancestry as Albanian and live in the United States or Michigan have a slightly higher percentage of the population who have 8 years of school or less and 9 to 12 years of school with no diploma. They also have a lower percentage of those who complete high school, GED or some college compared to the Albanian born in the United States and Michigan. Overall this demonstrates that those who identify their ancestry as Albanian are more highly represented among lower education categories than those who are Albanian-born. The picture is more mixed when it comes to post-secondary education. Those of Albanian ancestry in the United States or Michigan have a slightly higher percentage of those who completed an associates degree compared to the Albanian-born, but do not fare as well as the Albanian-born when it comes to completing a bachelor's degree. Even among those of Albanian-ancestry, these data still show that Albanians in the United States are more highly educated than those who live in Michigan, even though a slightly higher percentage of those in Michigan compared to the United States complete high school. However, those who define their ancestry as Albanian in both the United States and Michigan do slightly better than the Albanian-born when it comes to professional degree completion. So what kinds of occupations do the Albanian-born and those of Albanian ancestry have?

The top five occupations[32] for the overall Albanian-born population in the United States who are 18 years and older are in personal services and sales (26%); production and transportation (15%); buildings and installation (14.8%); office services and related (11%) and construction and related (8.7%). Differences emerge when you look at occupations for men and

[32] Table not shown. Available upon request.

women. Not surprisingly, men are more concentrated than women in production and transportation, buildings and installation and construction occupations. The top job for men is in personal services and sales (22%), but women outnumber men in that category (31%) followed by office and service related (women 16.3%; men 6.9%). Education and health care practioners, technical and support are two of the top five occupations where women are focused as well, but those occupations do not make it on the men's top five list. Similar patterns emerge in Michigan where you find the Albanian-born population concentrated in the same top five jobs as the Albanian-born across the United States. You only begin to see differences when it comes to men and women. In Michigan, personal services and sales remains the top job for women, but a higher percentage of females are concentrated in personal services and sales than those in the United States (45.2% in Michigan and 31.2% in the United States). Similarly, personal services and sales remains the top job for men in Michigan as it is in the United States and there is slightly higher percentage for Michigan than in the United States, even though women still outnumber men in that category. Overall, the occupations of the Albanian-born in Michigan mirror those of the rest of the Albanian-born population in the United States, but the picture changes slightly among those who identify their ancestry as Albanian.

The one key difference in occupational category between the Albanian-born and the individuals of Albanian ancestry who live in Michigan or the United States is that management and business, science and arts occupations becomes one of the top five occupational categories for individuals of Albanian ancestry overall. Those who are of Albanian ancestry maintain similar sex and occupation patterns as those who are Albanian-born with personal services and sales still remaining the top job for both men and women even as women outnumber men in this category, especially in Michigan (45.3% for women; 29.4% for men). The Albanian population

in the United States earns less on average in terms of median personal income (Albanian-born $16,407; Albanian Ancestry $16,039) compared to the US population as whole ($20,694), and the same patterns holds for Albanians in Michigan when you compare them to the total median personal income for the Michigan population as a whole, although the gap in income is smaller. When it comes to median family income, the story is slightly different, particularly for Albanians in the United States who have slightly more family income on average than the national average. However, Albanians in Michigan still earn less than the Michigan population as a whole in terms of family income as well.[33]

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a pre-migration cultural and sociopolitical background that has laid the foundation within which Albanian migration to the US as well as their experiences in the US can be comprehended. I began this chapter by discussing some of the general characteristic of Albanians in Albanian, and discussed the process involved in political redrawing of national borders in the Balkans since the late 19th century. This is important because it is fundamental to understanding the diversity of Albanians in the US, particularly in Michigan, and the overall character of Albanian identity throughout history and Albanian culture as it relates to how it is reproduced in the US. I focused on describing Albania under Enver Hoxha's rule as part of Albanian communism because it shaped religious experience and national identity of Albanians as well as contributed to facilitating, after its downfall, a massive wave of Albanian migration. Along with this, I discussed Albanian nationalism and associated national symbols as it provides a context for what my participants describe in later chapters

[33] See Table 13 in Appendix A.

about Albanian pride. Finally, I provide a basic quantitative portrait of Albanians in the US and Michigan in order to give readers some insight into the social and economic characteristics of the Albanians population, and there is no other study that I found on Albanians that provides such detail using census and ACS data.

CHAPTER FIVE

CULTURAL CONTINUITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ALBANIAN

The next three chapters provide insight into the meaning and importance of creating and maintaining an Albanian identity for a select group of Albanians, the struggle to define an Albanian identity in US contexts, and the perceived costs associated with being Albanian. I refer to the explanatory schema that I use to bind each of these chapters as the problems of continuity and change – the struggle of maintaining culture in the face of social and cultural changes. The purpose of this particular chapter is to examine the processes by which my participants maintain the importance of ethnicity –Albanian culture, traditions, and ethnic and national identities. The main contention of this chapter is that the process of maintaining ethnicity involves the constant interplay of the individual, family and ethnic community, and requires an understanding of what the meaning of ethnic distinction is in the first place. Albanians (whether US native or foreign-born) who want to be Albanian do so because ethnic identity is a source of pleasure, and gives individuals a sense of purpose, and the family and community are sustaining to the individual. Upholding particular ethnic traditions requires that immigrant families and ethnic communities continuously engage in and reinforce cultural preservation practices, and work at nourishing ethnic meaning that will last beyond the immigrant generation, even by drawing from the past or what the traditions were like in their country of origin at the time of migration. Notwithstanding difficulties in and challenges to organizing Albanians community as a whole, as I discuss in the next chapter, families and the immigrant community do work to (re)create and sustain ethnic culture and traditions. Joint actions in this regard are evident in the creation and activities of various Albanian organizations, the centrality of Albanian religious institutions, in marriage expectations, their Albanian networks, and the individual desire to be different by identifying

strongly with Albanian culture. The majority of the Albanian foreign-born arrived in the US since 1991, which allows for the possibility of, using Jimenez's wording, ethnic replenishment among Albanians since the generation growing up in the US would have opportunities for interaction with the immigrant generation.

This chapter investigates the ethnic traditions that are maintained and how they are reinforced and experienced by a particular group of Albanians, especially within the 1.5 and 2nd generations in Michigan. By tradition I mean the deeply rooted beliefs, customs, actions or behaviors that are passed down from generation to generation. In this chapter, I answer the questions: Given that Albanians enter a context of acceptance that facilitates their assimilation and blending in to the white American mainstream, why is it important to be Albanian? And how (and why) do my participants attach meaning to this importance through their engagement in and understanding of the continuation of Albanian culture and ethnic traditions? Most participants describe how family and community experiences work to maintain a "thick" Albanian culture, and are important institutional contexts for preserving Albanian culture. Then I describe how an Albanian identity also provides a place of belonging or somewhere to belong in which difference gives individuals a sense of purpose, a way of "join with some and depart with others" (Stone 1962:94). Looking through a symbolic interactionist lens, I am interested in my participants' construction of reality, or the meanings they attribute to their "ethnic" and "American" experiences, from the perspective of the people who are going through such experiences.

"THICK SOUP": PLEASURES OF AN ETHNIC IDENTITY

Derived from my interview with a second generation male, the metaphor of "thick soup" best illustrates the style of cultural continuity that originates from one's gratification with being

Albanian. Tony had this to say when I asked him how he would describe of define what it means to be Albanian:

> The first image that comes to my mind is just a thick soup and the reason I just feel like that is because there's some things that we are not so good at, that we need to evolve, but like the culture and traditions are very thick and I think that's important as far as for who I am, being able to speak the language and being proud of something, having a story that doesn't go back to Christopher Columbus but goes back, like November is 100 year anniversary [of Albania's independence], and they're talking about me being part of the celebrations in Shqipni [Albania] and actually performing [traditional Albanian dance and song] so for me that's like whoa and when I went to visit Southern Albanian for an event a few years ago to them [Albanian locals in the city he visited] it was this kid that was born and raised in America and never seen this place and spoke the language and was so engulfed in the culture…it made me proud and it made me feel like being Albanian. I have such an interesting past and ancestry.

Tony's description best exemplifies the importance of Albanian that many of my participants described, but also what that means for his life – being Albanian provides a history or an interesting past that is unlike the "American" past of the peers who he grew up with in the US, and it also makes for an "interesting" ancestry. Here Tony is differentiating between the "pasts" of Albanians and "Americans" in order to make sense of the importance of being Albanian. This aligns well with Mead's (1929) understanding continuity and discontinuity as Tony reveals those continuing elements of Albanian culture and its past while also identifying how those elements differ from the US American cultural past. So in the same act of continuity, one can also see aspects of discontinuity. Tony also describes his connection to nationalism with the celebration of and his involvement in Albanian national pride events. What is more interesting about the above quote is the imagery of the Albanian cultural experience as representing a "thick soup," which stimulates the idea that like a thick soup, Albanian culture is hard to stir, it sticks together, is rich and nourishing. In my interviews with Tony and others it was evident that Albanian immigrants and ethnics value the importance of and strive to maintain Albanian culture. In US contexts, as my participants have described, being Albanian is a significant source of pleasure.

Scholars like Water's (1990) and Alba (1990) refer to this in their research about ethnicity among white Americans. That is, white Americans choose to maintain aspects of their ethnicity because it enjoyable for them and makes them feel special. The following respondent, Gjon who came to the US when he was 10 years old, suggests this element:

> I like the fun stuff. I like the dancing. I like the music. I'll sit in the car and listen to Albanian music. I have no problem. I'll watch Albanian movies. When I'm around my family we all speak Albanian it's just I enjoy it. I enjoy being around it. I enjoy. It's just like a different feelings. I like the food and I'm used to, it's what I'm comfortable with, it's what I'm used to

As the above quote highlights, the importance of being Albanian is attached to the enjoyable aspects of the culture –music, film, language, and food. These and other elements provide participants a level of comfort, and certainty in their experiences. Knowing who you are while non-Albanian peers do not know their ethnic roots, but you do, as an Albanian, is one of the pleasures that come with identifying as Albanian. Sylvia, a second generation female of Kosovo origin describes:

> If one of your parents is Albanian then that's enough to [maintain Albanian culture]. It's weird because a lot of people that I talk to that I consider American when I ask them what ethnicity or culture are you know and they say yeah I'm Polish, German and Irish and you know 40 things and for me it's always distinct because I know that if I'm Albanian I eat these kind of foods and we do this every time we have a fest [gathering of relatives and Albanian friends for a feast, usually held at people's homes] and this and that and when I ask them they don't really identify with their ethnicity. So if they're Polish it's not like they eat paczki every time you know.

Sylvia implies that there is a distinction between an Albanian identity and other white identities which rests in one's actual the knowledge and practice of culture in a "thick" fashion. Participants take pleasure in having a close, meaningful ethnic attachment and culture and one that it is different from other "white" or "straight up white" individuals they encounter who have been in the US for generations. Mike more specifically describes his understanding of the Albanian distinction from other white Americans as such:

> Mike: I have one friend whose Polish, he's proud of being Polish but he's straight up white though. His parents were born here too, they are straight up white. His grandparents born here, **they are straight up white.** I think his great grandparents were born in Poland.
>
> Linda: Does he say he's Polish?
>
> Mike: Oh yeah. If you ask for his nationality he won't say American, he'll say I'm Polish because he has his pride, but it's pathetic though. He doesn't know anything about Poland. He doesn't know the language. I bet he doesn't even know how to say hello, like nothing.

Generally, therefore, the pleasures in one's Albanian identity come from having a deeper-rooted knowledge of one's ethnic background, including language, and closer connection to the immigrant generation and country of origin that extends far beyond just the announcement of an ethnic identity. My participants perceive being Albanian as important to their sense of self because it is a source of pleasure - a pleasure in knowing their difference within a group of other white Americans. The thickness of Albanian culture that is composed of distinguishing morals, principles and values that one was raised with, which are important to the meaning of an Albanian identity for many of my participants. Mike also described that being Albanian and the pleasure in such an identity derives from the consistency in culture:

> When you have pride, you hold onto your values, when you hold on to your values you are going to influence them from other people and I mean everyone has a different opinion and in my opinion it is a beautiful thing. Unfortunately with this country what you notice a lot there is so many cultures around the world coming here and it's a big melting pot so there is no uniformity, everyone is just doing their own thing, which I guess you could say that is uniformity. Everyone is going their own thing—there is no one consistent thing. That is the only form of consistency-that sense of pride. That sense of standard of values and morals that everyone has. It's just not here. Everyone has a different set of values. Some people have none. They don't care about anything else or anyone else. It's a beautiful thing where someone has a set of beliefs, morals, and values and when you look at the divorce rates and stuff back home [Albania] they are almost non-existent compared to here in the US. In the US half of the people get divorced and it's like oh guess what when you are putting people together who have different values and principles and morals, what's going to happen. If you are going based on attraction or some other chemistry or what happens when you actually start have agreeing on stuff. If

> one person says one thing..again I like consistency. I like that sense of camaraderie and I think that's where the pride things comes here where here it's like do whatever you want. You know freedom is nice but it doesn't move forward together.

As Mike elucidated, in a society that has diversities and a strong sense of the individual over the group, there is no consistency in culture, and it is difficult to create a continuity of culture in a "melting pot"-like society. It is meaningful in this diverse society to be Albanian because it provides a consistency of culture in a place that is not consistence in terms of supposed beliefs, values and morals. Ella, a second generation female with origins in Montenegro, provides an example of such morals:

> Linda: How would your parents compare to others who are not Albanian in terms of how they view raising their kids?
>
> Ella: There is a standard that you have to live up to a sort of expectations not standards but expectations and you know obviously you can't live up to every expectation but they're there and you know subconsciously that they are there you know such as marrying an Albanian or not being out at bars every night. Things like that we all know that whereas you have the moral, most parents want to raise their children morally correct but I feel with Albanian parents there's a lot more dictated to you than with an average parents. We don't have a curfew but if we ask we can go somewhere it's either a yes or a flat out no I don't care what time you are coming home or where but it's a no. So we have more of those I don't know I guess rules. Strict.

In our conversation she acknowledged that not every Albanian household is strict, but what is apparent from the above response is that the respondent attaches the meaning of being Albanian to a collective sense of standards, expectations and rules to live by that can be distinguished from the so-called "average parents." Jesika, who came to the US from Shkoder, Albania when she was 7 years old, also points out the "moral" aspect of culture in terms of what it means to be Albanian and why it is important, even when they are no external visible "signs" designating her as Albanian:

> Jesika: whenever people ask, oh you are Albanian well you don't look, you don't act like it. it's like I don't know what I'm supposed to act like? Oh no accent. Okay, is that what defines it? But I mean like I said for me it's all about values and character and morals

> because like I said the way that I live, I go to events, I go dancing, I got to the clubs once in awhile, it's not like I hold myself off from certain events cause it's like oh it's bad, 'kush po t'shef, cap o thote." [who will see you, what will they say]. So I think that makes me Albanian to some people but for me it's just more of a spiritual thing, it's all about the person that you are, your mentality. I think our mentalities are way different than someone who was born here, raised here, with an American family, with an American background.
>
> Linda: What about second gen'ers?
>
> Jesika: I still see a lot of those Albanian values in them as far as what's important and the way that they see their life planned out you know the kind of the things they want out of themselves. I find that it's still the same. You know they might not know how to speak Albanian perfectly which is adorable when you hear them speak Albanian…it's so cute. I still see, I think Albanians feel really strongly about their culture and they'll pass it down no matter what. I have cousins in Austria who are just having kids and one in Italy and my cousins mom is living there with them and she's teaching him Albanian so it's still something at school they can learn American and they can learn how to be American, but at home this is our culture, this is the context of where you are going to be living. This is our living.

Unlike other racial and ethnic minorities, Albanians, particularly their children, have the option to be white American when they are not at home and other members of society see them as such, especially when they do not have an accent or a distinguishing physical characteristics that mark them as the "racial other." Albanians instead build internal group solidarity by given meaning to being Albanians as encompassing a set of distinguishing set of morals, values, which are incorporated into the and perceived as pleasurable aspects of the self. The importance of being Albanian extends beyond basic pleasures of culture to a strong sense of national and cultural pride.

"I'm Proud to be an Albanian": National and Cultural Pride

It is difficult to decipher what is an "Albanian identity" because there are multiple Albanian identities rooted in nation-state, geographical region (including urban or rural origins), religion, and language. However, the notion of Albanian pride emerged as significant in my conversations in the field and interviews with Albanians. Albanian pride encompasses an

emotional attachment to the feeling of "I am proud to be Albanian," and having "Albanian blood in you," whether or not one was born there and regardless of your geographic origin or religious affiliation. All of the Albanian-identified organizations that I have encountered in Michigan throughout the course of this research implicitly and explicitly espouse this idea of Albanian pride such that there is something special about being Albanian. Other descriptions of the pleasures involved in an Albanian identity encompass a sense of pride derived from the struggles that Albanians endured throughout their history, particularly challenges to their national and ethnic identity. At the time of my interview with Tony, he was in the process of permanently symbolizing his sense of Albanian pride by getting a half sleeve tattoo of Gjergi Katrioti (Skanderbeg), Mother Theresa and Ded Gjo Luli, with the Albanian double-headed eagle as the backdrop.[1] It is not uncommon, especially among men, to get a tattoo of the Albanian eagle on one's arm or other places on the body of various Albanian national and religious heroes, such as Skenderbeg and Mother Theresa. As Tereze points out:

> There is I think there is a certain feeling with saying I'm proud to be an Albanian. I mean c'mon we have more tattoos of our freakin eagle than, probably there are more tattoos than Albanians. [Linda: chuckling] No I'm serious. And then there is that feeling of like national pride you know I'm Albanian it's who I am because I think it's also because religion wasn't as prominent because it was forbidden during the regime so it's feja shiptaret eshte shiperia ['the faith of Albanians is Albania] so you have that sort of connection and then you know in Malesi [geographical region of Northern Albanian and Eastern Montenegro] where I think correct me if I'm wrong, it was very hard for the communist government to infiltrate because everyone was in the mountains, hence, Malesia, they were able to keep their kinsmanship you know their kins and clans and they were able to practice their religion hence why we have such a very robust Catholic community here [in Michigan] and I think that is what I think sort of the difference. But when it comes to sort of doing something for Albanian on behalf of Albania or for the community itself, I think all you need to do is remind people of who you are because I have lots of identities, you have lots of identities but when I introduce myself…I am

[1] See Appendix B (Figure 13) for a picture of the tattoo. He sent me a picture of the tattoo when it was completed, and agreed to have it included in the dissertation. Ded Gjo Luli was a prominent commander in the fight against the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th century, and was born in Malesia or southeastern Montenegro.

> saying 'Hi I'm [states her name] and I am an Albanian you know because it just doesn't go away it's who you are, it's where I came from

The act of getting an Albanian tattoo illustrates how some Albanians participate in mainstream tattoo culture, but do so with some differentiation by getting a tattoo that represents Albanians. When I asked Elona, who came to the US from Tirana, Albania when she was 6 years old, what it means to be Albanian she said,

> Being proud in general. We are a very proud people, we take it overboard sometimes but we yes, we are just we know who we are, and we're okay with it, you can say whatever you want about it and we're okay with it.

Some of my participants said that this sense of pleasure in being and expressing their Albanianess is partly due to the fact that throughout the history Albanians have been denied the right to be and identify themselves as Albanian under the various occupying regimes, as I discussed in a previous chapter. For instance, in the late 1800s, Albanians territories were ceded to what is now Serbia and Montenegro, where some of them were not even allowed to have Albanian last names, but were given Serbian last names[2] (Vickers 1995). As I heard from others in the field, ethnic Albanians who lived outside of the political borders of Albania (e.g., Yugoslavia) were not allowed to fully express being Albanian, but now they are in place where they can and do practice being Albanian and create an Albanian ethnicity. In some ways ethnicity becomes "thicker" in the new context. I asked Tereze to describe the meaning of Albanian pride that so many of my participants expressed. She explained it best when she said:

> I think it's [short pause] we as Albanians didn't have a lot, we didn't have a personal identity like as individuals you know it wasn't [says her first and last name] is this, it was very much, "ti punon ne Koperative," [you work in a cooperative] - you know everyone was the same as a proletariat you know everyone was the same, everyone was like a number, it's like going to a really large university and no one cares about you know and

[2] My own family name was Serbian until my parents, who were born in what is now Montenegro, changed it to the Albanian version when I was about 10 years old. It changed from Djokic to Gjokaj.

> then you have some people at the top who were like I guess the elite if you want them but all in all the goal of a communist society was for everyone to be the same and if everyone was the same then there is no personal identity so the only identity that I think we had that was that I'm an Albanian. I mean this is my sort, this is my idea, that's what I think it is in the sense of what else can we identity with you know we can identity as I'm someone's daughter, someone's granddaughter, but overall something that has nothing to do with my place in family or community that what it would be that's what it would be and then you know and then I think because we've had so many struggles you know they tried to chop our country down. I mean basically Albania was supposed to be gone if it wasn't for president Woodrow Wilson and you're kind of saying well we're a people and we're going to make it you know and we believe in certain things and we want to be recognized in the case of Kosovo.

As Tereze describes, the importance of maintaining an Albanian identity is that it is more than a personal identity, but a larger imagined national identity. It is imagined because a sense of Albania identity goes beyond a single nation-state identity, as Albanians do not belong solely to one nation-state. Gjon further describes that the importance of being Albanian has to do with the history of persecution that Albanians faced, and that just by identifying oneself Albanian makes one feel proud to be Albanian - it is important that Albanian identity has been maintained despite past attempts to erase it. Gjon says:

> That pro-Albanian probably has to do with a lot of history. We've been denied a lot of things. We've been denied that we're Albanians. We've been denied that we've even existed in history. We've been denied very many things-land, you know we've been called Turks, we've been called Serbs, we've been called Gypsies, we've been called Greeks, just being know that you're Albanian. Getting that right of passage from your grandpa, your great grandpa you know you're Albanian, you're Shqiptare [Albanian]. Just that in itself you know.

What is apparent from the above responses is that the respondents strictly considered the importance of an Albanian identity in light of the historical denial of Albanianess. Gjon further defines the importance of being Albanian as an identity that is different from other regional identities (e.g., Turkish, Serb), and one that is passed on from generation to generation. I encountered in the field a situation that presented an opportunity to display and defend an Albanian identity. I attended an "International Day" event at a city library. It was an event that

was sponsored by an organization of Albanian college students. I showed up wearing the shirt I was given by the organization – it is black t-shirt with red writing (colors of the Albanian flag) that listed the different colleges that are associated with the organization over a print of Skanderbeg, the Albanian national hero who spearheaded the defeat of the Ottomans. In addition to Albanians, there were several different groups who were at the event to represent their ethnic, national and cultural backgrounds: England, Germany, Czech Republic, India, Poland, Switzerland, and Turkey. At the "Albanian table," there two women in traditional Albanian dress—both young college-aged women.[3] They spoke Albanian to each other off and on, meaning they were switching from English to Albanian. I also saw one of my participants who was dressed in a traditional Albanian male skirt, characteristic of Albanians of the South. An Albanian flag draped the table, and on top there were three wool hats, a wooden Albanian canteen, a poster board with the Albanian political map, as well as an "ethnic Albania" map, which includes Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania. Also on the table there was a more decorative hat that women wear as well as what looked like a handkerchief (shami, in Albanian) for women that had gold embroidery on a red colored cloth. On the poster board there were pictures of Skanderbeg, scenic pictures of Albania, and a picture of Mother Theresa.[4] There were several people who stopped at the Albanian table to find out about Albania, but also to eat the food they had there (e.g., spinach pie). What was interesting about this field experience – other than knowing what cultural materials are considered important – is what one of the Albanian participants said about his interaction with people who attended the event and stopped at the "Albanian table":

[3] See Figures 5-8 ("International Day") of this event in Appendix B.

[4] See Figures 5, 6 and 8, "International Day" in Appendix B.

> Today we heard that we are located in the Middle East, we were part of Yugoslavia, our food is Greek and Turkish, and our Eagle is German. People kept on commenting that the spinach pie was Greek. I told them, 'they [Greeks] stole it from us-they are like that.'

The importance of announcing and claiming an Albanian identity rests in making sure one is not confused with any other national or ethnic groups, and at this event the Albanian participants directly encountered misunderstandings of Albanian identity, which provided them an opportunity to assert and defend an Albanian identity.

The idea of Albanian national pride is also about the experience of immigrants who attempt to make a space for themselves in the new culture. Teuta, who came to the US from Pogradec, Albania when she was 9 years old, says:

> Immigrants I think tend to stick together especially when they don't know anyone else, they don't know what anyone else is about. So they want to bond to who they know so their ties. I feel like the Albanians here are much more patriotic than the Albanians there. Because there [Albania] everyone else is like you it doesn't matter. It's just like oh whatever. It's when you come here well it's me against everyone else and no one is like me and you find someone who is like you and your patriotism grows. I just noticed that too like Albanians that are immigrants, be it Italy or Greece, wherever they went, they're much more you know do everything for Albanian like I'm so proud to be Albanian and then the ones who are there are like who cares I hate this place, like I can't believe I have to live here, I want to be in your shoes. That's just what it seems like. There's just like extra patriotism to where it blocks what they're thinking like where they can't see out of their Albanianess.

Lula also suggested that the growing importance of being Albanian is also a characteristic of people living outside of the US, but not necessary of those who currently live in Albania. That is, the importance of maintaining an Albanian identity becomes more emphasized when lives outside of Albania. She described Albanians as a very proud people, and I asked her about what is that pride—is it national pride? She says:

> Oh yeah I will say this though people from Montenegro, Kosova and Macedonia are more proud Albanians than Albanians from Albania but it is a strong thing. I have an Albanian flag at my house. I'm sure most Albanians do. I'm proud to be Albanian**.** I've never not been [proud] to say that I'm Albanian.

Lula describes how Albanians who live outside of Albania work to become more Albanian because they are in a context where being Albanian matters more than being Albanian in Albania. She suggests Albanians in the US are trying to become more Albanian in part because of Amercianizing forces whereas Albanians in Albania are attempting to become more westernized:

> Lula: And that's why I said that people from Montenegro right and Macedonians because they are in areas that are not Albania. And they are trying even harder to hold on to their identity as Albanians and that's what we're trying to do as well as our identities as Albanians as we know it right whereas the people from Albania well some of them are like that my nephews very proud to be Albanian. I will say this most of my dad's family is very proud to be Albanian. They don't try to Westernize. Albanians still smoke in the home and stuff but I still see a lot of other families where it's not and I think for them it's like a caged animal right they want to get away from everything where they had no choice. They weren't allowed to listen to foreign music, to watch foreign TV channels right and they are trying to break free from that where we are just trying to hold on as much as we can. I mean we go to these Albanian conventions we wanted to be more Albanian. Back in the day maybe a little bit younger than me they used to have Albanian festivals at Hart Plaza [in Detroit]. I remember the reason they stopped having them you know how they have the reggae festival they used to have an Albanian festival in Hart Plaza the long weekend there would food tents I mean I was really young when they had these and then they stopped having them because too many fights…They stopped having them because there were too many shootings. What happened too is the Serbians would come and they'd have huge fights but it was great. They had "kiss me Albanian" pins. They had Albanian bands on that stage down there in Hart plaza. It was fun but you know. And that's the sad part you know but that comes down to pride. You insulted someone's pride somehow or they felt that they were less manly because of what you said. I tried to explain to people they're like teach me an Albanian bad word I'm like well technically there are that many and I go most of them are either Yugoslavian or Greek. Usually the way you insult someone is you insult their upbringing, you insult their parents. And that's huge, you're insulting and that's the big insult is to insult them by their upbringing and they don't quite get it because it comes down to you need to be the best, and if you insult someone they take it very very personally as compared to blowing it off right and depending on the level of insult right and some of it is stupid.

Similarly, Susie, a second generation female with origins in Montenegro, says:

> Susie: There's a high sense of cultural pride and a high sense of maintaining culture and a heritage that is the linking bond to other Albanians. The biggest thing that I see when I go to Albania or Malesi [eastern part of Montenegro], what happened was my dad came with the 1980 mentality, where women don't wear shorts women don't paint their nails, women do this, they listen to the men, the men do this so there's all this strict expectations then when they come to America they try to uphold those same expectations whereas when I go to Europe now it's a lot different. You almost feel like they are more modernized than we are here because they are allowed to go out and have boyfriends and go to bars whereas here our parents came from that and try to maintain that but over there

> it's constantly changing but our parents don't know it's changing because they are stuck trying to maintain that you know so I almost feel a lot of times that Albanians in America are almost more stuck in that tradition whereas the Albanians in Albanian and Montenegro are progressing towards a more lenient society whereas we are trying to preserve it here.

Susie and other participants have described that being Albanian becomes more emphasized in the US context, and in some ways becomes more important to be Albanian in the US because otherwise they would be similar to every other "average white American." The possible loss of a distinct ethnic identity propels many Albanians to want to be more Albanian. The desire to be different from a perceived undifferentiated white American category is an important motivation to be ethnic in the US context, and further nurtures national and cultural pride among Albanians.

"WE'RE DIFFERENT, I WANT A DIFFERENT BOX"

The 2009 *Albanian Yellow and White Pages* asked, "Do you want to identify yourself and family members as Albanian?" in the 2010 US Census. Advertisements on the social networking web site Facebook and video-sharing web site YouTube encouraged and showed Albanians how to identify as such in the 2010 Census, as "white" and as "other race," Albanian. The Census is a way of "strengthening our community" ("duke forcuar kestu komunitetin tone"), and counting yourself as Albanian ("numerohuni si je Shiptare), while also declaring "o sa mire qe jam Shqiptare!" (how good it is that I'm Albanian!). When asked what is your background, they will unequivocally declare, "I'm Albanian" or "Albanian-American" or "American Albanian." While several of my participants did not think that Albanians are a separate racial category in terms of not being white, acknowledging that their skin is white or they are indeed of European origin. All of my participants, however, agreed that being categorized as just "white" does not fully reflect how they were raised, their experience within their Albanian family and community, and their sense of Albanian pride.

As described above, some of my participants described the struggles Albanians have gone through historically to maintain a distinct Albanian identity and found pride in that struggle to be Albanian. Veronika elucidates that the uniqueness and importance of an Albanian identity that is linked to an Albanian history of struggle to protect and maintain a distinct Albanian identity and one that is intimately linked with language. I asked Veronika to reflect on the idea of Albanians writing in "Albanian" as an "other race" category in the 2010 Census. She says:

> I think it's a bit historical. To me it would seem natural because we've fought. History shows that we have fought to maintain our identity. We fought Serbs, we have fought Turks, we have fought Greeks [and] we have fought Bulgarians [in order] to maintain our own identify. We are not Slavic, our language is Indo-European, our language is not Slavic. It's it own. There is a linguistics, this I believe is preserved through our language, hence through our culture because of our language. [She then refers to a male professor at University of Ohio who travels to Kosovo often who studies Albanian language] He has specifically studied the uniqueness of Albanian language and clearly admits It's not like no other language and because I think that reinforcement plays into us as a people and as a result we feel we are which is portrayed as we are growing up, even now and today we are different, we are our own people, we do don't throw us with the Macedonians and Slavs, don't throw is with the Romans, don't throw us with the Greeks because all the surrounding nations our such strong nations around us that really boast their identity is only natural that we in that region do the same, **I think it's to identify that we are not part of other cultures we are our own, we are distinct, we fought for that.** Our language validates that therefore we feel in this case which I haven't seen that [The call for a Albanian as "other race" in the Census], this is powerful to have numbers from a political standpoint because once we get a strong voice and once we can go to Gary peters of the world and so you know what, Gary Peters [Michigan Congressman] there's 300,000 Albanian you want our vote, you need to come to our functions, you got to hear our needs and that's what Chaldeans have done so successfully, that's what the Jews have done so successfully is they have organized themselves into one voice and until we can pull in and organize ourselves in one voice that's when we are going to be heard, right now we are not that heard, we are getting there, but we are not as loud as we can be so things like this, data mining is going to create a powerful voice and these association and the chambers of commerce and the foundations [talks about a foundation directed toward Balkans, mainly Kosovo and Albania she founded].

In this view we can see that a separate racial category for Albanians has personal and community level significance. The idea that Albanians are somehow different is reflected in "us as a people" and was 'portrayed as we are growing up," wherein language and the struggle for a distinct

Albanian identity factor into the meanings my participants attach to the "Albanian difference," giving my informants a distinct sense of belonging. Identifying Albanian as "the other" also has political significance in that, like other groups, Albanians can have a voice and be heard so that their needs are addressed by the US or state governments. The interesting part about the drive to be different is that my participants use whiteness as a default identity, something that does not solely rely on the external imposition of whiteness. Rather they use Albanianess as being different than white Americans and other groups in order to construct internal group solidarity. The conversations I had with my participants revealed that while Albanians are indeed white in terms of their skin color, and that is overwhelmingly clear from the ACS data I presented in a previous chapter, but many elucidated that they are not simply "white Americans," even though they may be perceived by and accepted as white by external groups. Assimilation culturally to white American society does not provide significant rewards (e.g., sense of belonging, a distinct identity) and my participants do not see full assimilation as a desirable outcome for them, their family or community. Consider what Gjon says about the importance of ethnic replenishment and not assimilating:

> Assimilation will eventually happen no matter how many tries there are out there assimilation will happen. But there's also those new waves that are going to come here or something else that will form the Albanian identity and you know we have to exist until those new waves sort of we have to exist until the come here until they grasp the base, grasp the roots. The longer we don't fall into the category of assimilation the better.

In the field I observed attempts at preventing assimilation by secular and non-secular organizations teaching young Albanian children, mostly those who are born in the US, how to be Albanian - teaching the language, dance and folklore, and implicitly promoting cultural rules such as how to interact with other Albanians.[5] Albanian identity is not only about how one self-

[5] See Appendix B for photos from some of these events (Figures 9-12).

identifies, but it is also about how one was raised, and the cultural knowledge and behaviors gained through their ethnic affiliation. Here is what Lula had to say:

> I really have a hard time writing white because white to me means a Caucasian American Norwegian type person and I guess it goes back to where I told you I don't feel like I fit in anymore. And as an American with a cultural background I'm not a white American because I could be at school and people know I am different and to me putting that white box means I'm the same as everyone else and I'm not. My culture is different, my family values are different, everything about me my language I speak, the way I would have a wedding, the foods I eat are different so I agree [with writing in Albanian on the census]. You know that it's funny that you say that since I was a kid I would say I don't know what box to check a lot of times I used to check other and they'd come back and say you're white, and I'm like no I'm not. So if you notice they start of European descent they started putting in there because I think a lot of people were putting other that are from any of the Balkans like Italians too I am sure they don't consider themselves white. It's funny cause I tell people you know what we describe as Americans he's a white boy…she married a white boy. When I married American. I'm like no I'm not I guess I am skin but I'm not white! And they don't understand because they think white you know Caucasian that's it.

Whiteness represents both an assimilation and Americanizing process that does not reflect the "different" background and experiences of Albanians to be lumped into the category of the, as Lula defines it, "Caucasian American Norwegian type." My participants described how they make a distinction between Albanians and all other white Americans. In doing so, they construct an identity that is in contrast to the "plain white American identity," a category to which they feel they do not fully belong. A study conducted by Perry (2001) revealed that her white participants (she also interviewed African Americans, Chinese Americans, one Filipino and Latinos) viewed white identity as "cultureless," a category that cannot be culturally defined, regarded as "removed from the past," and thus carries little meaning for the white youth in her study (p. 58). She writes, "Common also was the explicit and implicit definition of white as empty, meaningless, bland, and without tradition" (p. 79).[6] Also among her non-white

[6] She argues that the issue with viewing whites as cultureless or culturally empty is that it exacerbates the problem of seeing white identity as normal, and taking whiteness for granted.

participants it was difficult to define what is "white culture," and only did so in terms of styles and taste, not tradition (p. 81). Frankenburg's (1993) research with white women showed that whiteness was linked to a feeling of culturelessness. Along a similar thought, for my participants, being ethnic in the US means that they have a culture, a past, and are different than the undefined and hard to define white American, which does not carry much meaning for my participants in and of itself. Because they are largely indistinguishable from other white Americans (unless they have an unidentified accent or others read or hear a foreign sounding name), my participants have faced the external imposition of whiteness, and have to work at differentiating themselves. As Mike explains, "We do differentiate ourselves because we have our pride. Albanians are very good at labeling let's face it, but we don't want to be labeled an American." Being Albanian has a moral recognition to it whereas the white American category is somehow deficient, not good enough as a stand-alone identity.

A claim to ethnic difference and differentiating from a white American category is not just about finding pleasure in one's identity, but it is about eschewing the category of white in their everyday lives in order to be distinctive because difference gives them a sense of purpose, a sense of a distinct place of belonging in a heterogeneous society. In his work on ethnicity Yinger (1994:47) documents that "ethnic attachments in spite of extensive assimilation are best accounted for by the usefulness of ethnicity in the struggle for power, status, and income." Even though the census advertisement did not translate into an "other race" re-identification in the ACS among Albanians, as I showed in chapter four, my participants still did not find qualitative meaning in whiteness or did not attach importance to being white because being Albanian is more important as it provides benefits that supposedly other individuals do not have (e.g., a unique, distinct language, music, food, and community), and is a strategy for gaining recognition

in the US. There are different ways in which my participants make that meaning clear. Tony describes how his Albanian identity comes before his American one:

> I was obviously born in America, my hardheaded ignorant way to say is as long as black people are African American, and I'm Albanian-American okay. As I've grown older I've become a little more open-minded and when I say open-minded I mean having the ability to ignore people I do not fucking agree with. I'm very passionate about that one. I get offended and as I've grown up more open minded I don't express the fact that I'm offended but I get offended when somebody is not Albanian when they are American Albanian or they are just American cause they were born in America like the soil didn't get into your blood your blood is still like American is built on Europeans they came here okay and they ran away from something and they created their own colony but they stole this land from somebody this is not yet there is a government developed here and everything and it's the land of opportunity and that's why our parents came here but don't forget who you are, don't forget where you come from. There's always a foundation to something and what's the foundation of Albanians before Illyrians I have no idea I didn't go that far in history but I know that I'm Albanian. I speak the language and I'm not **I don't know what American is but I'm not when it comes to I'm an American citizen but I'm Albanian American but I'm not in no way shape or form American before I'm Albanian.**

It is important to be different because otherwise Albanians are just white Americans and in being white American there is no difference, it is culturally empty. For my participants, the problem with the category of American is not being able to define it, and instill meaning about what it is and thus has limited meaning other than citizenship.[7] Ella describes identifying as American Albanian, saying:

> I think if there was an option of just American and Albanian, I would probably pick Albanian. But if there was Albanian American or American Albanian, those segways into different aspects, I think I would probably pick American Albanian. I was born here [US], I grew up here, I was educated here. But I still am Albanian. I still feel like I am a little different. There is always that thought.

[7] None of my participants mentioned naturalization as an issue, but some did mention that it has been a problem for many Albanians who remained undocumented. I suspect that if my participants were not US citizens, citizenship (or lack of) would have been an important part of our conversations about their experiences in the US, possibly pulling them more in the direction of desiring to be "American."

Albanians do not have to construct a white identity, but they do have to construct an identity against the white American identity. They use institutional reinforcements for this differentiation—community institutions are popping up to reinforce this such as various Albanian clubs. Being Albanian links you to a family, a community and is tied to sense of respect for such affiliations. In my interview with Mara, who is from Korca, Albania, she says,

> Linda: How would you identify, as Albanian, Albanian-American, American Albanian, American, or something else?
>
> Mara: It's such a difficult question to answer because some times people ask me where are you from? Okay, that's easy, Albania. Then it's like what are you-what nationality are you? I automatically say Albanian cause it's known, obvious I'm American too, I'm here, I'm speaking English to you and everything but you know that part so I'll just say Albanian.
>
> Linda: What about if you had to fill out a form that would give you options…
>
> Mara: I would probably say Albanian, but US citizen.
>
> Linda: It wouldn't be just American?
>
> Mara: No, no, no, no, no. If I said just American I would be like disowning the whole Albanian identity and that's so much a part of me that I feel like I'm disrespecting my parents and grandparents and it's like a slap in their face like I don't know you. [chuckles] then I'll get shunned.

All of my participants identified themselves as Albanian or Albanian American or American Albanian. One of my participants described that even those with very loose connections with the community retain some attachment to being Albanian. As the above descriptions show, maintaining an Albanian identity is important because it is a source of individual pleasure, and a gives one a sense of purpose, and is an ethnic identity that is nurtured by a sense of national and cultural pride. It is also important because it provides a way for individuals to distinguish themselves from "white Americans," an identity that the Albanian in my study do not find meaningful or sustaining to the self. The importance of being Albanian lies too in the idea and

experience that family strengthens and supports the individual, as well as the connection to an identity that is linked to an entire community of Albanians. While the sense of pride among my participants was tied to the struggles Albanians have faced, there were other sources of pride and avenues for creating and sustaining the importance of an Albanian identity, mainly regarding how family and community are sustaining to the individual.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Several of my participants described how family is central to Albanian culture, describing Albanian families as "close knit," and as a very positive aspect of their identity as an Albanian. As such, Albanian ethnic identity is entrenched in images of family. Family in a way is used by my participants as an "interpretive structure" to understand their own experiences (Pyke 2000). In her research, Pyke (2000) studied the adult children of Korean immigrants used family as an interpretive framework through which to compare and contrast their families with the idealized North American family. In a similar fashion, my participants also use "White American" as a category, from which to be different, which includes "American families." Pyke was specifically referring to how white American hegemonic images and ideals of family (and the ideology of the monolithic North American family) enter into the interpretive lenses of children of immigrants in ways that influenced how they viewed and contrasted their own familial experiences with mainstream, idealized images of American families, which has both a negative and positive influence on familial relationships. Rather than thinking of family merely as a social institution that serves to socialize its members, the notion of family as an interpretive structure is useful for thinking about the multiple ways in which immigrant youth use "family" as a lens through which to interpret and give meaning to their relationships and everyday lived experiences in the "host" society. This coincides with the view of symbolic interactionists that individuals and social

institutions are not dualistic features of social life, but work in a dialectical fashion. In a similar manner, Camino's (1994:47) research with Latin American refugee and immigrant adolescents demonstrated how they distinguished Latino and North American identities by asserting the importance of adhering to "Latino values of *familismo* and *respeto,* which made youths different from materialistic, competitive, and violence-prone North Americans." Camino's study showed that, "While young refugees and immigrants may fervently seek to 'fit in' in some contexts, such as at school, they may also appreciate opportunities which allow them to be apart from members of the dominant society…" (p. 51). In describing why it is important to be Albanian, my participants point out why they seek to be apart from members of the dominant society and brought together with co-ethnics. Family is one such context that allows my participants to feel different from members of the dominant society.

Meanings of family serve as a way to distance a group and individual from mainstream North American ideologies. In other words, it is important to be Albanian because the Albanian family and community is a way to distance themselves from so-called mainstream American families, and connects them to a distinct ethnic community. They describe their understanding of Albanians as very family-oriented compared to other "American families." As Tereze asserts,

> That was the thing it's like there was a very strong pride about I'm Albanian because of these sorts of ties that family members have or friends have. There's this sense of community.

Lula describes that one of the most positive aspects about being Albanian is family values – that her experience with Albanian culture is that it is very family-oriented:

> Positive [aspect of being Albanian] I will say this I have very strong family values. I think that's another thing about Albanians is they have very strong family values. And I'm proud of that. I'm proud of who I am, I'm proud, people might call me old fashioned and I'm old fashioned when it comes to family values and me as a person I'm very liberal when it comes to education and women's rights things like that but in terms of things in the house, I'm pretty still old fashioned… in terms of other so to answer your questions

about family values. I believe that also everything should be done as a family. Everything is done as a family. When I was growing up my parents didn't do anything separate. Everything was done as a family. We go to the park together, we go to a wedding together. My dad didn't go hang out with his buddies ever. Obviously would get together when the kids were at school. But, it's not like going out to the bar with the girlfriends. Everything is family oriented. The families are coming over. You go to someone's house for 3-4 hours, kids play, women bullshit, men bullshit they play cards. I like that. I think that's nice is that you have this whole family thing. to me that brings a warmth to my heart when I remember those times. If I had a family that's how I'd like it we can do things as a family together and not have to worry about it's your night to stay with the kids to me that's strange when I hear that. you have to baby sit the kids tonight…I see nowadays where the wife goes out one night the husband goes out another night. [she didn't like that]

As the quote above illustrates, notions and images of family are rooted in ethnic identity. When I asked Jesika what it is like to grow up in an Albanian immigrant family, she says,

Jesika: They are very together. I don't know what other word to use besides together because everything that we did or everything that we thought of or kind of had a problem with it was always a family thing. When we were working to get our house, my sister was working, my parents were working and everything went to one place. I notice with my American friends it's all like, I work, I do my thing. My dad works, he's got his own thing. For me I always loved the fact that we always had our family dinner and we always had that family time.

Linda: So it's more family-oriented

Jesika: Definitely. Always. I don't remember going to one place just my sister and I, it was always the family thing, especially since it was the first few years but shopping was a family event, the grocery store was a park for me, that was the most exciting part of the week.

David describes also how in his Albanian immigrant family, family was emphasized:

Linda: So did your parents or cousins or anyone emphasize while you were growing up one part of being Albanian more than others?

David: Family. I think for my parents they always one of the things they really got in my head was family.

Linda: What did they tell you about family?

David: Oh just you know how we take care of each other. You have to take care of each other. If you don't take care of each other no one else will.

> Linda: Is this something that is particularly unique, not unique, but a very important value in Albanian culture or is it because family is important regardless of being Albanian or not.
>
> David: I think it is I think the closeness of family is cultural. The closeness you maintain…one of my biggest disappointments that I lost all of my first cousins that I used to see all the time and can't see them again. I lost touch with a lot of them [because of] school, different time zones.

Sylvia describes what it was like to grow up in an Albanian immigrant family:

> Sylvia: Um, it's loud. It's so loud. Oh my god it's so loud. My mom like a normal asking me how my day is like screaming. "[insert name] what are you doing today?" [she raises her voice] I'm like 'mom I'm right here.' Loud and is big. I think every Albanian family is huge cause I know my dad has 5 brothers and sisters and my mom has 5 brothers and sisters. And I know other people who have parents who have 12 brothers and sisters you know so the families are always huge and there's a lot of focus on family and sticking with the family and you know I think also when you talk about marriage it's a lot of times more joining two families as opposed to you're marrying that individual, you are marrying their family too with Albanians and I know it's like that for Americans too but it's lesser so of a factor.
>
> Linda: And when you say Americans, what image pops up?
>
> Sylvia: Even with my Albanian friends they would be like "oh that white girl." I'm like "oh we're white too." But it's just anyone who is not Albanian.

I then asked her if there are things Albanians do that she thinks are particularly Albanian. Sylvia explains:

> Yeah I think they stay closer together as far as I don't know that many American people because everybody is different but I know a lot of my friends who are Albanian who don't talk to their cousins, just immediate family-parents, grandpa, grandma, but it's like this is my family, we knew our 12th cousin who is their Kumars [best man] and everyone and I would tell my mom and my mom would tell me stories do you remember fillani's [so and so's] daughter who is this persons cousin and I'm like 'no.' and she's like 'how do you not remember' I'm like okay you know so yeah they just stay close together and I think it's huge that they want to even after you marry into another family to keep that kind of closeness. I think that's why it's so big for Albanians too that they like the person's family and they come from good values and what not.

One of the aspects I found interesting in my conversation with Sylvia was her image "American" and understanding "white girl" as anyone who is not Albanian is labeled as white as if Albanians

were not white. Being and maintaining Albanianess through marriage and family and engagement on some level in community and family affairs is important part of being Albanian. In several of my interviews I heard the use of "white girl" or "white boy," and I inquired further about what that meant. Consider my conversation with Steve, a US born male with origin in Montenegro:

> Linda: What do you think about "white girl"-have you encountered that?
>
> Steve: Definitely, not so much as white girl or white just if you date outside of your culture, it's a part of your culture that just dies in a sense. The language dies altogether. If you are speaking with an American you are not going to be speaking Albanian. For the most part you are not going to be bringing this person to church and if you don't go to these functions, if you don't go to the funerals and the churches and you don't speak the language, you lose your identity or a large portion of your identity so therefore you have degraded your background. The same way in a sense everybody has to do what makes them happy. Obviously not everyone is going to feel the same way I do but keeping your identity is important to me.

Similarly in my conversation with Luke, he adds further insight into the label "white girl"

> Linda: Have you heard about 'oh that white girl'?
>
> Luke: Yeah. Like one of my friends he's Irish we'll be like oh that white boy even though he was born here and stuff he's American but he's white.
>
> Linda: So what about dating and stuff? Oh he's dating that white girl.
>
> Luke: Yeah it's like oh who you dating right now like if it's not a Chaldean girl, if It's not Asian girl oh white girl…even if she's just German or English oh I'm dating a white girl. It's having all foreign ethnicities. Even when I was younger too in elementary I was like do I put white. I didn't know what to put. I wasn't sure. Then when I grew up I'm like I put white, what the heck.
>
> Linda: And do you remember why you thought that?
>
> Luke: Probably because the other Albanian kids and foreign kids were like oh I'm not white. They just put other or even like one's that were born in Albania they would still like oh I'm not White cause they just think of it as oh American. So that's what I think. They think I was born over there so I'm not white I'm other.

A conversation about Albanian families had turned into a distinction between American families and Albanian families, which included this notion of "white girl" or "white boy," and I followed up on this in many of my interviews. I learned that the distinctions that one of the ways my participants made between themselves and other groups, mainly white Americans, is through the lens of family wherein the importance of being Albanian as opposed to "white American" was emphasized.

Being Albanian is important for my participants because it links them to a network of support, provides a strong base and bond through family and community, which they felt made them distinct from "American" families. Genti pointed out the advantages and disadvantages of being "born into a network" originating from family and an ethnic community:

> Linda: What are your feelings or thoughts about what it's like to grow up in an Albanian immigrant family?
>
> Genti: I see it you know the advantages are this: a) we are born into a network because of our communities which most Americans are not. They have to form those networks. We're thrown into a network so in today's age that's very beneficial. Also we're born into a multi-at least bi-lingual family if not multi-lingual and bi-cultural family and like it or not those are both also advantages not just globally but business competitive competition wise. I had to do a paper on business on what executives want out of their employees the most and always the two top things were diverse culture and good communication. So I think coming in with those things are a very positive you know puts us at an advantage if we utilize. It takes people 10-20 years for people to build a decent network that we already start with. B) Some of the disadvantages I see go back to that conservative thing you know is it's good to maintain traditions, to maintain the roots, but if you want to set up your family or your children for success you have to embrace certain aspects of this [American] culture which is let them, him or her, become independent so that then they can become interdependent and if it's that kind of that contained controlled lifestyle it's putting them at a disadvantage you know.

Like others, Genti pointed out how his experience growing up in an Albanian family is different from "most Americans" because he has an automatic network as part of an ethnic community and family, but he also points out that the tight-knit structure of some Albanian families can also

limit individuals who want to embrace aspects of American culture, such as individualism. The ethnic community, while limiting at times, is an important means of imparting culture.

During the fieldwork, I participated in and recorded in my field notes relevant details relating to the events in the Albanian community. Culture is transmitted and sustained through community as well as family. In some situations, Albanian tradition is maintained and the importance of being Albanian is perpetuated across generations. What I observed in these community settings is that Albanians work very hard to make sure their kids are Albanian, and I have seen this in the Albanian language and dance classes I attended as well as at national events and from the stories I heard in the field. I interviewed a community leader who pointed out how family and ethnic community networks intersect to support ethnic members and provide them with certain advantages, but in a way that emphasizes integration with "American culture," and not full assimilation. Elton says,

> **Assimilation process-so what we wanted to do [as an organization] is more of an integration than assimilation and integration is a phenomena where you are able to preserve what is good and offer this value to a community as well as you get the best of this [US] community.** This is the purpose of life, the betterment of people's life wherever they go. They don't give up what they have, they improve, even the civilizations that's how they improved, it's a continuous effort of centuries long development of different societies that have added on to the civilization we live on today. It's a progress, that's how we see it. The preservation of our native language was important. Why is it important people would ask. And I tell them very simple: first, by learning your native, language, your own language it is an added value wherever you go, you have an extra language, it is an extra foreign language even if you are native born here so it's an added plus on your resume. The communication between your parents, or your grandparents to you is facilitated easier when you know the language. What happens here is kids after a certain age they are good at speaking language until 4 or 5 years old, because they live with their grandparents and after that they get disconnected because of social life because life outside the house where they spend most of their day. School becomes the heavier influence for them so they tend to lose their native language by losing their language they star to lose communication with other members of the family and in our culture the elders have been always the pillar of the family- it is that is how a home is home, that is how we have been raised. I am proud to say I live in a big family, where my parents live with us, my brother, his wife and two kids live with us, we have two kids, my sister and sister-in-law we live together still so a big house where

> everybody was through sincerity and tolerance and understanding looking at the core we made this a supportive place where from even the beneficial standpoint when you look at the rational standpoint of it.

It is clear from the above quote that community and family are sustaining to the individual in ways that provide particular advantages. What is most interesting in the above quote is his approach to assimilation, and is one that is shared by Albanian ethnic community leaders as well as many of my 1.5 and second generation participants. While the next few chapters highlights the struggles of defining an Albanian identity and the costs of an Albanian identity, there are several ways in which I observed how Albanian identity and community, despite particular struggles and disadvantages, is recreated in new contexts and maintained. For example, as the invited co-host, I attended an event for Albanian Independence Day (Festa e Flamurit or festival of the flag on November 27, 2011) at the Albanian Catholic church.[8] The event, like the 4th of July in the US, is full of patriotism. The speech they asked me to write had to appeal to the audience, and it was full of patriotism, and emphasized national identity, and what I would call, "Albanian flag worshipping." During my speech about what Albanian Independence Day means, one guy yelled out, "lum te goja," which means "bless your mouth/words." He was responding to a quote I had found by the Albanian hero – "Long live the flag! Long live Albania." The program included young US born Albania children, as little as probably three years old, who performed Albanian dances under the direction of a an Albanian professional choreographer, and then another dance group of older Albanians, who were in their twenties also performed traditional Albanian dances. Also, a brother and sister sang an Albanian song in Albanian ("shiperi o nane ime" My Albania oh my mother) while their dad played an Albanian string guitar instrument called the "cifeteli" (the girl was probably ten and the boy six or seven years old). There were individuals and

[8] See Figure 10 in the Appendix B.

families with children who attended—mostly children who were in the program who were dressed in traditional Albanian costumes and had their hair and makeup done. I also attended a Kosovo Independence Day party at the one of the community centers. While this event was to celebrate Kosovo Independence, there were—from what I was told—only a few Kosovar Albanians in attendance. There were probably 200 to 300 people at the event, mostly Albanians from Albania. The banner they created stated: "Nje gjuhe, nje komb, nje flamur," which means "one language, one nation, one flag."[9] These experiences helped me think about and validate the ways many Albanians I spoke with feel about what it means to be Albanian. Despite the fact that Albanians are not all from the same nation-state, there still perceive themselves, at least theoretically, as one nation, one language and one flag.

SUMMARY

In this chapter I have discussed the various ways in which ethnic identity is important for a group of Albanians in Metro Detroit, Michigan. The chapter showed the importance of an Albanian identity lies in the pleasures of ethnic identity, how difference gives one a sense of purpose, belonging, and how family and community are sustaining to the individual. It is important for my participants to be Albanian in part because the other option – white American – is not meaningful to their everyday lives, and does not represent their experiences growing up in immigrant families. They communicate the identifiable and distinguishing cultural characteristics, and a shared history that make ethnic attachment meaningful to the individual. I have shown the desire to be Albanian is partially in response to a perceived need to be different from the undifferentiated white American, which is nurtured by various actions and thoughts

[9] See Figure 9 "Kosovo Independence Celebration" in Appendix B.

surrounding Albanian national and cultural pride, and institutions and organizations that are set up maintain ethnic distinction within and over generations.

The tension between assimilation and remaining ethnic – the problem of cultural continuity for immigrant communities and families - is a situation faced by many immigrant groups, but approaches to the problem are different depending on an individual's definitions of the situation, the social structures they encounter, and contexts of exit and reception that immigrants and ethnics experience. These findings confirm what other scholars have said about white ethnic identity – that white ethnics can choose to maintain aspects of their ethnic or national identity because it is enjoyable and makes them feel special. But the story of white ethnic identity is not just one of choosing ethnicity, but also about what they are not choosing – an unmarked white American identity – and why. These findings make apparent the processes by which groups considered to be white and overwhelmingly present themselves as white through survey data (i.e., ACS) define and interpret who they are as more closely tied to their countries of origin or ethnicity than with a white racial identity. In other words, assimilation to an undefinable white American identity is not seen as a desirable outcome. A small number of studies have also revealed a similar pattern in the lives of Middle Eastern immigrants in the United States**.** For example, Ajrouch (2004) studied the identity formation processes of Arab American adolescents, finds that her participants distinguish themselves from both "immigrant culture" as well as "white." Thus they define themselves as racially distinct, as Arab Americans, from the mainstream, dominant society. My research confirms this line of thought as it provides another example of how ethnic difference matters for groups define as white by the racial classification system in the US. This chapter adds some depth to that research as well by elucidating the various situations and meanings that arise out of the tensions of remaining ethnic

(and they that is important) and being American, and by also incorporating notions of family and community in the construction of internal group solidarity. In the next chapter I will continue to look at the meaning of "being Albanian," but focus more on the contested arenas of Albanian identity.

CHAPTER SIX

PROBLEMS OF CHANGE: STRUGGLING TO DEFINE ALBANIAN IDENTITY

In the previous chapter, I described the meanings my participant attached to the importance of "being Albanian" within the contexts of issues regarding cultural continuity. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the problems of change in the Albanian immigrant and ethnic community, particularly the struggles in defining Albanian identity. I view change in a more narrow sense in which I look at how my participants through in interactional process perceive and deal with the struggles to define an Albanian identity, especially at the points of religious fractures, intergenerational conflicts and change. I am concerned with what immigrants and the young adult 1.5 and second generation think has changed and how families and the community deal with new situations and challenges as identity, culture, generations and communities transform. As some of my participants have described, a number of things have changed in the last few decades in which she feels that Albanians have become more "Americanized," and the boundary of ethnic distinction is not as clear as it use to be.

Change after migration and settlement in a new country is about what one needs to do adjust to live in the country of destination. That is, there are some situations that require immigrants to adjust, which could include language, political involvement, housing, employment, and parenting strategies. The process of change after migration also involves identity challenges and transitions, especially as Albanian immigrant parents' deal with their US-born white American children and grandchildren. This chapter attests to other research that shows that family, gender relations, and ethnic and racial identities are central to processes of change in immigrant and ethnic communities, which are shaped by cultural meanings and tensions embedded in assimilation and acculturation processes between generations (Foner

2008). I investigate issues of racial, ethnic and national identity, examining the way Albanians deal with an Albanian "identity crisis" or struggles of defining an Albanian identity. I explore the changes that have occurred within the Albanian community in terms of family and gender, looking also at how the efforts to maintain Albanian culture and tradition do not match the generational changes that are occurring within and beyond the Albanian community. I am not studying if or how Albanians assimilate or not, rather the point of this chapter is to capture the "insider" understandings of that process in terms of how it is understood and handled by individuals, families and communities.

The tensions between maintaining and losing ethnic distinctiveness is a central feature of immigrant group life, and Albanians are at a time in their immigration story when they are going through, as one my participants called it, an "identity crisis." Consider my conversation with Genti:

> Genti: I went to an event about Balkan communities, and it was nice. I got to network, make connections and a lot of times when you go to those events you get to hear the same problems and you start realizing that it's not our the problems or the issues or the transitional issues it's not because we're Albanians in Detroit, it's not because we're Albanian Bektashi or Albanian Orthodox or Albanian Catholic or any of those things**,** it's simply our timing in America because the event I went to also extends into the Bosnia community and Turkish and other Balkan area communities and when they speak and they are in the same kind of timeline as I am, as we are, and they list all the same issues exactly.
>
> Linda: what are some of those issues?
>
> Genti**: it's those transitional issues-it's that identity crisis phase—that second, going into the second and third generation is an identity crisis kind of phase of any community that moves to America, not specific to the Balkans, we're just the Irish, Italian and German and those kind of communities they have been here longer so they've gone through this phase but the results are different.** You can see the communities that have bonded together and have gotten through the identity crisis phase you can see the success they have and in the Detroit community you can point out the Greek community. You can say what you want, you can have your different beliefs but as a Greek American community in Detroit they are successful. They have investment clubs, they have large-scale businesses. They've moved from small business owner to large

> corporations you know which has allowed their kids to be grown into a good social class at least a good platform for success then you see some communities that did not transition into success and that' s because they basically when they got to this identity crisis phase you know they couldn't compromise and they just basically dissolved.

Genti suggests that Albanians could possibly take the same assimilation path as the Irish and German, but right now the Albanian community is in a period of transition as the 1.5 and second generation grows older, gets married, establishes their households, and has their own US born children. As a community who still has a significant foreign-born population in which the majority of the population entered the US after the 1990s, Genti indicates that it still remains to be seen what the Albanian community will do and be like over generations. Genti is curious if Albanians will still maintain a tight-knit community and ethnic institutions that persist over generations or dissolve when they move from the first generation to US-born second and into the third generations. This is not unusual for immigrant families and minority groups. Shibutani and Kwan (1965:480) assert "…most minority groups that are acquiring the culture of another group become temporarily disorganized," facing periods of social disorganization in the family and community. Albanians are not necessarily going through a "crisis," but a collective reinterpretation of what it means to be Albanian in US contexts and the character of the "Albanian community" as time passes and the 1.5 and second generation get older and the third generation is born. From an symbolic interactionist perspective, it is clear that there is no predetermined end to Albanianness or the community, but an active (re)construction of meaning or "sense-making" about what it means to be Albanian, what contexts and situations are important, and how Albanians should act and be. The struggle to define an Albanian identity goes beyond issues of the social transformations that occur in immigrant families lives after migration to encompass religious and regional fractures that complicate the definition and meaning of an Albanian identity.

ESTABLISHING RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

The one thing that unifies Albanians is the fact that they have Albanian ethnic origins. But because of complex border drawings and war in the Balkans, Albanians as a national and ethnic group have been split into religions and cross national arenas, and what is felt most in terms of organizing and experiencing community is religious divisions. Albanians in the Metro Detroit area organize in religious pockets. The Muslim Albanian community has a long history in Michigan. One of the Albanian Muslim leaders describes this history:

> In 1945 was as a society, the Albanian American Muslim society was established in 1945 before that the first writings about Albanian Muslim communities in Michigan we find it since 1917. It was part or branch of another center, Muslim center which was established in Maine in 1915 so this was branch until '45, '45 they established their own society, registered it in the state and continued with that. 1949 they brought an Albanian Imam, Vehbi Ismail. Then they started full activities, school, and it continued. They before they had this building they bought a church somewhere in Highland Park they, used it as a mosque until they purchased the land and built this mosque which is here which was one in 1963. Since 1963 it wasn't exactly like this, it was smaller, it was added to it later on but basically this is the building.

The Albanian mosque also serves as a cultural institution through its school (Albanian language and history classes, including Islamic studies), and hosting of various cultural events. Also as part of the Muslim Albanian community in Michigan are the Bektashi Albanians who are Sufi Muslims. One of the leaders of the Bekstashi Albanians estimates that there are approximately 12,000 people (based on their address list) who are Bektashi across Michigan and parts of Canada. People from Canada visit the Tekke (or Teqe, which is a Bektashi Monastery) in Michigan, as it is the first and only Albanian Tekke in North America, which opened in 1954 in Taylor, Michigan.[1] Most of the people who attend or a part of the Tekke are Albanian nationals

[1] See http://www.teqeamerica.com/history/teqe

or Albanians from other countries such as Kosovo and Macedonia, but a very small number of Turkish and Iraqi individuals also participate at the Tekke.

The Catholics also have rooted themselves quite well in the Metro Detroit area, establishing their own churches, expanding the Catholic community, and creating a large church in a prosperous city in Michigan (Rochester Hills) where they can do all the things that a community needs—weddings, parties of all sorts, funerals, marriages, service and prayer, Catholic education, and Albanian language education—even being a space where potential couples meet, engaged couples and families greet, and married couples present themselves to the community, as a few of my participants pointed out. The church provides many community needs, and there is a sense of trust through religious affiliation. The center of the Orthodox Albanian community is located in Massachusetts where the first Albanian Orthodox church in the US was built. Orthodox Albanians have been migrating to Massachusetts since the early 19th and 20th centuries, much earlier than the Albanian Catholics who came to Michigan after the 1960s. In the late 1920s, the Orthodox Albanians were also the first group to organize as a religious group and institution in Michigan, who were then followed by Muslims and Roman Catholics (Trix 2001:21). One of the leaders of the Orthodox community explains that the Albanian Orthodox community in Michigan today is lacking significant membership compared to the other religious groups, and unlike the Mosque, Teqe, and the Catholic Church, the Orthodox leader is not Albanian, but Romanian. He says,

> We are not as many Albanian Orthodox here. As I mentioned earlier, a lot of them were raised and born in the communist regime [when religion was outlawed so there are people who are atheists or agnostics]. We don't' have as many membership there. We are lacking a lot. I would say we have 250 Albanian Orthodox families that have been members of the church. It could be more but I think it's around 250. But also the Albanians who have created this church have been in this country since 1912 so they are actually Americans. I don't see them as Albanians. They have been here for generations

> and generations. There's a woman who is 80 years old and she was born here [in the US] which is one example, but her son-in-law is like me born and raised in Albania but came here in his mid-20s.

He explained that the Orthodox community in the US is very small in Michigan, but in Boston there is a strong presence. The Albanian church in Michigan is a branch of the Albanian Orthodox church in Boston, and a lot of the things they do in Michigan come from that church. It is clear that Albanians do not share one religious base, but are divided between three religions: Muslim, Catholic and Christian Orthodox.

"The Faith of the Albanians is Albanianism"

A popular Albanian poem written in the 1880s by the Albanian poet and writer, Pashko Vasa, stated:

> O moj Shqypni ('Oh poor Albania')
> Awaken, Albanians, wake from your slumber. Let us all, as brothers, swear an oath not to mind church or mosque. The faith of the Albanians is Albanianism.

Vasa was promulgating that Albanians should be united under one faith - Albanianism. Religion played a distinctive role in Albania relations under communism when the idea was that the faith of Albanians was Albanianism was taken seriously. As I explained in chapter four, the Albania government declared Albania a secular state in law in 1967 until it was lifted in 1990, shaping the contours of Albanian nationalism and nation building for decades to come. I call this chapter a struggle to define an Albanian identity because there are internal diversities that complicate Albanian identity among my participants in that there is this question of "who are we?" and the issue of what it means to be Albanian and disagreements about the prioritizing of identities in the context of changes both in the countries of origin and settlement. Most of my participants viewed religion as fragmenting the Albanian community, making it difficult to create an all-

encompassing sense of what it means to be Albanian or to make Albanians faithful to being Albanian over any other identity, especially religion. Gjon says,

> We are existing as a race but I think how many [Albanians exist in the US] is another story. I think some Albanians like I said before they put their faith in God than in Albanian. They'd rather be Muslim, they'd rather be Catholic or Orthodox Albanians. There are Orthodox Albanians that are a very strict. Technically that is what orthodox means but sometimes I wish, the Albanian factor helps and sometimes it helps in unifying somewhat the Albanian community but it's not its full potential, we've never reached the full potential of unifying the Albanians except those two times and sometimes I do wish like I said we were all Muslim, all Catholic, all Orthodox, one point of view you know even though there would be like people like me that wouldn't adhere to the faith but your background would still be [the same] you know it's an Orthodox country, it's a Muslim country even though most nations perceive us as a Muslim country you know that's the true aspect of it so and plus the deformity of the 50 years of communism so there's lots of problems. Like I said there is that barrier. That barrier of religion, there's also other aspects to it but religion is number 1…I think religion is the main thing. You know certain groups don't want to be affiliated with I want to say that there's more hatred towards the Muslims since the 9/11.

What is apparent from the above response is that the respondent strictly considers religion as being the force separating Albanians, and suggests that often time religion supersedes an Albanian identity when it should not. But he also suggests that post-9/11 context has further added to the religious fractures within the community. During my field research, I was told that is has not always been that way in Michigan as the different religious communities use to actively help each other out as they were building their religious institutions. Anthropologist. Trix (1994, 2001) who extensively studied the Bektashi Albanian community in Michigan and has written the only book on Albanians in Michigan also cites the historical religious cooperation between Albanians Christians and Muslims when they were establishing themselves in Michigan and building Albanian their religious institutions. However, Trix (2001) documents that this closeness and cooperation did not sustain itself over time, especially between the Orthodox Christian and Muslims because the community grew larger after World War II. She writes,

> When they were fewer in number during the first half of the twentieth century, their common concern with the fate of their homeland and their common origin in southern Albanian had brought them together (p. 14).

Roman Catholic Albanians from the former Yugoslavia only began arriving in Michigan in the late 1960s and they did not, as Trix notes, have a close relationship with other Albanians who came before them. However, the Teqe and Mosque helped the Albanian Catholics purchase the first Albanian Catholic church in Michigan (Trix 2001:15). Consider my conversation with one community leader, Elton, who is Muslim and came to the US from Albania in 2002, as he describes the initial cooperation of Albanians across religious lines and how the events 9/11 has shifted the perception of Muslims among "Americans":

> Elton: Coming from Albanian in 2002, a year after 9/11, the economy [in Michigan] was very bad and at the same time the perception of the "others" was very, people were starting to look to others with suspicion coming from Balkans, coming from Muslim religion and background. We tried to do our best to introduce ourselves at least in the university networks where we belonged here mostly. The universities here, Wayne state, that's where most of the activities, some of our friends were in Lansing too, together with friends we tried to organize dialog dinners where we would call different religious leaders from different faiths come together and promote I would say a language of understanding and religion is not the reason why these things happened at that time. Here in Michigan the history of the Muslim community goes back to 1900s, the first mosque that was back in 1945. It was in Detroit and then they moved in a bigger place in 1960s. It was Imam Vehbi at that time. That center had served as a starting point for everything else, fundraising events. When the churches were built the fundraising was held there [at the mosque] we never had this [conflicts between religions]. Actually the Albanian community we come from such a diverse community where all these different religions have been together for centuries so it's very bothering that a small event, I mean it was a big thing, such a bad thing can influence relationships, century long relationships of understanding and diversity where we have come [from], I have lived, my close friends are from different [religious]-Orthodox, we share rooms, boarding rooms, event today they are all over the world and we keep close contacts.
>
> Linda: So you think after 9/11 when you were doing these dinners there were misunderstandings among Albanians?
>
> Elton: There was misunderstandings not in Albanians not so much as much as in the conceptual mood of Americans so it was our job to make it clear to the community at large that hey we are not those kind of people, do not do this mistake of putting everybody n the same box. Those who ever did this, they don't represent our religion and

> terrorism has nothing to do with Islam. They cannot go together. I always use this term very often: A Muslim cannot be a terrorist and a terrorist can never become a Muslim. It is a fundamental; these are perquisites that don't match each other.

The above respondent adds that some of the challenges that the Albanian Muslim community and Balkan communities in general have had to face after 9/11 is the "perception of the 'others'" which he explains as "mood of Americans," not just among non-Muslim Albanians. The situation shifted to look upon Muslim communities, as well as communities from the Balkans, with suspicion. Elton and a small group of friends from different parts of the Balkans and different religious leaders sought to rectify this by creating a space to have "dialog dinners" to promote understanding. As the respondent points out, the Albanian religious communities have for the most part gotten along historically – both in Albania and in Michigan. However, some of my participants still see religion as fragmenting the community, and some of the religious leaders also suggest that relations could be improved.

Gjon and others also brought up the experience of years of communism, which includes the problem of trust among Albanians. Interestingly, religion in some ways rectifies the lack of trust among Albanians that was nurtured under years of communism, making the separate religious institutions composed of largely Albanians stronger. Tereze best describes this issue of trust and religion particularly for Albanians from Albania who lived under the Hoxha regime:

> If people go to the church religiously or if people go to the Teqe religiously then you basically assuming there is a level of trust within that religious community so it's kind of so if I go every Sunday it means that I actually believe what they are saying or I believe in what I'm being taught….it's really hard to empower a community that has always been divided. I mean in our history, we, with the Enver Hoxha regime is basically we were taught to spy on our neighbor you know so how can you develop the trust you know in somebody else and sort of putting a group together to say it's not about position of authority, it's a matter of how we come together, you're skill is a, theirs is b, c d, f and g, when come together we can actually produce something, it's not you know what is my role, how do I get recognition, it's focusing on the overall result, but I mean I'm an idealist so I don't think you are going to find that very often.

Lula describes that religious divisions are intertwined with regional origins. She says,

> The church will have a party and so what we're getting is we are segregating further by religion right you're having the religion where the church is mostly people from Montenegro and from Shkodra probably, Lezhe, maybe some Kosovars too right, but those are minorities compared to majority are Montenegrins and then even between the two churches you're segregated even the Catholic churches [based on where people live]. I think they are getting more segregation and that I don't like…I hate the segregation. I don't know if it's because I'm from the two different sides where I feel like I need both to feel comfortable

Gjon describes the religious fissures he has encountered and the question of the priorities of identity, which comes first – being Albanian or being of a particular religious faith:

> Gjon: There's a lot of Albanians I want to say a large amount of the Malesor [ethnic Albanians from Montenegro] crowd who identify as Catholics, they are very quick to judge if you're not Catholic, you're nothing. If you're not Catholic you're a Turk, if you are not Catholic and you're Orthodox you're a Greek as if to say like you know Catholicism was the first you know the first religion to be out there…technically not because there's been little pagans leading into all of the mythology stuff but and there's also the Muslim crowd which I actually have a funny story. I was at Wayne State for one of these cultural events and I was having a debate with this girl, Albanian girl, just talking, never met her before and she asked me what religious background are you? I'm like I don't really per se believe in any religion, I believe in God but not in a certain category. And then she was you know she kind of pulled away and I kind of engaged the conversation again and I was like what religious background do you belong to and she's like I belong to Muslim. I guess I started the whole conversation but basically just blatantly putting it out there and I told her I was like I seen that you pulled away a little bit, got a little colder and she's like I kind of like to talk to only basically what she said was Muslim but she tried to put it in a sweeter, smoother way and just kind of made me think then I asked her the question, would you rather be an Albanian Christian or just a regular Muslim that you would like to marry. And she threw out the answer blatantly. She was like I'd rather marry a Muslim of any other cultural group than marry an Albanian Christian and that just threw my jaw down to the ground. That's when the conversation just basically ended.
>
> Linda: Do you think that maybe the Catholic Albanians kind of feel the same way?
>
> Gjon: They feel the same way I think of course there's instances of acceptance and within the borders of Albania there's not as much discrimination or if you go to Albania there's not much discrimination. **I think the mentality once you come over here changes because you're in a group and like I said most of the southerners are located that way west and Wayne county are of Metro Detroit] and the Northerners that way [East side-Sterling Heights and surrounding areas], you only have an affiliation with**

that group, with only Catholics, with only Muslims, with only Orthodox, with only this and that, and I think you just the whole picture comes together.

Gjon acknowledged the pockets of acceptance and suggested that not all Albanians judge one another based on religion or affiliate only with Albanians of the same religion. He and other participants have acknowledged that religious divisions are not as strong in Albania as they are in Michigan. Still, religion is a barrier to forming a coherent Albanian community, and is possibly a challenge to defining and maintaining a distinct Albanian identity.

Religion, Community Organization and Conflict

Based on my conversations with Albanians, and experiences in the field, I discovered that religion is one of the major ways the community is organized in which there is limited opportunities for Albanians of different faiths to come together as Albanians unless it has to do with conflict tied to politics abroad, as is in the case of Kosovo in which there have been Albanian organized demonstrations. This is very much felt among the 1.5 and second generation who attempt to organize without religious distinction and do, but only through their student organizations, and find that sometimes that is the only way things get done. Thus the idea that the faith of Albanians is Albanianism by itself is not widely present in the Albanian community in Metro Detroit. The community has established itself as one mostly organized along religious lines and this, according to my participants, has worked against organizing Albanians in a unified way. As Tereze was explaining the division of the community during our interview, she drew a rough sketch on a piece of paper of circles that represent each religious group with a unmarked circle in the middle that signified no connecting element between the different religious communities—no space or place to unite the multiple religious identities in way that expresses the long held assumption that the faith of Albanians is Albanianism. Tereze describes in this way as she very roughly sketches the organization of the community:

> Tereze: So maybe okay we basically have Albanians then you have church, church, mosque, Teqe [she draws on paper what the Albanian religious division looks like] Orthodox church. You have these people and they trust. So they have their following here [Orthodox], they're following here [Catholic], their following here [Muslim], blah blah…all these things I mean if they are already organized by a particular thing so how do we say dear whatever, father this, dear imam this whatever so how do you get this people to function. I think maybe that's the true test. Maybe no one has come and asked these people to say, why can't you guys be that alliance that says that we're Albanians, we're not divided by faith because right now it's whoever has the most money has the most influence. I mean that's normal but how do you get a leadership going while utilizing the very rich and the very smart and by making them happy and maybe that's the test…

In my conversation with one of the Muslim community leaders, Fatmir, I asked him what he thinks about the younger generation who think that the Albanian community in Michigan is really only organized along religious lines and the different religious groups rarely come together. Consider my conversation with Fatmir:

> That might be true to some extent. I mean people go to their religious places where they find their peace of mind because they worship something, they believe in something, they meet people who believe the same thing which I don't see anything wrong as long as they don't have bad feelings about the other group so it's people go where they feel in peace and something pushes them to go there. In Sunday mass I assume Christians will go there. I don't expect Muslims to go to for Sunday mass. I don't expect Christians to be here for Friday prayer. They go where they worship but at the same time when national events like flag day and Independence of Kosova we have people who come from other faiths and we participate in their events even if it's in symbolic number that exists probably I would say there were some events which I am sure you were aware of that caused some problems. People in leadership they should be careful what they say and where they say it because a public speech…if you get into altar and start cursing on some other people's faiths of course that will bring the reaction which will create the hatred between two groups. Which Albanians in their genes don't have it, but someone is doing the work of someone else outside of Albanians and creating that which should not have been happening and should not continue.

Fatmir builds upon Tereze notion that the community is organized along religious lines in part because there is a sense of trust and adds that it is not unusual that people of the same faith, who share the same beliefs, come together and spend time with each other in particular contexts (e.g., church, mosque) and situations. Fatmir describes some of the situations in which the different

religious groups of Albanians will come together for events like Albanian Flag Day or Kosovo Independence Day. However, he suggests how recent relations between Catholics and Muslims were soured as a result of a very controversial situation in 2007 when one of the Albanian Catholic leaders was accused of expressing anti-Muslims sentiments in the Albanian language to a group of his congregants, which was then posted on YouTube. Fatmir assumed that I was aware of that situation, and I was because I heard all about it from members of the Catholic community and some of my other participants, and it was a very controversial issue within the Albanian community that provoked an apology by the Catholic leader, and response from the Archdiocese of Detroit.

> Linda: What are the relationships between the different Albanian religious communities today?
>
> Fatmir: We meet occasionally probably not as well as we would like to. I won't say we don't have communication at all. We do meet. Personally I don't have any problem with other faiths. I have American priests who are my friends. I meet them on weekly basis and I mean I respect, our religious orders us to respect other religions. 'People of the Book' they are called in the Quran, which means they have special status, Jews and Christians, we are allowed to marry with Jews and Christians and if you are allowed to marry someone, how closer can you get? You can't get any closer. You are allowed to create a family and respect each other beliefs. We as Muslims when it comes to Jesus we respect him as one of the greatest prophet of God. We name our kids after Jesus. That tells volumes if you name your kids after someone, you must love that person, respect that person otherwise you would never name your kids after someone you hate.
>
> Linda: So there is respect among the communities and meetings?
>
> Fatmir: It is to some extent it could be better. What I think Albanians the mass the people when they see something wrong in their leaders be it religious or political or whatever they should react and say this is not what we want. We have family ties with each other, you cannot separate us. We belong to each other but unfortunately that didn't happen. You now you can go on to YouTube and type the leaders name and you will see what kind of language and that creates immediately, it gets out and people hear it, the other part, other religious followers right away and react and say what is this. Is he among ours or he is someone who we fought with them [who we fought against]. They [leaders] can fix things and they can destroy things and I strongly believe also if someone makes a mistake the other leaders should correct.

As Fatmir pointed out, Albanians of different faiths have historically gotten along quite well, living side by side and marrying across religious lines. Fatmir, as a religious leader, also highlighted that special status that is given to Jews and Christians in the Quran so the discord among religious is not part of the belief system. However the notion that "we belong to each other" was put into serious question when the incident I previously mentioned that occurred with one of the other Albanian catholic leaders. But clearly, among my "generations" participants, religious fragmentation is part of their understanding about the struggles of an Albanian identity. An ideal Albanian community for Lula and some of my other participants would be one that would encompass diverse Albanians, a space that is secular and that just being Albanian is what brings you there. While in the field I was told that there have been attempts to organize an Albanian-only space, but organizers simply could not find enough support, particularly financial support, for it among community leaders. Lula says,

> The more you segregate that breaks people up. I don't like seeing that I like being as a whole and I guess it comes back down to what is your identity. What do you consider yourself—do you consider yourself a Catholic or do you consider yourself an Albanian and usually if you ask someone what are you don't say your religion first you say your nationality. Yeah I'm Muslim! I've never said that. that's the last thing I'm ever going to tell anybody, my religion…Hi my name is [says name] and I'm Muslim. It's not like I go around identifying myself as Muslim.

There are situations when there is a religious and regional intermixing of Albanians such as at college student parties, concerts at non-secular locations or Albanian national flag day, although the latter is much less so since the Catholic Albanians have a very big event that draws probably 1,000 or more people to the church, almost all Catholics.

Jesika describes how the religious division has made it difficult for her Muslim Albanian family who came to Michigan in the late 1990s from Shkoder, Albania to assimilate into the existing Albanian community in Michigan, which she views as made up of mostly Catholics.

Consider my conversation with Jesika about her feeling somewhat like an outsider in the Albanian community:

> Linda: Did you go to Albanian events here because you were saying it was very hard to get in?
>
> Jesika: It was it's just one of those things where in the beginning my parents were working so much that I was always home with my brother, my sister working. My mom teases me about this all the time and she almost feels bad about it but she has worked 2-3 jobs since we came here and my dad has worked full-time since we came here. He almost took the role of mom, cooking, cleaning. Just being there for us. It was really hard. I had to put myself into the community or get to know people myself because as far as a family we never really if we didn't try because we didn't have too many people that we knew, so it just kind of unaware of things and being from Shkoder at least the part that Iive it's mostly Islamic and the population here is mostly Catholic so it's really hard to be a part of something that's almost separated from generations ago of mindset. I had a really close friend of mine that went to Wayne state and she's prej malesijet [from Montenegro] and we're very close and we are always talking about how sad it is that religion has always kind of separated us in such a way…
>
> Linda: So you did grow up in a Muslim family?
>
> Jesika: Yes, but not strictly religious. My parents they didn't practice it so it's not like we went the mosque every weekend, maybe for a few holidays like for Ramadan my mom would hold whatever, but not like pray 5 times whatever a day. And that's why I've always gotten along with Catholics because I never saw that as a problem cause I never really differentiated it in such a way.
>
> Linda: Do you see in the things you here or situation, do you still think that's a dividing factor?
>
> Jesika: It is. I really do feel like it is because it's just one of those things I feel like it gets passed down and I don't think they do it on purpose where they are being told it is this way and we don't want it, but I see a lot of my friends. For back home my cousin who just got married it was just a big thing that she got married to a Catholic Albanian and not a Muslim Albanian. For my aunt it was just so hard on her because they were practicing and blending those two together was just very hard. I see it here with my friends as well it's not like something oh I'll never be your friend because you're Catholic but it's like on of those things when they have the events at the kish [church], when I get invited I definitely go but I do feel like, the people that know me they are like what are you doing here?
>
> Linda: Makes you feel like an outsider?

> Jesika: A little bit you know. I don't find it I don't take it as an insult. I still get involved and do my thing but I do realize it's a big part of the community here in Michigan because it is especially with the church, they are the ones who hold most of the events, which is awesome, but I just wish that things were a little bit more connected and intertwined.

Like Jesika, many of the participants who said they were Muslim or their parents were Muslim were not "strictly religious" or did not practice regularly or at all. However, among several of my participants there was awareness, not just among Muslims, that the meanings of religious separation have negative consequences for relations among Albanians. Gjon, who is from an Orthodox family but does not ascribe to the Orthodox religion, was the most specific about instances he has observed where religion has entered into Albanian relations in a undesirable fashion, essentially ending the interaction altogether. When reflecting on the religious fractions in the Albanian community, Gjon explains, adding on to what Elton said, that it will be hard for Albanians to unite, especially in the post-9/11 context:

> Gjon: You know certain groups don't want to be affiliated with I want to say that there's more hatred towards the Muslims since the 9/11. I see that very much so especially it's a very big taboo for Malesor like Catholic [Catholic Albanians] to go out there and get married to a Muslim. Very big taboo. For what reason I do not understand.
>
> Linda: Do you know of anyone who has done that?
>
> Gjon: Not from my friends. I don't know to tell you the truth. It's always been a big taboo. My friend wanted to date this Malesor [i.e. Catholic from Montenegro or Northern Albanian-Montenegrin border towns with predominately Catholics, such as Shkoder] chick. And she liked him too until she found out that his background was Muslim but he was like me, non-adhered to the faith you know. But you know she was like that was the cut off line, oh you're Muslim oh. That was it. And there have been instances with the other way around, but you know what I've noticed here the majority of the crowd is Malesor in Michigan I believe Albanians from Albania [who are predominately Muslim] came later on toward the 1990s and later. I think there's that gap, that gap of misunderstanding.
>
> Linda: What do you think, if you could bring them together? What do you think would bring them together? That foundation.

> Gjon: And still I don't want to sound too nationalistic or anything like that I am nationalistic I believe in the words of the great Albanian, put your Albanian before your faith. It doesn't sound very well in English but [Linda: Say it in Albanian] 'feja e Shqiptarit eshte shqiptarismi.' It's not Catholicism, it's not Islam, and it's not orthodox Christian. It's Albanian. That's what I believe and it takes the right person [leadership to make changes] and I'm not the right one.

The idea that the faith of Albanians is Albanianism was historically woven into the fabric of the Albanian society, but it remains an ideal in some Albanian relations. For example, the religious context is a predominate force in shaping the way Albanians relations are organized in Michigan today. One of the community leaders I spoke with, Mira, explained that Albanians from the former Yugoslavia (Kosovo and the region of Malesia in present-day Montenegro) are more strict, and not tolerant about religion. She says, "In Albania people are very tolerant about religion. I think maybe with time these young folks will understand that being together is the most important thing." Albanians from Montenegro, Kosova, and Macedonia did not experience religion to the same extent as Albanians from Albania during communism where the focus was on building Albanian nationalism. For those from the former Yugoslavia, the problems between the Yugoslav state and its ethnic minorities were more about ethnicity or ethnic tensions than religious ones (Babuna 2000). Only a few participants had a different interpretation of the religious fissures noted by other informants. One of those participants sees the Albanian community as fragmented because of issues of geography and miscommunication. Genti says,

> …but going back to the different religions I guess I don't see it as being fragmented because there' s conflict I just see it being fragmented because of issues like geography a little bit you know we are a little bit further distance within MI and then b) we just lack in some communication channels but the tools the Albanian TV is an example of a tool that has to be utilized to start making those connections between communities you know. Albanian TV is one and that has to be community non-profit organization initiated you know it's not just going to happen out of thin air.

Genti points out that there are opportunities available to open up communication channels among Albanians from different regions and faiths, such as through Albanian television programs but it

requires some work on the part of group and organizations to make that happen. Almost every one of my participants explained that religion is a dividing, segregating factor in the community—not so much in terms of overt conflict between groups, but in terms of physical separation and organization of a coherent community. Sometimes it also operated to distance some Albanians from others, as Gjon and Jesika described. It also is an important element of which Albanian one marries, but only among my Catholic respondents was religion an important factor in who they marry, as well as who their parents would prefer they marry. I turn my attention to another situation complicating the defining process of Albanian identity, intergenerational tensions.

GENERATIONAL TENSIONS, FAMILY AND GENDER

Family migration scholarship has elucidated the various ways immigration processes are connected to families. Over the last few decades, migration scholars have become increasingly interested in how children change (or not and in what ways) after migration, and what challenges migration brings about to parenting practices and parent-child interactions (Suárez-Orozco 2000; Espiritu 2001; Foner 2009). Several scholars have showed that immigration experience presents a variety of challenges for youth and parents/caregivers in families (McCarthy 1998; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; Suárez-Orozco 2000). Some of these challenges include adjusting to changes in gender relations, learning a new language, culture, and constructing new identities within a racially, culturally, and linguistically dissonant host society. The immigration and settlement experience brings to light the relationship between two or more cultures. Parenting and raising children in the US context is sometimes at odds with parental (and wider ethnic community) distinct cultures and communities from which their immigrant parents are most familiar (Foner 2009). Simply put, immigrants move to another country, and want to maintain some sense of

continuity in important contexts such as the family and gender relations. In a sense, parents socialize their kids by imposing culture and traditions on them, and the ethnic community reinforces it. But, the children of immigrants are living and growing up in the US, and there is something about it parents and the community members do not like.

Intergenerational Conflict and Change

My participants, mostly second generation, expressed the generational tensions as living in "two different worlds" – the American and Albanian worlds. Those who are part of the 1.5 generation talked about the "two different worlds" more in terms of not fitting well in either world. The one situation that could account for this slight difference is that the 1.5 generation individuals have an experience of growing up in Albania, even for a short period of time, and when they go back to visit they realize that they feel that they do not entirely fit in in Albania either because they are more "American," and have a different experience than everyone else in that context who did not emigrate and spend their adolescence and now their early adult life in the US. Intergenerational tensions are experienced as the tension between the Albanian upbringing and the American upbringing. Growing up in an Albanian immigrant family was like living in "two different worlds," but as adults it is experienced in the way Jesika frames it as a "little balance of back and forth." Ella, 29 year-old of the second generation, explained what her thoughts and feelings are about growing up in an immigrant family. She says,

> I mean there's a lot of things, there was no explanation for it, just do it because Albanians are used to doing it and that's it. We couldn't shave our legs, we couldn't date, we couldn't go out, we couldn't hang out with friends. There were a lot of things that we couldn't do because there was no explanation why, you just couldn't do it. So growing up in my eyes was very hard, it was very hard because **you are living in two different worlds. You have the world where you go to—school and work—that is the American society that you have to adapt to and then you come home to a completely different world is the Albanian society that you live in where the rules, restrictions, regulations and the company and the traditions and everything.** It's two different worlds. It's very hard. Growing up we did have a lot of family all the time over and as a

> vajze [unmarried girl], as a girl, you have to "ba hysmet" [to serve], you have to be there, you can't go in your room and do your homework, you have to be out there with the family and just sit there and help your mom and clean and put all the meze [appetizers] out and then clean after. It was a lot. You couldn't be a kid. You had to grow up right away.

Veronika, a practicing Bektashi woman who was born in the US to Albania immigrant parents from Macedonia, explains a similar tension, attributing it the growing up as an Albanian girl:

> I think my parents were probably faced with now looking back with a lot of different outside pressures. First of all they are raising three daughters in America so now they are dealing with assimilating and saying oh you want to go to the movies, which has nothing to do with being Albanian or not, but you want to go to the movies. football games, you want to have boyfriends. As ethnic parents ehh you are not doing this. Albanian girls don't go out at night. That was the rule. Why couldn't I go? Because I'm Albanian. So you grow up sometimes hated being Albanian. I could probably say I hated being Albanian until I graduated from college because, it was because the way it was portrayed, it was always portrayed as limited us in wanting to do things because of my ethnic background because sort of what the Americans good girls don't do that, Albanian girls don't do that, Albanians girls don't have boyfriends, Albanians girls are home, boys don't call you. **So they had to learn how to give in, and balance keeping, instilling culture, religion and social pressures, American social pressures along with my parents peers - the expectations of you what you have a good girl, and I have a good girl and not losing their children in the same way.** A lot of parents failed that; it's not a failure because it's an evolution of raising teenagers, but a lot of my cousins partying and really breaking the mold where I don't know how but my dad had a really good leash on us I guess where we knew how far we could go with them. I think a lot had to do with and I am a big believer that because we were more geared towards sports and my parents didn't have to face the challenges that I think a lot of parents in general have to face with their kids coming home from school and on the phone, wanting to go to the mall. We just wanted to go play basketball…**it was a struggle for them [parents**]. My generation [second generation] we grew up with split personalities. So you were Going to school, being an all American athlete, my sister was homecoming queen of her class, she was captain of the basketball team, 9th grade she played varsity basketball, she got a scholarship but she didn't take it at the end because she couldn't go away to school. These good things happened in my family…but we were all American, we did good in school, teachers loved us, **we were good American girls, and then we would come home and we would have pressures that were unnecessary for us.**

The "two different worlds" that once seemed so separate to some of my participants as they were growing up in Albanian immigrant families, have become complex arenas of change, conflict, and negotiation between the generations. In telling me his story, Tony, a 28 year-old second

generation male whose family is from Montenegro, said he told his father that certain ethnic traditions and patriarchal notions do not work anymore such as viewing women primarily for their reproductive labor, both to bear children and provide unpaid kin work.[2] He explains:

> You can't women can't walk around in nothing but potato sacks, bare foot, keep the house and have kids anymore…obviously the Kanun says that, that's where I got the walking around in a potato sack barefoot and pregnant from, that's like a "thes" [thes me mbaj or bag to carry] yeah like no guy [his father] it doesn't work. And two kings and two queens in a castle doesn't work either.

The ideology of household structure and family takes on revised dimensions in the thoughts and behaviors among the participants who were born and/raised in US contexts. The household strategies that once may have worked in the immigrant generation need to change, and many of my participants' stories have identified such changes. Tony stated, "two kings and two queens in a castle doesn't work either." That is, living in the same household as his parents after marriage and children - the two kings (father and son) and two queens (mother and daughter-in-law) - does not work, even though it may ease a family and newly married couple's economic hardships.

The experiences of Albanian men and women in the family and community were starkly different decades ago when immigrant fathers and husbands could be the sole providers through their full-time jobs with benefits in the Detroit automotive industry of the late 20th century. With structural changes in the economy and the second generation of Albanian women are becoming more educated than their immigrant parents, and gender relations and strategies shifted, providing Albanian-born women and the second generation an opportunity to build a social and economic space for themselves that is unlike their parents, especially their mothers from rural areas. According to the ACS data, among those who identify their ancestry as Albanian in the

[2] See: Whitaker, Ian. 1981. "A Sack for Carrying Things": The Traditional Role of Women in Northern Albanian Society." *Anthropological Quarterly,* 54 (3): 146-156.

US, more women than men have eight years of school or less, but only slightly more men than women have nine to twelve years of education with no diploma or a high school diploma with some college. When it comes completion of post-secondary education we begin to see women with slightly more education than men in the categories of associates (6.1% women versus 4.8% men) and bachelors degrees (19.7% women 18.5% men). Only in the completion of a professional degree do Albanian men surpass women, and even that is not a major gap (9.0% men versus 7.4% women). A similar pattern emerges among those who identify their first ancestry as Albanian in Michigan when it comes to sex differences in educational attainment. That is, women are still slightly more educated than men beyond high school/GED, with very minor differences at the post-graduate studies level (6.5% women and 6.2% men). All of my participants who are part of the 1.5 and second generation, except for one, had some college or completed a college degree, and those whose parents were from Montenegro[3] and Macedonia were more likely to have less than a high school education, no degree. For example, Genti, who is now pursuing his master's degree, explains his parent's work and education background:

> They came at a time when that first generation when they come they were very motivated and eager to work so they came with no education being from the Prespa region you know high school education and they were basically hard working farmers their whole lives, they did tobacco farms and apple orchards their whole life. So when my father got here he basically wasn't trying to compete with the educated class he just knew that he wanted to bog down and make a living for his family so he bought into a restaurant that some relatives owned. He bought half of it and pretty much stuck to the same path he did when he was there. He wakes up at 5 in the morning every day. That's all he knows.

For most of my participants whose parents are Albanian-born, they had both or at least one parent who had a minimum of high school education and/or professions in Albania. For instance,

[3] There was one case where a parent (mother) of one of my second generation participants came to the US from Montenegro when she was an adolescent, and graduated high school and earned a master's degree in the US.

Gjon's mother was a textile engineer, and his dad worked for the Albanian government. Tereze's mother was a nurse and her dad was a mechanical engineer. Teuta's mother was a seamstress and her Dad had his masters and did logistics work for the army. I had one Kosovo born participant whose dad was a civil engineer and mother was in her second year of medical school before they had to leave Kosovo as a result of rising tensions and conflicts in the former Yugoslavia during the early 1990s. One of the factors accounting for the educational differences between Albanians and ethnic Albanians who lived outside of Albania is that Hoxha made it a point to focus on education and eradicating illiteracy among Albanian men and women, even as education was an avenue for Hoxha to instill his ideological positions upon the population (O'Donnell 1999).

According to the symbolic interactionist perspective, people act toward others based on the meanings we attach to them and a particular situation. Conflicts between generations have to do with meaning—assigning different meanings to a particular set of situations, which calls for adjustments. Consider my conversation with Ella, a second generation woman, about what traditions Albanians need to let go of, especially the tradition of the only son or the youngest son in the family living in their parent's household after marriage. It is an area she describes; however, where Albanians are "moving forward" in generation growing up in the US:

> Ella: The most obvious one is the fact what we and my husband how he's the "djale t'shirit" [which means the only boy/son in the family] to me is number one I feel like a husband and wife and couple are getting married are financially capable just capable of living on their own and want to they should be able to and obviously thinking of the family they are more than capable of taking care of themselves and doing their thing, then what's the problem. Why do we have to do it [live with his parents]?
>
> Linda: is it still evident today?
>
> Ella: I think it's still evident but I think we are moving forward from that. We've broken that barrier, got our own place and moved out. And I know some people are still stuck in that generation where they don't want to do that. My uncle, his son, he's the only son and they just bought a house too themselves. That's wonderful to see even my family as traditional as they were; they're breaking those barriers as well. You can't blame that

> generation for bringing those rules and regulations over because that's how they were raised. But what they don't realize is that we're in America and those traditions are what they did when they were with their parents in the old country which made sense there because everyone had their land, they farmed and that the son lived there and the dad got too old to take care of that land so the son took over so it made sense. We don't have that here. My husband's father makes his own money. As we are own couple and have a growing family, we would like to have our own life, doing our own thing.
>
> Linda: Do you think that more Albanian households especially in the second- generation are moving away from that multigenerational household to a more nuclear family?
>
> Ella: I think so. I don't have anything wrong or against people that want to live with each other. I did it for several years. It was great doing it but at the same time we were ready to move out. We wanted to expand our family and get our little home. But for those that want to like my brother and sister-in-law they are choosing to live there. My mom is helping them to help them save their money so eventually one day they can move out too. There are no restrictions with them; they choose to live there. But at the time 6 years ago doesn't' seem that long ago but you didn't question it, you didn't fight it. It is what it is. You can't move out. He's "djal t'shirit" [the only boy in the family]. Don't even bother. That's how it was.

Others told me similar stories from the generation growing up in the US of how they or others they know have moved out of their parent's houses before or after marriage. Those who still remain in their parent's household, like Tony, still feels in conflict with his parents about moving out of their house. So issues related to generational change within and between cultures is where you get the disagreements between parents and offspring. The 1.5 and second generation experiences being in school and/or at work with non-Albanians, and have this idea that "this is America." They hang out with non-Albanians, attend non-Albanian events and sometimes consciously choose not to be around other Albanians. However, the older parent/immigrant generation, still desire to "hang on" to those traditions, for instance, by conveying the idea that an Albanian girl should be a "good girl." Disagreements between generations are not uncommon in immigrant families (Dreby 2006; Foner 2009). Foner's (2009) edited volume addresses the various tensions and conflicts in immigrant family relations, the influence transnational dynamics on relations between parents, their children and grandparents. This struggle to define

Albanian identity is shaped by the changes that are occurring among the 1.5 and second generation, especially changes to gender relations.

Gender, Generations and Change

Albanian families and gender relations have been changing, especially with regard to the family status and women as "keepers of the culture." Albanian men and women are dating more openly, newly married couples are moving out of the parent's home and forming their own nuclear families, and also both men and women, especially women, are becoming more educated than their parents and have careers. As mentioned, all of my female participants were in college pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees or had already finished an undergraduate or graduate degree. The men in my study also have some higher education, but when women become more independent and begin building a professional life for themselves, it brings changes to gender relations and families.[4] Ada, a second generation female whose parents are from Montenegro, described how the Albanian community is "losing" their roots. When I asked her why this might be the case, she said:

> I definitely think it's just the style of living, when my grandparents came here they could make it on one paycheck and money was made fast and we came here and everyone got rich quick and everyone had a lot of money. Women all stayed home and that was pretty much their duty-they raised the kids, they learned how to speak Albanian. But as the economy took its toll women were forced [by the changing economy] to go to work, some went to college. I definitely think the opportunities are different. Women go to school and college whereas women over there they didn't, more time was spent at home, but now it's everyone's option, everyone needs to pitch in and have a job, kids needs to

[4] Social, political and economic changes have been occurring in Albanian as well over the last few decades. In Albania many more people have migrated from rural areas to the cities, and economic inequalities have widened and unemployment has increased (Burazeri et al., 2005). Notably, women have become more independent and have had greater economic responsibility in Albania, which has challenged the stereotypical role of men in families as sole providers. One of the effects of this has been an increasing number of reported incidences of intimate partner violence (Burazeri et al., 2005).

> have a job to help support their family, both parents need to work so I definitely think lifestyle is taking it's toll from just trying to make a living.

Steve talked about economic and educational change as it relates to the how men and women experience the Albanian community:

> More so in the past [they experienced it differently], but they have their own rules in society just like in many cultures it's a hierarchy so a male has the fundamental role of providing for the family but with the economy the way it is in America now it's not the 90s anymore so you have to work together, it's just about education because what my parents instilled in me was education and the reason they do that is because they were denied education even when they wanted to open schools they were burned down under Turkish rule and under Serbian and Montenegrin rule. So here I know my family on both ends strive to educate their children.

Education is important for men and women, but it provides Albanian women the opportunity to transgress and bend gendered restrictions. For families from Montenegro, education was not always an option for some Albanian women after marriage. As Ella describes,

> More and more people are going to school. Talking to these people who I know who are married for 20 some years now who were in the same boat as us but just earlier in their years, their husbands couldn't let them go to school, they wouldn't let them go to school because it wasn't acceptable at the time. They thought wives need to be at home, baby-making. It's more acceptable now and more and more people are doing it. Coming from the way that we were raised, our parents barely even knowing how to speak to language. It was hard for us with the school thing. I know my friend would be like oh my dad helped me with my homework last night. I couldn't have that. My parents did not know math.

It was evident in my interviews, especially those from Montenegro, that girls and women have more opportunity to choose their own path than they ever had in previous years when their families were newer immigrants. However, I found that despite the increased educational and professional status of Albanian women, some of my participants still described the feeling of being a "second hand" in the Albanian community. Mira, a college-educated community leader who was at the forefront of several Albanian cultural activities I observed, had this to say about her interactions with men in community settings:

> Mira: If I say something that is my opinion they just turn to me like oh no no it's not like this. I am just because I'm the only woman maybe. And men they think that women are stupid.
>
> Linda: What is it like being the only woman in a group of men trying to plan things?
>
> Mira: As I said, women are really the second hand in the Albanian community. It has always been through our history – they don't value woman as they should or they don't have the place they should have in the society. Throughout history it has been like this. For example, I can tell you an expression—it says 'women have only a long hair and short minds,' which is very very humiliating. I am not a feminist, but I am really for the rights of women, especially Albanian women. I am glad that I live here in so many points. I am not saying that we don't have people that abuse women here. We have thousands, but women in Albania are always second hand. Even if they have a really good role in people's lives… It has been tough for me [in community organizing meetings] when I enter I was always with the my intention was always to help my community. I don't have any intention to be part of the, or to be a boss or to be a figure or to be somebody to show off…When I was in a meeting for the first time, one of the men when I was talking something…he was just like shut up. And I turned my head and I said, 'who are you to tell me to shut up?' And I said, 'who are you, you are so disrespectful, you don't have a culture, you don't have manners, you are not educated. How could you?' So I'm not that kind of person to confront in that way but this kind of people deserve it. so this man oh because it was a first time for me most of them were like ohh they said no you are doing this wrong, not for me, but for him. So time by time whatever meeting which are very rare it has been times I wanted to give up just giving up but if I gave up completely, I don't want to let people think I came for something that I was interested, which is really bad but there were times that I really don't agree. I feel very hopeless. My word doesn't count very much. They are old views, old people, old mentality. I don't fit there very much.

Based on my interviews and field observations, Albanian women do craft their own professional and intellectual lives, and some resist or speak out when they encounter the "old mentality," as Mira's story above describes. By referring to this interaction as a result of "old mentality," Mira suggests that there is a "new way" of interacting within the Albanian community and women spearhead this change. Based on her interactions with some of male Albanian community leaders, another one of my participants gave me some advice about how to "speak out" or stand up for oneself. She said,

> Tereze: Here, let me give you some advice. You just basically think that you know more than the smartest person in that room whether you do or not it doesn't matter you just tell

> yourself that you do. You shut up, you let them speak sooner than later, usually sooner they stop saying because they don't have anything to contribute and you're definitely are smarter than them. The more they talk the stupider they are. And the thing you have that they don't have is you actually give a shit. And that should give you enough energy to get anything.
>
> Linda: And that has been something you learned in your interactions with Albanians, particularly men right?
>
> Tereze: Oh yeah right.

Other female participants limited their verbalizations to me during the interviews and in some cases to each other as I observed in the focus group and field settings. Orgocka (2005) studied highly skilled Albanian women, a neglected group of Albanian immigrants in the United States. Although not unique to the Albanian community, women still competed against patriarchally structured gender relations that tie them primarily to the home and family. As Orgocka points out, "Scholars researching migrant women in general point to the fact that migration may not improve the status of women equally at home, in the community, and/or workplace" (p. 147). My research shows that Albanian women and individuals in 1.5 and second generations are pressing beyond the boundaries of what Albanian women "should" be. Consider Tereze's comment during her interview:

> Tereze: I think in terms of the Albanian community, you and I are anomalies. I don't know how you feel, I'd love to know your story in terms of sort of you're driven, you're getting your PhD, you're a woman and you are sort of in the Albanian community, they're saying why isn't she married? How old are you?
>
> Linda: 28.
>
> Tereze: You're 28 and you're not married like what's wrong with you?!? I mean do you get that?

As Tereze points out, she and I are anomalies in the Albanian community in Michigan. As the ACS data show, however, neither men nor women achieve high levels of education. From her and some of my other participants' perspectives, and from my observations in the field, we are

indeed anomalies at this point in time if you use the Albanian community as a reference group. However, this is changing. At community events I have met US born and Albanian-born lawyers, social workers and engineers. There are also professional organizations composed on men and women, both immigrants and US born, such as Albanian Legacy Foundation and the Albanian Bar Association. These are new organizations developed by young professional Albanians, including women, which center on supporting and promoting Albanian-American professionals. The group of woman in my study and those I have encountered in the field exemplifies that the 1.5 and second generation of Albanian women are creating a space for themselves that is different than what the immigrant community might promote, in a real or in an imagined sense. In the course of doing this study I have also encountered men, particularly those from Albania, who are pursuing degrees or have completed a 4-year degree. I have also met several other men who are in businesses that Albanian men are stereotyped to be in – painters, line cooks, tile workers, and construction workers. But, notable changes are occurring in the generation of Albanian women born in the US and those who came at a young age who are creating a space for themselves as educated, independent professionals against the backdrop of Albanian gendered norms and expectations that relegate them to the reproductive sphere.

Age and time since parent's migration shapes the changes in gender relations. That is, age and generation also intersect to form a dynamic in which the younger generation (teens and early 20s) growing up in the US does things that the older second generation (i.e. late 20s and 30s) could not accomplish when their parents were more recent arrivals in the US, particularly changes to Albanian gender relations as part of "older" second generation, Lula had this to say:

> When we were growing up if there were girls in the house the mother never stood up. The girls were supposed to serve everything. Nowadays the girls are off somewhere else, talking with the friends or something but when we were growing up the girls were supposed to serve and wash all the dishes like if they had a big dinner all the girls were in

> the kitchen washing the dishes, one is drying, one's doing this, that. You don't see that too much anymore. But when we get together you see it, my generation, that is still the norm right. We have our duties and no one thinks anything of it.

Dating and marriage practices have changed over the last decade, showing another difference between the younger and older second generation. As I have written most of this dissertation sitting at coffee shops in the Metro Detroit area, there have been several times when I have run into other Albanians at coffee shops. One notable interaction was with second generation female in her mid-twenties. She had one day off a week from work and school to spend some time with her daughter. This woman is not one of my family members, but I knew her through my family. I had not seen her in a very long time, but she came up to my table with her young daughter to say hello. We proceeded to catch up on the mundane stories of our lives, but when I told her what kind of book I was writing she proceeded to tell me her experience and understanding of change:

> She said that the younger generation [the late teens and early twenties] is doing things that the others in her generation could not do. They are getting a higher education, dating, going out and having fun. When I was growing up some families, including hers, were so strict that the girls were not permitted or allowed to go to school, particularly college. She did not get to go to college until after she was married and had a child. In many cases the boys were also not going to college, but working in a family business, which is the case for her brothers and several of her male families members. She explained that for women, marriage was encouraged; you were taught and internalized the notion that marriage was the goal. She also questioned, 'Why would you not let girls move away to go to college-isn't getting an education good?' (Excerpt from field notes, December 2012)

This aspect of gendered change is evident in Albanians' reflections of the past and the present. Similarly, Ella, 29 years old, compares her experience several years ago with what is going on now:

> Right now they [Albanian girls] are dating. It's a different world right now. It's a completely different world I feel like I'm a grandma who was born in a completely different generation. I think we went from like old school to fast forward. Like too fast. I feel like I understand they should date and get together but now I feel like they are crossing the line, it could just be my naïve thinking and my old fashioned way. I do feel like they should date and get together and know each other, but now I feel like they are coming over each other's houses and they're very comfortable at a stage where they

> probably shouldn't be. But again that's not my problem. That's theirs. That's how I feel. When I was growing up I couldn't come inside my husband's house when I was engaged which was retarded. We're engaged. We're going to be married. And that's another thing with Albanian traditions. I feel like some of them we should embrace and a lot of them we need to let go.

Several years ago it would have been embarrassing to visit your boyfriend or fiancé's home where he most likely lived with his immigrant parents. A few decades ago when immigrants were more recent arrivals to Michigan, Albanian girls, particularly from the Montenegrin Albanian community could have been disowned from their families and/or ostracized from the community for acts such as divorce or dating non-Albanians, especially non-white individuals. This seems to be more of the case for Albanian Catholic families from Montenegro, which embraces a more "conservative culture" (Vullnetari 2009; Whitaker 1981). Disowning a child is hardly the case anymore as families are changing. Based on what my participants told me, even though the stigma of getting a divorce is still somewhat present, it has become more accepted. This is what Ella had to say when I asked if an Albanian could be ostracized from the community today:

> I heard a lot of people do things that's life changing and they've been accepted. I haven't been surprised yet I guess. I don't think there is something. Saying family and community are two different things. I feel like the family is more forgiving and the community is not. If a girl or a boy does something that is disrespectful, the community is on fire. But, I like to distance myself from that shit. I don't like to hear about other people's problems. But I know that people talk still and it's very obvious that Albanians do and I think they love doing it sometimes. They're bored and that's the community though but I feel like the families, I don't think they could disown somebody. I don't think so. Whatever they do they're still their child and I like that that we've moved forward from that. As a community we're learning, but there's still those few that can't let go of things but as far as families go I think they are very tight nowadays.

While educational attainment facilitates and age and time shapes intergenerational socio-economic change, and drives changes in gender relations to the benefit of women, there are still elements, as I have discussed above, that constrain the possibility for radical change in gender

relations. Education is encouraged and expected at the family level, but it is the community that sets the stricter boundaries around what proper Albanian girls should do. As one of my second generation participants said: "I feel like the family is more forgiving and the community is not." This suggests that immigrant parents and family members are more flexible and open to change than ethnic community members as they spend more time in the country of origin. Research has demonstrated that with assimilation could come the decline in parental authority and in other cases the ethnic community members can affirm and support parental authority (Kibria 1990), but it is not clear if the authority of ethnic community members declines as well. Based on what my participants have said, I found that while parental authority may decline over time, ethnic community authority can figure prominently in ethnic relations in ways that could make individuals identify less with particular aspects of Albanian culture (e.g., gendered double standards), and that is the issue I tackle in more detail in the next chapter. This chapter and the next chapter attest to other research that views family a gendered institution (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). The relationships between generations and their conflicting perspectives and experiences has become more relaxed within families, but as Ella describes it is the community that is less forgiving of transgressions that might be deemed disrespectful. Individuals have the option to and sometimes do not engage in the community for that reason as they try to live their lives the way that they want, picking and choosing from each culture where in some contexts the Albanian might be more emphasized (e.g., wedding).

The changes that are being experienced by immigrant families and the new generation shapes the struggles to define Albanian identity because what is important about being Albanian is in the process of reinterpretation. The generation born and/or largely raised in the US context will shape and continuously challenge the immigrant generation on what it means and how to be

Albanian in the US context. When it comes to gender relations, the experiences of men and women, particularly women, are not the same across the different Albanian communities. I spoke with women from Catholic Albanian families who described their upbringing as more strict in terms of their experience growing up as a girl/women. Albanians from other communities, such as some members of the Bektashi Albanian community, have a slightly different interpretation of and experience with gender relations so what it means to be an Albanian man or an Albanian woman varies. Genti, second generation Albanian from Macedonia who came to the US when he was an infant, expressed that in his Albanian community gender relations are more relaxed, attesting to the heterogeneity of Albanians communities. He says,

> Out of the Albanian communities I'm familiar with, not just in Michigan but Chicago, Canada and east coast, ours in that sense has been known to be more open, less conservative. I think that's because our parents gave us that direction because we've done so many family oriented events. They [women] were never like, they were always allowed to do what they wanted to in terms of going out stuff like that, but you know not without supervision, we always did things as a group, always the guys and the girls doing things together…But, some of our girls in our community went away to college or maybe they didn't, but eventually they did for their graduate degree…

While Genti has this perspective, some of the Bektashi women I spoke with framed the issue in terms of the struggles immigrant parents had to face in raising their daughters in the US, even if the community their immigrant parents came from had a more relaxed view on gender relations. Raising children in the US presented a new situation for immigrant parents in which they had to deal with new pressures and face the expectations of their Albanian immigrant peers to maintain a family with a good girl or good girls. However, over time, as my other participants described, those relations have become more relaxed.

SUMMARY

Taken together, this and the last chapter revealed the seeming contradiction between the importance of being Albanian, and the lack of agreement on what being Albanian means, how it

is experienced and understood. Immigrant scholars have discussed at length the maintenance or loss of ethnic identity, but pay less attention to the internal inconsistencies that make up the process of constructing and making sense of ethnic meaning and affiliation.[5] While my participants believe in the importance of being Albanian, they do not have a clear understanding of what exactly being Albanians means, and there are contrasting experiences and meanings based on age, generation and gender. Participants have interpreted this contradiction as a result of the history and diversity of the Albanian populations, particularly the religious and regional differences.

In the US context, intergenerational differences emerge as an important characteristic of the struggle to define an ethnic identity, as there are different interpretations and expectations between immigrant parents and the generation growing up in the US. The conflicting perspectives between immigrant parents and their children were especially felt among my female participants. Similar to what Ella and other women in this study described, it was like living in two different worlds. The struggle to define an Albanian identity emerges from situations patterned by gender, conflicting perspectives between generations and even among generations as well as the religious and regional fractures that characterize the Albanian community. Families and households deal with new situations and challenges a lot easier than at the community level where the potential for gossip and judgment is strong, which is what I will discuss in the next chapter.

[5] Vasquez's (2011) multigenerational research on Mexican American families is a notable exception.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: "COSTS" OF BEING ALBANIAN

In the previous two chapters I separated the frameworks of continuity and change, but in this chapter the empirical evidence gives stronger support for the notion that cultural continuity and change are intertwining processes. This chapter is about constraining gender norms, the meanings my participants attached to such gendered norms, and the internal pressures and desires among my participants to change and challenge what they see as the gendered constraints of Albanianess. While my participants highlight the various ways that the restrictive gender relations have relaxed compared to when they growing up, as I described in the last chapter, many of my participants continue to perceive these modifications as not enough to overcome the way Albanians maintain social and cultural systems that resist significant changes to gender relations. I argue that maintaining gender norms that are limiting, especially for women, allows Albanians to maintain cultural continuities, giving individuals a sustained sense of security and control over what it means to be Albanian, in some ways that are in contrast to what it means to be "American."

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with how Albanian families and community relations are patterned by gender such that culture and traditions are reinforced. In this section I will examine the problem of maintaining tradition and similarities among group members as importantly tied to gender, especially femininity, where I discuss gendered honor. I follow the discussion on honor with an examination of how Albanians influence and attempt to regulate ethnic members through co-ethnic gossip as a community surveillance practice. This process too takes on gendered elements. This segment gets impetus from Dreby's (2009:35) understanding of gossip; "As a socio-cultural practice, gossip articulates community norms and

values and simultaneously allows individuals to creatively participate in defining these norms and values." The activity of gossip (and the potential of gossip and judgment) works to inform Albanian community members about how to act and what are the cultural boundaries of the community. Gossip can also be a form of entertainment or just a way to pass on information to others in the community, which can be positive for community solidarity (Dreby 2009), but it is also a way to control members (Menjivar 2000; Bourdillon and Shambare 2002). Menjivar (2000:161) refers to gossip as "one of the most widespread forms of social control…" She observed this in the exchanges between unrelated men and women and also in the relations among women in ways that hindered their opportunities for developing woman-based networks of support (p. 175). My research revealed that gossip, while it might be a source of entertainment, it is used more to reinforce ethnic boundaries, and pressure those who deviate from the norms of the community.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

The "Short" Dress Story

March 2012

> It was about one month after my engagement when my husband's extended family came over to congratulate us, and to fulfill their responsibility of respect, which in part was to give me money. I bought a new dress thinking it was a pretty casual dress that I could wear should anyone come over. When I bought the dress, I had never imagined it would be too short, but I learned that I did not have much say in what is considered short.
>
> We were expecting several family members to come over and, normally, I felt a bit overwhelmed already. Before everyone came over, I put on my new dress, and examined it to see how I looked. My husband wondered if the dress was a bit too short. I disagreed until I sat down in the couch to test whether it was short when the dress went up, making it look shorter than I was normally comfortable with. We both did not think I had to change, and I did not, but I quickly became self-conscious. The fear of judgment, gossip and potential shame took over, something I grew up learning as a young Albanian girl, quickly regained significance in this setting.
>
> Feeling really anxious, I chose to stand up while the guests were over. Not only did I choose to stand up to avoid potential gossip, judgment and shame, but to stand up in front

> of a chair, hoping that the chair would shield my "short" dress. I felt like it was protecting me from people seeing my "short" dress, including me,, even though our guests did not really do or say anything to make me feel this way. Perhaps they sensed my nervousness. I already felt like an "incomplete Albanian" because I do not speak the language as well as everyone else in this context did—I was the only one whose native and first language is English. So despite the "short" dress, I already felt somewhat inadequate, an incomplete Albanian "nuse."
>
> I stood behind the chair long enough for people to ask me to sit down. "Nuse, they said, "ulur rri." Being called "Nuse" (meaning, bride) reminded me of my role in the interaction. I thought about when my female cousins got married, and how I used to think "nuse" was offensive because the bride has a name. But then I learned that many Albanians view it as honorable, a special word specifically made to honor the new bride in the family, even though she is referred to as "nuse" even after the wedding, sometimes for a good year after the wedding. After standing up for a long time, some of our guests kept telling me to "sit down nuse," and I tried to deflect their request for me to sit down by saying this in Albanian, "I have enough time to sit down." But then, the little 6-year-old girl took my hand and brought me over to the only chair available—the one right in front of the elderly man. Oh shoot, I thought - when I sit down my dress hikes up a little, making it look much shorter! Well, I had the girl sit next to my lap so my legs were not revealed too much but then as any other little girl would do, she got up and moved along. I felt like too much of my legs were exposed, and I had become extremely uncomfortable, feeling like everyone is looking at my legs and judging me, thinking "that is a short dress, how embarrassing." I kept my hand on my lap, but then moved very little and thought, 'the elderly guy was looking at me.' I just felt so uncomfortable. It was only until after they left that my husband expressed to me that it made him feel a bit uncomfortable as well [because he feared his relatives would think that and his uncomfortableness made me even more uncomfortable]. I then thought "Shoot I, the nuse, messed up! I can't do anything right with Albanians no matter how hard I try."
>
> No one, as far as I know, gossiped about that dress or me and maybe they never would have, but I thought of it as a potential based on what I learned growing up in the Albanian community, my own field observations, and what my participants had said about gossip. I was quite the whole afternoon, until later when I started crying, still worried that I might be judged because of the "short" dress. I felt physically awful and my energy depleted—and all for a so-called "short" dress. I had (re)learned what some of my participants had been suggesting to me: be cautious around some Albanians because one is frequently under surveillance, and at risk of being criticized, especially if you are a "nuse." It is about "saving face," honor and respect, and it seems very easy to lose as a woman and a new bride (Excerpt from field notes).

The "short dress" excerpt from my field notes illustrates how both honor and respect are simultaneously woven into the personal and social experiences of an Albanian woman, particularly the women I talked to during the course of this research. The "short" dress story

above illustrates that honor and respect are embodied, there are not just in the "mindsets" of Albanians. My own experiences in the field as a newly married Albanian woman reveal the embodied display of appropriate Albanian femininity, which is described more generally among my female participants. This excerpt is an example of the power of taking culture into one's self, and is emblematic of the notion that prior to this I had felt pretty "American." I had violated certain rules of growing up in the specific Albanian community I did – I got an advanced education, moved out of my parent's home before marriage, and had my own individual interests and pursuits outside of marriage and childbearing. But in coming back into the Albanian culture through marriage and this research I gained deeper insight into the internal and external gendered constraints, or how it is made constraining and the women in it are co-creating the situation.

In her discussion about emotion in feminist epistemology, Jagger (2011:160) writes that human emotions "…depend essentially on the ways that we perceive those situations and events, as well on the ways that we have learned or decided to respond to them." My research reveals that the family and immigrant community pressures female members to be a certain way such that a good and proper image of themselves and their families are maintained. The above story also captures the way in which emotion is socially constructed and expressed in various ways, depending on the situation (Jagger 2011). Here the situation of the "short dress" demonstrated not an instinctive, biological response to having challenged cultural expectations; rather, I was being "taught" and reminded again what my culture had defined as appropriate (or inappropriate). I was very aware of my emotions and was able to reflect on them in my field notes as it related to the standards and values of a culture I was trying to understand, particularly the culture of northern Albanians. Clearly the emotions (e.g., embarrassment, fear, anxiety) I was feeling were not the result of private worries, but were embedded in interactions with some

Albanians, previous knowledge about how they might respond, and the way I perceived the situation as possibly not displaying myself as the "virtuous Albanian nuse" by dressing somewhat provocatively, even though I would consider my style of dress as "conservative." From this past situation, I (re)learned to be even more considerate of how I dress in similar situations in the future; it became part of my knowledge base and as a researcher it gave me insight into issues of emotion and presentation of self in ways that I otherwise would not have had, especially as it relates to gender, and the embodiment of culture. More broadly, the short dress story encapsulates what I learned about 1.5 and second generation women I talked to during the course of this study because it reveals the tensions of being both "American" and "ethnic." For instance, the practice of being called a "nuse" can simultaneously be both offensive (if you think women should be valued in their own right) and flattering (if one values "traditional" Albanian womanhood). The "short" dress story is a perfect example for how surveillance can be perceived and imagined, inciting not only anxiety, but also physical discomfort and feelings of embarrassment – an intensely emotional experience for the actor. While this is one way Albanian individual and families protect their honor and retain respect, it also is a process that reveals how easy it is to lose it, especially for women. Honor is both personal and social (or public). It is personal in that it shapes how one feels and behaves in one's everyday interactions and the choices one makes, and also public because honor has a way of entering into how one establishes and maintains a good family and reputation under the surveillance of the immigrant community, specifically within the moral community espoused by Albanians. I use "surveillance" to mean the actual and imagined observations and conversations that community members have about each other. On the one hand, surveillance is experienced by my participants as actual or "real" in the sense that they described how their or others actual

behaviors and physical appearance were judged, gossiped about, and observed by others in the community in a public and/or family setting. On the other hand, it is imagined in that it provokes anxiety and distress in individuals about possibly being treated in such a way, even though it might not occur. Community surveillance, whether real or imagined, shapes the way my participants think, feel and behave in a particular setting, and also the way they perceive other Albanians in general.

Albanian (Gendered) Honor

In the course of my research I made a discovery about the meaning and explicit rules of honor that are outlined in an Albanian code of law book called, the *Kanun* or *The Code of Leke Dukagjni*.[1] As the introduction to the translated text states, "Kanun (cf. Greek kanon 'rule, measure') is the common term for the customary law of Albania…" Several of my participants were aware of this ancient code of law that outlines Albanian traditions; however, many of them have not actually read it. Some of my participants explained how some elements of the Kanun are still present in contemporary Albanian relations, such as honor and "besa" (i.e. giving your word or word of honor), rules of hospitality and understandings of marriage, kinship and blood

[1] Different versions of the Kanun exist based on region, time and the prominent Albanian figures of the time. For instance, The Kanun of Leke Dukagjni, was named after a very well-known Albanian chieftain during the time of Ottoman rule, which has been used more by the populations in Northern Albania, Montenegro, and Kosovo (Young 2001), and followed to a greatest extent by people in villages across a wider geographic area compared to the other versions (Camaj 1989). This is the version that is sold at the Albanian Catholic Church's bookstore in Michigan, and is in some Albanian households (including my own), and often is the only one people in Michigan are really familiar with. Some of the most talked about rules of the Kanun are about the continuation of blood feuds in Albania and other countries with large Albanian populations, as well as the importance of "besa" or word of honor. Both traditions have been showcased in films, documentaries and exhibits (see 2011 Film, *The Forgiveness of Blood* or the documentary about how the Albanian tradition of 'besa" or word of honor influenced why Albanians helped to save the Jews during WWII, see *Besa: The Promise* at http://besathepromise.com/

and gender relations. However, some Albanians are also very critical of it, especially what is says about women. In a visit to one of the Albanian Catholic churches, I noticed the Kanun is available for purchase at the Albanian Catholic Church's bookstore. I got a copy of the "big red book" from my parent's bookshelf. The Kanun still has relevance in present-day Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro in which people still abide by the custom of blood feuds (gjakmarrya) (Mangalakova 2004), and my participants are familiar with the law book, even popular movies have been made to depict blood feuds and the concept of besa, which are both key components of the Kanun. When I asked Mike, a second generation male with origins near central Albania, if and how he would spread Albanian culture, traditions, values and norms, we had this conversation where he mentioned the Kanun:

> Mike: Of course because we always compare ourselves…look at this person what a bum like have a sense of pride, your moral principle. That's the one thing about the new movie [about Albanians], the blood feud thing, where it's like the old school laws. The movie is based on blood feuds, I haven't seen it but it seems like it's based on blood feuds. **The whole Kanun is like a book of laws and what not kind of from the north, there are different ones. Essentially it's like 12 books or 12 sections, it's 12 sections, some people call it books, 12 or 13 I don't know. There are different versions of it too. It's a set of laws, how to exchange property, how to borrow things, how to behave in public. That's why we have this sense of this is how we live our life. We don't just do whatever the hell we want because we want to maintain this image.**
>
> Linda: Do you or your friends refer to that Kanun?
>
> Mike: Never, to be 100 percent honest I never heard someone refer to it but just say Albanian principle and I think that's pretty much the same thing you know we don't need a book to tell us. There is a book. It tells you. I'm not saying it's God's words, it's not God's word. I don't like to compare anything to God at all but it's in a sense it's a similar way to guide your life.

There is no clear definition of honor documented in the Kanun, but it lists several ways in which someone, particularly men, can be dishonored by others, how to honor a guest in one's home or what are the rules of hospitality, and blood and kinship relations. And many of the "rules" presented in the Kanun are outdated. For instance, the following rule may not occur:

"Upon entering the house, the guest must give you his weapon to hold." The Kanun outlines the "rights," and "duties" of men and women, husbands and wives. The text states that one of the duties of the wife is to "preserve the honor of her husband." There are ways my participants describe how honor is maintained in their contemporary gender relations, particularly as it relates to preserve women's honor in the family and community such that a man's honor is tied to a woman's honor, but his behavior is not the one that is being policed.

Several of my participants, especially women, conveyed the unequal gender relations in the Albanian community. Oftentimes their comments connected back to the notion of honor wherein women were more at risk of jeopardizing that honor than men. This study finds that Albanians and their families maintain honor by vesting it more in females, who are considered the "keepers of the culture." This is not unique to Albanians as women in other cultures in the US are framed "keepers of the culture" and therefore their behaviors are scrutinized more than men (Dasgupta 1998). Dasgupta provides insight into the problem of continuity and gender among South Asians. She writes,

> As keepers of South Asian culture and heritage in the US, the roles of second-generation daughters are therefore monitored more strictly than those of sons. Fears of cultural obliteration by 'Americanization' and exogamy have played a large role in imposing such constructions on the female gender role." This gender imbalanced expectation is coming to a head as the second-generation Asian Indian women approach adulthood (p. 957).

As one way to maintain "traditional" Albanian culture, honor, especially family honor, is inextricably tied to the daughter's sexual purity before marriage (i.e. virginity), although it is not the only aspect of family honor. Among my female participants, there is just a general sense of, as Teuta describes it best, "You don't want to be the one in the family which gives everyone else a bad name because you know that's just too much of a burden to bear." I found most significant in my interviews with both men and women is that sexual purity is a measure of honor for some

Albanian women, and is reinforced by and through institutions and community practices. For instance, as Tereze, a 1.5-generation female from northeastern Albania, says below, it is in the "mindsets" of Albanians*;* it is fundamental to the way they view their world among other Albanians. As Tereze says,

> Well, you're a girl, things could happen. There is this big component of honor in Albanian mindsets. There's also that big component of like how will the Albanian community perceive you. That perception. You're saying, well you don't even know these people why does their opinion really matter. So it was always me basically outlining to them [her parents], let's think rationally about this, like do you really want me to limit like my life just because someone is going to say, oh my god I can't believe you let your daughter…

Honor is negotiated in families, as Tereze attempted to do, but the Albanian (i.e., community - what the community thinks) largely shapes it. Families—as mothers, fathers, and daughters – have to deal with how to negotiate that "community surveillance" even when they do not actually know who these people are other than that they are Albanians. That is, they imagine a community of Albanians and the possible consequences. In her research on Mexican immigrants, Gonzalez-Lopez (2005) discovered how women and girls' bodies and sexuality are regulated through constant hetereronormative-based family relations, religious and cultural norms and practices. For example, she describes how virginity in socially constructed as an element of respect, and family honor. But also, virginity, she writes "takes on a social exchange value that Mexican women, a subordinate group in a patriarchal society, use to improve and maximize their life conditions and opportunities" (pp. 38).[2] In her study she documents instances where women did vigorously challenge proscriptive norms of women's sexuality. I have not found strong evidence that my participants were challenging the norms vigorously. There are women in my

[2] She also provides ample evidence for how women and men negotiate their sexual experiences and changes to their sexual lives through migration and settlement (e.g., women's social networks and groups).

study and some I met in the course of field research who are openly dating, but I have heard other stories about how some Albanian women date, and do not share that with their parents or as one of my participants stated,

> I still think it's like a taboo to date before you get married to Albanians. That's just the impression I get from other girls. It was like a big deal and to keep it on the down low if you're dating someone.

Perhaps because my participants viewed me as an Albanian, not all of them wanted to tell me about how they have challenged the norms of women's sexuality or my sample did not include many who opening challenged norms of sexuality in Albanian culture, which can also be influence by their religious affiliation. Ada, a 1.5-generation female from Southern Albania, however did open up to me about it:

> Ada: Yeah with me even though as American as I seem to be, I still have the mentality of an Albanian. I still have a lot of respect for myself. A lot of girls these days don't care. They do whatever they want. They go all crazy. To me, I'm still a virgin. It's not because of my parents; it's because of me more than so so I have a lot of self-respect for myself. I just know what I want to do and once I tell myself what I want to do I follow it and it's just how I've been.
>
> Linda: So is respect of self is part of the Albanian mentality?
>
> Ada: Yeah. All my life my parents haven't really talked me about it but I just know how other parents are with whatever, doing whatever so I understand my parents wouldn't want me to go sleep around but at the same time I know I wouldn't want to do that it's kind of like you have that Albanian mentality with you…I've been raised that way even though I've changed the way I think sometimes I still have the mentality of an Albanian.

Respect also incorporates what it means to have and express honor. Lula says,

> I think everything is about our honor, especially if you're an Albanian girl - it's one that's a virgin until she gets married because if not you've dishonored your parents and everything and I don't think I use more of the word respect not so much honor, that's what I use when I explain it to non-Albanians, everything is about respect…

As Lula and other participants explained, the actions of individuals can bear upon the whole family and thus taking account the family when they act is an important element of Albanian

identity. The idea of virginity, honor and respect emerged among the four women I talked to as part of the focus group. Each of my participants had a story about the "virginity question" after Eva brought up the issue:

> I remember I was trying to talk to this Albanian guy I was like whatever I'll explore this avenue I just noticed Albanian guys, you are texting, you want to get some coffee and then it's like, "Are you a virgin?" And it always comes up. I would always say back, 'well are you a virgin. Can you answer me first?' They're like, 'well I'm a guy.' And then I'm like 'I'm a girl.' I think that's what they want your master status to be. I think it's so strange. I hate when they ask that because it's almost like you are being submissive and you are being I worded that wrong they want you to be in a way. If my sexuality matters that much to you like go away. If you are that concerned

Hanna responds:

> They want this pure angelic thing that has never been touched and they are the first person to have that I guess if you want to say so. Anybody that's not a virgin it's like ehh, God someone's been with her…

Elizabeth adds:

> God forbid someone sees me walking somewhere with you they're going to be "I had her." It's like 15 girls can be there that slept with your husband and like….

Finishing Elizabeth's thought, Lora says, "Yeah, but you [the female] should be the virgin," and Eva responds by saying, "That's true." The above conversation reveals an assumption that if someone is dating or even seen talking to a non-family member of a different sex, people assume that they are having intercourse. That assumption would not necessarily be made among "mainstream" Americans, many of whom would still devalue a woman who had many sexual partners. Elizabeth seems to be making the assumption that a woman and a man walking together are having sexual relations, critiquing the idea that men can have sex with "15 girls" and that is okay, but she does not critique the assumption that being seen in public with a man equals a sexual relationship. Lula, Tereza's, Eva, Hanna's, Elizabeth's and other women's stories suggest that female honor is tied to sexual purity, and women can lose it more quickly than men,

signifying a gendered double standard. To be an Albanian, especially an Albanian girl/woman, is to know the rules of honor and respect, and act accordingly. It is most evident during the interviews where both women and men talked about dating. My interview with Sylvia exemplifies this point:

> Linda: And why do you think that might be the case that girls keep dating on the "down low"?
>
> Sylvia: you know I think it's because and this is what one girl said to me because I asked her that I said, if I was dating someone I would rather people know because if we break up and they know..she was nice but maybe it was just something in their relationship and I would want my parents to know if I was dating someone, god forbid something happens I could go to somebody about it**. But she's like it 's like if you're dating an Albanian guy and you break up with him or it doesn't work out she said it's kind of like you're less valued then, it's kind of like your worth goes down. You've already been through one and you've already been through another one.…**
>
> Linda: Do Albanians think that she is less than valued?
>
> Sylvia: Yeah. The community even. I think that's with the guys too. I think they think that if a girls dated a lot of guys and it's not like this I think for all guys I just think the majority of them think that if she's dated a lot of guys there's something wrong with her…she's got some mileage, but okay forget who he has been with you know because that comes up in the bathroom at weddings too 'oh did you hear,' this god that's like *The View* for Albanians…the bathrooms at weddings [chuckles] it's like ridiculous. I just stay in the stall. It's like a confessional.

Miranda had this to say when I asked her if (and how) men and women experience the Albanian community differently:

> Miranda: To a certain extent, it obviously depends on the person themselves but I feel as if boys and speaking from experience with cousins and my brother, a lot of times they get to experience a lot more and get a lot more freedom you know outside of the house, no questions asked sort of where are the girls are always being monitored more thoroughly I would say.
>
> Linda: Does that happen today?
>
> Miranda: I think so. I think it's a familial effort as well as a communal. If you see a girl doing the same thing a guy will not only will usually the parents speak up but a lot of times maybe judgment will be passed [by the community]. I feel like it's changing a lot but

Linda: it's becoming less.

Miranda: I think so. Girls, women, young ladies have more ability to choose their own path than they ever had in previous years.

As the previous data suggests, Albanian gendered honor is tied to issues of sexual purity wherein women's worth, as Sylvia noted, is questioned, and family as well as the ethnic community monitor women more thoroughly than men. The gendered double standard that the women in my study described, especially those who participated in the focus group, even occurs among the same generation in which men set a standard for other women with regards to sexuality, but it does not occur the other way around even as Eva, for example, attempt to challenge it during her date with an Albanian man.

The changes occurring in women's lives sometimes do not match men's lives in another way. Albanian women are trying to create a new space for themselves that is unlike their parents, and the way their parents have married and relate to the family and community. However, my participants described situations in which Albanian men have not changed as much as women. While still not entirely clear, it appears as if the Albanian women I spoke with are on the path to constructing a different way of being an Albanian woman while men are holding on to the culture in terms of marriage and dating or at least their preferences for girls. In my field conversations, I heard stories about Albanian men, many US-born, who travel to Albania or Montenegro if they cannot find an Albanian girl in the US that they would like to marry (i.e., who is a good girl). George (2005) has found this practice in her study of Indian immigrants in the United States. She investigates the transnational marriage market, and observes that immigrant parents and unmarried immigrants draw from their connections to Kerala to find marital partners. She writes, "The transnational marriage market is another site of connection

between Kerala and the United States that has implications for the reproduction of family and community ties" (p. 170). Overall the women I spoke to have not been able to find an Albanian man or are worried that they will not find one that will align with the "new" Albanian woman or the Albanian woman growing up in the US. Consider my conversation with Ada, a 20 year-old, 1.5 generation woman, who describes what her parents expect of her and how being an independent woman makes it difficult to find and be with an Albanian man:

> Ada: they expect me to grow up and be good and have the right friends. You know I still have yet to be allowed to have a boyfriend so they expect me to when I do find a guy after I'm done with college, he has to be Albanian. With my situation, with my experience going to school with all these Albanian guys and everybody else, it's something that worries me because none of the Albanians I've seen, I've liked. And so it's a lot of stress on me because I've become so independent in what I want and yet they are telling me to do something else, be with someone who is Albanian. They have to be Albanian and they have to be where we came from so they expect a lot and it's hard. That's just part of being Albanian.
>
> Linda: So what do you expect of yourself [in marriage] what's with the Albanian?
>
> Ada: It's something about the Albanian guys that remind me of how my parents are: you know telling me what to do, when to do it and what time to get it done by. I don't—I can't like all my life I've been following I've been following things to do I've been made to do. I don't want to be told all my life what to do..I'm looking for that part where I can still be independent, myself, so that's just always been a big part of me because I don't experience myself being independent other than [her current job] so it's hard because you know every Albanian guy I've tried to like see or talk to it's hard because they have this mentality that I don't like, they are very cocky, there's just something about it I don't like. Granted not every Albanian guy is like that. There are Albanian guys that are Americanized like me. But it's, I just haven't found that.

Ada believes Americanized Albanian men exist, but she has not found any yet. Other women I have talked to describe similar concerns about finding an Albanian male partner to marry, even though their preference is to marry an Albanian. This dynamic makes it difficult to reproduce a culture when the men and women are moving in different directions in terms of families and marriage, which is conceivably a cost to being Albanian in the way that it perpetuates the

gendered double standard my participants described. Another one of my respondents, David, said the following:

> David: I think for me to meet and marry an Albanian girl I have to get along with her for a long time for about a year or something like that. I have to accept both each other's faults and get comfortable with that to take her to the family. But I think in our culture, especially, I don't know how it is for people in Malesia[3] and I know that for people who weren't born here, they have difficulty with dating and even people from Malesia have difficulty with dating too. Because with dating it seems like once you go through with somebody then you are considered **damaged goods.**
>
> Linda: Just girls?
>
> David: Well just girls it seems like. No one has ever told me a guy's damaged.

Another male respondent, who is second generation and his parents are from Montenegro, explains it this way:

> The thing is in the American society we have a very liberal media so it's only normal to date out and hang out and do all these things that are quite normal in American society. But for an Albanian female like we have higher expectations. Me being a first generation [born in the US] my eyes are more open to these things because I experienced, I understand, you have feelings, just human emotions, but the thing is an Albanian girl, what I want in an Albanian girl is someone that is honorable and intelligent. By honorable I mean somebody that hasn't been around, just like in any other culture, just a very conservative culture is what we have.

Maintaining honor and self-respect in this way has potential "exchange value" for Albanian women in US society, especially if they want to remain part of the Albanian community and prefer to marry Albanian men. Albanian men have, as the response above indicates, "higher expectations," and by not meeting that expectation, a woman is at risk of being viewed as "damaged goods." She then can marry into a good family, can expect for her husband to provide for her, have the support of her family members (e.g., childcare, financial support), and she and her husband's family can have a respectful status in the community. Gonzalez-Lopez (2005)

[3] Malesia generally refers the region of the southeastern part of Montenegro.

research frames this dynamic when she refers to sexual purity as a "social exchange value." She writes,

> A woman learns to perceive her premarital virginity as a form of social capital that she may use strategically. A woman's decision not to engage in premarital sex also offers symbolic capital to her family. Similarly, a man may perceive virginity as a symbolic value: it guarantees a stable and happy married life (p. 43).

Women have less flexibility when it comes to honor, especially when it is tied to family status and larger community norms and values. Tereza and other Albanian women do not react passively to the surveillance and scrutiny from Albanian immigrant parents and the community, but question why does it have to be that way, and also cite that it is the key aspect they dislike about Albanians, perceiving it as a cost of being Albanian. Many of my participants exclaimed that they do not like the gossip, the judging, and labeling, even though there are a lot of things like about being Albanian, such as the respect, hospitality, keeping one's word, and maintaining an "intact" family structure.[4] In my interview with Tereze she suggests that attempts to preserve family honor under community surveillance that restricts girl's and women's lives, and for her it almost did when she wanted to go on an international trip for school. She said,

> For me being a girl is always hard growing up because of oh you can't do that because you're a girl, you can't play for the volleyball team because you're a girl. I mean it sort of continued al the way to college….So, it was constantly me challenging the norms.

Tereze explains that part of the concept of honor being so strong in the Albanian-American community is partly due to their immigrant parents' memory of the homeland - what the Albanian customs were like at the time of their parents' migration. When I asked Tereze if the concept of honor is still prevalent in Albanian mindsets and families she had this to say, " I think

[4] This means that both parents live together and are married.

it's the case here too. I think it's the reason why a lot of Albanian girls in particular do things in hiding. You know they date, they hide and don't they tell their parents." She goes on to say:

> I think it's important to see where things are in Albania and see where things are here because there's this expression I use all the time: t'ke kap rota historise,**' meaning that my parents thinking or the way they think about life is basically stuck in 1995 when we left Albania. That's how they see the world**. Albania in '95 was, you know, we were transitioning to a democracy, old-schooled values and traditions are important. Then '97 hits, '98, '99 and then up to 2011, people just don't give a shit… I'll give you an example… So I have a 19-year-old cousin. She just got engaged in Albanian. My mom was there [Albania] last time my mom told my cousin, 'well let me meet this guy' so nothing was official yet, so she brought the guy and my mom met him, and then my mom is telling the story and so here's my mom, my dad is sitting here, I don't know who is sitting, maybe it was empty and then I'm sitting on the end on one of the chairs in the living room, and then my mom is telling the story and then I'm like 'oh my god like you met her boyfriend without things becoming official?!?' And she's like 18 and we're talking about Albania here, oh my god I really can't believe it, I'm 25 and they still give me shit here

I asked her why her parent's and others would want to stay with the 1995 mentality even though there are changes going on where they grew up as well as in the US. She explains that maintaining culture and traditions, ones particularly entrusted to females, goes back to the concept of Albanians attempting to preserve culture through upholding norms of honor after migration, even though culture is constantly changing, and gender relations in country of origin are becoming more relaxed. Tereze's description exemplifies this point:

> I think it goes back to the honor concept. So you have you know you have girls now because there's so many girls and there's not a lot of guys in Albania because most of them migrate and leave and plus the world population is 51 percent women 49 percent men…there's basically an overabundance of women. So I mean let's look at the numbers right **so men can afford to pick and choose so it was really important to Albanians for this honor thing, you marry your daughter and she's going to be a virgin and all these things and if you're dating somebody things might happen and if things happen then and then basically you break up then basically you're spoiled goods. I'm saying this based on how I know Albania. And I think that Malesia where you're from is even stricter because we have Albanian friends from that region**…**you have Albanians who come [to the US] who have daughters and my dad would make comments of course your daughter is going to college you know that's so important and you know she needs to do things for her life and for herself you can't rely on somebody else and they just sort of look down and say how are you**

> **trusting your daughter you know to go to…[away to college and school trips to other countries without family members].**

In the US context, my participants have described situations in which it was important to assert and nourish a common descent, culture, shared traditions and identity based on immigrants' memory of homeland. From the perspective of their kids, Albanian immigrant parents, for instance, imagine gender relations as if they were the same as when the left Albania, and they carry those differences with them to the US, and attempt to implement them as way in order to create a thick ethnic culture of which maintaining an Albanian identity is important. As I mentioned in a previous chapter, culture and ethnic and national identities become "thicker" and more emphasized in the US compared to their country of origin, especially within the context of a small co-ethnic community in Michigan. The notion of "Albanianess" is also used to preserve a structure of gender relations in the "host" country that is characterized by patriarchal power and inequality, which is influenced by the idea that Albanians in some ways do not "see out of their Albanianess," as one of my participants explained it to me. Sylvia explains this point quite well when she talks about gender relations and marriage, tying it to her visit to Kosovo:

> It's been like that in history in general. Men have always had a kind of promiscuity, it's not that big of a deal for men. I mean it's changing now, but it's slower in the Albanian community than it is with others. Obviously in westernized countries you are going to have more progression. I think the war and everything that has happened it has set us back a bit as far as ideals go. But you know what's weird is when I went to Kosovo and Albanian the people there were a little bit more open and outgoing. **When I came here I told my mom that and my dad said a lot times Albanians here are really strict because they are trying to preserve that sense of identity, culture in a westernized world. It's like intimidating. To keep and hold on to what's left of being Albanian and preserving that.** My dad one time said you have to look at it-some people think that marriage is you carry on the Albanian community. You're breeding more Albanian children. I was like, 'I'm not going to breed!' Please don't refer to me having children as breeding. What the heck. I guess that's how some people look at it. You're keeping the community alive and if you intermingle with other cultures it's like it almost diffuses the strength of how many Albanians there are.

The strength of the Albanian community and family depends on maintaining stricter control over girls/women than boys/men, and it involves that expectation that both men and women will marry other Albanians. These elements are also a mechanism through which Albanians attempt to maintain a thicker ethnic identity in a place that is not Albanian. The following section focuses more closely at how Albanian families and community maintain Albanian culture by regulating their members, especially women, through co-ethnic gossip. I understand co-ethnic gossip to be one of the instruments of community's surveillance, and it is used specifically to control and challenge, whether tacitly or not, one's honor, sense of respect, and reputation within their families and community.

Under the Surveillance of the Community: Co-Ethnic Gossip

Individuals and families imagine what the community might say about ones daughter or family, reinforcing community norms and values. The Albanian community is the real and imagined reference group. As Tereze mentioned, "someone is going to say, oh my god, I can't believe you let your daughter…" Parents are supposed to regulate their daughters, but when they let them go just a little more than most other Albanian families might do, the community comes back to remind them that they crossed some boundary, however blurry that line may actually be. Gossip is the instrument through which community members are reminded of such cultural boundaries. Gossip is also one of the key reasons why many of my participants do not like to be around other Albanians, the reason why they like to mind their own business and not engage in community or family affairs, as much as they are proud to be Albanian. As I wrote about in my methods section, gossip was the main reason why the focus group was not a viable data gathering technique for this study. Even though the focus group I did with women generated a lively discussion, an Albanian women I did not even know said that she heard one of my focus

group participants "talked too much" in the focus group. In June 2011 I attended a gathering that was just for Albanian woman and children, it was a "coffee gathering." There were several women and children sitting in the lounge area of the community building. All of the women who attended were Albanians from Albania. I was the only one there who was second generation and had origins in Montenegro. I was also probably the youngest of the adult women in the group. I sat next to a woman who I had seen a few times before at a local community center, but did not know anything about her. We greeted each other and she mentioned my dissertation work. She said I heard you are doing a study on Albanians. I told her, yes, I am writing a book about Albanians. She said that one of her clients was in my focus group and enjoyed it very much, but then she chuckled before telling me that her client also said that one of the girls in my group spoke too much. My eyes had widened and thought, "Oh, wow. Small world and word gets around pretty quickly as this was only a few weeks after I had completed my focus group interview." It occurred to me that I had to be cautious about doing focus groups or discontinue doing the focus groups altogether because individuals in focus groups could potentially gossip or share the personal stories of what my participants said to other Albanians. The interaction inspired me to pay closer attention to how gossip operates in the Albanian community. One participant describes how gossip works in the community. Teuta says,

> There are some Albanians as soon as they see another Albanian they will go up and talk to you and they want to know about you and there's me who's just kind of like I'm just going to stay away [chuckles] I don't know why it's just there's a lot of things that come with Albanians that I tend to, the bad stuff I don't want to get involved with like gossip, I hate gossiping. I hate the gossiping. I noticed this with my own family too and my mom is not one to sit around and talk about other people, she doesn't like but we'll have my aunt, she'll come over and she'll tell you the whole life story about someone who she has probably never met

She then ties gossip to her own experience, particularly how it affects Albanian girls. Teuta had this to say:

> …you know there's stuff that has come up even when I was going away to school, people gossiping about why I was leaving, what are her parents thinking, she's so young, she's probably going there because her boyfriend goes there stupid things like that that really made me want to get away even more. It was just you know no matter to some people no matter what you do, no matter how successful you become, no matter anything, it's like you are always getting compared to someone else and you know they'll find a reason where you have some sort of character flaw. She may be let's say a doctor or whatever but she doesn't look this way, just you know things like that you know that are very irritating, this all starts with the gossiping, it's ruined people's reputations and it ruins families because you know parents hear things about their children they may not necessarily know or they you know it's not even true and someone made it up and it comes back to you and you're like 'well I didn't do that so why would someone say that?' And I think it's more directed towards girls, if a girl is seen with a guy, they're together, they have to be together there is no such thing as being friends with someone, and it's you know I just, that's just one thing that bothers me more than anything, it's just you automatically put a label on something and decide this is who they are when you had no idea.

My female participants felt pressured by insiders and ambivalence about displaying acceptable Albanian femininity, whether or not they agree with the performance itself. Here is what Mara had to say,

> They definitely look and judging you like you have to know people are staring at you, you have to look perfect and it's like sad but you have to do it whether you agree with it or not for your family to accept you and everyone to be part of the community you have to just do it and sometimes I avoid going to parties cause I know that pressure if there and I'd rather not. Because when you're younger you're like oh this is just the way it is then you realize like outside of the Albanian community there's this this and this. I kind of value other things you know. If I go to a party I'm not going there for someone to judge me or see how I'm acting. I'm there to enjoy my time, be with people but it's like you can't.

However, some have chosen not to put themselves in a position in which they would be pressured to act according to the Albanian norms and risk being judged. That is, some choose just to "stay away." Mara expresses this discontentment about the Albanian community because of the element of co-ethnic gossip and judgment. She explains,

> For me, personally, I don't really like the Albanian community. I would not go out of my way to hang out with an Albanian. I would actually probably prefer the opposite because I don't like the whole gossip thing aspect, the whole having to be so careful, private and all this stuff. I just want to be me, I don't judge you, so don't judge me type of thing

> cause me I don't get with their mentality so I don't find myself having too much in common with the people that identify so strongly with Albanian. I'm in the middle.

While Albanian families and community attempt to keep its members, especially females, "in check" through the practice of gossip, it has the potential of pushing away young Albanians, especially women, from the community. The possible consequences of not going along with some of the traditions and expectations sometimes compels individuals to conform, as Mara stated, because your family's status in the community is on the line - their "face" is at risk, and their respectful status and family name in the community is challenged. In contexts where there are Albanians (e.g., religious space, weddings, parties), my participants are aware that there is a potential for them to be gossiped about. Some times "staying away" or ostracizing ones self is the only way to deal with the real or imagined criticism or being "looked at" or "talked about" when she has not performed according to accepted "traditional" customs and norms. Lula's story explicates one of the actual consequences of not following "traditional" customs and norms. She had this to say:

> Lula: I got divorced. I would say I ostracized myself because I was embarrassed. So I kind of kicked myself out of the community. I just felt weird. People would talk about you and they did. Until this day, when they see me they say [she whispers] "she's divorced. You know here's a funny story. I was at wedding once and this was a few years ago this guy liked me and he goes and tells a friend of our families he's like 'hey can you give me her phone number. I really like this girl." The first words out of her mouth was, 'you know she's divorced, right?' he's like I don't care but she's like in her mind I'm **damaged goods.** I am divorced.
>
> Linda: So that's one way of getting [I: ostracized] or ostracizing yourself [I: yourself yeah].
>
> Lula: That's a good example. I didn't think about it but obviously things come out but yeah I mean so I stopped hanging out with Albanians cause I didn't like being looked at, being talked about so I hung out with more Americans

It is not unusual for men to ask other male or female family members, "do you know that girl?" who is that girl?" How can I get her phone number?" because Albanians who date or marry other

tend to meet each other through family networks. Additionally, the context is important here—it is an Albanian wedding where the guests are predominately, if not entirely, Albanian. And as Lula said when one is around other Albanians there is a potential to be "looked at" or "talked about." So one would most likely not just go up to another Albanian woman at a wedding and ask her for her number. Instead, he would ask another family member about her to see who she is or how he can connect with her. The male quickly found out about her background – she is divorced. I do not know if he pursued her any further, but what is important here is the idea of "damaged goods" emerges to refer to the consequences women must bear for doing something counter to the culture. As the previous section demonstrated notions such as, "spoiled goods" or "less valued," arose in multiple interviews, including the focus group, to refer to women who have engaged in an action that is deemed "dishonorable" or embarrassing according to the family and community. As a result, some women, as Lula did, chose not to be around Albanians. They would instead hang out with "Americans" or non-Albanians. One of my second generation respondents, Amanda, referred back to the Kanun to describe how it refers to the role of Albanian women in the family: " A woman is a sack, made to endure." After my interview with her, I looked up the passage in the Kanun and it describes it this way:

> A woman is known as a sack, made to endure as long as she lives in her husband's house. Her parents do not interfere in her affairs, but they bear the responsibility for her and must answer for anything dishonorable that she does (Fox 1989:38).

Many of the women in my study were uncertain about dating and marrying Albanian men because of the stereotype they construct of Albanian men and of the Albanian culture. Consider the dialog between a participant and me during as part the focus group participants when were talking about how difficult it is to find an Albanian male who is not "traditional":

> Participant: I can never be the wife to make food and serve—I don't know how to cook. If that's what you want I can't be that for you.
>
> Linda: So being in a relationship with an Albanian guy would require you to engage in those tasks?
>
> Participant: It's passed on to them, engrained in them—you are the man, give orders, protect your wife. With the younger generation though it is changing.

The ideology of gender they portray shapes who they see as a potential mate and for some of them, they are turned away from marrying Albanian. This presents a problem for the continuity of Albanian culture as some of the women in my study are questioning the existing patriarchal gender relations, and acting accordingly, such as ostracizing oneself from the community. Vasquez's (2011) multigenerational study of Mexican American families reveals that marriage can be a "bump" in the "bumpy line" model of assimilation. According to Gans (1992:44) who developed this model, bumpy line was meant to "replace what has often been described as straight line theory with bumpy line theory, the bumps representing various kinds of adaptations to changing circumstances – and with the line having no predictable end." Vasquez (2011:122) found that Mexican American women viewed intermarriage[5] as a way to escape what they thought were the patriarchal aspects of Mexican culture; whereas, men outmarried with white ethnics with the idea that they could still practice Mexican culture. The idea is that men are not expected to adapt to the cultural norms of their wives. Rather it is the wives who are expected to adapt to the norms of their husband and his family, which is partially the reason why some of the women in my study are uncertain about marriage to an Albanian man, but also aware of the difficulties non-Albanian women would have in marrying an Albanian man. George's (2005:172) study of Kerala Indians reveals a similar dynamic of uneven gender norms in

[5] I do not have information on the actual intermarriage rates of Albanians.

marriage, and some immigrants in the US would send their daughters back to India to "expose them to Keralite culture and the expectation of 'homeliness." In both Vasquez's and George's studies, marriage was an important to the reproduction and consistency of culture. Vasquez writes, "Marriage is highly influential in terms of how a family routes itself either toward or away from Mexican or American culture. They dynamics that marriage set in motion have potentially major consequences for multiple generations: the marital partners, the successive generations (children), and the prior generation (parents)" (p. 122). I was not aware of situations when parents sent their children back to Albania, although several of my participants had made voluntary trips to Albania or Montenegro since they or their parents emigrated. The struggle to define what it means to be Albanian and problems with continuing the culture are certainly evident in my participants' reflections on marriage and marital preferences. A situation is created wherein being Albanian is trying to be maintained by ethnic community members, but some are losing in that process in order to achieve some continuity in Albanianess.

Ambivalence About and Acceptance of "Being Albanian"

As the last section showed, my participants did acknowledge significant changes have not been made in Albanian gender relations or that all Albanian men and women agree with that characterization of women or even think to treat women in such a fashion. One of the participants said that her dad took responsibility of child-care, but she still knows a lot of Albanian men who will not change a diaper. But, as things are changing, it is possible that by third generation the importance of honor and gendered surveillance practices will be a less significant portion of what it means to be and maintain Albanianess, but right now it is perceived by many of the women in my study as a cost of membership. This dynamic of Albanian gender relations may vary based on time and region of origin (Northern, Middle, Southern Albania and

urban versus rural), and religion. For instance, some research has documented that historically communities (villages) in northern Albania have had a more rigid, strict gender and age hierarchy than those in southern Albania (Vullnetari 2009; Whitaker 1981). I found it striking, though, that similar ideas of strict gender relations emerged when some of my respondents thought about and/or experienced gender relations in the Albanian community. Even though my participants have described how much they disliked the experience and potential consequences of being under the surveillance of the Albanian community, my interviews and observations revealed that many Albanian men and women still engage in community events, participate in Albanian organizations, including accepting leadership positions within those organizations, marry other Albanians, have "traditional" Albanian weddings. I have witnessed and heard about through my interactions in the field the many young adult Albanians who continue to attend Albanian festivals (e.g., labor day, US Independence Day), date other Albanians, have elaborate engagement parties and weddings, some of which I have attended myself. Even Lula decided to re-integrate into the community after years of ostracizing herself because of her divorce, saying,

> I've come back to the community a lot. You know it's just getting back involved [in community events and organizations] even like with my relatives or friends that I grew up with that I called cousins even though we are not blood related. Just getting back with them.

It is evident in my interviews with the 1.5 and second generation female participants' that despite having deep ambivalence about Albanian gendered relations, they still embrace Albanian culture and norms to some extent, prefer to marry Albanians, and be around other co-ethnics, not just their Albanian families. While my participants acknowledge that there are some Albanians who intermarry with other non-Albanian Europeans, all of my participants said that they believe most Albanians marry other Albanians, and several of my participants said they (and their parents) preferred to (and some did) marry an Albanian. Many of them said, "It's just easier." It is easier

because there is a mutual, sometimes unspoken, understanding of one another because the couple shares the same culture, and the parents can communicate with each other in the Albanian language. Steve says it is easier to be compatible with someone who is Albanian when considering dating and marriage. He says,

> Well we went to church every Sunday. As a child I went to all the folklore groups [as part of the church] so growing up I remember hearing in the background like hearing Enver Hoxha music so we were watching all these folklore tapes that our relatives would bring from overseas so that was part of my childhood so that's why it's easier to identify with another Albanian in times of marriage because it's not necessary, it's not a guaranteed thing to where you are just going to click with an Albanian but when you grow up hearing the same songs and you have the same sub-culture, it's a lot easier to be compatible with someone.

It is not simply about compatibility, but also a family and community affair. Here is what Ella had to say:

> I wanted to [marry an Albanian] I knew that they were out there. Number 1 it's sad to say it's easier. We know where they are coming from, they know where we are coming from and you don't have to sit there and explain the traditions to somebody. It's something I wanted to do for sure. Easier and better. We know each other. When my mom told my dad about my husband, right away they look at the family and my dad could not be any happier that I was talking to my now husband. He knew his dad, he knew his mom. We all knew each other growing up so now when their kids are getting married it's a great feeling to know oh I hung out with them growing up, he was cool to hang out it and it's cool that my daughter likes his son so that made me feel good to knowing that my parents knew them and can say yeah absolutely. If they were not part of the community my parents would not have known the parents, where they came from, their background. It's almost as important as the person itself that you are looking at is their parents.

This easiness is also gendered. It is particularly easier for an Albanian woman to marry an Albanian man than it is for non-Albanian woman to marry an Albanian man. In other words, an Albanian woman who marries a non-Albanian man would not have as difficult time as a non-Albanian woman who marries an Albanian man. I have met Albanian men in the field who are dating and/or married to non-Albanian women. At the time of my interview with David, he was

dating who is a Middle Eastern woman, but he did not tell his parents about her and he has been dating her for nine months. He said it was "not smart" to tell his parents:

> David: My parents don't know. I mean what would I tell them and get them into…I mean I have friends who have told their parents and their expectations and the next month they declare engagement. But you have to realize that you have to go through you have to finish school. That's key. You have to be solid in your career and whatever you want because the times have changed. We can no longer…our parents got married at 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, people are now getting married at 30.
>
> Linda: Do your parents expect you to marry an Albanian?
>
> David: My mother yes. My dad doesn't say anything. My mom wants that I think, but I don't know if that's going to happen. I can't promise.
>
> Linda: So what are your expectations?
>
> David: [chuckles] I have no idea now. I could say and I don't know. I think it would be easier for life, for my parents to communicate [if she was Albanian] but I don't know.

When I asked Luke about his and his parent's preferences in terms of who he married, he distinguished between dating is and marriage. Consider our conversation:

> Linda: Do you think that Albanians tend to marry and date each other?
>
> Luke: I mean I'd like to marry an Albanian girl. But I really I don't know if I really care. It's more if she's the same religion as me. I noticed like my friends that aren't really religious they just want the same Albanian spouse or something but other friends they don't care. They would date anyone. When it comes to marriage it's more I want to marry an Albanian girl. Like right now I don't really any girl that I don't but I would more want to marry an Albanian girl. [Linda: So Albanian catholic?] yeah pretty much.
>
> Linda: And the girl you date has to also be catholic?
>
> Luke: Not really. I don't really don't care for the girl I date, but I really don't see any future with her if she's not catholic.

Marrying Albanian is viewed as important, but dating for men is a more open arena for some even though the parental expectations of marrying Albania are strong. Mara explains it this way when I asked if her parents expected her to marry an Albanian:

> Yes. It would be preferred I am positive by all parents. And I think it's easier because you both understand each other. Albanians are very complicated people to understand so if you come into that family and they're not Albanian it's like wow, what's going on. There are unspoken things you need to know especially if you're a woman I think it's harder going into like non-Albanian woman to move into an Albanian family because like I said there is so much expected of women it's like if you go into your husband's house for the first time you have to carry yourself in a different way. You cannot dress provocative like not even what's consider considered provocative here we consider provocative there [Albania]. You have to show a lot of respect. There are certain topics you really shouldn't mention. Like personal life is personal life. You never disrespect your husband. Like there are so many things like that that I don't know if other cultures can really understand.

As Mara explained, so much is expected of women and even though women have ambivalence about the expectations of them, especially when they marry Albanian, they still think it would be easier and would prefer to, as would their parents, to marry an Albanian. By not marrying Albanian, Mara argued that it would be difficult for women of other cultures to understanding the cultural expectations (e.g., respect, not dressing provocatively, carrying yourself in a different way) that come with marrying Albanian.

Gossiping is one mechanism through which community surveillance is accomplished, but surveillance works in other ways. That is, one of the goals of community surveillance practices is to "protect" women, mainly the honor of women and their male family members. Many Albanians do not perceive protecting women as negative aspect of Albanian culture. Based on what participants said, Albanians perceive this as fulfilling their masculine "duty" in the community, validating their honor as men of the community and heads and providers of their families. However, regulating women—who they can talk to and be seen with in public spaces – is one way to maintain a respectful legacy of the Albanian culture, and the reputation of their family, which is disproportionately entrusted in women. Mike had this to say:

> I think Albanians, we, tend to be very protective of our women and it's funny because I used to work in a place that used to have a bunch of Albanians working there and it was only a few who were not? And the guys joking around say, 'why are you so damn

> protective of your women?' That's something you guys need to learn. Don't patronize us for being protective. With boys there is a little more freedom, like if he's out late, it's not a big deal. If she's out late, where is she?

He goes on to describe how he and his Albanian friends look out for each other by protecting one another's female relatives in public spaces, protecting her from potential harassment but also loss of honor, but not just her honor. It is also his honor tied through the patrilineal organization of the Albanian family. He says,

> So the boys tend to be a little bit more figuring out how to represent their families, societies, community, getting out there more. The women tend to be like I mean it depends how old school the family is, but they are more protective over the women…I know lots of [Albanian] guys who have younger siblings; some have sisters and are very protective. We assume the role for one another like if one is not there like I'll look after another one. It's like I hang out with a large group of friends and it's all Albanian and we're like an extended family if you will and we all look out for one another, nothing is going to, power in numbers essentially, nothing is going to attack a huge group of people. One time we were out for my friend birthday, he went away to a restaurant or something I don't know where he went and I saw someone talking to his sister like a whatever guy I told him to get lost. I am not going to wait for him to come back. I got it you know. I know if it were my younger sister he would have done the same thing.

I asked Mike what makes one do that; that is, what makes one feel obligated to protect the other's sister, for instance. It is also about "keeping your word" or "besa," a practice embedded in Albanian culture. He explains,

> Mike: Pride.
>
> Linda: Pride in being Albanian?
>
> Mike: Pride in where you come from and the principles that you were raised with. There are a few good movies that are supposed to be coming out about similar stuff like that.
>
> Linda: About Albanians?
>
> Mike: About Albanian culture and stuff like that…. There's "Besa" which is like oath and promise.

Traditions like "Besa" are an integral part of the Albanian character and social relations. As I explained earlier, he and other participants have not have read or read an any detail the "Kanun,"

"besa" was still an important part of maintaining individual and group honor, mainly through surveilling Albanian women. With the relatively small size of the Albanian community in Michigan and their concentration in the three counties of Metro Detroit, surveillance of individuals in public spaces is made easier and gossip travels faster through family and community channels.

SUMMARY

The preceding data demonstrate the tight link between family and community in the protection and stabilization of Albanian culture and traditions as conditioned by gender. Central to this individual-family-community dynamic was the protection of a particular set of gender relations. At the same time, there are attempts by family and community members to recreate gendered constraints, even as gender relations are changing with the new generation of Albanian Americans who are growing up in the US. There is not a clear answer as to whether strict gender norms are a required part of what makes one Albanian. What is clear, though, is that what makes people Albanian is their interest in engaging with the idea of Albanianess. By not agreeing on the foundational core of ethnicity, Albanians face the problem of organizing a coherent Albanian community, as some of my participants described. However, as chapter five suggests, the community does not necessarily need to agree on a foundational core of the ethnicity in order to constitute a sense of community and belonging. Ethnic communities and the people within it and on the outskirts of it are "ongoing projects," constantly being redefined and negotiated as new situations arise.

My research shows that, due to gendered constraints, there is ambivalence about Albanian relations in ways that are problematic for the continuity of Albanian culture and the ethnic community. The ambivalence about engaging fully with ethnic identity is due to the

gendered constraints that my participants have described. Honor is an important ingredient in that processes of constructing the "costs of being Albanian." I not only show how honor operates, but also how it is perceived by individuals as one way to constitute an ethnic identity, and create a sense of stability in what that means while dealing with cultural changes that are likely to occur in many immigrant and ethnic communities who experience similar problems of cultural continuity and change, particularly ones patterned by gender. Gendered constraints are reproduced and reinforced through the activity of gossip. As previous research has showed, gossip is a key element of social control in community relations (Menjivar 2000). At the same time Albanians are attempting to maintain Albanianess, they create an opportunity for members, especially women, to recreate new ways of being Albanian or introduce new ways to be ethnic and American as existing gendered arrangements motivate them to pursue new directions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of white ethnic identity and assimilation for a select group of Albanians who live in Metropolitan Detroit. I used qualitative research techniques – face-to-face interviews and participant observations of 35 Albanian immigrants or the second generation children of immigrants who live in Michigan. In-depth interviews provided the bulk of the data. At the heart of this research was a concern about the feeling and meaning of assimilation, ethnic distinctiveness, and identity, and more broadly, the struggle with problems of change and continuity of culture in that process. Given the dearth of recent immigrant scholarship on white ethnic immigrants and ethnics alongside the resurgence and revisions of studies of assimilation, I selected Albanians as a case as a way to understand how one white ethnic group maintained (or not and in what ways) an ethnic/immigrant culture when phenotypically they can pass as white "mainstream" American. This exploration involved uncovering the meaning and importance of, and the struggles and costs associated with, an Albanian identity in the United States, as was described in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In my analysis of the importance of ethnic difference for individuals, I discovered that maintaining ethnicity involves the constant interplay of the individual, family and ethnic community. It also requires one to reveal what is the meaning of ethnic distinction in the first place, and that is what I accomplished in chapter five. I highlighted why an ethnic identity is important to my participants, and how they interpret ethnic difference and infuse it with meaning. Ethnic identity was a source of pleasure, and gave individuals a sense of purpose, and is important because the family and community are sustaining to the individual. In this chapter I

also discovered that the drive to be ethnically different for my participants lies in using whiteness as a default identity, something that does not solely rely on the external imposition of whiteness. Rather they use Albanianess as being different than white Americans and other groups in order to construct internal group solidarity. Thus whiteness represents both an assimilation and Americanizing process that does not reflect the "different" background and experiences of Albanians to be lumped solely into the category of the "white." In chapters 6 and 7, I described the power relationships within families and ethnic communities, and how ethnic community spaces shape and are shaped by co-ethnic group relations, and changes that must be made as they live in contexts of "American" culture. In chapter six, I discovered the various interstices of power and internal differences that embody the ethnic identity defining and meaning-making processes. Within these processes there are tensions between religious, ethnic and national identities that are shaped by pre-migration contexts, stories about a group's past (e.g., communism), and new situations. By looking at social and cultural continuities, I showed that that there are comfortable patterns of behavior and meanings that give individuals a sense of security and personal control over one's sense of self within the context of social and cultural change, which is an important motivation for being ethnic. In chapter seven, I focused more on the ways cultural continuity and change are contested by uncovering the costs and consequences of being Albanian, drawing largely from the perspectives and experiences of the women in my study who highlight the gendered double standard they have experienced. I also highlighted the significance of the ethnic community in that process. One cannot understand continuity without also thinking about discontinuity. The dialectic of continuity and discontinuity is key for symbolic interactionists and pragmatics because it is from here social experience emerges (Mead

1929). Using one white immigrant and ethnic group, Albanians, as a case study, these chapters overall provide another view of whiteness and the perpetuation and alteration of ethnicity.

Assimilation and Symbolic Interactionism

An implication of this study relates to the epistemological assumptions that traditionally have served as the theoretical framework upon which studies of contemporary immigrant assimilation have been built. Symbolic interactionism provided a lens through which to examine assimilation processes in a revised way than the extant research has provided by seriously considering "insider" understandings of assimilation. In doing so, this study revealed how individuals, family and the ethnic community attempt to direct the progress and shape of their own assimilation. I approached the data through the lens of symbolic interactionism as its concepts and perspectives informed me, particularly the concepts of meaning, situation, time, and action. In other words, I contribute to the literature on immigration and ethnicity by looking at ethnic identity and issues of cultural continuity and change mainly through these four concepts, which are central to symbolic interactionist thought.

I addressed what it means to be ethnic and some of the motivations for maintaining ethnicity, and how it is subject to negotiation and change through social interactions and adjustment to situations. The meaning of ethnic identity is shaped by the particular situations people encounter in their everyday lives. In other words, situations are the elements of human experience that confronts the person that one then is required to interpret and respond to. For example, in chapter five I specified the situations in which ethnic affiliations become important (i.e., differentiating from the mainstream). I also revealed the ongoing activity among Albanians in various situations and contexts, such as family, religious spaces and non-secular community spaces, and how as situations change through time so do meanings (e.g., generational

differences). My participants' stories revealed the new situations that continually emerge as part of the process of adjustment in the lives of people within and outside of an ethnic group. New situations sometimes require a revision of "old rules," and new individual and joint actions, such as redefining idea and expectations of Albanian femininity as described in chapter seven. Actions are not only individual, but also joint, which involves the behaviors of groups, organizations, and institutions, and I have emphasized some of those joint actions more explicitly in chapter five where the process of defining Albanian identity as important involved joint actions. In this regard, the data I presented in previous chapters are shaped symbolic interactionist lens because I emphasize interpretation or definition rather than simple reaction to the situations emerging in people's everyday lives (Blumer 2000). Using this lens, individuals and groups encounter and deal with situations presented by immigration and settlement processes, and some do so with various definitions, interpretations, expectations and understandings as they fashion their actions within the problems of continuity and change. This is most clear in chapters 6 and 7 where my participants describe the struggles to define an Albanian identity and their understandings of the perceived "costs" of being Albanian. The stories that my participants shared also showed how individuals give shape to those situations, and are not just merely shaped by the situations they encounter. This could be best illustrated by the "short dress story" described in chapter seven or Mira's and Tereze's story of "speaking" or standing up for oneself as presented in chapter six.

By thinking about time from a symbolic interactionist perspective rather than usual model of studying assimilation quantitatively as the extent to which a group has assimilation over time, I show how the process and experience of ethnic identity construction also involves people re-constructing the past (e.g., history, stories, heritage) so that ethnic identity has meaning in the present in ways that can guide future action (e.g., the choice to marry Albanian and/or raise their

kids in particularly Albanian ways). My participants' articulations of their experiences with cultural continuity and change involved a process of, "redefining the meaning of past events in such a way that they have meaning in and for the present" (Maines 1983:169), but also in this process futures can be constructed and imagined. In chapter seven I explored the process of how ethnic group members can legitimize particular power relations through their understanding of past experiences and then use those past experiences to frame their present situations (e.g., gendered constraints). It is the meaning of the past (the symbolically reconstructed past); the facts of the past (the implied objective past or what actually happened) that allows ethnic group members to make claims about how future situations will be defined (i.e. social structural past). If the past is not seen as legitimate, however, conflicts emerge. This is where we can see more clearly the generational conflicts as well as divergences in men and women's experiences that can emerge as situations change through time and so do the meanings people attach to them. An enhanced view of assimilation would rethink the (re)construction of ethnic identity, and cultural aspects of incorporation into new society in some of the ways I presented here. I expect that the findings can challenge and extend dominant models and theories of assimilation.

White Ethnicity, Race and Identity

The overall story told of white ethnic identity over the last few decades or so has been one in which ethnic distinctiveness and importance is declining. For 20th century European immigrants, the stories surrounded their attempt to achieve whiteness alongside upward social mobility (Roedinger 1994), but this study shows a possible movement toward achieving difference in some areas of social life within a heterogeneous society. My dissertation is a counter-example to that story because Albanians seem to have a stronger identification with being ethnic than being only white. A study of Arab Americans in the US is another example of

this emerging dynamic among immigrants who are defined as white by and may even define themselves as white in the US census (Ajrouch 2000). In both my study and Ajrouch's, participants draw upon the perceived positive (e.g., education) and negative aspects (individualism, sexual promiscuity) of "white American" identity as a way to construct ethnic difference. Differentiating themselves is important, and they draw from particular meanings (values, stereotypes, beliefs) in order to do so. What is driving the people in my study to construct and reconstruct ethnic identity and culture is that it is pleasurable, it is a way to be different, and gives one a sense of purpose. There is also an element of comfort in belonging to a definable group, and knowing that one has a culture, and can express how they "do" culture as they have a readily available cultural "tool kit" from which to draw. An important part of this too is that my participants know how to define being Albanian, and express what an ethnic identity means for them as part of their everyday lives. Because ethnicity is multifaceted and is linked to two or more cultures over space and time, there are struggles involved in the process of creating social meaning of ethnicity, as I discussed in great detail in chapter six.

The ways in which my participants interpret and construct ethnic difference and belonging as well as the tensions of race and ethnicity have been found in other studies of much larger immigrant populations in the US. However, my study extends upon this earlier work to reveal the symbolic boundaries underlying the process of identity formation of Albanians and their different approaches to assimilation based on their social location in the US racial hierarchy. For instance, unlike for white ethnics, ethnicity for Mexican Americans is not yet an option (Vasquez 2011:7), and research continues to document how Mexican Americans and other Latino groups occupy the "racial middle" (O'Brien 2008) - between blacks and white, and face the contradiction of whether they are a race or an ethnic group. Vasquez (2011:5) refers to

Latinos as a "racialized ethnicity" because of the racialization experiences the population faces in the United States. However, Latinos can also be viewed as white and despite internal diversities, they do share some of the same cultural values as Albanians (familialism, attachment to cultural tradition, food and religion) (Camino 1994). They also share some of the same norms of sexual propriety for women (Horowitz 1992; Gonzalez-Lopez 2005), with the same kinds of community gossip enforcing those norms (Menjivar 2000). Studies of other recent immigrant groups have also show how ethnic and cultural difference from the "American mainstream" is constructed through the sexual regulation of women (Espiritu 2001; Das Gupta 1999). What is interesting about the case of Latinos is that they largely embracing some aspects of assimilation and are engaged in a political project to show that they are American (Vasquez 2011). In my study, however, Albanians are leery of assimilation and resistant to identity as American or as unmarked American.

Unlike many Latino groups, Albanians do not experience a racialized ethnicity, and this shapes how Albanians differ in their approaches to assimilation and experience US society. Vasquez's (2011) study, for instance, finds that Mexican Americans who cannot "pass" as white have to "prove themselves against negative stereotypes and low expectations" (p. 152). My study builds upon this notion of "proving" to also mean that in order to create ethnic difference, white ethnic individuals and groups have to "prove" they are different from white American mainstream in the face of the external imposition of whiteness. This dissertation thus uncovers to importance of and the meanings that underlie the rejection of whiteness as a stand-alone identity in the process of ethnic identity construction. One such consequence of this thought and action is that it possibly further perpetuates the notion that "white American" is the group to which white and non-white ethnic groups define themselves against, leaving whiteness as the hegemonic

norm and ignoring the reality that the "mainstream" is and has been changing (Alba and Nee 2003). Thus another implication of this study is that it encourages a new way of thinking about white ethnicity identity and assimilation that illuminates the processing and meaning underlying the construction of ethnic difference. Future research could explore in more detail the consequences of rejecting "white" as an identity in and of itself, and constructing one's own ethnic group as superior to the perceived undefined "white American." Albanians may also differ in their approach to assimilation because compared Mexican Americans or Latinos as an aggregate group, Albanians are a small immigrant group whose political organization is not well established or consistent, particularly in Michigan. It is quite possible that Albanians may not be embracing assimilation because, unlike the subsequent generations of Irish and Polish individuals, Albanians are a still a recent immigrant group, and are in the second generation at most. It is possible that over another generation, some of their ethnic distinctiveness may wane, as previous European immigrant generations have experienced. Albanian immigrants are a recent immigrant group in the US (most coming to the US since 1991), and thus they are only beginning to adapt and deal with changes related to acculturation and assimilation. Albanian adaptation is perhaps slow because they come from a repressive country who are generally economically poor and are settling in a depressed region in the US. Future research would involve conducting a multigenerational study (including the third and fourth generations) of Albanians in order to investigate longer-term issues regarding assimilation. This could also include studying Albanians in other states in the US where there is a larger population of Albanian origin who have greater generational distance from the immigrant generation. Massachusetts, the major settlement place of the first wave of Albanians in the US, would be one

such research site where there is a large Orthodox Albanian community who are beyond the second generation.

Gender and Immigration

Differences between women and men stand out stand out in the data chapters I presented above. Recent studies and theorizing (Kibria 1990; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994, Curran and Saguy 2001, Gabaccia 1994; Foner 2009) of the experiences of women migrants' in particular is viewed as more embedded in family, generation, racialization, and ethnic group culture and thus more complex than the "male versus female" conflict models (Pessar and Mahler 2003). Gender and migration scholars have approached the experiences of immigrant women from a "gender social relations" perspective (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Kibria 1993; Menjivar 2000), through an "integrative approach" (Oishi 2002), from a "gendered geographies of power" framework (Pessar and Mahler 2003), as well as from "critical household" lens (Nawyn, Reosti and Gjokaj 2009). These more complex perspectives of immigration view gender as more mutable, relational, as intersecting other systems of power and privilege, and embedded in various social institutions. In this dissertation I have explored how gender contributes to the changing experiences, interpretations and definitions of Albanian identity in US contexts. I showed how honor is an important element in the process of experience uneven gender relations, particularly how social control appears to enforce constraining gender norms on women. Future research would need to explore men's honor, and also how honor can be viewed as a positive element of ethnic identity. That is, if there is little attempt to control men's sexuality, what might their honor be about, and how is that honor embedded in family, generation and ethnic group culture. Cainkar's (1996) study of Palestinians explored the different responsibilities men and women had with respect the continuation of culture, which produced different understandings of what is

honorable for men and what is honorable for women. Similar to other research (Kibria 1990), I show in dissertation that gender relations between men and women are in some ways reconstituted through family and community relations wherein the reasons behind gender restrictions lie partially in the fear of "losing culture" through a process of "Americanization. Future research would include transnational contexts in order to understand changes and continuation of culture through the interaction of "home" and "host" countries, and also the intersection of gender and religion in the lives of Albanian immigrants and ethnics.

LIMITATIONS

The insights gained from this study are not meant to represent all Albanians. Instead, this study provides a smaller picture of the processes that underpin ethnic identity and assimilation processes. Additionally, findings must be viewed within the context of other limitations, including sample size, participant recruitment, interview protocol, participant diversity and participant disclosure. The sample size did allow for an exploration of relevant themes and aspects cultural continuity and change among some Albanians, but because of the number of participants, any generalizations about the larger population of Albanians should be done with caution. The final sample could also be viewed as biased as my sampling involved both snowball and convenience techniques, but I tried to achieve diversity by also using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting individuals that fit a particular characteristic (e.g., religion, generation). Each sampling technique, however, involves the subjectivity of the researcher and thus is not representative of the population, and has the potential to contain researcher bias (Black 1999:118). The interview protocol could be viewed as insufficient as there might be factors not included that shape the experiences of ethnic identity and being Albanian in the US, which were not addressed. Lastly, participant disclosure may have been censored by

some participants because I was viewed as an insider, and considering the significance of gossip, my insider status could have limited their verbalizations to me. Even though I assured before the interview that what they shared was confidential and their actual name would not be connected to what they said, there were some obvious hesitations in some questions and probes. There were also a few times I was asked to turn off the recorder during an interview due to the sensitive nature of the topic. Despite these limitations, the results raise important concerns for those who study ethnic identity, assimilation and whiteness.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The directions for future research are in part derived from the limitations I identified above. First, in order to fully explicate the experiences of Albanian immigrants and ethnics in the US, a comparison of immigrants and ethnics from the various major settlement states is required. Such an undertaking may shed light into if and how Albanian experiences are different from state to state. This can be accomplished by conducting a larger survey-based study of Albanians immigrants and their offspring. This should be accompanied by in-depth interviews with a larger sample size and sampling parameters that are more precise in achieving the diversity I initially sought. Furthermore, given the fact that Albanians are a diverse group, such a comparison must take into account the different conditions of the original country of origin, time of migration, generational change, religion as well as the host country environment. For instance, it would be important to examine how religious differences shape gender relations. I was able to recruit more people who are practicing Catholics than those who are practicing Muslims or Orthodox Christians. I suspect that religion and gender intersect to shape gender relations in different ways for each of these Albanian religious communities, and future research would need to dig deeper into those issues. Also, one such issue that can be addressed is whether or not Albanian Orthodox

immigrants, as one of the earliest waves of Albanian migration to the US, have experienced the waning of ethnic distinction into the third and fourth generations compared to other states that have more recent Albanian migration (e.g., Michigan, New York, Florida). Another equally important research agenda may be a comparative study both in terms of the "home" and "host" environments. Such an agenda would uncover the transnational dimensions of ethnic identity construction and change.

Some of my participants wanted me to provide "solutions" to the problem of Albanian disorganization. This study was not set up to come up with solutions. Instead, it uncovered what some Albanians perceive to be the problems of the Albanian community, and that is the basic starting part to coming up with ways to do something better. Future research could expand on what I have done here to offer more explicit suggestions about creating a more comprehensive and consistent way to organize the Albanian community for those who are interested in initiating such an endeavor. I suspect that a comparative study of the Albanian community in different states in the US might help shed light on that issue.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1a United States (1920-2011), birthplace by Census Year and Intercensus growth of foreign-born population by place of origin, Albania

Census Year (Absolute values)	Albanian-Born, US	Albanian-born, Michigan	Census Year (intercensus growth)	Albanian-Born, US	Albanian-born, Michigan
1920	3,338.60	301	1920-1930	162.99	2.43
1930	8,780.20	308	1930-1940	-1.76	-35.02
1940	8,626.00	200	1940-1950	5.46	154.50
1950	9,097.00	509	1950-1960	12.82	56.78
1960	10,263.00	798	1960-1970	-3.54	-49.87
1970	9,900.00	400	1970-1980	-25.25	80
1980	7,400.00	720	1980-1990	-25.35	-13.89
1990	5,524.00	620	1990-2000	1,367.34	934.52
2000	81,056.00	6,414.00	2000-2010	-8.29	-3.60
ACS 2010	74,335.00	6,183.00	----------	----------	----------
ACS 2011	78,284.00	10,660.00	----------	----------	----------

Table 1b United States (1920-2011), birthplace by Census Year and Intercensus growth of foreign-born population by place of origin, Yugoslavia

Census Year (Absolute values)	Yugoslavian, U.S.	Yugoslavian, Michigan	Census Year (intercensus growth)	Yugoslavian, U.S.	Yugoslavian, Michigan
1920	46,191.60	2,598.90	1920-1930	296.95	551.35
1930	183,359	16,928	1930-1940	-15.61	-33.79
1940	154.733	11,208	1940-1950	-4.98	24.98
1950	147.026	14,008	1950-1960	7.40	-30.34
1960	157.908	9,758	1960-1970	5.76	5.55
1970	167.000	10,300	1970-1980	-6.24	6.02
1980	156.580	10,920	1980-1990	-9.68	0.05
1990	141420	10,926	1990-2000	-31.72	-28.62
2000	96,558	7,799	2000-2010	15.51	13.94
ACS 2010	111,530	8,886	----------	----------	----------
ACS 2011	105,192	6,686	----------	----------	----------

Tab1e 1c United States (1920-2011), birthplace by Census Year and Intercensus growth of foreign-born population by place of origin, Total foreign-born, United States

Census Year (Absolute values)	Foreign-Born (US)	Census Year (intercensus growth)	Foreign-Born (US)
1920	14,196,547	1920-1930	1.13
1930	14,357,054	1930-1940	-12.86
1940	12,510,890	1940-1950	-7.33
1950	11,594,104	1950-1960	-12.65
1960	10,127,690	1960-1970	7.98
1970	10,935,800	1970-1980	38.47
1980	15,142,700	1980-1990	42.24
1990	21,538,296	1990-2000	53.43
2000	33,045,175	2000-2010	28.39
ACS 2010	42,428,246	----------	----------

Table 2: United States (2006-2011 ACS): Year or Period of Arrival of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		YEAR OR PERIOD OF ARRIVAL				
			Before 1945	Between 1946 and 1959	Between 1960 and 1990	Since 1991	Total
United States	Male	Count	172	467	3,182	35,762	39,583
		% within Sex	.4%	1.2%	8.0%	90.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	381	361	1,956	34,330	37,028
		% within Sex	1.0%	1.0%	5.3%	92.7%	100.0%
	Total	Count	553	828	5,138	70,092	76,611
		% within Sex	.7%	1.1%	6.7%	91.5%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	0	33	415	5,110	5,558
		% within Sex	0.0%	.6%	7.5%	91.9%	100.0%
	Female	Count	49	25	240	5,189	5,503
		% within Sex	.9%	.5%	4.4%	94.3%	100.0%
	Total	Count	49	58	655	10,299	11,061
		% within Sex	.4%	.5%	5.9%	93.1%	100.0%

Table 3 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Age structure (3 groups) of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		AGE			
			Less than 18 years	Between 18 & 64 years	65 years and older	Total
United States	Male	Count	4,735	31,108	3,740	39,583
		% within Sex	12.0%	78.6%	9.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	3,676	29,786	3,566	37,028
		% within Sex	9.9%	80.4%	9.6%	100.0%
	Total	Count	8,411	60,894	7,306	76,611
		% within Sex	11.0%	79.5%	9.5%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	446	4,486	626	5,558
		% within Sex	8.0%	80.7%	11.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	538	4,447	518	5,503
		% within Sex	9.8%	80.8%	9.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	984	8,933	1,144	11,061
		% within Sex	8.9%	80.8%	10.3%	100.0%

TABLE 4 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Age structure (3 groups) of Albanian-Ancestry (first response) in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		AGE			
			Less than 18 years	Between 18 & 64 years	65 years and older	Total
United States	Male	Count	23,085	58,020	5,902	87,007
		% within Sex	26.5%	66.7%	6.8%	100.0%
	Female	Count	22,047	52,886	6,713	81,646
		% within Sex	27.0%	64.8%	8.2%	100.0%
	Total	Count	45,132	110,906	12,615	168,653
		% within Sex	26.8%	65.8%	7.5%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	446	4,486	626	5,558
		% within Sex	8.0%	80.7%	11.3%	100.0%
	Female	Count	538	4,447	518	5,503
		% within Sex	9.8%	80.8%	9.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	984	8,933	1,144	11,061
		% within Sex	8.9%	80.8%	10.3%	100.0%

TABLE 5 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Race of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex**.**

	SEX		RACE				
			White	Black/Negro	Other race, nec	Two major races	Total
United States	Male	Count	39,408	0	0	175	39,583
		% within Sex	99.6%	0.0%	0.0%	.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	36,811	15	38	164	37,028
		% within Sex	99.4%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	76,219	15	38	339	76,611
		% within Sex	99.5%	.0%	.0%	.4%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	5558	…	…	…	5558
		% within Sex	100.0%	…	…	…	100.0%
	Female	Count	5503	…	…	…	5503
		% within Sex	100.0%	…	…	…	100.0%
	Total	Count	11061	…	…	…	11061
		% within Sex	100.0%	…	…	…	100.0%

TABLE 6 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Race, Albanian-Ancestry (first response) in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		RACE						
			White	Black/Negro	Other Asian or Pacific Islander	Other race, nec	Two major races	Three or more major races	Total
United States	Male	Count	85,982	124	14	365	522	0	87,007
		% within Sex	98.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	100.0 %
	Female	Count	80,805	71	0	102	563	105	81,646
		% within Sex	99.0%	0.09%	0.00%	0.12%	0.69 %	0.13%	100.0 %
	Total	Count	166,787	195	14	467	1,085	105	168,653
		% within Sex	98.9%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	100.0 %
Michigan	Male	Count	11,978.00	…	…	…	32.00	…	12,010.00
		% within Sex	99.7%	…	…	…	.3%	…	100.0 %
	Female	Count	11,581.00	…	…	…	0.00	…	11,581.00
		% within Sex	100.0%	…	…	…	0.0%	…	100.0 %
	Total	Count	23,559.00	…	…	…	32.00	…	23,591.00
		% within Sex	99.9%	…	…	…	.1%	…	100.0 %

TABLE 7 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Citizenship Status of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		CITIZENSHIP STATUS			
			Born abroad of American parents	Naturalized citizen	Not a citizen	Total
United States	Male	Count	1,109	20,882	17,592	39,583
		% within Sex	2.8%	52.8%	44.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	873	19,869	16,286	37,028
		% within Sex	2.4%	53.7%	44.0%	100.0%
	Total	Count	1,982	40,751	33,878	76,611
		% within Sex	2.6%	53.2%	44.2%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	157	2,734	2,667	5,558
		% within Sex	2.8%	49.2%	48.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	180	2,442	2,881	5,503
		% within Sex	3.3%	44.4%	52.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	337	5,176	5,548	11,061
		% within Sex	3.0%	46.8%	50.2%	100.0%

TABLE 8 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Citizenship Status of Albanian-Ancestry (first response) in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX			CITIZENSHIP STATUS			
			N/A	Born abroad of American parents	Naturalized citizen	Not a citizen	Total
United States	Male	Count	31,803	983	30,382	23,839	87,007
		% within Sex	36.6%	1.1%	34.9%	27.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	32,194	993	27,088	21,371	81,646
		% within Sex	39.4%	1.2%	33.2%	26.2%	100.0%
	Total	Count	63997	1976	57470	45210	168653
		% within Sex	37.9%	1.2%	34.1%	26.8%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	4,204	52	4,203	3,551	12,010
		% within Sex	35.0%	.4%	35.0%	29.6%	100.0%
	Female	Count	4,122	186	3,657	3,616	11,581
		% within Sex	35.6%	1.6%	31.6%	31.2%	100.0%
	Total	Count	8,326	238	7,860	7,167	23,591
		% within Sex	35.3%	1.0%	33.3%	30.4%	100.0%

TABLE 9 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Language Use of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex.*

	SEX		LANGUAGE USE			
			English	Albanian	other	Total
United States	Male	Count	3,278	34,072	1,992	39,342
		% within Sex	8.3%	86.6%	5.1%	100.0%
	Female	Count	3,360	31,978	1,620	36,958
		% within Sex	9.1%	86.5%	4.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	6,638	66,050	3,612	76,300
		% within Sex	8.7%	86.6%	4.7%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	124	5,218	188	5,530
		% within Sex	2.2%	94.4%	3.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	552	4,737	214	5,503
		% within Sex	10.0%	86.1%	3.9%	100.0%
	Total	Count	676	9,955	402	11,033
		% within Sex	6.1%	90.2%	3.6%	100.0%

*N/A Responses have been removed

TABLE 10 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Language Use of Albanian-Ancestry (first response) in the United States and Michigan by sex.*

	SEX		LANGUAGE USE			
			English	Albanian	other	Total
United States	Male	Count	18,052	60,143	2,447	80,642
		% within Sex	22.4%	74.6%	3.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	18,962	55,455	1,956	76,373
		% within Sex	24.8%	72.6%	2.6%	100.0%
	Total	Count	37,014	115,598	4,403	157,015
		% within Sex	23.6%	73.6%	2.8%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	1,824	9,347	157	11,328
		% within Sex	16.1%	82.5%	1.4%	100.0%
	Female	Count	2,026	8,674	206	10,906
		% within Sex	18.6%	79.5%	1.9%	100.0%
	Total	Count	3,850	18,021	363	22,234
		% within Sex	17.3%	81.1%	1.6%	100.0%

*****N/A Responses have been removed

TABLE 11 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Education of Albanian-born in the United States and Michigan by sex

	SEX		EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
			Eight years of education or less	Nine to twelve years of education, no diploma	HS graduate, GED or some college	Associate degree	Bachelors Degree or 5+ years or college	Post graduate studies	Total
United States	Male	Count	1616	1408	15747	1074	6148	2301	28294
		% within Sex	5.7%	5.0%	55.7%	3.8%	21.7%	8.1%	100.0%
	Female	Count	2939	1297	13910	1551	6372	1882	27951
		% within Sex	10.5%	4.6%	49.8%	5.5%	22.8%	6.7%	100.0%
	Total	Count	4555	2705	29657	2625	12520	4183	56245
		% within Sex	8.1%	4.8%	52.7%	4.7%	22.3%	7.4%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	335	264	2263	102	464	279	3707
		% within Sex	9.0%	7.1%	61.0%	2.8%	12.5%	7.5%	100.0%
	Female	Count	538	409	2130	228	628	170	4103
		% within Sex	13.1%	10.0%	51.9%	5.6%	15.3%	4.1%	100.0%
	Total	Count	873	673	4393	330	1092	449	7810
		% within Sex	11.2%	8.6%	56.2%	4.2%	14.0%	5.7%	100.0%

TABLE 12 United States (2006-2011 ACS): Education of Albanian-Ancestry (first response) in the United States and Michigan by sex.

	SEX		EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
			Eight years of education or less	Nine to twelve years of education, no diploma	HS graduate, GED or some college	Associate degree	Bachelors Degree or 5+ years or college	Post graduate studies	Total
United States	Male	Count	3,196	3,697	27,820	2,476	9,497	4,605	51,291
		% within Sex	6.2%	7.2%	54.2%	4.8%	18.5%	9.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	5,559	2,743	23,760	2,950	9,492	3,578	48,082
		% within Sex	11.6%	5.7%	49.4%	6.1%	19.7%	7.4%	100.0%
	Total	Count	8,755	6,440	51,580	5,426	18,989	8,183	99,373
		% within Sex	8.8%	6.5%	51.9%	5.5%	19.1%	8.2%	100.0%
Michigan	Male	Count	727	689	3,567	224	577	382	6,166
		% within Sex	11.8%	11.2%	57.8%	3.6%	9.4%	6.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	981	617	3,176	366	846	413	6,399
		% within Sex	15.3%	9.6%	49.6%	5.7%	13.2%	6.5%	100.0%
	Total	Count	1,708	1,306	6,743	590	1,423	795	12,565
		% within Sex	13.6%	10.4%	53.7%	4.7%	11.3%	6.3%	100.0%

Table 13 United States (2007-ACS 2011): Median Total Personal and Family Income of Albanians in the US and Michigan

PLACE OF RESIDENCE	INCOME	
	Personal Income	Family Income
United States	20,694.00	53,678.00
Albanian-born in US	16,407.00	54,100.00
Albanian-Ancestry in US	16,039.00	57,012.00
Michigan	19,749.00	50,639.00
Albanian-born in MI	11,180.00	40,410.00
Albanian-Ancestry in MI	10,000.00	40,917.00

Table 14 Characteristics of the 1.5 and Second Generations Sample

Category	*f*	%
Country of Birth		
U.S.	12	48%
Albania	10	40%
Montenegro	1	4%
Kosovo	1	4%
Macedonia	1	4%
TOTAL	25	100%
Geographic Origin of Albanian-born		
Northern Albania	2	20%
Central Albania	2	20%
Southern Albania	5	50%
Not reported	1	10%
TOTAL	10	100%
Mother's Birthplace		
U.S.	0	0%
Albania	10	40%
Montenegro	10	40%
Kosovo	1	4%
Macedonia	2	8%
Italy	1	4%
Egypt	1	4%
TOTAL	25	100%
Generation Since Immigration		
1.5 generation	9	36%
2nd generation*	16	64%
TOTAL	25	100%
Year of Immigration		
Not an immigrant	12	48%
Before 1945	0	0%
Between 1946 and 1959	0	0%
Between 1960 and 1990	2	8%
Since 1991	11	44%
TOTAL	25	100%

Table 14 (cont'd)

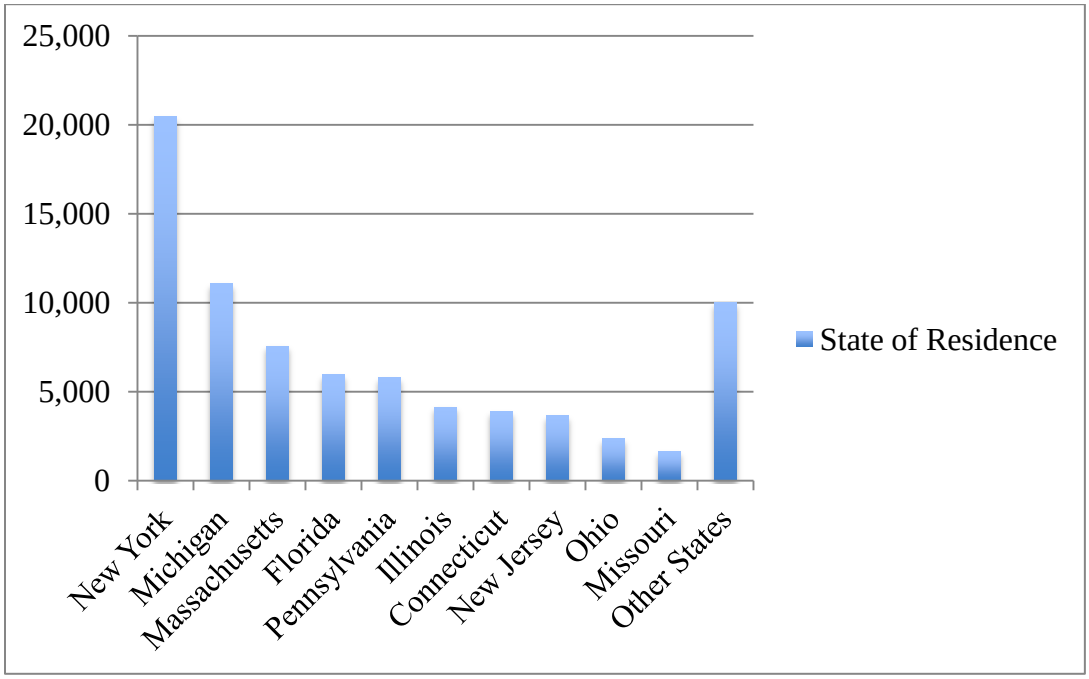
Age		
20-24	14	56%
25-30	8	32%
31-35	1	4%
36-40	1	4%
41-45	1	4%
TOTAL	25	100%
Sex		
Male	7	28%
Female	18	72%
TOTAL	25	100%
Marital Status		
Married	4	16%
Single	19	76%
Divorced	2	8%
TOTAL	25	100%
Educational Level		
High School	1	4%
Some College, No Degree	14	56%
College Degree (Associate's and/or Bachelor's)	6	24%
Master's Degree	4	16%
TOTAL	25	100%
Occupation Category**		
Service	10	40%
Office	4	16%
Management, Business, Professional & Related	4	16%
Manufacturing	1	4%
Unemployed	1	4%
Not specified	5	20%
TOTAL	25	100%
Religion***		
Muslim (Sunni and/or non-specified)	6	24%
Bektashi Sufi Muslim	2	8%
Bektashi and Sunni Muslim	1	4%
Catholic (Roman)	11	44%
Albanian Orthodox Christian	2	8%
Did not identify	1	4%
Not reported	2	8%
TOTAL	25	100%

Table 14 (cont'd)

*Includes those born abroad but emigrated 4 years old or younger
**Used the Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010 occupation classification, see http://www.bls.gov/cps/cenocc.pdf
***Includes practicing and non-practicing

APPENDIX B: FIGURES

Figure 1: Top 10 States of Residence, Albanian-born in the United States



For interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this thesis (or dissertation)

Figure 2: Top 10 States of Residence, Albanian Ancestry (first response) in the United States

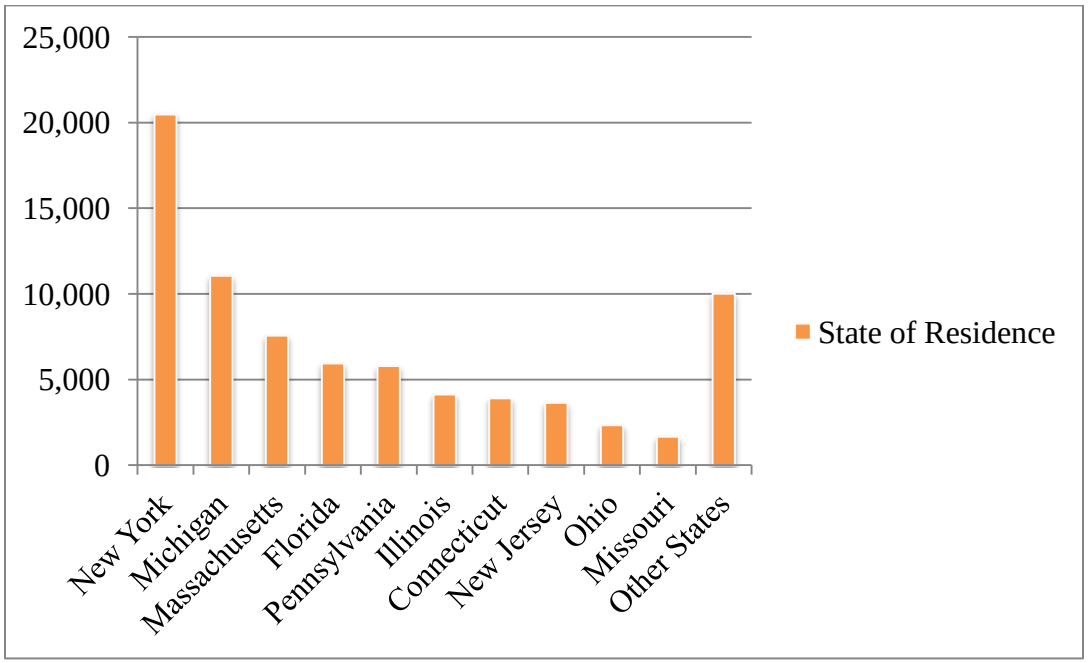


Figure 3: Photo of Gjerg Katrioti Skënderbeu Portrait at an Albanian Catholic Church

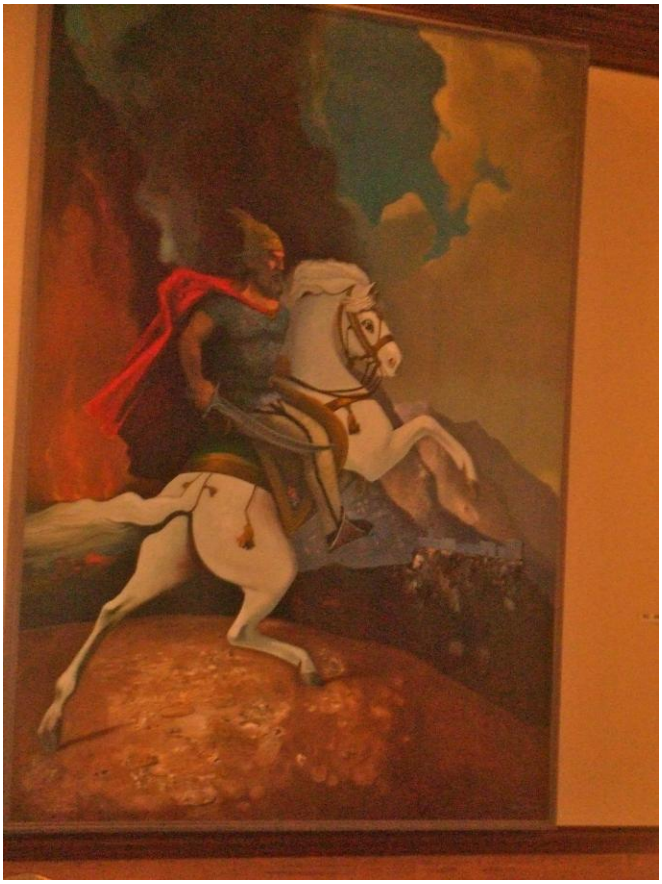


Figure 4: Photo of Gjerg Katrioti Skënderbeu Statue at an Albanian Catholic Church

Figure 5: Photo of International Day

Figure 6: Photo of International Day

Figure 7: Photo of International Day

Figure 8: Photo of International Day

Figure 9: Photo of Kosovo's Independence Celebration

Figure 10: Photo of Albania's Independence Day Celebration

Figure 11: Photo of Choreographed Traditional Albanian Dance

Figure 12: Photo of Albanian Language School Fundraiser

Figure 13: Photo of Tattoo

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE: "GENERATIONS"

Introduction

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
    a. How old are you?
    b. Where were you born?
    c. What is your highest level of education?
    d. What is your current occupation?
    e. Marital status details

2. Tell me about how you and your family members came to the U.S.? Michigan?

3. You have grown up in an Albanian immigrant family. Tell me about your thoughts and feelings of what it's like to grow up in an Albanian immigrant family?

Families and Relationships

Tell me a little bit about your parents

4. What do/did your parents do for a living in US & home country?
    a. While growing up, did they often associate with other Albanians?

5. What were your parents like when you were growing up?

6. While growing up, did they mostly speak Albanian or English to you? Do you speak Albanian now? Do you have to speak Albanian well to be considered Albanian?

7. How would you compare your parents to other parents who are not Albanian?

8. Think about when you were growing up, did any of your family members emphasize one part of being Albanian more than others?

9. Are there different expectations for men and women in Albanian families and/or within the Albanian community?

10. Do you think [U.S. born] Albanians tend to marry/date each other?
    a. How does an Albanian ethnic background matter in who one chooses to date and/or marry? Nativity? Religion? Race? Skin Color?

11. Would you (or do/have you) pass(ed) on Albanian cultural norms, behaviors and values on to your children? How would you do this?

Ethnicity, Race and Identity

12. Do you think of yourself as Albanian, Albanian American or American Albanian, American, white Albanian American or other identity category? Have you always identified this way?

13. In what ways do you think you follow Albanian culture and norms? Did you grow up going to a church/mosque/teqe {get religious affiliation here}?

14. In your opinion, what do you think it means to be Albanian?

15. Can you think of any situations or contexts in which your ethnic background as Albanian has had an influence-either positive and/or negative? (e.g., employment, school opportunities, religious experiences, partner choices). Has it restricted you or provided you with opportunities? Your children?

16. Some Albanians in the United States want to be identified as "white" and as "other" race in the U.S. Census by writing in "Albanian" on the form. What do you think about that? What do you think is going on here? What might be the positive or negative aspects of identifying as white and as other race? Why can't Albanians just say they are "white"?

17. What do you think most other people (non Albanians) think about Albanians? [Have you ever experienced discrimination because you are Albanian?]

18. What do you think most Albanians think of other Albanians? In your opinion, do you think Albanians mostly compare themselves to other Albanians or other non-Albanian Americans?

Albanian Community, Peer Group Relations

19. Do you associate mostly with other Albanians? What about Albanians born in the US?

20. How would you describe the Albanian community in Michigan? {What do you think of Albanians in Michigan?}
    a. Are there any problems you can think of that exist in the Albanian community?
    b. What divisions do you think exist within the Albanian community?
    c. What area(s) do you think Albanians are united? How?

21. Can you think of any concerns/issues you have, if any, you have with the Albanian community?

22. There are several Albanian organizations and ways of connecting to the Albanian-American community. Have any of you participated in Albanian-identified organizations or groups? If so, what was your experience? If not, would you? And, why?

23. Can you think of the last time you attended any event organized by Albanians?

24. What do you think having an Albanian community would mean for you? What would that look like?

Ending Questions

25. Any thoughts about what you think might be the most important thing you would want people ready my study to know about Albanians?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: "GENERATIONS" FOCUS GROUP

Introduction

1. Tell me about how your family members came to the United States?
2. You all have grown up in an Albanian immigrant family. Tell me about your thoughts and feelings of what it's like to grow up in an Albanian immigrant family?
    i. How would you describe to a non-Albanian what it's like to grow up in an Albanian family?
    b. Do you find that boys/men and girls/women experience this differently?
    c. What specific events and experiences emerge as significant when you think about growing up in an immigrant family?

Key Questions:

Ethnicity, Race and Identity

3. Some Albanians in the United States want to be identified as "white" and as "other" race in the U.S. Census by writing in "Albanian" on the form. What do you think about that?

4. What makes a person a member of the Albanian community and/or ethnic group? Do you think there is anything one could possibly do to get kicked out of the community?

5. Can you think of any situations or contexts in which your ethnic background as Albanian has had an influence? (e.g., employment, school opportunities, religious experiences, partner choices).

6. In what ways do you think you follow Albanian culture and norms?
    a. Are there times when you identified more or less (or not at all) with being Albanian? Why?

b. Would you (or do you) pass on Albanian cultural norms, behaviors and values on to your children? How would you do this?

Families and Relationships

7. What were your parents like when you were growing up? What were your interactions like with your parents?
    a. How would you compare your parents to other parents who are not Albanian?
    b. Do Albanians raise their kids in a particular way? How would you describe how Albanians raise their kids?

8. What do you think your parents expected of you while you were growing up? Describe how they (or, how would they have) reacted when you did not obey?

9. Think about when you were growing up, did your family members emphasize one part of being Albanian more than others? If so, please describe. Who? What about now?
    a. Were these experiences different for boys and girls (men and women)? If so, how?
10. Did you grow up knowing the Albanian language? Did your parent's speak mostly to you in Albanian? How about now, do you speak Albanian?

11. Are there any benefits to growing up in an immigrant family? Drawbacks?
    a. How have these benefits or disadvantages shaped your relationships with non-Albanian peers, co-workers, and/or school experiences? How much of this is related to being Albanian?

Albanian Community, Peer Group Relations

12. Do you associate with other Albanians?
    a. If yes, describe what those associations are like? In what contexts?
    b. If no, with whom do you associate the most? In what context?

13. Who are your closest friends? What ethnic group are they from?

14. Do you think U.S. born Albanians tend to marry/date each other?
    a. How does an Albanian ethnic background matter in who one chooses to date and/or marry? Nativity? Religion? Race? Skin Color?
    b. Who do your parents want you to marry? Do your parents pressure Albanian children to (did they) to marry Albanian? Your peers? Albanian community?

15. How would you describe the Albanian community in Michigan? What do you think of Albanians in Michigan?

a. What divisions do you think exist within the Albanian community (such as, country of origin? Religion? Period of arrival? Area of settlement? Language? Other divisions?).
b. Do Albanians help each other? {how/why}. Examples?
c. Where do most Albanians in MI live? Hang out?
d. Are Albanians in MI different than Albanians who live in other parts of the US?

16. In what ways do you think Albanians are different from other racial and ethnic groups in America? How are Albanians similar to other racial and ethnic groups in the US?

17. What do you think most other people (non Albanians) think about Albanians?
18. Does the Albanian community emphasize particular aspects of being Albanian more than others? How so?

19. Are their benefits and/or drawbacks to belonging to the Albanian community? Not belonging? Belonging to multiple communities or groups?
20. How do you think, if at all, has the Albanian community changed? Stayed the same?
21. There are several Albanian organizations and ways of connecting to the Albanian-American community? Have any of you participated in Albanian-identified organizations or groups? If so, what was your experience? If not, would you? And, why?
    a. Can you think of the last time you attended any event organized by Albanians? What was that like?

Ending Questions

22. Is there anything that I missed?
23. Is there anything else you think I should know to understand better?
24. Is there anything that you wanted to say about what we discussed today but you did not get a chance to say it? If you think of something at a later time, we could meet again.

INTERVIEWS GUIDE: ALBANIAN RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Introduction

I'd like some information about the churches/mosques role in organizing the Albanian community, some information about your personal history, and your experiences and perceptions of the Albanian community

Individual Questions:

First, tell me about yourself

1. Where were you born? And how old are you now?

2. When did you come to US?

3. Is Michigan your first place of settlement?

4. What was your life like before you came to the U.S.?

5. Tell me how you came to the United States?

6. What was it like when you first got here?

7. When did you come to this church/Mosque/Teqe?

8. How did you become a part of the [insert name]?

9. Could you describe how you came to serve as a [priest/imam/dervish/baba] for this mosque/church?

10. What has been your experience like with [insert org name] as [position]

11. How long has this Church/Mosque existed in Michigan? Only Albanians? How many people come here?

12. Does this Church/Mosque offer? Cultural activities? Who comes?

13. Are Albanian churches/mosques different than non-Albanian-churches/mosques?
    a. How do you think the Albanian church/mosque has changed since it began? Since you came?

14. Do Albanians come to you for help/advice?
    a. When was the last time someone came to you for help/advice? What was that like?
    b. Do you have frequent contact with Albanians?

15. What is the relationship of this Church/Mosque (those who share the Muslim or Catholic faith) with other Albanian-identified religious organizations (Churches/Mosques) in Michigan? In the United States?
    a. Have the Albanians of different faiths helped each other?

    b. Were there/are there any past and/or present conflicts between Albanians of different faiths?

Albanian Community and Interactions

16. How would you describe the Albanian community in Metropolitan Detroit?
    - In what ways might it be unified?
    - Is the Albanian community divided in any way?
    - Some of the people I interviewed said that the Albanian community is really only organized by religious, thus not allowing many opportunities for Albanians of different faiths to come together, what is your thoughts on that? [Disa nga njerëzit kam intervistuar

thanë se komuniteti shqiptar është me të vërtetë i organizuar vetëm nga fetare, duke mos lejuar shumë mundësi për shqiptarët e besimeve të ndryshme të vijnë së bashku, çfarë është mendimet tuaja për këtë?]

17. What do you think most other people or communities think about Albanians? [Çfarë mendoni se shumica e njerëzve të tjerë të mendojnë për shqiptarët]. [si thote menja se american thon per ne shiptare]

18. Are there any areas of the Albanian community that are of particular concern?

19. Or, how should we teach Albanian generation born here about what it means to Albanian

Ending questions

20. Is there anything else you think I should know to understand better?
21. What would you want the people who read my papers and book know about Albanians?
22. Is there anything that you wanted to say, but you did not get a chance to say it?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: ALBANIAN ORGANIZATION LEADERS

Introduction

I'd like some information about your organization, some information about your personal history, how you became involved in the organization, and your experiences in and what are the perceptions of the Albanian community.

Individual Questions:

First, let's talk about your own experiences.

1. Where were you born? When? And how old are you now?

    - When did you come to US?
    - Is Michigan your first place of settlement?
    - What was your life like before you came to the U.S.?
    - Tell me how you came to the United States?
    - What was it like when you first got here?
    - What about your family, did you come with family members? Describe how your family came to the U.S.?
    - Have you gone back to visit? A keni shkuar për të vizituar]When was the last time you visited?
    - What is your educational background?
    - Employment background? How does this job compare to others you've had? [Si e bën këtë punë të krahasohet me të tjerët që ju keni pasur]
    - What is/was your father's occupation?

Organization Questions

Now I want to know about [insert name of organization]. Tash unë dua të di për organizatën tuaj

2. How did you become a part of the organization?

   What has been your experience like with [insert org name] as [position]

3. How long have you been involved with this organization?

4. What other involvement have you had in the Albanian community?
5. How long has this organization existed in Michigan?
6. What are some of the reasons for the creation and development of [insert organization name]?
7. What is a typical day like at [insert org].

8. Who makes up the staff here [leaders?, women? All Albanians? Any born here? Where are they from?] What do they do? [Çfarë bëjnë ata]

9. Is all the work conducted at this office?

10. Which populations of Albanians do you serve? Or, Who watches/listens? Do non-Albanians watch?

    a. In the last month, how many people do you think you have served?

11. What is the primary focus of the organization?

12. What is the role of this [org name] in the Albanian community?

13. What types of activities/events does this organization offer or take part in?

14. What types of responses have you gotten from the public or other communities in the US?

15. What types of responses have you gotten from Albanians?

16. What do you think people like the most about [insert organization]?

17. Do you partner with any other Albanian-identified organization? Non-Albanian organizations? [do you want to? How about in the past—have you been involved in Albanian orgs]
    a. Which organizations?
    b. If so, how and why did the partnership develop?
    c. What types of things do you do together?

Albanian Community and Interactions

18. How would you describe the Albanian community in Metropolitan Detroit?

19. Are Albanians in Metro Detroit different from Albanians living in other state in the US? Other countries?

20. Are Albanians who came in the 1960s different than those who came after 1990s?

21. Are there a lot of Albanian organizations in MI? How many would you say? What kinds?

22. Do you know of any organizations that work to connect Albanians across the world?

23. Some Albanians in the United States want to be identified as "white" and as "other" race in the U.S. Census. What do you think about that?

24. What do you think most other people or communities think about Albanians?

25. Are there any areas of the Albanian community that are of particular concern? What about families?

26. If you could tell the generations of Albanians born here, like me, about what being part of the Albanian community means right now, what is the main thing you would want them to know? Do you see the generation born here involved in the Albanian community in any way?

27. Or, how should we teach Albanian generation born here about what it means to Albanian

Ending Questions

28. Is there anything else you think I should know to understand better? .
29. What would you want the people who read my papers and book know about Albanians?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abramson, Harold. 1980. "Assimilation and pluralism" in *Harvard encyclopedia of American ethnic groups*, edited by S. Thernstrom, A. Orlov, and O. Handlin, pp. 150-60. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Albanian Population and Housing Census. 2011. INSTAT, Mediaprint, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_phc/Albania/Albania.pdf

Alba, Richard. 1988. "Cohorts and the dynamics of ethnic change" Pp. 211-28 in M. W. Riley B.J Huber and BB Hess (eds.) *Social structures and human lives*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Alba, Richard. 1990. *Ethnic identity: The transformation of White America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Alba, Richard, and Victor Nee. 2003. *Remaking the American mainstream: Assimilation and contemporary immigration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ajrouch Kristine J. 2000. "Place, age, and culture—community living and ethnic identity among Lebanese American adolescents." *Small Group Research*, 31:447–69

—. 2004. "Gender, Race, and Symbolic Boundaries: Contested Spaces of Identity among Arab American Adolescents." *Sociological Perspectives*, 47(4): 371-391.

Baca Zinn, Maxine, D. Stanley Eitzen, and Barbara Wells. 2010. *Diversity in families*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Babbie, Earl. R. 2012. *The practice of social research*. California: Wadsworth.

Babuna, Aydin. 2000. "The Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia: Ethnic identity superseding religion." *Nationalities papers* 28(1): 67-92.

Barjaba, Kosta. 2004. "Albania: Looking Beyond Borders." In Migration Information Source, Country Profiles, http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=239

Barjaba and King. 2005. "Introducing and theorizing Albanian migration." In *The New Albanian Migration*, edited by Russell King, Nicola Mai, and Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers. Oregon: Sussex Academic Press.

Bean, Frank D., and Gillian Stevens. 2003. *America's newcomers and the dynamics of diversity*. New York: Russell Sage.

Bhalla, Vibha. 2002. *American Dreams: Gendered Migration from India* (Doctoral dissertation). Michigan State University, Department of History-Urban Studies.

Black, T. R. 1999. *Doing quantitative research in the social sciences: An integrated approach to research design, measurement, and statistics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Bloemraad, Irene. 2006. *Becoming a citizen: incorporating immigrants and refugees in the United States*: University of California Press.

Blumer, Herbert. 1953. "Psychological import of the human group." In Muzafer Sherif and M.O. Wilson (eds.) *Group relations at the crossroads.* New York: Harper and Brothers, pp. 185-202.

—. 1954. "What is Wrong with Social Theory." *American Sociological Review*, 18 (1954): 3-10.

—. 1962. "Society as Symbolic Interaction." In Arnold M. Rose (ed.) *Human behavior and social processes.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 179-192.

—. 1966. "Sociological implications of the thought of George Herbert Mead." *American Journal of Sociology*, 71:535-548.

—. 1969. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and method*. California: University of California Press.

—. 1990. *Industrialization as an agent of social change*. Edited by David R. Maines and Thomas J. Morrione. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Cainkar, L. 1996. "Immigrant Palestinian women evaluate their lives" In B.C. Aswad and B. Bilge (eds), *Family and gender among American Muslims: Issues facing Middle Eastern immigrants and their descendants* (Pp. 41-55). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Camino, Linda. 1994. "Refugee adolescents and their changing identities." Pp. 29-56 in *Reconstructing lives, recapturing meaning: Refugee identity, gender, and culture change*, edited by L. Camino and R. Krulfeld. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University.

Castles, Stephen, and Mark Miller. 2009. *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World,* 4th edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2005. "Grounded theory in the 21st Century." Pp. 507-535 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research,* edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cornell, Stephen and Douglas Hartmann. 2007. *Ethnicity and race: Making identities in a changing world* (2nd ed.). California: Pine Forge Press.

Curran, Sara R., and Abigail C. Saguy. 2001. "Migration and cultural change: A role for gender and social networks." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 2:54-77.

Daniels, R. 2002. *Coming to America: A history of immigration and ethnicity in American life*. New York: Perennial.

Das Gupta, Monisha. 1997. "What is Indian about you? A gendered, transationational approach to ethnicity. *Gender and Society,* 11:572-596.

Dion, K. K., and K. L. Dion. 2001. "Gender and cultural adaptation in immigrant families." *Journal of Social Issues* 57:511-521.

Doane, Jr., Ashley W. 1997. "Dominant group ethnic identity in the United States: The role of "hidden" ethnicity in intergroup relations." *The Sociological Quarterly*, 38(3): 375-397.

Draper, Stark. 1997. "The conceptualization of an Albanian nation." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 20(1): 123-144.

Dreby, J. (2006) "Honor and virtue: Mexican parenting in the transnational context." *Gender & Society*, 20, 32-59.

Emerson, Robert M., Fretz, Rachel I. and Shaw, Linda L. (1995) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Erikson, Erik H. 1950. *Childhood and society*. New York: WW Norton & Co Inc.

—. 1968. *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: WW Norton & Company.

Espiritu, Yen L. 2001. "'We don't sleep around like White girls do': Family, culture, and gender in Filipina American lives." *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26:415-442.

Fernandez-Kelly, Patricia, and Richard Schauffler. 1994. "Divided fates: Immigrant children in a restructured US economy." *International Migration Review* 28:662-686.

Foner, Nancy. (Ed.). 2009. *Across generations: Immigrant families in America*. New York: New York University Press. New York. Basic Books.

Foote NN. 1951. Identification as the basis for a theory of motivation. *American Sociological Review* 16:14-21.

Frankenberg, Ruth. 1993. *The social construction of whiteness: White women, race matters.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gabbacia, Donna. 1994. *From the other side: Women, gender, and immigrant life in the US, 1820-1990*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Gallagher, Charles. 2003 “Playing the ethnic race card: Using ethnic identity to deny contemporary racism,” in Ashley W. Doane and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (eds), *White out: The continuing significance of racism*, New York: Routledge, pp. 145-58.

Gans, Herbert J. 1962. *The Urban Villagers.* New York: Free Press.

Gans, Herbert. 1992. "Comments: Ethnic invention and acculturation, a bumpy line approach." *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 11:42-52.

Gans, H. 2007. "Ethnic and racial identity." in *The new Americans: a guide to immigration since 1965*,, edited by M. C. Waters and R. Ueda: Harvard University Press.

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. *The interpretation of cultures: Selected Essays*.

George, Sheba Mariam. 2005. *When women come first: Gender and class in transnational migration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Glazer, Barney G. and Anslem Strauss. 1968. *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

Goffman, Ervin. 1963. *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gold, Steven J. 1992. *Refugee communities: A comparative study*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Gonzalez-Lopez, Gloria. 2004. "Fathering Latina sexualities: Mexican men and the virginity of their daughters." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66:1118-1130.

Gonzales, Lopez, Gloria. 2005. *Erotic journeys: Mexican immigrants and their sex lives*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Greeley, Andrew M. 1974. *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance.* New York: Wiley.

Guba, Egon G. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. 2005. "Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences." Pp. 191-215 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Gugliemo, Thomas A. 2003 *White on Arrival: Italians, race, color, and power in Chicago, 1890-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Haxhia (Ljarja), Nertila and Romeo Gurakuqi. 2001. “National identity and religions in Albania.”In *Social Studies/Studimi Sociale*, 5(2):85-98, edited by Leke Sokoli. Albanian Institute of Sociology / Instituti i Sociologjisë.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, Pierrette. 1994. *Gendered transitions: Mexican experiences of immigration*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Horowitz, Ruth. 1992. *Honor and the American dream: Culture and identity in a Chicano community.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press

James, William. 1948. *Essays in Pragmatism,* New York: Hafner Press.

Jelavich, Barbara. 1983. *History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, UK: The University of Cambridge.

Jiménez, Tomas R. 2010a. *Replenished ethnicity: Mexican Americans, immigration, and identity*: University of California Press.

Jiménez, Tomas R. 2010b. "Affiliative ethnic identity: a more elastic link between ethnic ancestry and culture." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(10).

Kasinitz, Philip. 2004. "Race, assimilation, and 'second generations,' past and present." Pp. 278-298 in *Not just Black and White: Historical and contemporary perspectives on immigration, race, and ethnicity in the United States*, edited by Nancy Foner and George M. Fredrickson. New York: Russell Sage.

Kasinitz, Phillip, John H. Mollenkopf, and Mary C Waters. 2004. *Becoming New Yorkers: Ethnographies of the new second generation.* New York: Russell Sage.

Kibria, Nazli. 1990. "Power, patriarchy and gender conflict in the Vietnamese immigrant community." *Gender and Society*, 4(1): 9-24.

—. 1993. *Family tightrope: The changing lives of Vietnamese Americans*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kusow, Abdi M.1998. *Migration and identity processes among Somali immigrants in Canada* (Doctoral dissertation). Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

—. 2003. "Beyond indigenous authenticity: Reflections on the insider/outsider debate in immigration research," *Symbolic Interaction*, 26: 591 599

Lai, H.M. 1980. "Chinese." Pp. 217-234 in Stephen Thernstrom, Ann Orlov and Oscar Handlin (eds.), *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Levitt, Peggy. 2001. *The transnational villagers*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Levitt, P. and N. Glick Schiller. 2008. "Transnational perspectives on migration: Conceptualizing simultaneity." Pp. 284-298 in *The Transnational Studies Reader: Intersections & Innovations*, edited by S. Khagram and P. Levitt. New York: Routledge.

Lubonja, Fatos. 2002. “Between the glory of a virtual world and the misery of a real world.” Pp. 91–103 in Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd J. Fischer (eds.), *Albanian identities: Myth and history.* London: Hurst,

Maines, David. 1973. *Encounters and Careers of Postdoctoral Students.* Ph.D. Thesis. University of Missouri.

Maines, David. 1982. “In search of mesostructure; Studies in the negotiated order.*” Urban Life*. 11:267-279.

Maines, David R., Noreen M. Sugrue, and Michael A. Katovich. 1983. "The sociological import of GH Mead's theory of the past." *American Sociological Review*, pp. 161-173.

Maines, David, and J. Charlton. 1985. “The negotiated order approach to the analysis of social organization.” Pp. 271-309 In *Foundations of interpretive sociology: Original Essays in symbolic interactionism*. Edited by Norman Denzin. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Maines, David R., and Monica J. Hardesty. 1987. "Temporality and gender: Young adults' career and family plans." *Social Forces* 66.1: 102-120.

Maines, David R. 2001. *The faultline of consciousness: A view of interactionism in sociology.* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Massey, Douglas S., Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, and J. Edward Taylor. 1998. "Contemporary theories of international migration" Pp. 17-59 in *Worlds in Motion: Understanding international migration at the end of the millennium*: Oxford University Press.

Maxwell, Joseph A. 1996. *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Applied Social Research Methods Series, 41. Sage.

Menjivar, Cecelia. 2000. *Fragmented ties: Salvadoran immigrant networks in America.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

McCarthy, Kristin. 1998. "Adaptation of immigrant children to the United States: A review of the literature." Center for Research on Child Wellbeing, Working Paper 98-03.

McHugh, Peter. 1968. *Definitions of the situation*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

Mead, George H. 1934. *Mind, self, society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Menjivar, Cecilia. 2000. *Fragmented ties: Salvadoran immigrant networks in America.* Berkeley: *University of California Press.*

Miles, Matthew B., and A. Michael Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage.

Mills, C.W. 1959. On intellectual craftsmanship. pp. 195-226 In C.W. Mills (Ed.), *The Sociological Imagination,*. London: Oxford University Press.

Misha, Piro. 2002. "Invention of a nationalism: Myth and amnesia." *Albanian identities: Myth and history* (2002): 33-48.

Morawska, Ewa. 2009. *A sociology of immigration: (Re)making multifaceted America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nawyn, Stephanie J., Anna Reosti, and Linda Gjokaj. 2009. "Gender in motion: How gender precipitates international migration." Pp. 175-202 in *Perceiving gender locally, globally, and intersectionally: Advances in gender research*, edited by V. Demos and M. T Segal: Emerald Group Publishing.

Newland, Kathleen, Hiroyoki Tanaka, and Laura Barker. 2007. "Bridging divides: The role of ethnic community-based organizations in refugee integration." *Migration Policy Institute and the International Rescue Committee* http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/Bridging_Divides.pdf.

Novak, Michael. 1972. *The rise of the unmeltable ethnics: Politics and culture in the seventies.* New York: Macmillan.

—. 1974. "The new ethnicity." *Center Magazine* 7(4):18-25.

O'Brien, Eileen. 2008. *The racial middle: Latinos and Asian Americans living beyond the racial divide.* New York: New York University Press.

O'Donnell, James. 1999. "A coming of age Albania under Enver Hoxha." *Eastern European Monographs*, No. DXVII. New York: Columbia University Press.

Oishi, Nana. 2002. "Gender and migration: An integrative approach." San Diego: Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, University of California, San Diego.

Pano, Nicholas C. 2008. "Albanian Americans." Pp. 47-49 in *Race, Ethnicity and Society*, edited by R.T. Schaefer. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Park, Robert E. 1950. *Race and culture*. Illinois: The Free Press.

Park, R.E., and E.W. Burgess. 1971. "On competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation." in *Sociology: The Classic Statements*, edited by M. Truzzi: Random House.

Pessar, Patricia R., and Sarah J. Mahler. 2003. "Transnational migration: Bringing gender in." *The International Migration Review* 37:812.

Perry, Pamela. 2001 “White means never having to say you’re ethnic: White youth and the construction of ‘cultureless’ identities”, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 30: 56-91.

Pike, Kenneth Lee (ed.). 1967. *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of Structure of Human Behavior* (2nd ed.), The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton

Portes, A., and R. G. Rumbaut. 2001. "Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation." University of California Press.

Portes, Alejandro (Ed.). 1996. *The New Second Generation*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Portes, Alejandro, and Ruben G. Rumbaut. 1996. *Immigrant America: A portrait*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Portes, Alejandro, and Min Zhou. 1993. "The new Second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants among post-1965 immigrant youth." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530:74-98.

Pyke, Karen. 2000. "'The normal American family’ as an interpretive structure of family life among grown children of Korean and Vietnamese immigrants." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 52:240-255

Reiboldt, Wendy and Avery E. Goldstein. 2000. "Positive Coping Strategies among Immigrant Cambodian Families: An Ethnographic Case Study." *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* 28:489.

Roediger, David R. .2005. *Working toward Whiteness: How America's immigrants became White: The strange journey from Ellis Island to the suburbs*. New York: Basic Books.

Rumbaut, Rubén G. 1998. "Coming of age in immigrant America." *Research Perspectives on Migration* 1.6:1-14.

Sandstrom, Kent L., Daniel D. Martin and Gary Alan Fine. 2001. “Symbolic interactionism at the end of the century.” Pp. 217-231 in Ritzer, George, and Barry Smart, eds. *Handbook of social theory*. Sage Publications Limited.

Sasson-Levy, Orna. 2013. “A different kind of whiteness: Marking and unmarking of social boundaries in the construction of hegemonic ethnicity.” *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 28(1): 27-49.

Schutz, Alfred. 1973. "Concept and Theory Formation in the Social Sciences," In Maurice Natanson (Ed.), Collected Papers, 1, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 48-66.

Shibutani, Tomotsu and Kian M. Kwan. 1965. *Ethnic stratification: A comparative approach.* New York: The Macmillan Company.

Shibutani, Tomotsu. 1986. *Social Processes.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Skendi, Starvo 1967. The Albanian national awakening, 1878-1912, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Smith, R.C. 2005. *Mexican New York: Transnational lives of new immigrants*. California: University of California Press.

Stone, Gregory P. 1962. "Appearance and the Self." Pp. 86-118 in Arnold M. Rose (ed.) *Human Behavior and Social Processes*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Stone, Gregory P. 1990. "Appearance and the self: A slightly revised version." Pp. 141 162 In *Life as theater: A dramaturgical sourcebook* (2nd edition) edited by Dennis Brissett and Charles Edgley. New Jersey: Transaction.

Strauss, Anselm. 1959. *Mirrors and masks: The search for identity*. Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe.

—.1978. *Negotiations.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

—.1993. *Continual permutations of Action*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Stryker S. 1968. Identity salience and role performance: The relevance of symbolic interaction theory for family research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 30:558-64.

Suárez-Orozco, Carola. 2000. "Identities under siege: Immigration stress and social mirroring among the children of immigrants." in *Cultures under siege: Collective violence and trauma*, edited by Antonius C. G., M. Robben , and M. Suárez-Orozco. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in action: Symbols and strategies." *American sociological Review*, 51(2):273-286.

Thomas, W.I., and F. Znaniecki. 1918-20. *The Polish peasant in Europe and America*. Chicago: Badger.

Thorne, Barrie. 2003. "Raising children and growing up across national borders: Comparative perspective on age, gender and migration." in *Gender and US immigration: Contemporary trends*, edited by P. Hondagneu-Sotelo. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Toro-Morn, Maura I., and Marixsa Alicea. 1999. "Gendered geographies of home: Mapping second-and third-generation Puerto-Ricans' sense of home." Pp. 194-214 in *Gender and US immigration: Contemporary trends,* edited by Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo. Berkely and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Trix, Frances. 1994. "Bektashi tekke and the Sunni mosque of Albanian Muslims in America." *Muslim Communities in North America*, pp. 359-380.

—.2001. *The Albanians in Michigan*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.

Valenzuela Jr., Abel. 2009. "Gender roles and settlement activities among children and their immigrant families." *American Behavioral Scientist* 42:720-742.

Vasquez, Jessica M. 2011. *Mexican Americans across generations*: Immigrant families, racial realities. New York: New York University Press.

Vickers, Miranda. 1995. *The Albanians*. London: IB Tauris.

Vryan, Kevin D., Patricia A. Adler, and Peter Adler. 2003. "Identity." Pp. 367-390 in *Handbook of symbolic interaction,* edited by L. T. Reynolds and N. J. Herman-Kinney. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Warner, Warner Lloyd, and Leo Srole. 1945. *The social systems of American ethnic groups.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.

Waters, Mary C. 1990. *Ethnic options: Choosing identities in America*. California: University of California Press.

Waters, Mary C.1996. "Optional ethnicities: For white only?" Pp. 444-454 in *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in America,* edited by S. Pedraza and R. G. Rumbaut. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.

Whyte, William Foote. 1943. "Street corner society: The social structure of an Italian slum," pp. 18-24.

Wolf, Diane L. "'There's no place like 'home': Emotional transnationalism and the struggles of second-generation Filipinos." *The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation* (2002): 255-94.

Yinger, J. Milton. 1994. *Ethnicity: Source of strength? Source of conflict?* New York. State University of New York Press.

Zhou, M. and C. L. Bankston III. 1998. *Growing up in America: How Vietnamese children adapt to life in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.