

**EDITORIAL**  
**ASSIMILATION OF IMMIGRANTS IN AMSTERDAM AND NEW YORK: A CASE FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE STUDY**

JAN RATH

In the past few decades, practically every country in the advanced world has witnessed a substantial increase in immigration (Castles & Miller 1993). Some countries such as Canada or the United States have been hosting immigration for centuries and their mental map and social fabric are consequently geared to accommodating newcomers. But even for those countries, the magnitude of the current flow of people crossing the border with or without valid documents was unexpected. The U.S. had its version of the guest worker system in the Mexican Bracero Programme in the 1940s, but the immigration of Latino workers for the agricultural industry was nothing compared to what was in store. When the American civil rights movement gained momentum and the U.S. government decided to change its immigration laws with their unpopular annual quotas on immigration, things changed dramatically. The previous immigration regime favored immigrants from Europe, but the abolishment of restrictions to immigrants from Africa, Asia or Latin America in 1965 opened the U.S. to non-Europeans (Cornelius, Martin & Hollifield 1994). Immigration laws were tightened in the 1980s and 1990s in response to growing political pressure against what some regarded as unbridled immigration and to mounting unemployment and rising public expenditures for documented and undocumented immigrants alike. Meanwhile, Los Angeles outnumbered America's all-time city of immigration, New York. This being said, and in a way contrary to the general political mood in the U.S., the authorities in the Big Apple still maintain that the city gives a warm welcome to immigrants. Even if immigrants are not always treated as welcome guests, the authorities do acknowledge the contribution of immigrants to the city's flourishing now and in the past.

On the other side of the Atlantic, similar developments have occurred, though there are many differences. One striking difference is that the countries of Europe have never really considered themselves countries of immigration the way North American countries have. On the contrary, just after World War Two, Italy and Greece – sending countries in living memory – as well as Portugal, Spain and even the Netherlands presented themselves as countries of emigration. The Netherlands was supposedly overcrowded, a condition strongly related to the weak economic situation and the immense housing shortage in the 1940s and 1950s. The Dutch government set up or sponsored programmes to encourage people to leave for the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia or New Zealand. In the meantime and due to a painful process of decolonization,

hundreds of thousands of immigrants from the former Dutch East Indies – now the Republic of Indonesia – came to the Netherlands. Except for the 10,000 Moluccans, who came to the Netherlands under a different title, they came as ‘repatriates’, a label that suggests that they had returned to their fatherland (Schuster 1999). This is rather peculiar, considering that many of them had never set foot in the Netherlands. Calling them ‘repatriates’ only served to obscure the fact that the Netherlands was actually experiencing ‘immigration’. The ‘repatriates’ fared well, partly as a result of the booming economy, and they are now generally considered assimilated.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the economic boom took off and Dutch workers exhibited strong upward social mobility, labor market shortages arose, particularly as regards unskilled workers in the steel industry and sunset industries such as mining, textiles, shipbuilding, meatpacking and the leather industry. Following the examples of other European countries, the industries either relocated to low-wage countries or started recruiting ‘guest workers’, initially from Italy and Spain and later also from Yugoslavia, Portugal, Tunisia, Greece, Turkey and Morocco. In 1973, when the recession set in, the government abolished the guest workers programme, but immigration from the sending countries continued, now as family reunification. When the recession deepened, many manufacturing firms cut back on their production or closed down entirely and numerous mainly unskilled guest workers were made redundant (Kloosterman 1994). In the current period of economic prosperity and labor shortage, their unemployment rate is still far above average, although many did succeed in finding a job. The second generation is doing better than their parents in terms of their proficiency in the Dutch language, educational level and social relations with the Dutch, but their social position is still a cause for concern to politicians, researchers and journalists.

The former colonies of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles – both in the Caribbean – have always sent migrants to the ‘mother country’, usually youngsters from the higher social classes to complete their education. This migration pattern changed fundamentally in the early 1970s, when Surinam was about to gain independence (1975) and many people decided to leave for the Netherlands for fear of political instability and ethnic strife. By the time Surinam became independent, no less than a third of its population had moved to the Netherlands. This timing was very unfortunate, since a long period of economic recession had begun and many of the Surinamese migrants consequently faced long-term unemployment. Compared to the Mediterranean guest workers, the Surinamese were nevertheless in a relatively favorable position: they had Dutch citizenship, most of them were proficient in the Dutch language, on the average they were better educated, and their community encompassed a variety of social classes. Nowadays, especially in comparison to immigrants from Turkey and Morocco, the Surinamese do relatively well in terms of

housing, education, labor market performance and political influence, albeit not as well as the Dutch (Liem 2000)

The Netherlands is also hosting a continuing inflow of students, professionals, and other people from EU countries, Japan and the USA. In addition, a growing number of people from a wide variety of sending countries in the Third World such as Vietnam, Nigeria, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Ethiopia/Eritrea are coming to the Netherlands. Many of them entered the country as asylum seekers and have since been accepted as refugees. Their level of education is often relatively high and in this respect they differ sharply from most of the guest-worker immigrants. In the course of time, the Dutch authorities have tightened the rules and regulations and their enforcement with regard to the admission of immigrants from outside the European Union, and this has led to a growing number of undocumented immigrants. Table 1 gives an overview of the immigrant population legally residing in the Netherlands.

For a relatively long time, the Dutch believed they were just dealing with sojourners, people who were only there for a few years, and their approach

Table 1 Immigrants in the Netherlands by country of birth (x1000). 1 January 1999

	The Netherlands*		Amsterdam**	
The Netherlands	13,052	82.9%	404	55.6%
Indonesia	407	2.6%		
Germany	403	2.6%		
Turkey	300	1.9%	33	4.5%
Surinam	297	1.9%	71	9.8%
Morocco	252	1.6%	53	7.3%
Belgium	112	0.7%		
Netherlands Antilles + Aruba	99	0.6%	11	1.5%
United Kingdom	68	0.4%		
Former Yugoslavia/	63	0.4%		
China + Hong Kong	45	0.3%		
Italy	33	0.2%		
Iraq	30	0.2%		
Spain	30	0.2%		
France	29	0.2%		
Poland	28	0.2%		
Somalia	27	0.2%		
United States of America	26	0.2%		
Former Soviet Union	20	0.1%		
Cape Verdian Islands	18	0.1%		

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Pakistan	16	0.1%		
Austria	15	0.1%		
Ghana	15	0.1%		
Vietnam	14	0.1%		
Egypt	14	0.1%		
Portugal	14	0.1%		
South Africa	12	0.1%		
Australia	12	0.1%		
India	11	0.1%		
Others	289	1.8%	155	21.3%
Total	15,751	100.0%	727	100.0%

Note: The category of immigrants encompasses i) first-generation immigrants who were born abroad with one or both parents born abroad and ii) second-generation immigrants who were born in the Netherlands with one or both parents born abroad. To be sure, these figures do not refer to citizenship.

\* Source: Maandstatistiek van de Bevolking. Volume 47. December 1999.

\*\* Source: Amsterdam in Cijfers 1999. Amsterdam: Het Amsterdamse Bureau voor Onderzoek en Statistiek, 1999.

towards immigrants was correspondingly ignorant. In 1971, the Ministry of Welfare did commission a scientific to record the latest trends in the social position of immigrants, and the book that ensued had a rather peculiar and unusual title, namely *Allochtonen in Nederland* (Verwey-Jonker 1971). The originally Greek term 'allochtons', which merely means 'immigrants', was used instead of the more obvious Dutch term 'immigranten'. Civil servants had exerted political pressure on the authors and argued that the Netherlands was not a country of immigration and that, logically, there were no 'immigrants'. Governmental intervention was confined to providing welfare services to alleviate the hardships during the sojourn of the immigrants, oh excuse me, I mean the 'allochtons'. It was not until 1979, in the wake of violent incidents involving Moluccan youngsters and following an innovative report by the Scientific Council on Government Policy (WRR 1979), that the central government shifted gears. In that year, it acknowledged what was already common knowledge among experts, namely that the country was dealing with people who had come to stay. Even after this dramatic political change, the government and leading politicians are still reluctant to accept the fact that the Netherlands is a country of immigration.

The political changes in the 1980s resulted in the formulation and implementation of the Minority Policy, and in line with this new policy the immigrants were re-labeled 'ethnic minorities'. The central government and then the local governments and private and semi-private organizations such as trade

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unions, business associations and educational institutes, embarked on a policy aimed at integrating the ethnic minorities into Dutch society. It is still unclear what the concept of 'integration' really means. Some experts envisage assimilation in the strict sense of the term, i.e. the ideal typical situation of ethno-cultural homogeneity with separate categories of the population no longer identifiable and where each individual has equal rights and opportunities. Others have their mind set on pluralism, a situation where ethno-cultural groups are identifiable and co-exist, and where group rights prevail. And others would prefer a situation somewhere in between. Both terms describe processes of incorporation, albeit with very different outcomes. Despite these differences, in common parlance people indiscriminately refer to processes of integration. The use of the term 'integration' contributes to an awkward and Babel-like confusion, and the lack of clarity allows for a reassuring pseudo-consensus and depoliticization. After all, everyone agrees that immigrant ethnic minorities should be encouraged to 'integrate' into Dutch society (Rath 1993).

The concept of 'integration' is not the inevitable key to the process of incorporation. In the U.S., the concept of 'assimilation', stripped of its normative connotations, is currently de rigueur. Although this concept, its power and usefulness or lack of it are objects of debate (see DeWind, Hirschman & Kasinitz 1997), scholars do use it. This would be unthinkable in the Dutch context, where the concept of assimilation would be met with disapproval or fierce opposition. Interestingly enough, this does not mean processes of assimilation are not taking place or that people would necessarily disapprove (see for instance Rath 1999). The point is that each country has its own way of framing the problem, and social science research is informed by these national representations, whatever their academic pretensions. Academic researchers are not only faced with the task of providing the empirical data needed to assess the validity of clearly defined concepts, but also of problematizing popular concepts and their theoretical and ideological foundations. International comparative research can be an important and strategic instrument in this connection.

### International Comparison

So far, American researchers have not demonstrated a great deal of commitment to international comparative research. In general, there is no overpowering interest there in what is going on in other parts of the world, with a number of notable exceptions of course such as William Rogers Brubaker, Gary Freeman, Rich Friman, Barbara Heisler, James Hollifield, Patrick Ireland, Mark Miller, Jeannette Money, Martin Schain, Ari Zolberg, and John Mollenkopf. Admittedly, the European multiplicity of languages does not foster international exchange and it would be unfair to accuse American researchers of a lack of willingness to master such obscure languages as Dutch or Danish. But this is

not the only thing that matters. American social scientists, particularly those with a preference for quantitative methods, seem to be very much focused on census data and this does not encourage an international social science exchange.<sup>1</sup> More importantly perhaps, American and European research agendas are not always in sync. In the 1990s, immigrant entrepreneurship was a hot item in the U.S., and Europeans did not exhibit much interest. Today, research into second-generation immigrants has become a hot topic that had already been studied extensively in Europe in the past. Only very recently did one of the pundits of American immigration studies, Alejandro Portes, call upon his fellow Americans to broaden their horizon and embark on international comparisons. In doing so, he and other authors were to follow the footsteps of dozens of European researchers involved in international comparative research for over twenty years (see Bovenkerk, Miles & Verbunt 1990 and 1991; Hammar 1985; Layton-Henry 1990; Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Soysal 1994).

The Dutch research community has its own version of parochialism, though some have long been internationally active. The Netherlands is a country with a relatively high concentration of social scientists, and they seem to be particularly active in social areas identified as problem areas. One such area is migration, an area the government is seriously committed to. The output in terms of books, reports and articles is impressive. Still, Dutch researchers only play a relatively marginal role when it comes to setting the theoretical agenda. International scholars such as John Rex, Robert Miles, Nathan Glazer, Alejandro Portes or William Julius Wilson take credit for that. Many Dutch researchers find theoretical inspiration in their work, adopt their ideas and concepts, and apply them to the Dutch case. However, they often do so irrespective of the empirical bases these international scholars ground their theory on, and they take the ontological specificities of the British or American case for granted. To them, such concepts as race (in the American context) and ethnic origin (in the Dutch context) are synonyms. Concepts, however, do not travel easily. It hardly makes sense to suggest that the position of African Americans in their blighted ghettos in the windy city of Chicago, Illinois, is similar to that of Turkish immigrants in the Dutch city of The Hague. The African Americans constitute a racial category in a racialized country that has not come to terms with its history of slavery and its after-effects, only recently enfranchised these citizens, still accepts high levels of segregation on the basis of race, ethnicity or class and does not allow its government to play a substantial role in social and economic life. These characteristics, simplified though they might be, are totally different across the ocean. In the Netherlands, the government decided to design its Minority Policy in the interest of a category of immigrants who had only resided in the country for less than one generation and who, compared to the U.S., exhibited a striking absence of segregation. The government went as far as to extensively sponsor ethnic minority community organizations and

even granted local voting rights to residents who were not Dutch citizens without any form of naturalization or registration and without these foreigners having campaigned for it. It is revealing that the Dutch *expect* their government to intervene in the country's social and economic life. As for the enfranchisement of foreign residents, the government launched a large-scale information campaign to promote their participation in local elections and initiated and generously sponsored a variety of activities to that end. Even then, there were widespread complaints because many self-appointed spokesmen felt that the government had not done enough. We are evidently dealing with entirely different situations and it remains to be seen whether uncritically applying concepts and theoretical notions from one country really helps to understand and explain the situation in another one.

In the Dutch welfare state, researchers assume a specific role, particularly if they are working on politically sensitive topics or are active in social problem areas. To put it bluntly, Dutch social scientists dedicate themselves to helping to solve social problems rather than formulating and advancing social theory. It is no coincidence that the government should be so involved in social science research: a great deal of the research conducted at Dutch universities is commissioned and sponsored by the government. Most researchers nevertheless maintain an independent position in the course of these projects and they are allowed to publish widely after producing their reports. Researchers do exhibit a tendency though to orient themselves to governmental discourse, and their projects, concepts and questions are informed and sometimes even shaped by it. In the U.S., research is organized in a different way. The government only rarely commissions research projects at universities; these projects are commonly granted to private politically-based think tanks.

The specific social and political role played by academic researchers affects their ontological premises. Take research on immigrant entrepreneurship. American researchers treat entrepreneurship as an accepted way to become economically independent and achieve upward mobility. Dutch researchers, however, treat entrepreneurship as a painful way to reach integration and focus on the numerous problems these entrepreneurs are confronted with. This leads to an inevitable series of policy recommendations. The different positions reflect the different welfare state models and models of integration. They illustrate the difficulties of international comparative research, but at the same time underscore its importance.

#### *An American poking around in Amsterdam*

In the light of this, the work by the American social geographer John Mollenkopf is interesting. He works at the City University of New York and together with Manuel Castells, editor of the well-known volume *Dual City*:

*Restructuring New York*, he has demonstrated an interest in the immigration and post-immigration processes in European cities. In 1998, he was a visiting scholar at the Amsterdam Study Centre for the Metropolitan Environment. During his brief stay in the Netherlands, he was surprised by the similarities and differences between the situations in Amsterdam and New York. His observations served as the basis for a lecture and then an article entitled: 'Assimilating Immigrants in Amsterdam. A Perspective from New York'. The subtitle is telling, and the article discusses the process of assimilation (*sic!*) as seen through the eyes of a scholar from New York. He observes various phenomena and puts them in a perspective as only an outsider would. For Dutch researchers, his observations and analyses are challenging, because he does not take the standard routes. Mollenkopf is brave and deliberately takes the risk of misinterpreting things. Yet his article, whatever its shortcomings, is thought-provoking and therefore worthwhile. It inevitably provokes interesting discussions.

This is why the editorial board of the *Netherlands' Journal of Social Sciences* has decided to include his article in the current issue. To promote the discussion, a number of international scholars have been invited to write their critical comments, each from their own perspective. They address the merits of Mollenkopf's analyses and highlight the significance and complexity of international comparative study.

All of the authors acknowledge the relevance of Mollenkopf's work and appreciate his contribution. But they also have their questions and doubts. Robert Kloosterman suggests that Mollenkopf does not sufficiently appreciate socio-economic changes. He notes that the Amsterdam economy has recently experienced a very strong expansion and concomitant job growth. Unemployment has gone down and immigrants have obviously benefited from the booming economy. Susan Fainstein argues that comparing central cities rather than metropolitan areas may underestimate the success of New York's foreign-born. Moreover, she has doubts about the selection of the social categories under study and wonders whether African Americans or immigrants constitute the more appropriate comparison group. If it is the African Americans, then the case for New York's greater tolerance becomes much harder to make. Malcolm Cross argues that until recently, the Dutch welfare state was hardly geared towards steering its clients into employment and this impacts the socio-economic position of welfare dependents. In addition, he suggests that Muslims are more excluded from jobs than others, and in his view this says something about the foundations of Dutch racism. Kees van Kersbergen argues that in the Dutch religious pluralistic context, the fact that immigrants live separately from the Dutch could be interpreted as *successful* integration. He also notes that the Dutch 'caring state' is historically a 'could-not-care-less' state as far as labor market outcomes are concerned. Mollenkopf's optimistic expectations regard-



ing the Dutch welfare state are thus unfounded. Enzo Mingione and Enrico Pugliese criticize Mollenkopf's definition of assimilation, or actually his failure to carefully define it. In addition, they are not convinced that the welfare system only accounts for low participation rates on the labor market. As the experience of African Americans suggests, ethnic and social discrimination account for exclusion as well. Lastly, Hans Vermeulen and Tjino Venema assert that Mollenkopf's conclusions are based on meager empirical data. They refer to his ignorance of the fact that first-generation immigrants in Amsterdam had a much lower level of education than first-generation immigrants in New York City. In a rejoinder, Mollenkopf reacts to his fellow debaters.

#### NOTE

1. The Netherlands abolished the census thirty years ago, after a fairly controversial one in 1971. Moreover, Dutch social scientists do not shun very small samples, especially if they fancy more qualitative research.

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**ASSIMILATING IMMIGRANTS IN AMSTERDAM: A PERSPECTIVE FROM NEW YORK**JOHN MOLLENKOPF<sup>1</sup>

Late one Sunday afternoon in June 1998, the sounds of steel pans floated through the air near Sarphati Park in de Pijp. Since the melody reminded me so strongly of my home in Brooklyn, where more than a dozen steel pan bands compete in the Panorama during the annual West Indian Labour Day Parade, it drew me towards their source. There, in the park, was Amsterdam's one and only steel band. The group included an older player from Trinidad (where steel barrels had first been made into drums and this type of music originated) and a number of younger players, some of whom were born in Surinam and Guyana and came to Amsterdam as young adults and others who had grown up in Amsterdam. Their driving force was a German woman who had studied at the conservatory in Rotterdam, had fallen in love with steel pan music on a visit to Trinidad, and who chose to live in Amsterdam because its freedom and diversity made it appeal to her more than her home country.

The friends of the band members who composed the small audience ranged from an architect with Finnish and Dutch parents to a long-time resident of Bijlmer whose father was a Surinamese sailor and whose mother was Dutch. The first black child in the Dutch neighbourhood where she had grown up, she had lived both in Bijlmer and Surinam and offered interesting perspectives on being Surinamese in the Netherlands. Other audience members were also Surinamese, but of diverse racial backgrounds, including one with Chinese ancestry. The only ethnically Dutch person was also a recent Rotterdam Conservatory graduate who had grown up all over the world because her father worked for an oil company. Her boyfriend from the conservatory, a *conguero*, was German. People were relaxing, enjoying the music and food, and chatting with each other on a beautiful, sunny afternoon. It was a birthday party for the band and several of its members. When the event was over, band members loaded the steel pans onto a *bakfiets* (delivery bicycle) and took them, in typical Amsterdam fashion, to the bandleader's house nearby, where they laboriously hoisted the pans one by one into the attic, which served as the band's pan yard.

Despite the unusual nature of the group, it sounded and smelled like home to me. Brooklyn, New York, contains the largest concentration of West Indian people outside the Caribbean, including 300,000 people born in Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, Guyana, and the smaller islands. Watching the West Indian

American Labour Day Parade and sampling island foods from the stalls that line Eastern Parkway on the day of the parade is my favorite public event of the year. The Amsterdam Steel Band members had prepared roti, curried lamb, curried chicken, dahl, and other delicacies, which they kindly shared with me when they noticed my interest.

At the same time, this clearly was also *not* like home. People with foreign roots seem to remain foreigners in the Netherlands even when they have been born there. Though many Surinamese marry Dutch people, the Dutch and Surinamese do not seem to mix much as groups and few Dutch show much interest in the Caribbean cultural activities. The Steel Band and its circle of friends lived in Amsterdam and clearly enjoyed its high standard of living, fine public amenities, and social tolerance, but they were not of Amsterdam. Even in the relatively heterogeneous neighbourhood of de Pijp, the people living around Sarphati Park remain predominantly white and Dutch; elderly and low income Dutch people who remain in increasingly immigrant neighbourhoods like Overtoomseveld and Bijlmer feel abandoned and marooned and want to move.

In Brooklyn, West Indians (not to mention tens of thousands of people from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, China, and many other places) live nearby upwards of 800,000 native-born African Americans, and even Brooklyn's white population has an extremely diverse ethnic and religious makeup. Immigrants and their U.S.-born descendants have had a massive impact on New York City, fundamentally changing its cultural dynamics, economic organisation, and neighbourhood patterns. As they have become the majority of the city's population, they have undermined the utility of simple dichotomies like "American" versus "foreign" or "white" versus "black." As immigrants have a more central part of the city's social experience, its whole cultural fabric has become more cosmopolitan and complex.

This vignette of the Amsterdam Steel Band – of immigrants living lives that are distinct and separate from the lives of Dutch residents of Amsterdam – should give us pause in comparing the immigrant assimilation in the two cities. Despite many reasons to think that Amsterdam and the Netherlands would do a far better job than New York and the United States in integrating first and second-generation immigrants into their politics, social structure, and economy, there is reason to think they have not. This presents us with a paradox: even though Amsterdam has implemented many pro-immigrant measures that American progressives would love to see in their country, they have not produced the desired result. As Jan Rath has said, a caring state should be able to ensure a higher quality of life than an 'uncaring' state, but in actual practice this does not seem to be the case.<sup>2</sup> Why might this be?

### Amsterdam - Oud and Nieuw

The two cities are well suited for comparison (Fainstein 1996). The two certainly differ greatly in size, but Amsterdam is something like a one-tenth scale model of New York.<sup>3</sup> Their economic histories have both been shaped by their long-time functions as port cities housing small manufacturers and as centers for banking, corporate services, corporate headquarters, social services, and cultural and intellectual activities. Both have elites who perpetuate the high cultures of their nations (whether at the Concertgebouw or Lincoln Center, the Rijksmuseum or the Met). Despite suburbanisation of family life, both cities retain many middle-class neighbourhoods and strongly attract young, upwardly mobile professionals. Each has an increasingly professionalised labour force supported by proliferating low-level service jobs in sectors like the hotel and restaurant industries. Perhaps characteristically (Sassen 1991), both are entry portals for migrants from the rest of the world willing to perform these service jobs when natives are not, and have thus attracted large and diverse foreign-born populations.

The old, heavily regulated housing stock and large supplies of social housing in both cities have heavily influenced their social geography. Only about 11 percent of the units in Amsterdam are privately owned, with 33 percent privately rented and 55 percent rented by housing corporations (O+S 1998; Paulen, Hoogenstraaten, Stadig, and Michel 1992). In New York, a quarter of the units are owned privately; about 8 percent are public housing, about 41 percent are private rental housing subject to rent regulations, and only 19 percent are unregulated private rentals (Blackburn 1995:142). Both cities are quite dense. In fact, the 1997 mean population density of Amsterdam, with 715,000 residents in a land area of 167 square kilometers, is about a third less, at 4,283 per square kilometer, than that of New York, which had a 1997 population of about 7.6 million and a land area of 1,128 square kilometers, or a density of 6,706 per square kilometer. (Much of Amsterdam's land may be in dockland areas, but New York also has such areas.)

While the moth-eaten character of the American welfare state stands in dramatic contrast to that of the Netherlands, New York and Amsterdam both have large and strong public and social service sectors. In Amsterdam, government (8 percent), education (7 percent), and health and other social services (17 percent) employ 32 percent of the active labour force. In New York City, the equivalent figures are government (15 percent), education (9 percent), and health and other social services (16 percent), for a total of 40 percent of the active labour force. Indeed, we might think of New York City as the most European part of the U.S., since it has more government employees per capita and more types of public and nonprofit social services than any other U.S. city (with the possible exception of Washington, D.C.)

Most relevant for this comparison, foreign-born minorities and their children make up a large and increasing share of the resident population of both cities. In Amsterdam, ethnic minorities from Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles, Turkey, Morocco, southern Europe, and other non-industrial countries account for 238,000 of the city's 715,000 residents, or one-third; the Surinamese are the single largest group. (While Surinam is racially and ethnically diverse, most Surinamese immigrants to Amsterdam would be considered Afro-Caribbean by U.S. standards. In New York, the Guyanese population is also predominantly Afro-Caribbean but has a substantial share of people with East Indian roots, called Hindustanis in Holland.) As in New York, this growing immigrant population makes up for the out-migration of native-born whites, helping to stabilise Amsterdam's population. These immigrants arrived in successive waves associated first with the decolonisation of Surinam (not many Indonesians settled in Amsterdam) and then with labour migration from Turkey, Morocco, and other Southern European countries. More recently, the Netherlands tightened its immigration policies in 1994 and 1995 and slowed the rate of influx slightly from the high levels reached in the early 1990s (Lucassen and Penninx 1997; Groenendijk and Heijs 1998:27).

Despite attempts at immigration reform, entry of the foreign-born into the U.S. and New York City, the second largest "gateway city" after Los Angeles, continues at a high pace. The U.S. admits approximately 900,000 foreign-born legal permanent residents each year (including refugees). About ten percent have settled in New York City each year since the mid-1960s; indeed, the number rose to 120,000 in some recent years (Salvo and Ortiz 1992; Lobo, Salvo, and Virgin 1996). In contrast to the great turn of the century immigration, these "New New Yorkers" come from the Latin Caribbean (particularly the Dominican Republic), the Anglophone Caribbean (particularly Jamaica and Guyana), South America, and Asia, particularly China. Given that many white residents of New York City are themselves immigrants or children of immigrants, it is becoming increasingly hard to find a typical "American" (defined as a native white with native parents). Native stock whites account for only 18 percent of the population. (The other "real Americans" in New York are native blacks with native parents.) Foreign-born people make up 37 percent and the second-generation makes up 23 percent.

Amsterdam and New York City therefore both face the challenge of assimilating new groups and achieving a new equilibrium between them and natives within labour markets, housing markets, public culture, and local politics. Given that globalisation, economic restructuring, and contraction of the welfare state are heightening economic inequalities in both cities (and many others) and that it is not easy to create good inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations even in the best of times, we might say that immigrant assimilation is the largest challenge facing these two cities.

The challenge of assimilation is particularly acute for the second generation. First generation-immigrants might expect to encounter poor living and working conditions and make many sacrifices for the betterment of their children. The second generation, however, will have grown up comparing their life situation with the norm of an advanced industrial country, not the bad conditions in the home country that set their parents in motion. As they inexorably become a larger share of the population of these two cities, their life course will determine the future story of these two cities.

What do we expect this future to be? In the U.S., scholars worry that the picture may not be a happy one. It is to be expected that the relatively low levels of education, occupational status, and income which many B but not all B members of the first generation bring to the U.S. will hamper the mobility of their second-generation children. Nevertheless, previous cohorts of Central and Eastern European immigrants and their descendants overcame these barriers in the years after World War II. Some observers worry, however, that additional factors have arisen in recent decades that will make second-generation outcomes worse than they might otherwise have been simply based on individual and family characteristics. These are:

- Negative neighbourhood effects: if second-generation immigrants grow up in concentrated poverty neighbourhoods segregated by race and income, they may experience negative neighbourhood effects (Wilson 1987, Wilson 1996, Jargowsky 1997).
- Unfavorable labour market niches: the first generation may establish labour market specialisations in declining industries, industries that are not conducive to self-employment, or that cannot be passed on to their children (Sanders and Nee 1987; Waldinger 1997).
- Biased treatment by public institutions: schools, the criminal justice system, and other public organisations may differentially channel the second generation toward worse outcomes than natives, even native minorities (Min 1999).
- Group identity: second-generation young people may join native-born minorities in forming an "oppositional" identity that will impede their mobility (Ogbu 1991).

These concerns have led some highly insightful social scientists to worry about "second-generation decline" (Gans 1992) and "segmented assimilation" (Portes and Zhou 1993). Gans hypothesises that racial prejudice, spatially concentrated poverty, and growing inequality in places like New York City will force many non-white second-generation young people into the native-born minority underclass, while Portes and Zhou argue that assimilation will be limited or "segmented" in various respects and that second-generation young people might actually counter-assimilate in order to distance themselves from native-born minority groups (see also Vickerman 1999).

Rumbaut (1998) summarises early studies of the school-aged second generation in California that show outcomes worsening as they become more "American." They watch more TV and do less homework, eat more McDonalds French fries and have higher cholesterol counts. Not everyone sees the situation in such drastic terms, of course. Perlmann and Waldinger (1999) caution that many immigrant second-generation groups are doing well and we should not forget how hard the beginning of the assimilation process was for earlier generations. Given the scale of the first generation and the rapidly growing "new second generation" – native children born to post-1965 immigrants – a great deal of scholarly and public concern has focused on how well this group will do in school and at work as compared to native white young adults and native blacks and Hispanics.

#### **Why Amsterdam Should Do A Better Job**

Amsterdam is obviously confronted with these same issues. The overall contrasts between the U.S. and the Netherlands and the specific differences between Amsterdam and New York would lead U.S. observers to hypothesise that Amsterdam would do a far better job than New York City in incorporating immigrants. Two obvious reasons for such a view are the strength of the Dutch welfare state (at least for those who have the legal right to work) and the absence of a tradition of racial tension and discrimination. U.S. scholars believe that the American failure to redress growing economic inequality, our lack of commitment to egalitarian, consensual policy-making, and our history of racial discrimination (directed at Asians and Latinos as well as blacks) make our job of integrating immigrant minorities far harder. On the other hand, the Netherlands and Amsterdam have a much more egalitarian income distribution, a far higher floor under the family income, a stronger commitment to urban policy, minority policy, and immigrant incorporation, and far less spatial segregation by class and race. This is not to say that social policy has been racially neutral in the Netherlands; to the contrary, a strong welfare state can perpetuate social difference (Rath 1999). It is only to say that, by comparison, the possibility that social policy would accentuate racial differences seems to be far less likely in the Netherlands than in the U.S. In the U.S., market actors and private preferences (and prejudices) rule, with relatively little interference from the state, while in the Netherlands, the state regulates housing and labour market outcomes according to a corporatist process that espouses the values of inclusion and equality.

The Netherlands may well have Europe's most thorough and effective welfare state. It provides a far higher standard of living to the dependent poor (through cash, inexpensive housing, and access to good social services) than the U.S. and it constrains the upper half of the income distribution. A female sin-



gle parent with two children in Amsterdam receives a welfare grant of NLG 1916.24 per month, while her New York counterpart receives only US\$ 577, including a shelter allowance (NLG 1211.70). The former would probably live in social housing or a rent-controlled unit, while her New York counterpart would live in more costly, lower-quality private housing (Schill, Friedman, and Rosenbaum 1998). Unemployment benefits in the Netherlands are also far higher than in the U.S. Meanwhile, at the top end of the income distribution, the U.S. managerial and professional occupations are much more highly paid than in the Netherlands and marginal tax rates are lower. As a result, income inequality is higher in the U.S. than in the other 17 OECD countries, while the Netherlands is among the lowest (Gottschalk and Smeeding 1995).

Drawing on Esping-Anderson's classification system, Kloosterman (1994) finds that the Netherlands is more successful at promoting employment, especially among women, than social democratic Sweden or corporatist Germany, and far more egalitarian than the liberal U.S. Gornick, Meyers, and Ross (1997) show that the Netherlands had a high rate of social transfers to children and moderate support for working mothers, while the U.S. was near the bottom on both counts. Clearly, the Netherlands would never let Amsterdam residents, native or immigrant, sink to the levels of joblessness, homelessness, and poverty that are all too prevalent in New York City. Whatever else may be said about the shortcomings in the Netherlands' effort to assimilate its immigrants, an unemployed Surinamese resident of Bijlmer clearly has a higher standard of living in many respects than a Guyanese resident of Brooklyn working at a low wage job.

The Netherlands also lacks the scar of racial inequality that has been central to American history. While slavery was common in the Dutch overseas possessions and the Netherlands did not abolish it until the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it took place at a considerable distance from the home country. Slavery was not practiced in the Netherlands, a racially subordinated class of agricultural workers was never created, and native racial minority groups never emerged. Instead, the terms 'minority' and 'immigrant' are practically interchangeable in the Netherlands. Unlike the U.S., where immigrant minorities (such as the Chinese) were long subjected to the same kind of negative status originally accorded to blacks, the Netherlands does not have a previously stigmatised native group to which to assign immigrant minorities. Indeed, many immigrants to the Netherlands entered as residents of overseas territories, with citizenship and Dutch language skills.

Amsterdam also has far lower levels of segregation by income and ethnicity than New York, even for those of African ancestry. Since many middle-class people choose to live in Amsterdam's large supply of social housing and may even consider it to be superior to private rental housing, social housing is not as associated with concentrated poverty and low social status as it is in New York.

This also prevents rising real estate prices from driving the middle class and poor out of the central city as often happens in New York. As a result, Amsterdam lacks the pattern of spatially concentrated wealth and poverty so typical of New York City (Deurloo and Musterd 1998; Musterd and Ostendorf 1998, 197). While the segregation indices are higher for Surinamese than for other immigrant minorities, and ethnic segregation is more pronounced than income segregation, Amsterdam has nothing like an American ghetto. Even the Bijlmer, the closest thing to a racially segregated area in Amsterdam, retains a substantial non-black population, is thought by many of its residents to be a nice place to live, and did not experience the severe disinvestment that took place in Harlem or the South Bronx after 1970 (on this comparison, see Fainstein 1996). As citizens of the Netherlands and Dutch speakers, Amsterdam's Surinamese and Antillean immigrants are also better positioned than New York's black immigrants.

Other factors should also favor Amsterdam. Notwithstanding the precipitous fall in the crime rate in New York City, Amsterdam still has far less street crime and minority neighbourhoods are therefore more secure than those of New York. (Amsterdam's enlightened drug enforcement policies probably have a good deal to do with this difference.) Amsterdam has an excellent system of public transportation that affords better physical access to employment than is arguably the case in New York City. Moreover, some say that Amsterdam's labour market does not have the pronounced ethnic niches (such as Korean greengrocers) so characteristic of New York or Los Angeles, so there is less segregation in the labour market as well as in the housing market. All these factors should point to better second-generation outcomes in Amsterdam than New York.

The Netherlands and the municipality of Amsterdam have also undertaken specific policies designed to achieve immigrant incorporation. Of particular importance are naturalisation policies. Currently, the Netherlands is extending citizenship to 12.2 percent of its foreign population each year, more than twice the next highest case in Europe (Sweden), and significantly more than in the U.S., where under one million people per year are naturalised out of a foreign-born population of 26 million.<sup>4</sup> A comparative study of the Low Countries and Germany finds the Netherlands' efforts to incorporate immigrants into political life and public policy have been most successful (Ireland 1998).

The Netherlands also adopted a minority policy and an urban policy considered to be central to immigrant incorporation and national development strategy in the 1990s (Kruythoff et al. 1997:10, 75-116; Terhorst and van de Ven 1995:355-358; Terhorst and Van de Ven 1998). A 'Big Cities Policy' provides funds for local economic development projects that have the impact of reducing chronic unemployment in marginalised districts. 'Melkert jobs' provide 40,000 public service positions to the long-term unemployed to provide neighbourhood social services. Such schemes involve many immigrants (Rath 1997:15). The

Dutch government has adopted a policy to encourage (or perhaps require) immigrants to get jobs and learn Dutch, making several hundred million guilders per year available for this purpose. Indeed, legislation was enacted to promote "proportional labour-market participation among people of foreign origin" in 1995 (Kruythoff et al 1997:87). Policies were also directed towards education and housing.

As Terhorst and Van de Ven (1998) have pointed out, these measures were designed to promote growth in the Dutch economy, provide greater flexibility in the Dutch labour market, and reform the Dutch social welfare system. But they also sought to reinforce the competitive position of big cities, provide equal services to minorities, break up concentrations of minority disadvantage (by bringing in upper-income Dutch residents!), and bring excluded minority groups more fully into the labour force. Since Amsterdam and other Dutch cities rely heavily on the central government to finance their local services, planners have an extremely strong hand in determining land use, and local and national governments are run by left-leaning political coalitions, Amsterdam has the means as well as the desire to carry out these policies.

It is not far from the truth to say that the United States has neither an urban policy, a minority policy, nor an immigrant assimilation policy (Mollenkopf 1998, Weir 1998). The federal government makes only a small contribution to the financing of local public services; its main new program, "Urban Empowerment Zones," is a neoconservative idea to provide employer incentives embellished with supplementary social spending. While local politicians who are granted zones like this program and it may induce development where it would not otherwise occur, it will not increase net investment in poor urban neighbourhoods nor change urban income distribution or labour force participation rates in any appreciable way. Meanwhile, welfare reform and immigration reform have substantially reduced the eligibility of needy immigrants for cash assistance, allow local authorities to require people to work off family assistance benefits, and generally aim to force people into the labour force without providing commensurate support (like child care).

In sum, while moving towards a more flexible and market-oriented welfare state, Amsterdam and the Netherlands have an avowed goal of integrating immigrants fully into labour markets, social provisions, and politics, while moving against concentrations of poverty and disadvantage. While New York City has generally adopted a pro-immigrant stance and has sought to promote naturalisation among immigrants, U.S. policy towards immigrants has largely been one of reducing benefits and encouraging work, even at poverty wages. The U.S. government makes no special financial contribution to cities like New York, which have absorbed the immigrant flows allowed by national policy. It is logical to suppose that this contrast would lead to more effective immigrant incorporation in Amsterdam than New York.

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### First and Second-generation Immigrant Outcomes

What, then, do we know about the situation of the first and second generations in our two cities? The prognosis is evidently mixed in both. While outcomes vary considerably by group, first and second-generation immigrants are generally doing less well than native white residents. The first generation arrives with less education, is less likely to hold a job, and, when working, is more likely to hold a menial or blue collar job in both cities. This difference also holds into the second generation in both cities, although the gap with native whites diminishes. In the U.S., there is concern that minority second-generation individuals might do less well than the first generation because they will be assimilated into native minorities living in ghetto conditions (Rumbaut 1997). The evidence from Amsterdam regarding the second generation is not as detailed as in the U.S., but it indicates a roughly similar situation.

If we begin by examining the labour force situation of the working age population of different ethnic groups, sorted by ancestry, for the two cities, certain stark contrasts are apparent. In Amsterdam, 57 percent of the overall population aged 14 to 64 are working; the counterpart figure in New York City is 59 percent. (This difference increases if we look at what is considered working age in New York City, 18-64.) Tables 1 and 2 classify working age individuals into ethnic groups according to their ancestry regardless of whether they were foreign-born. They provide a general picture of where the different groups stand. Five trends are evident:

- immigrants to New York are generally more likely to hold jobs than first-generation immigrants to Amsterdam
- immigrant groups have far higher unemployment and far lower employment-to-population ratios than native whites in both cities; this is true for both genders
- female labour force participation rates are significantly higher for all groups in New York than in Amsterdam, while male rates are lower
- the gap between immigrants and native whites is narrower for women in New York than for men and narrower than for either gender in Amsterdam and
- New York's immigrants, particularly women immigrants, are more likely to have jobs and to have higher incomes than their native-born minority counterparts; no comparison can be made to Amsterdam, which lacks a native minority group.

Keeping in mind that Amsterdam provides better housing and social services to its non-working foreign residents than their counterparts could obtain in New York City (Schill, Friedman, and Rosenbaum 1998) and that many of New York's working immigrants receive poverty-level wages, New York nonetheless appears to provide more labour market opportunities than does Amsterdam, especially for immigrant women.

If we take this analysis one step further and compare native and immigrant educational attainment and presence in high-paying industries, we find similar results. In both cities, first-generation immigrants have significantly lower levels of education than native whites. In Amsterdam, 65 percent of the native whites have completed higher secondary school ~~degrees~~ (HBO/WO or MBO/HAVO/VWO), which is true for 38 percent of the Surinamese, 19 percent of the Turks, and 18 percent of the Moroccans (O+S 1998:46). In New York, 47 percent of the native white adults have a college degree, but the immigrant rates range from 55 percent for those from Taiwan and Hong Kong down to 16 percent for West Indians and only 7 percent for Dominicans. While the West Indian rate compares poorly to that of whites, it is higher than that of native blacks (11 percent) and Puerto Ricans (13 percent) (CPS 1998). In both cities, therefore, the gap in educational attainment between whites and immigrants varies considerably across the different immigrant groups. In Amsterdam, the Surinamese do better than other immigrant groups, while in New York the Chinese, Filipinos, and Indians do better than West Indians, who in turn do better than Hispanics or native blacks.

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With some exceptions, working immigrants also cluster in industry sectors and occupations that involve manual labour, have low skill requirements, and do not pay well. In New York City, certain immigrant groups (especially Asians) have generally high rates of self-employment and cluster in certain industries (Chinese men in restaurants, Chinese and Dominican women in the garment industry, West Indian women in health care, etc.) Roughly similar but less pronounced patterns may be observed among the working members of immigrant groups in Amsterdam. As in New York, the Surinamese are somewhat clustered in health care, but may also be found in banking. Turks and Moroccans are likely to be found in agriculture, the hotel and restaurant industry, and low level business services (O+S 1998:35).

In New York City, immigrant groups generally have remarkably high overall labour force participation, especially among the women. And while the educational levels and occupational status of minority immigrants are substantially below those of native whites, they are markedly above those for native-born blacks and Puerto Ricans (except for the Dominicans and Mexicans, whose rates are the lowest of any group). Native whites thus tend to see immigrants as upwardly striving and less dependent on welfare than native minorities, particularly in comparing immigrants from the Anglophone Caribbean to native-born blacks. Instead of comparing them adversely to native whites, as might be done with the Surinamese in Holland, whites in New York City think that West Indian immigrants are doing far better than native-born blacks. Their unemployment is half that of blacks, while their employment-to-population ratio is twenty points higher.

These findings have clear implications for the second generation. In

Amsterdam, the labour force position of the first generation is still marginal, female labour force participation is low, even compared to the low rates among Dutch women, and rates of dependence on public assistance are high. This creates a potential for the negative stereotyping of neighbourhoods where immigrants live as being crime-ridden, having poor schools where white parents would not send their children, while native whites have an image of themselves as productive people who play an active role in society. This creates an environment that may be difficult for young second generation people to escape, even when they obtain substantially more education than their parents. Even the Surinamese, who are better positioned than other immigrant groups, still lag markedly by Dutch standards.

Evidently, even though the second generation is doing better in Amsterdam's schools than the first, a large gap remains between them and native Dutch children. For example, 23.6 percent of Dutch young people get a secondary school education (HAVO-VWO, i.e. top level high school), but only 2.8 percent of Moroccan and 5.9 percent of Turkish young people can make this claim. With 14.1 percent attending secondary school, the Surinamese second generation does better than Moroccans or Turks and better than first-generation Surinamese (9.6 percent of whom attended secondary school), but even they have a long way to go to close the gap with the Dutch (Gemeente Amsterdam 1996:164). Similar patterns can be observed across the groups for the polytechnic degree (HBO), which 47 percent of Dutch young adults have, compared to only 4 percent of the Turks, 5 percent of the Moroccans, and 16 percent of the Surinamese.

In-depth research on the second generation in Amsterdam is just beginning. Most studies are qualitative investigations of small samples (Saharso 1989, Leeman and Saharso 1991, Crul 1996). These studies do suggest some positive outcomes compared to the first generation. Maurice Crul concluded that his subjects were "doing relatively well at school...and their over-representation in the lowest vocational streams seems to be disappearing" (Crul 1996:4). He points out, however, that primary schools function as a selective mechanism determining subsequent educational trajectories and that mastering the Dutch language and getting help from older siblings are crucial to successful outcomes. Since the Moroccans had more contact with Dutch than the Turks, their children were doing somewhat better. Anja van Heelsum (1997) conducted a careful study of 301 second-generation Surinamese youth and also found some grounds for optimism. Her sample was also doing better than the first generation and was more likely to have a job and hold a better school diploma (van Heelsum 1997:77, 123). More than half of her sample did not give an ethnic identity, and of those who did, as many said they were Dutch as Surinamese (van Heelsum 1997:83). A substantial amount of intermarriage was taking place, and the children of these relationships had an even better chance to inte-

grate into Dutch society (van Heelsum 1997:164). But if the second-generation was advancing over the first, these studies still suggest that a substantial gap remains with the native-born Dutch.

Several studies suggest that geographical concentration and sorting within the primary school system will remain major challenges in integrating the immigrant second generation in Amsterdam. In a study reminiscent of many conducted in U.S. cities, Sako Musterd and Wim Ostendorf (1998) concluded that residence in a concentrated ethnic enclave might well produce negative outcomes in social participation. This would apply especially to Surinamese second-generation individuals, who are most likely to live in segregated environments. And Peter Gramberg's important study (1998) found that segregation within the education system is far greater than within residential housing and that it operates to channel second-generation youths into lower educational outcomes, with obvious consequences for individual mobility and earnings capacity. Given that a university degree is the *sine qua non* for the professional and managerial jobs that pay wages that will lift families into the middle class (and above) in Amsterdam as well as New York, the fact that relatively few second generation immigrants complete a university education in either city has troubling long-term implications.

Current research is beginning to allow us to look more closely at the situation of the new immigrant second generation in New York City.<sup>5</sup> While individual outcomes vary by family and group characteristics, some positive signs are evident. If we look only at the 18 to 32-year-old age range and examine educational outcomes, second-generation immigrants are clearly doing better than the first generation and closing the gap with the comparable native group. Among second-generation immigrant whites, 33 percent have college degrees, compared to 32 percent for the first generation and 47 percent of native-born whites. Among blacks, 19 percent of the second-generation immigrants graduate from college, compared to 16 percent of the first generation and a remarkably low 11 percent of native blacks. Similarly, 14 percent of the Hispanic second generation have college degrees compared to 10 percent of the first generation and 13 percent of Hispanic natives. About 34 percent of the second-generation Asians in this cohort have college degrees, down from 42 percent of the Asian first generation, many of whom came to the U.S. to go to college. (These second-generation figures will improve as the members of our sample age.)

As in Amsterdam, the immigrant second generation in New York is therefore making progress over the first. In contrast to Amsterdam, it is doing well compared to the native blacks and Hispanics. But New York's minority second-generation immigrants still lag substantially behind native whites and it is hard to judge whether they are more likely to close this gap than they are in Amsterdam. Young Asian and white first and second-generation immigrants appear to have the best chance of doing so, Hispanic second-generation immigrants are faring the worst, and West Indians somewhere in between.

We thus arrive at the paradoxical conclusion that the situation of first and second-generation immigrants in our two cities is far more comparable than theory would suggest. Indeed, by one measure, labour force participation, first-generation immigrants (particularly women) do better than in the Netherlands. The immigrant second generation is also doing better than the first in both cities. Indeed, since the second generation in New York has demonstrably higher levels of educational attainment than their native-born minority counterparts, they do not occupy the lowest social status, which is where we find most first and second-generation immigrants in Amsterdam.

Why might this be so? Why haven't the good intentions and the powerful policy tools characteristic of Amsterdam and the Netherlands produced a result that is demonstrably better than in New York City and the United States? Quite tentatively, and mainly for the purpose of debate, let me suggest that the Dutch welfare state itself might operate in ways that contribute to this outcome. As one who believes that the U.S. should become more like the Netherlands by strengthening its welfare state, providing central government funding for local social welfare needs, this possibility troubles me. But it deserves consideration.

In both Amsterdam and New York City, the primary and secondary education system differentially sorts native-born young white people into better educational trajectories, while consigning minority and immigrant youths into less promising directions. In both cases, white native parents take active steps to secure this outcome, moving their children to better schools within the primary and secondary school system or, if necessary, moving them to private schools in the New York City case. The Dutch educational system is more stratified into vocational and university-oriented tracks than that of the U.S., and university entrance is more dependent on test-taking. While some of Amsterdam's second-generation young people obviously recover from having been tracked towards vocational training and do enter the university, this seems to happen less often than in the U.S. In particular, far fewer first and second-generation immigrant youths attend the University of Amsterdam than the (public) City University of New York, or perhaps even (private) New York University and Columbia University. Though some criticise the City University for having low standards of admission, it clearly provides a 'second chance' for many young first and second-generation young people who have not followed a 'normal' white middle-class trajectory towards higher education. The operation of primary, secondary, and post-secondary education as a mechanism sorting first and second-generation immigrants and native minorities to poorer outcomes is a central factor in limiting their assimilation.

Equally important, many middle-class whites are employed by Amsterdam's local government and non-profit organisations to provide services to dependent families and children, who are disproportionately of immigrant origin. The Dutch public and social service sectors sustain Amsterdam's middle class, just



as New York City government and social service organisations employ the white and African American middle class (Waldinger 1996). This inevitably creates tensions between natives and first and second-generation immigrants, as social service providers attempt to train, and if necessary discipline, recipients into being 'good clients,' while the clients in turn resist and resent the heavy hand of bureaucratic oversight over their lives (Lipsky 1980). If educated whites find career opportunities in providing welfare state services to immigrant and minority families outside the labour force, this can become a trap. They might find it economically irrational to assimilate immigrants into the labour market while simultaneously adhering to negative stereotypes about their unproductive clients (Rath 1999).

This tendency may be compounded by the absence of an immigrant heritage among native whites and their strong commitment to a consensual Dutch cultural and political heritage. This contrasts sharply with New York, where white residents often have an immigrant background and accept ethnic competition and succession as a normal part of life. Native Amsterdammers hold universalistic norms that are largely devoid of ethnic content. Strong labour market regulations may also retard the emergence of ethnic niches associated with a consumer service society. In Amsterdam, retail stores generally close at 6 pm. In New York, one can buy an avocado at four in the morning at a Korean grocery store. Agreements between large retailers and the unions representing retail workers prevent the emergence of a 'convenience society' in Amsterdam, along with the many low-level service jobs it would provide to immigrant young people. While many observers rightly criticise this sector for its low wages, one must not underestimate the social stigma of permanent unemployment, which may be its alternative in Amsterdam. In short, we should entertain the possibility that a strong welfare state and extensive labour market regulation can perpetuate ethnic inequality even while it is promoting certain forms of egalitarianism.

What other lessons can we draw from this comparison between Amsterdam and New York? It appears that citizenship and language trump race in Amsterdam. That is to say, despite being racially classified as black, the Surinamese in Amsterdam appear to be doing well relative to other immigrant groups. The Surinamese second generation is evidently not transforming into a native-born subordinated racial group, as may be the case for West Indians and Dominicans in New York City relative to the native-born black and Puerto Rican populations. While religion may be a more important cleavage in Europe than the U.S. (Zolberg and Woon 1997), the religious 'pillarisation' of Dutch society may work in favor of Muslims by making state support available. Cross-national comparisons of the incorporation of Islamic immigrant and second-generation groups across the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, and France might shed light on this issue.

The experiences of the immigrant second generation in Amsterdam and New York will be a critical indicator of the future of assimilation. Though research on this topic is only just beginning, local authorities, university researchers, and members of these communities are eager to learn more about this topic. Researchers in Amsterdam have an advantage in that they are able to identify virtually the entire second generation through the municipal housing registry, while expensive sampling is required in New York City. The conclusions offered here are speculative and tentative at best. As we gather more knowledge about this vitally important topic, we will better understand how social fragmentation and social cohesion are affecting how groups make their way in the two societies. The preliminary evidence suggests that the second generation is progressing beyond the situation of the first generation in both cities. This may enable the descendants of immigrant minorities to become part of the social fabric and civic cultures of Amsterdam and New York, which may begin to heal the ethnic divisions, prejudices, and disappointments experienced by first-generation immigrants. In another generation, Dutch children may find it normal to learn to play the steel pan in school, just as hip hop is pervasive among the youths of New York City. At the same time, the evidence also shows a persistent gap with native whites. Meeting the challenge of assimilating first and second-generation immigrants will require serious work on both sides of the Atlantic.

Table 1. Labor Force Status by Ethnic Group and Gender. Residents Aged 14-64 (in thousands). Amsterdam, 1997

	In Labor Force			NILF	Total Pop	W/P
	Total	Working	Unemployed			
<b>MEN</b>	190.4	166.8	12%	67.7	258.1	65%
Surinamese/Antillean	17.3	13.1	24%	9.5	26.8	49%
Turkish	6.4	5.0	22%	4.9	11.3	54%
Moroccan	8.5	6.1	28%	8.8	17.3	35%
Southern European	4.7	3.7	23%	2.4	7.1	52%
Other LDCs	16.1	12.4	22%	8.1	24.2	51%
Dutch/OECD	137.4	126.4	8%	34.1	171.5	74%
<b>WOMEN</b>	144.0	125.5	13%	107.4	251.5	50%
Surinamese/Antillean	18.3	13.6	26%	11.6	29.9	45%
Turkish	1.8	1.2	33%	7.4	9.2	13%
Moroccan	2.4	1.4	42%	10.9	13.3	11%
Southern European	3.4	2.7	21%	2.6	6.0	45%
Other LDCs	9.0	7.3	19%	11.4	20.4	36%
Dutch/OECD	109.2	99.3	9%	63.4	172.6	58%
<b>TOTAL M+W</b>	334.5	292.2	13%	1,175.1	509.6	57%
Surinamese/Antillean	35.6	26.7	25%	21.1	56.7	47%
Turkish	8.2	6.1	26%	12.3	20.5	30%
Moroccan	10.9	7.6	31%	19.7	30.6	25%
Southern European	8.1	6.4	21%	5.0	13.1	49%
Other LDCs	25.0	19.7	21%	19.5	44.5	44%
Dutch/OECD	246.6	225.7	8%	97.5	344.1	66%

Source: N. Nottelman (1998) Beroepsbevolking Amsterdam en Regio 1997 Amsterdam: Stuurgroep Economie Gemeente Amsterdam, O+S, Table 2.1, page 21.

Table 2. Labor Force Status by Racial/Ethnic Group and Gender. Residents Aged 14-64 (in thousands). New York City, March 1998

	In Labor Force			NILF	Total Pop	W/P
	Total	Working	Unemployed			
<b>MEN</b>	1,314.0	1,090.3	9%	494.4	1,708.5	64%
Chinese	78.0	76.1	2%	21.7	97.8	78%
Dominicans	123.5	112.8	8%	68.7	192.1	59%
West Indians	196.8	163.2	17%	70.7	267.5	61%
Native Blacks	147.8	106.0	28%	130.8	278.6	38%
Puerto Ricans	115.0	102.2	11%	66.6	181.6	56%
Native Whites	387.2	377.7	3%	87.5	474.7	80%
<b>WOMEN</b>	1,197.5	1,069.4	11%	725.8	1,923.3	56%

Chinese	64.9	63.1	3%	32.5	97.4	65%
Dominicans	144.5	123.3	15%	108.7	253.2	49%
West Indians	214.8	202.9	5%	94.6	309.5	66%
Native Blacks	210.4	172.7	18%	164.5	374.9	46%
Puerto Ricans	120.6	102.0	7%	140.2	260.9	39%
Native Whites	317.2	297.8	6%	119.9	437.1	68%
<b>TOTAL M+W</b>	<b>2,411.6</b>	<b>2,159.7</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>1,220.2</b>	<b>3,631.8</b>	<b>59%</b>
Chinese	143.0	139.2	2%	54.2	195.2	72%
Dominicans	268.0	236.1	12%	177.3	445.3	53%
West Indians	411.6	366.1	11%	165.3	577.0	63%
Native Blacks	358.2	278.6	22%	295.2	653.5	43%
Puerto Ricans	235.7	204.2	13%	206.8	442.5	46%
Native Whites	704.4	675.5	4%	207.4	911.8	74%

Source: March 1998 Current Population Survey. Ethnic categories do not add up to totals because some ethnicities are not broken out.

#### NOTES

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2. Personal communication, 19 April 1999.
3. Unless otherwise indicated, Amsterdam figures come from the Office of Research and Statistics web site <http://www.onderzoek-en-statistiek.amsterdam.nl/eng/> and New York City figures come from the 1998 Current Population Survey March Demographic Supplement.
4. This point was made by Rainer Munz in a presentation to the International Center for Migration, Ethnicity, and Citizenship at the New School, 1 April 1999. The Dutch figure, however, includes citizenship granted to the second generation, who are automatic citizens in the U.S. If we include the latter in the U.S. rate, it would obviously be higher than any European case.
5. This term applies to native-born children of immigrants who entered the U.S. after 1965. Data is available for this group both from the Current Population Survey, which asks a question about parents' nativity, and from the Immigrant Second Generation Study in New York, of which the author is co-principal investigator with Philip Kasinitz and Mary Waters.

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WALTZING ELEPHANTS. MOLLENKOPF'S VIEW ON ASSIMILAT-

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# WALZING ELEPHANTS. MOLLENKOPF'S <sup>35</sup> VIEW ON ASSIMILATING IMMIGRANTS IN OLD AND NEW AMSTERDAM

ROBERT KLOOSTERMAN

Perhaps it takes an outsider to put some things into a proper perspective. Locals tend to be biased, get stuck in the same rut and hence - to quote Carson McCullers - see everything in the landscape except the three waltzing elephants. The books by Jonathan Israel, Simon Schama and James Kennedy on various aspects of Dutch history are all brilliant testimonies to the foreign observer's potential vantage point. An explicit comparison between old and New Amsterdam by a distinguished social scientist from New York, accordingly, should be an exciting affair even though he has to make his point in less than 25 pages. John Mollenkopf expected Amsterdam to do a better job in incorporating its immigrants from less-developed economies than New York. The still extensive Dutch welfare state, the pro-immigrant policies and its 'lack of a domestic tradition of racial tension and discrimination' were expected to enhance the opportunities for immigrants in the Dutch capital. Their counterparts across the ocean, however, were expected to suffer from the 'moth-eaten character' of the American welfare state and a vested tradition of racism. This endemic and sometimes acute racism in the United States has been instrumental in creating and sustaining one of the most extreme forms of spatial and socio-economic segregation of one specific group, namely Afro-Americans, on either side of the Atlantic (Massey and Denton, 1994).

Notwithstanding these seemingly more favourable conditions in Amsterdam, Mollenkopf's findings point in a somewhat different direction. Firstly, New York 'appears to provide more labour market opportunities than does Amsterdam'. The second point is less clear as he anticipates 'substantial upward mobility' for the second generation in New York, but notes that both in New York and in Amsterdam 'relatively few second generation members complete a university education'. This will, inevitably, have 'troubling long-term implications'. In this sense, Amsterdam, despite its more active policies, is not doing any better than *laissez-faire* New York.

Is Mollenkopf right and has he shown us the waltzing elephants? I largely accept the position taken by the author and by authors like Susan Fainstein that, notwithstanding the difference in size, the two cities display sufficient similarities for a fruitful comparison. Moreover, I also agree with John Mollenkopf that the Dutch welfare state of the 1970s and 1980s turned out to be a double-edged sword after the post-war boom of the 'Golden Age' ended. It created a decent social minimum and afforded accessible and relatively cheap social

housing, but the welfare system strongly contributed to the emergence of a very deep insider-outsider cleavage. The insiders were inside the formal labour market and the outsiders, especially immigrants from less-developed countries, found themselves excluded from this core institution (Burgers and Kloosterman, 1996). As a consequence, immigrants displayed very high rates of unemployment and low rates of labour participation. Neither the lack of a domestic tradition of entrenched racism nor the explicit minority policies were able to bridge this cleavage on the labour market. As Esping-Andersen (1991) has argued, it is part and parcel of the specific make-up of a corporatist welfare state and differs from the post-industrial social stratification in a liberal welfare state such as the United States. In the latter case, immigrants can find entry jobs much more easily, as the low wage level does not exceed their productivity. In addition, the United States lacks the characteristic corporatist array of rules and regulations that hamper the formation of new businesses (Kloosterman, 1999). Immigrants can relatively easily start their own business in New York, and in doing so create employment for themselves as well as for their own co-ethnics.

The opportunities for immigrants in New York to create their own footholds and niches in the urban economy, albeit in many cases in 3d (dirty, demeaning and dangerous) jobs (cf. Waldinger, 1996), are sizeable. In the Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam with its large immigrant population, first-generation immigrants from less-developed economies were among the chief losers in the economic transformation of the 1980s. Even more ominous, their offspring – at least partly raised in the Netherlands – also had great difficulty entering the labour market. This situation continued long after the Amsterdam economy started growing again (Kloosterman, 1994). It seemed that having an immigrant background and being outside the active official labour force increasingly overlapped and the prospect of an 'ethnic underclass' as a sombre corporatist legacy, pivotal in John Mollenkopf's analysis, loomed large over Dutch cities. This legacy, however, has recently become much less prominent because of the rise of the new economy.

The Dutch economy has shown a resilience that took many people by surprise. High rates of income growth and of job creation have been prevalent for a long time. At first school leavers, young educated women, and the short-term unemployed were in great demand. Eventually, however, employers had to look to the long-term unemployed and immigrants as the unemployed pool shrank.

This 'Dutch miracle' (Visser and Hemerijck, 1997) was partly achieved by a long-term programme of piecemeal welfare reform that gradually transformed the corporatist nature of the welfare state and eroded the underlying causes of the insider-outsider cleavage. The minimum wage stayed more or less frozen after 1982 and the level of decommodification (protection against market forces) decreased as welfare benefits were lowered in real terms or made less



accessible. While this erosion was taking place, more active labour market policies were introduced. They included 'Melkert jobs' specifically created by the state for the long-term unemployed. This two-pronged programme of deregulation and active labour market policies strongly contributed to the end of the sclerotic labour market conditions in the Netherlands.

Besides boosting the demand for labour directly, deregulation was also instrumental in lowering the barriers for starting new businesses. According to the latest World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report*, the Netherlands now ranks seventh in the list of advanced economies with respect to the ease of setting up a new business (cited in *The Economist*, 1999). After number one, the United States, of course, but way ahead of other countries that could be classified as corporatist economies. This has opened the way for many immigrants to set up shop and their number significantly increased in the 1990s, especially in Amsterdam (Kloosterman and Van der Leun, 1999; Rath, 2000; Rath and Kloosterman, 2000).

In addition, the resurrection of the Dutch economy was linked to a renewed and much more vigorous entrepreneurial culture that partly inspired, partly followed but surely transcended these changes in the institutional framework. This entrepreneurial drive manifested itself in many sectors of the Dutch economy, especially in the ones that benefited from the changes in the global economy. The new global economy is characterised by economic activities that require international networking, especially entailing cross-border service activities. These activities are very well suited to the deeply rooted competitive advantages in the Netherlands. In marked contrast to manufacturing firms, many large Dutch financial firms became truly global players in the 1990s. This holds even more true of the city of Amsterdam that has historically been a world centre of precisely this kind of activity (cf. Israel, 1989). The Amsterdam economy has thus been doing better than the national average and can be found in the top-15 for economic performance of the large European Union cities (Verweij et al. 1999; *European Regional Prospects*, 1999).

This has inevitably led to a change for the better and immigrants have obviously benefited from the booming Amsterdam economy. The rate of unemployment has exhibited a steady decline from 17.3 in 1995 to 12.9 in 1999. Table 1 shows some of the recent trends on the Amsterdam labour market. The total number of unemployed job seekers has decreased in three years by more than 20 per cent, amounting to a decline from 26 per cent of the total labour force in 1995 to 19 per cent in 1999. The number of unemployed job seekers from less-developed economies also fell, be it to a lesser extent. The 26.5 per cent decrease in unemployed job seekers from Surinam and the Antilles was even more pronounced than that of the indigenous population. On the other hand, only very modest declines were observed for the Turks and the Moroccans and it is here that unemployment still manifests itself

Table 1 Numbers of unemployed job seekers in Amsterdam by origin, 1997-1999.

	1997	1998	1999	Change 1997-1999 in %
<b>Total</b>	83951	75260	66485	20.8
<b>Indigenous Dutch</b>	43549	37190	32943	24.4
<b>Migrants from less-developed economies</b>	37290	35304	31770	14.8
<b>Turks</b>	5294	5133	4972	6.1
<b>Moroccans</b>	6905	661	6322	8.4
<b>Surinamese</b>	11563	10282	8499	26.5
<b>Antilleans</b>	2088	1857	1645	21.2
<b>Others</b>	11440	11421	10332	9.7
<b>Migrants from advanced economies</b>	3112	2766	1772	43.1

Source: <http://www.onstat.amsterdam.nl/cijfers/beroepsbevolking.php3>

so prominently. This is alleviated in part by the increase in the number of self-employed people among these two groups over the last decade (Tillaart and Poutsma, 1998).

With respect to education, no recent data on migrants in Amsterdam were available. The recent national data do however indicate a clear rise in the level of educational qualifications of immigrants, although the Turks and Moroccans still lag behind the indigenous population (Tesser et al. 1999: 69-70). Within these groups, there are pronounced tendencies of polarisation with respect to educational attainment. This, in part, confirms Mollenkopf's rather ambiguous conclusions with respect to the developments in Amsterdam and in New York for that matter, and may be the forerunner of *social* polarisation among immigrant groups.

According to many Dutch pundits, Dutch chauvinism is an oxymoron. Dutch chauvinism does exist, though, albeit in a more implicit way. We do not brag about our achievements the way the French or Americans would do, but we look down upon what is happening in other countries. New York, though it is a favourite with Dutch tourists, has no-go areas in Harlem and the Bronx, and levels of deprivation and crime unknown to the Netherlands. We do not want 'American situations' is a phrase often heard when the position of immigrants is discussed. This attitude tends to obscure the fact that immigrants in Amsterdam have faced and, in some cases, are still facing sizable obstacles. These obstacles can be partly traced back to the unintended consequences of our welfare state and the lack of a kind of immigration tradition that is so evident on the other side of the Atlantic (cf. Walzer, 1997). In that sense, John Mollenkopf has rightly referred to some waltzing elephants that are frequently but not always missed by Dutch observers. He has, however, largely overlooked the significant changes in the landscape. These changes,

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SUSAN S. FAINSTEIN

## Immigration, inclusion and equity.

John Mollenkopf begins his comparison of immigrants in New York and Amsterdam with an observation based on his witnessing a steel drum concert that apparently attracted few native Dutch auditors. He infers that immigrants in Amsterdam are more isolated from the rest of the population than their New York counterparts: "People with foreign roots seem to remain foreigners in the Netherlands even when they have been born there." He then argues that despite – or even because of – the Dutch welfare state, Amsterdam has done no better than New York in integrating first and second generation immigrants into its politics, social structure, and economy. Since this contention is impressionistic rather than being supported with hard data, it is difficult to evaluate. He does show that unemployment is higher among the Amsterdam foreign born and their children than among New York immigrants relative to the rest of the population, but he does not demonstrate that they are less assimilated, less educated, or poorer. In fact, the principal reason why immigrants to New York do better in the job market than similar Amsterdammers when they are compared to the native population is the existence of African Americans, who have a substantially higher unemployment rate than any other native group. If, however, the comparison is to native whites, then the situation of New York's immigrants looks no better than that of Amsterdam's. Furthermore, Mollenkopf disregards the case of Indonesians, who have been easily assimilated by the Dutch. Also, when he disaggregates the unemployment statistics for New York's immigrant groups by country of origin, some of them do as badly relative to the white population as do their Dutch counterparts.

A more profitable line of inquiry might be simply to examine some of the differences in the assimilation process in the two cities without necessarily assigning a value judgment to them. In this respect, Mollenkopf's article offers some interesting points of comparison. He emphasizes the flexibility of New York's educational system and the second chances it provides. This contrasts with the more rigorous Dutch system, which streams children at a much earlier age into vocational and academic tracks. For children with initial disadvantages, it becomes very difficult to make the jump into technical, managerial, or professional occupations. On the other hand, most immigrant children probably receive higher quality educations in Dutch than American schools, as the dismal performances of American students on standardized tests seem perpetually to indicate.

Mollenkopf asserts that the immigrant heritage of most New Yorkers makes

partly policy-driven and partly due to more structural causes, have transformed the Amsterdam labour market from a buyers' market into a sellers' market. This has improved the labour market position of immigrants and hence their prospects. International comparisons enable us to see both the elephants and the landscape.

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## IMMIGRATION, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY

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them more receptive to the latest waves of newcomers and more willing to accept cultural diversity than are Amsterdammers. In contrast, the Dutch, like other European national groups, expect immigrants to become part of their culture. Whether immigrants benefit more from one approach than the other is difficult to determine. As Mollenkopf comments about Amsterdam, there is considerable intermarriage between immigrants and natives – an indicator of successful assimilation, but perhaps at a cost. The United States, like other settler-dominated nations, lacks a deep culture and consequently can more easily accommodate pluralism than countries where particular cuisines, styles of worship, manners of dress, language, and especially common history are assumed. Right now, in the United States, the goal of multi-culturalism has displaced the melting-pot ideal; whether the former is necessarily, or in all places, superior remains a debatable issue.

Another contrast between New York and Amsterdam comes from the higher level of labor market regulation in Amsterdam in comparison to New York. Mollenkopf mistakenly confuses state regulation with state welfare benefits, thus attributing stringency concerning wages and hours of work to a larger welfare state, with the outcome of increasing unemployment. Although he somewhat overstates the argument (since immigrant-owned small shops in Amsterdam are allowed to stay open when large stores must close), he is nevertheless correct that higher labor standards greatly limit the secondary labor market in Amsterdam. How this difference should be evaluated is, however, problematic. The result is protection of the labor market situation of job-holders from competition that would heighten labor exploitation. By and large, employed Dutch people have decent working conditions, and the sweatshop environment of many New York immigrant enterprises is absent. At the same time, many immigrants in the United States do use the opportunities provided by self-exploitation to achieve upward mobility. Whether the majority of either immigrants or natives is better off as a consequence is highly contentious (see Light and Bonacich 1988).

Most important, the income distribution of Amsterdam, while certainly unequal, is far more equitable than New York's. A comparison of the Randstad with New York City reveals that, while income became more unequal in the last two decades in each locale, both the extent and rate of growth of inequality was far greater in New York (see Table 1). Thus, at the beginning of the 1980s the bottom quintile of the Randstad population received 7.0 percent of income, compared with 4.9 percent in New York. By 1997 the share of the bottom in New York had shrunk by more than half to 2.3 percent, while in the Randstad the bottom quintile had lost about 11 percent of its share, declining to 6.2 percent. At the same time the share of New York's top quintile had soared from 44.6 percent to 56.1 percent, while its Randstad counterpart had edged up less than two percentage points. Generous Dutch housing assistance programs,

combined with higher incomes, means that the economic situation of the poorest part of the Randstad's population, consisting predominantly of immigrants and their children, was clearly much better than that of the most impoverished strata of New Yorkers.

Last, Mollenkopf comments that where in the US we see racial divisions as Table 1 Income Distribution, New York City and the Randstad

	1979	1981	1997	
	New York City*	Randstad	New York City*	Randstad
Share of bottom				
20%	4.9%	7.0%	2.3%	6.2%
Share of middle				
60%	50.5%	55.6%	41.6%	54.6%
Share of top				
20%	44.6%	37.4%	56.1%	39.2%

\*Data are combined for 3-year periods, 1977-79 and 1995-97.

**Sources:** Fiscal Policy Institute, *The State of Working New York: The Illusion of Prosperity: New York in the New Economy* (New York: Fiscal Policy Institute, September 1999); data supplied by the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics, Division Social-Economic Statistics.

the primary cleavage, in Amsterdam it is religion that divides the population. Probably the division between Muslim and non-Muslim does matter less in the pluralistic society of New York, where the multiplicity of religious affiliations tends to cut against any particular fissure being of great significance. And, more generally, the enormous size of the New York immigrant population, its internal heterogeneity, and the fact that most non-African-American New Yorkers trace their ancestry to immigrants who arrived within the last century result in considerable tolerance. The kind of nativist sentiment prominent in California has largely been absent in New York, where even its conservative Republican mayor has been openly supportive of new immigrants and has refused to deny them social benefits, including those who cannot demonstrate legal status.

In my own writings I have tended to present Amsterdam as a model of diversity and equity (Fainstein 1999; 1997). Perhaps I have exaggerated these qualities. One difficulty with any statistical comparison of the two cities is the high rate of population outmigration in New York as compared to Amsterdam. Successful immigrants, like the rest of New York's upwardly mobile, tend to

leave the city for the suburbs, to be replaced by newcomers or the progeny of the less successful. In contrast, the high quality of Dutch social housing tends to keep immigrants from moving out. Thus, if we focus on the fate of immigrants as individuals rather than the demographics of New York City, we might find a much higher level of achievement than is indicated by simply examining the city. Finding the appropriate unit of comparison makes all efforts to contrast American and European cities extraordinarily hard, and Mollenkopf should not be faulted for restricting the scope of his inquiry to the two cities.

It is the case that spatial segregation by ethnicity exceeds spatial segregation by class in Amsterdam (Musterd and Ostendorf 1995). Nevertheless, Amsterdam's immigrant population is not as segregated as New York's African American population. Thus, part of the issue raised by Mollenkopf's article is what is the appropriate counterpart group. Possibly his analysis leads to the dreary conclusion that every society will persist in excluding some group based on ascribed characteristics. Still, the better economic situation of Amsterdam's immigrant groups and the fact that no Amsterdam neighborhood is as devoid of services and rundown as many in New York imply that, whatever the lacunae within the Dutch welfare state, it still produces a better outcome for the immigrant second generation.

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**WELFARE, WORKLESSNESS AND WHITE GUILT: HOW AMSTERDAM DIFFERS FROM NEW YORK**

MALCOLM CROSS

There is much in John Mollenkopf's analysis with which it is easy to agree. The very questions he asks are central to urban studies. He does not make the mistake of bracketing together all groups that apparently share similar origins; he revels in cross-national comparisons and he does not shy away from questions that are defined by some commentators as politically incorrect.

The Dutch are extremely proud of their welfare state and its continuation is regarded as an act of faith on the right and left of the political spectrum. When giving alms to those poorer than yourself, however, you do not usually debate their *purpose* and since this is a strong feature of the underlying rationale it is perhaps not surprising that Mollenkopf does not reflect on alternative assumptions on the welfare state that are germane to his argument. He notes that unemployed Dutch citizens in Amsterdam of Surinamese origin have a quality of life that is at least as good as employed West Indian migrants in New York City. Their housing conditions also are far superior, and in fact there is no correlation between poor housing quality for minorities in Amsterdam and their employment status. He could also have mentioned that their health care standards are not only better than poor minority workers in NYC, but in many ways better than those available to all working class citizens in that city. But in asking whether the welfare state does not inhibit obtaining employment and entrepreneurship, he shows how far he is viewing the welfare state through American eyes. The original idea was to open up social rights regardless of income to services that would otherwise only be available to the wealthy, and that the Dutch welfare state has done very successfully. It also costs a lot of money and as pressure has mounted to cut public sector expenditure, and thereby increase competitiveness, *assumptions* about the purpose of welfare have changed. In this sense, therefore, the debate about welfare has moved in an American direction but the important point is that assisting entry to work was not its original purpose. There has always been a view in welfare democracies that if you called on the services of the state, then this itself demonstrated your need and there was no point in debates about whether it increased or decreased your motivation to work. He is spot on, however, in noticing that the brigades of the welfare army are not in the forefront of the re-assessment, and also that their role in assisting ethnic minorities is questionable. Too often they have appeased their guilt by offering forms of state supported sympathy when what they were being asked for was access to a decent education and a job based on merit.



Mollenkopf's case would actually have been much stronger had he chosen Turks and Moroccans rather than the Surinamese as the focus for his comparison. Many of the latter migrated for education rather than simply for work and it is unsurprising therefore that they have done relatively well. The same welfare apparatus has been available for the Turks and Moroccans and yet their labour market experience has been little short of disastrous. Overall the unemployment rate for Turks in the Netherlands was 41 per cent in 1995 (OECD, 1997: 133). In fact their position is even worse than these figures suggest. Many when faced with redundancy or an absence of work offers have simply dropped out of the labour force altogether and opted for one or another of the disability schemes that are available. Out of one hundred indigenous Dutch adults, 64 participate in the labour force and 62 are working. For Turks, out of every hundred only 44 participate and only 26 are working. Moroccans are similar (42 participating and 31 working) (OECD 1997:133). Thus in 1995 more than seven out of ten Turkish adults in the Netherlands were living outside the world of formal work, and most of them were concentrated in the four cities of the Randstad. Regular surveys by Justus Veenman's ISEO centre have shown that for the second generation the position is even worse. Prima facie, therefore, Mollenkopf is right; neither the welfare state nor the school system has been able to compensate for massive job losses as the Dutch economy shed low-level manufacturing positions.

The question of whether the welfare state has made matters *worse* has to be seen in the context noted above; namely that it has certainly had a marked effect on ghettoisation and on family poverty. Faced with persistent long-term unemployment, however, the only noticeable policy trend of the last few years has been to target the victims by introducing a 'newcomers' policy' of language training and 'getting to know the Dutch' (*inburgeringsbeleid*). Since most of those who suffer the worst labour market exclusion are not 'newcomers', and have experienced the Dutch on a daily basis, it seems unlikely that this policy will be very successful. It is certainly possible that paying someone up to 70 per cent of their last wage on becoming unemployed might their lower motivation to find another job, but it has also been shown in Frank Bovenkerk's excellent empirical studies for the International Labour Organisation (Bovenkerk et al. 1995) that all the ethnic minorities in the Netherlands face severe discrimination at the point of recruitment. As Thomas Pettigrew found, the Dutch do not like to think of themselves as racist even though in practice they are adept only at hiding it (Pettigrew and Meertens 1996; Pettigrew 1998).

It is also not common to find a discussion of the possible link between extraordinarily bureaucratic labour market controls on the one hand, and the channelling of Turkish entrepreneurship into some activities that are less legitimate but also less burdened with rules and regulations (Bovenkerk and Yesilgoz 1998). This is quite unlike the position in the U.S. where by comparison work

may be entered (and *exited*) with far greater ease. In other words, the existence of relatively generous welfare payments may be only one reason for national differences. Moreover, the Dutch welfare state may have many functions that are not immediately apparent. It appeases a wish to do well by the less privileged; it maintains many well paid jobs; it provides an endless outlet for those who wish to control the lives of others; it secures a workforce that can provide valued services for relatively modest charges and it saves having to face up to the real reasons why some people find it difficult to get a job.

John Mollenkopf rightly identifies the 'second generation' as a critical element in the future of ethnic minorities in cities. By choosing only one group in each city, however, he misses the opportunity to point out the extraordinary heterogeneity of the second generation in many cities on both sides of the Atlantic. In the U.S. three lines of thinking have been developed to account for this phenomenon. Human capital theory is the preferred choice of most economists (Borjas 1989; 1990). They point out that migrants with education can be expected to do rather better than those without. Social capital theory offers a more sociological interpretation by suggesting that the density and structure of migrant communities offers the resilience and motivation to overcome negative attitudes and the pressures of poor urban environments (Coleman 1988). Modes of incorporation theory offers an even more structural account by pointing out the role played by majorities in seemingly welcoming some minorities and blaming others for many of the ills of the age. Alejandro Portes and Doug MacLeod have recently tested these three approaches in an impressive empirical analysis and shown that while human capital is important, the differential response of majorities is also critical, far more so than social capital (Portes and MacLeod 1999). This argument is relevant for Anglophone Caribbean people in New York because by separating industrious West Indians from idle African Americans, a gloss of rationality can be found for deep-seated prejudices.

While this analysis is plausible for the U.S., where positive commentaries also abound on the thrift and entrepreneurship of the Koreans and Vietnamese, it is less persuasive in Europe where *all* migrants are considered negatively, and where immigration itself is now regarded as a major threat to prosperity rather than a way of bringing it about. We have to go back to what happens in the city to unravel the puzzle of emerging heterogeneity. We also have to explore further national prejudices. Here, perhaps, the Dutch are more like the French in having a greater problem with *cultural* difference than appears at first to be the case (after all the Surinamese and the Antilleans do speak Dutch and, despite what the natives may say, this is very important). The British by contrast reserve their most negative discriminatory impulses for the blacks, which is one reason why many South Asian youngsters, particularly those blessed with some human capital, now do better at school than their white peers while the Afro-Caribbean minority sink further in ghettoised communities characterised by

hopelessness, criminality and welfare dependence. Notwithstanding Mollenkopf's happy tale of shared roti, the Dutch may believe in cultural pluralism as a way of keeping people apart rather than together.<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTE

1. I remember a well-known pundit on Dutch ethnic minorities showing me the village where he lived and proudly pointing out where Verwoerd, arguably the architect of South African *apartheid*, was born.

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## A CARING STATE OR A COULD-NOT CARE-LESS STATE?

KEES VAN KERSBERGEN

At the risk of oversimplifying and appearing overly critical, I will discuss (although not necessarily in that order) the following four interrelated problems of John Mollenkopf's important yet puzzling essay:

1. The explanatory problem is not clear: what exactly does it mean if immigrants "do better" in New York than in Amsterdam and how does one measure this? Is the problem understood in terms of assimilation, integration or incorporation?
2. The empirical identification and substantiation of the "first and second-generation outcomes" seem to me to be too anecdotal and ambiguous to be convincing.
3. There is too little attention for the institutional legacy of pillarisation as a result of which the explanatory issue (assimilation or integration, point 1) is reinforced.
4. To a considerable extent the very "problem" seems to be an artefact of the overly simple or perhaps even flawed idea that a developed welfare state is "better" for the integration of immigrants.

It seems to me that the "dependent variable" of Mollenkopf's essay concerns the variation in the extent to which first and second-generation immigrants are integrated into the politics, social structure and economy of big cities. According to theory, there is a positive relation between welfare-state development and integration, but neither the Dutch nor the American case seems to corroborate this hypothesis empirically. Hence the explanatory problem.

The first thing that puzzled me is that in the title of Mollenkopf's contribution the concept of assimilation rather than integration is used. It turns out that the research problem is formulated in such a way that the two terms are used interchangeably. Mollenkopf's anecdote of the Amsterdam Steel Band and his New York experience give him reason to 'pause in comparing the immigrant *assimilation* in the two cities. Despite many reasons to think that Amsterdam and the Netherlands would do a far better job than New York and the United States in *integrating* first and second-generation immigrants into

their politics, social structure, and economy, there is reason to think they have not' (*italics added*). In fact, one finds both terms in the essay, although the concept of assimilation appears more often, while the term "incorporation" is also frequently used.

This brings me to the question of whether "assimilation" and "integration" (or "incorporation") really are synonymous. I don't think they are. In the Dutch context – as far as I can see – integration is the usual and preferred term. The reasons for this are partly ideological and partly historical. First, integration seems to be the politically correct word, because assimilation supposedly implies the loss of a cherished group identity. More interesting and analytically crucial, however, is the second reason: integration "fits" the social policy tradition and style of the Netherlands far better than assimilation. Even if the terms had not been used indiscriminately, the concept of integration (or assimilation and incorporation) would have needed further elaboration.

Let me, for the sake of debate, focus on integration. This concept is neither intuitively clear nor ready for use in comparative analysis. This is quite obvious, for any given empirical comparison holds that the notoriously difficult issue of concept travelling inevitably pops up. As Peters (1998: 86) recently summarised: 'The basic question (...) is whether measures that are constructed for use in one political setting, and that are based upon the experience of one society or culture, are necessarily meaningful or useful in another setting'. The observation I would like to make here is twofold: 1) the American concept of assimilation does not travel well to the Netherlands, and 2) the concept of integration has to be stretched to such an extent in an American-Dutch comparison that it either entirely loses its analytical distinctiveness or seriously distorts the results of the comparison.

Let us assume, for instance, that the puzzle is the diverging level of integration of immigrants in America and the Netherlands. What, then, would indicate a *comparable* level of integration? It seems to me that for Mollenkopf 'immigrants living lives that are distinct and separate from the lives of Dutch residents (...)' would empirically substantiate non-integration. Perhaps for the American case. But can the same conclusion be drawn for the Dutch case? Not entirely, because this would underestimate the lasting effects of pillarisation, that is to say, the paradoxical system of national integration via socio-cultural *apartheid*. In Dutch society, admittedly deconfessionalised and (ideologically) depillarised by now, the socio-cultural and political-institutional legacy of pillarisation is still predisposing the adaptation of social policy to contemporary problems of integration. The goal of integration historically implied a policy of reinforcing sub-cultural (or ethnic) identity (whichever the case may be) by publicly subsidising the organisations of the group in civil society (and ultimately politics). To exaggerate the point: identifiable groups living distinct and separate (but perhaps relatively comfortable) lives under the aegis of the gen-

erous welfare state can indeed be seen as a sign of *non-assimilation* in the American eye, but in the context of Dutch political culture the same observation may be considered as proof of *successful integration*. The reason is that this specifically Dutch form of social apartheid *is* the way social, cultural and religious minorities have habitually been integrated into the Dutch nation. (To avoid misunderstandings, I am not arguing that this form of negative tolerance is intrinsically good or for that matter *ought* to impregnate policy; I am simply arguing that it always *has*). To draw a parallel, I think it would be difficult to defend the thesis that the approximately 600,000 orthodox Calvinists, who live their distinct and relatively separate lives in the Dutch bible belt, are not integrated into Dutch society.

Perhaps one way the concept of integration can successfully travel across cultures is if the term is used to refer to labour market *participation*. According to Mollenkopf, the Amsterdam labour market provides far fewer opportunities to first and second-generation immigrants than the New York job machine. It seems that especially second-generation immigrants in New York are doing much better in terms of labour market participation than their Dutch counterparts. Apart from the question of whether this is an empirically valid observation, the issue I would like to address is why this outcome constitutes a puzzle at all? According to Mollenkopf, the situation of the second generations in both cities 'is far more comparable than theory would suggest it to be'.

What, then, is this theory that gives rise to these expectations? As far as I can see, it is the theory that hypothesises that a developed welfare state is "better" for the integration of immigrants. To borrow a phrase from Jan Rath, a caring state should be able to ensure a higher quality of life than an "uncaring" one. The precise explanation of the mechanism that relates the welfare state to outcomes in terms of immigrant integration is, however, lacking. This is hardly surprising, since contemporary welfare state research demonstrates that, generally speaking, the social and economic outcomes that welfare states produce largely depend on the *type* of welfare state regime. Now, the American regime produces highly flexible labour markets with fairly good opportunities for divergent groups to enter the labour market and a high level of labour market participation, but at the cost of low paid jobs, substantial inequality and poverty. In contrast, the Continental European welfare regimes have tended to produce fairly egalitarian results, but at the cost of highly inflexible insider-outsider labour markets, low participation rates and mass inactivity (including unemployment, early retirement and disability) (see extensively Esping-Andersen 1999). In other words, one cannot assume a linear relation between "the" welfare state and specific outcomes.

The Dutch "caring state" historically "could not care less" where labour market outcomes are concerned. Passive social policies provided benefits, not jobs. The major characteristics of the Dutch welfare state pertain to its passive,

generous, transfer-oriented quality coupled with the male breadwinner–female caregiver model. This model inhibited the labour market participation of women, especially married women, discouraged the reintegration of “disabled” workers, promoted the labour market exit of older workers, and constrained the labour market entry of immigrants, especially the ones who were not specifically “imported” to help reduce labour market shortages in the 1960s.

Of course, job growth in the Netherlands has been a striking recent development. Between 1985 and 1995, there was an annual employment growth of 1.5 per cent (compared to the European average of 0.4 per cent). This, however, refers to the total number of jobs. Expressed in full-time equivalents, employment growth was much slower. Most jobs have been part-time and women have “disproportionally profited” from the Dutch job miracle. Labour market participation is still comparatively low and labour market inactivity comparatively high. Surely, official unemployment has declined dramatically, but this is to a large extent an artificial result of classifications, because unemployed persons registered as “in training” or “disabled” or on social assistance or with subsidised jobs are simply not counted. The OECD has computed an alternative “broad unemployment” figure of almost 25 per cent for the Netherlands (1996).

Still, now that women have finally entered the labour market in significant numbers, under the condition that the service economy will continue to grow well into the 21st century, and under the condition that the passive could-not-care-less state is transformed into a pro-active welfare state that encourages active labour market policies, particularly at the local level, the labour market position of immigrants may improve substantially. Recent figures (1998; see <http://www.onderzoek-en-statistiek.amsterdam.nl/eng/werkloosheid.php3>) for Amsterdam indicate that unemployment is indeed declining among all the ethnic minorities, although not as rapidly as among the Dutch population. I am very sympathetic to Mollenkopf’s idea that the US should become more like the Netherlands by strengthening its welfare state, but I hope he has a pro-active welfare state in mind.

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**UNEMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE: TWO STORIES OF MIGRANT AND MINORITY DISADVANTAGE**

ENZO MINGIONE AND ENRICO PUGLIESE

Mollenkopf argues that there are no relevant differences between the conditions of New York and Amsterdam second-generation immigrants despite the contrast between the two welfare systems and the intense Dutch social policy favouring immigrants. Labour market figures demonstrate however that second-generation immigrants are less apt to be unemployed in New York than Amsterdam. Mollenkopf seems to be surprised by this discrepancy.

In our view these figures are not surprising at all given that labour market literature always emphasises the difference between the unemployment levels in Europe and the United States. In addition, many observers refer to 'eurosclerosis', i.e. the lack of flexibility in the European economic system, as the main cause of unemployment. The unemployment figures of various ethnic groups in New York are even less surprising. In fact, the United States has never had a protective welfare system. As a nation of immigrants, with various modifications of immigrant policies and legislation, it has accepted enormous numbers of people who somehow made their way into American society. The opportunities available to immigrants are not determined by welfare policies, but by a host of factors ranging from the economic characteristics of a society, the image a society has of itself, to how this image translates into institutional policies. Consider the importance the United States attributes to the rights of citizens born in America and the duties of non-citizens (at least until the 1996 welfare reform).

In other words, the United States has always been difficult for newcomers, and the situation has been more difficult for some than for others. All this was characterised by a strong tendency toward upward mobility in an ever-expanding society. Even today, people come to America in different ways, following various migration paths. Zolberg noted the difference between two patterns, the front door and the back gate, and showed how the latter, illegal immigration through California, is increasing. This is clear to Mollenkopf, as he underlines the difficulties experienced by recent immigrants and the risks presented by deteriorating situations. However, this temporal perspective only comes into his analysis with reference to the United States. Here, though, when we examine the effect of minority social policies in a comparative perspective, the complicating element is the presence of Blacks, who are expelled from the melting pot. African Americans are a minority that cannot in any way be compared with the minorities generated by immigration. We cannot speak of first or second



generation, since we are not dealing with either. Here the problem pertains to the very definition of minority and to the relation between being an 'immigrant' and being a 'minority'. It touches upon the relation between policies for immigrants and policies for disadvantaged minorities. In effect, the striking difference in New York City is between native blacks and native whites. Among the native blacks, whose population equals more than half the native white population, the unemployment rate reaches 22 per cent (vs. 4 per cent among native whites). This figure illustrates a key issue in the relation between welfare policies and employment. Mollenkopf's data shows that African Americans live in worse conditions than immigrants in either America or Europe, also considering the structural differences in the labour markets of these two continents. No other groups in Europe and in America face comparable conditions of relative disadvantage.

In his analysis, Mollenkopf attributes particular importance to the welfare system as an explanation for the disappointing Dutch data and the 'good' American data. We should bear in mind through that the welfare state has a particular effect on the labour market. To the extent that it reduces the commodification level of the labour force, the very existence of a welfare state implies greater rigidity. The reduction of welfare provisions compels more people to work under any conditions, whereas a non-residual welfare system allows workers to withdraw from the labour market if it offers them job opportunities under a given wage threshold. Thus it is possible for workers to choose between remaining unemployed and accepting working conditions below a level they consider satisfactory.

It is true that unemployment, even if people are protected by advanced forms of welfare, represents a condition of disadvantage and may induce social stigma. Yet there are also comments to be made on the stigma associated with bad jobs accepted in despair. Neither forced dependency on welfare nor a menial non-regulated job in the labour market's secondary sector can solve the problem. Underemployment and unemployment are two different forms of social discrimination associated with various stigma. As Esping-Andersen has recently noted (1999, 141): 'Hence, advocates of the American way would have to sell to European peoples not just flexibility, but also a racial divide, the world's largest integrated economy, massive immigration, and an incarceration rate that is about ten times the European average'.

Mollenkopf's data confirm his initial argument, at least in part, i.e. the fact that the current immigrant situation in the Netherlands is not particularly pleasant. In effect, in recent decades immigrant conditions have not improved in Europe. There are at least two reasons why. Firstly the labour demand moved progressively toward flexibility, unstable and irregular jobs, especially in the services. Secondly, the often illegal immigration from non-EU countries has increased and, for this very reason, is located at the margins of the labour market. Southern European immigrants are probably experiencing worse condi-

tions today than at the time of the large Fordist migrations. But on the whole, the ones who are now experiencing worse conditions are the immigrants from non-EU countries, who arrived during the deterioration of labour market conditions and the restriction of immigrant policies. Let us take the example of Moroccan immigrants. Whether they work off the books or do not work at all, they are still affected by the high unemployment rates in Amsterdam and cannot get by.

One final issue pertains to the terminology that is used. Mollenkopf does not make it clear what he means by the concept of assimilation. Essentially he is referring to a successful arrangement in the host society. In our view, this is a rather reductive use of the concept. The data he has taken into consideration, that of the labour market, is even more reductive. There has been an endless discussion on the various European immigrant incorporation models. At the time of the great inter-European waves of migration promoted by industrial development, scholars of migration opposed assimilation to and integration. Assimilation was considered the French republican model—with insertion in the host society as subordinate to the acceptance of the norms, values, expectations and life styles of that society: a process of becoming totally French. Instead, integration is based on the idea that the insertion can take place without having to renounce one's own values. Instead it is the respect for one's own identity that gives immigrants a better chance of success. This issue was later re-examined with the introduction of the multicultural society, where respect for differences is considered the basic condition for policies aimed at inserting immigrants. Moreover, some scholars, such as Philomena Essed in the Netherlands, have underlined the risks of ethnicisation, i.e. attributing to ethnic characteristics phenomena that are probably the effects of discrimination and class disadvantage.

Mollenkopf implicitly considers policies toward immigrants a specific kind of welfare policies. Not all welfare policies necessarily favour immigrants, and not all policies that favour accepting immigrants necessarily favour native minorities. These groups might have conflicting interests and, in any case, welfare policies and immigration policies are two different things.

'Biased treatment by public institutions' is a historical fact. Similarly, the differences between first and second-generation immigrants is another well-known fact. When Mollenkopf cites Wilson's effect of concentration, perhaps it is better to remember that 'the truly disadvantaged' are the ghetto poor, whose conditions worsen when jobs disappear. This is the case with blacks, not immigrants.

All the cities are comparable. And immigrants can be studied provided that the proper indicators are selected, the data are comparable, the processes and phenomena that are analysed match, and the terms and concepts refer to the same

things. By examining Amsterdam and New York situations, Mollenkopf touches on a sore spot: the deteriorating immigrant condition. However, the New York situation does not seem to fulfil the conditions referred to above, especially because labour market data are a weak indicator and only tell us part of the story. This is not the only problem. We have seen that even employment data show that an unregulated labour market favours ethnic inequality: the disadvantage level of African Americans is not comparable with any other group. Interestingly enough, if Mollenkopf had expunged blacks from his analysis and limited his study to immigrant groups, his thesis would have been more acceptable. In doing so, however, he would also have reaffirmed the well-known labour market difference between regulative welfare which discourages the creation of formal bad jobs, thus increasing unemployment, and residual welfare which forces individuals to accept bad jobs, prevents unemployment from rising, but at the same time diffuses the working poor.

Mollenkopf tells us two interesting but different stories. The first one is about the situation of a native ethnic minority, African Americans, hard hit and discriminated by the residual characteristics of the American welfare system. The second one is about the limits of social policies for immigrants in the Netherlands. Although greatly extolled, the Dutch model certainly reveals its limits. Yet, this has little to do with the question of second-generation immigrants.

**MOLLENKOPF'S FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE MIGRANT SELECTION, AND THE RELEVANCE OR IRRELEVANCE OF 'MIGRATION TRADITION'**

HANS VERMEULEN AND TIJNO VENEMA

In his Wibaut lecture, Mollenkopf compares immigrant integration in Amsterdam and New York. Here we demonstrate how interesting and how tricky this kind of comparison can be.

Mollenkopf starts by relating an experience that reminds him of his native Brooklyn: a steel band playing in Amsterdam's Sarphati Park. But the experience was also 'not like home'. In explaining what was different, the author makes a number of very general statements that are hopefully based on somewhat broader experience. In the Netherlands 'people with foreign roots seem to remain foreigners...even when they have been born there,' but back home they seem to have become a central element in the city's social experience, even to the degree that they have undermined the utility of simple dichotomies like 'white' and 'black'. The author also seems to have an explanation for this observed difference, which turns up later in the text: New York City's white residents have a strong affinity for immigrants, because they have an immigrant heritage themselves. It is not of much use to question impressions but we must say that we have a somewhat different perception of the USA from reading Hacker's pessimistic *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal* (1992) as well as the Thernstroms' more optimistic *America in Black and White: One Nation Indivisible* (1997). We will go into this later, but first let us turn to the main argument.

Mollenkopf presents a number of reasons why one would expect the Netherlands to do better at integrating or assimilating immigrants than the USA, the main ones being the strength of the welfare state and the absence of a history of racism comparable to that of the USA. He turns to 'the data' and concludes that the Netherlands does not do any better than the USA, maybe even worse. As reasons why the Netherlands does not have a better record, he cites the same welfare state that first seemed to promote integration, and the lack of experience with immigration and immigrants. We will not try to argue here that 'we do better', partly because we are not convinced we do, or that the welfare state does not also have negative sides to it, because we think it does (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000). We do however question some of Mollenkopf's empirical observations about the differences between the two cities.

Mollenkopf looks at 'first and second-generation immigrant outcomes'. The labor force participation of immigrants is higher in New York than Amsterdam, and this holds especially for women. This is not surprising. It has long been a known fact that the American situation is characterized by 'more jobs, but greater inequality and insecurity' and the European one by 'better jobs but high-

er unemployment and a thicker social safety net', as the American Secretary of Labour phrased it in 1994 (see Wilson 1997: 207). A more striking but similarly known fact is that particularly during the eighties, unemployment was extremely high among the immigrant minorities in the Netherlands, even in comparison with other European countries (Vermeulen and Penninx 2000). This is partly due to the fact that immigrants who lost their jobs were allowed to stay in the country, which was not the case in a country like Germany. Moreover, the transformation from an industrial to a service economy was more drastic in the Netherlands than in many other countries (Kloosterman and Elfring 1991: 22) and the immigrants were the main victims. This was particularly so since the educational level of the first generation was low, especially in the case of Turks and Moroccans. This brings us to the issue of education, but first two comments are in order. Firstly, it is incorrect to say that 'In Amsterdam, the first generation is still quite marginal to the labour force'. Labour market participation was high until the second half of the seventies, when the economic transformation made many of the unskilled jobs disappear that had attracted most of the labour migrants in roughly the preceding fifteen years. Secondly, the low labour market participation of immigrant women in the Netherlands was mainly due to traditional norms about the division of labour between men and women in the Turkish and Moroccan communities and their extremely low educational level.

Mollenkopf mentions that the first generation in both cities arrived with less education than their native counterparts. In a general way, this is certainly correct, but it disguises the important fact that on average the Amsterdam immigrants have much poorer educational credentials than their NYC counterparts. Mollenkopf provides some data on the educational level of first- and second-generation immigrants in New York City, but no comparable data for Amsterdam. This may be understandable for the second generation given the lack of data Mollenkopf refers to, but not for the first. In 1980, the educational profile of male immigrants who came after 1970 to the 'New York urban area' varied from 10.6 (Chinese) to 15.8 (Filipino) mean years of education.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, in 1998 in the Netherlands 72 per cent of the Moroccan men between 15 and 65 years of age and 58 per cent of the Turkish men had not completed any more than elementary school (Martens 1999). Many of the Moroccans had not even completed elementary school (men and women combined 47 per cent), or were illiterate. These figures include a small proportion of the better educated second generation, and are probably even slightly higher in Amsterdam. Among the Surinamese, the largest migrant group in Amsterdam, 'only' 28 per cent of the men have maximally elementary school, but 62 per cent have no more than a lower high school certificate (MAVO, a four year-course), compared to 11.9 mean years of education in the case of black immigrant men in NYC in 1980.<sup>2</sup> If we compare the women the contrast is even greater, because in nearly all immigrant groups in the US, the educational level of the women is close to that of the men (Reitz 1998, 91-92), whereas in the Netherlands the Moroccan and Turkish women in particular have far less schooling than their male counter-

parts. Although these comparisons are far from perfect, they serve a purpose by strongly suggesting a substantial educational gap between the immigrants in the two cities on arrival.<sup>3</sup>

It is striking how Mollenkopf presents the data on the USA and the Netherlands. After presenting some data on the educational level of the first and the second generation in New York, he concludes that 'we can anticipate substantial upward mobility for the immigrant second generation in New York City'. For Amsterdam he concludes that 'it is nevertheless clear in these studies that a substantial gap remained with native born Dutch'. These statements are not false, not even if they were reversed, but they do *suggest* a difference that may not exist. It is not at all clear if upward social mobility from the first to the second generation is or will be more marked in New York City, if we take into account - as we should - the point the groups started from.<sup>4</sup> Mollenkopf's statement is illustrative in this context:

While some second-generation youths obviously recover from having been tracked towards vocational training and enter the university, this seems to happen less often than in the U.S. In particular, far fewer first and second-generation immigrant youths seem to attend the University of Amsterdam than the City University of New York, or perhaps even New York University and Columbia University.

The first sentence may well be true. We have no data at hand to prove or disprove it, but neither does Mollenkopf. The second sentence seems intended to prove the first, but it does not. The higher level of immigrant youth attendance at universities in New York City is more likely the result of the higher educational level of the first generation. Moreover, it is not clear whether foreign students, who are far more numerous in the USA, are included here. Of course, Mollenkopf is aware that the empirical basis for his assertions is rather weak. That would not be so much of a problem if we could assume that the differences presented by Mollenkopf are roughly correct and give a good overall picture. Well, we are not certain about that at all. The empirical basis is simply too weak to warrant any kind of conclusion.

If we give Mollenkopf the benefit of the doubt and assume that Amsterdam is not doing better, maybe worse, we certainly cannot exclude the possibility that the welfare state may have some negative effects, like making people dependent on its services. But let us turn to Mollenkopf's second hypothesis. Amsterdam might not live up to the expectations because 'native whites lack an immigrant heritage and share a strongly consensual commitment to the Dutch cultural and political heritage'. This is a familiar hypothesis, or rather an article of faith, especially in the American literature on immigration. It is quite common to emphasize that the U.S. is an immigrant society while the European nation states are characterized by a strong commitment to their own cultural

heritages, to paraphrase Mollenkopf. As a result, they are thought to be less tolerant of differences. Walzer brings up this point in several of his publications. He writes, for example:

An immigrant society welcomed new immigrants or at least made room for them, tolerated their beliefs and practices with a degree of reluctance considerably below the standards set elsewhere (Walzer 1997: 95).

But is this really the case? And if so, to what degree? Like most other authors who defend this view, Walzer does not present any empirical data to support this proposition. Moreover, there are at least a few American authors who seem to share our doubts (e.g. Lind 1995, 288). The USA and other immigrant societies like Australia and Canada were quite homogeneous before large-scale postwar immigration began. Moreover, there is a contradiction in assigning a potentially negative role to 'a lack of a migration tradition' and a potentially positive one to 'a lack of a racist tradition', since there is clearly a relation between the two, which Mollenkopf does not discuss.

So, by way of a conclusion, we are critical of both of Mollenkopf's hypotheses. We are critical of the first one, that there is 'not more social mobility in Amsterdam in spite of more government attention and a lack of an (internal) racist tradition', because we are not at all convinced that New York is doing better than Amsterdam in terms of migrant mobility. New York did not experience the same large-scale immigration of unskilled labour and the educational background of the Amsterdam immigrants appears to be much lower than that of the New York immigrants. Regarding the second hypothesis that there is 'not more social mobility/integration in Amsterdam in spite of a lack of a racist tradition, because of a lack of a migration tradition', not only does Mollenkopf fail to clarify the relation between the traditions of racism and migration, he also fails to account for the fact that after nearly half a century of 'immigration stop' in the USA (granted, less so in New York), the receiving societies might not be so different in terms of social and cultural homogeneity and attitudes towards immigrants as the 'classical' distinction between 'immigrant society' and 'European nation state' would suggest. In fact, this might well be an example of a common sense presupposition that could easily impede the critical investigation this subject deserves.

#### NOTES

1. Chinese 10.6, Cubans 10.6, Blacks 11.9, Whites 12.3, Koreans 14.8, Japanese 15.5 and Filipinos 15.8 (Reitz 1998: 102). At least at the time, Mexicans - the only ones who could be compared to Dutch labour migrants in this respect - were too small a group to figure in his New York statistics.

2. Completed elementary school would be equivalent to 6 years of education, and lower secondary

school (MAVO) to 10 years. In the same Dutch survey (Martens 1999), the Moroccan, Turkish and Surinamese fathers of children under 20 years of age, in a way more comparable with Reitz' 1970-80 immigrant cohorts, generally have an even lower educational profile. A total of 84% of the Moroccan fathers did not complete any school after elementary school, and the same holds true of 61% of the Turkish and 27 % of the Surinamese fathers, 65% of whom did not complete any school after lower secondary school (MAVO).

3. In addition to this educational gap, it should be noted here that immigrants to the Netherlands generally have more language problems than immigrants to the US with similar educational backgrounds. The reason for this is that many immigrants to the US already have some command of English, but virtually none of the immigrants to the Netherlands have any prior knowledge of Dutch.

4. If anything, precisely because of this low starting point, the relative progress of the second generation as compared with the first might be expected to be greater in Amsterdam than in New York. At any rate, the still premature and limited data on the scholastic performance of the second generation do indicate considerable progress.

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**REJOINDER****JOHN MOLLENKOPF**

It is an honor to have these distinguished readers react to my thoughts about immigrant trajectories in Amsterdam and New York. My late grandmother used to say, 'if you poke a stick at a wasp's nest, don't be surprised if you get stung'. Obviously, I never completely learned this lesson. Otherwise, my readers would not be telling me that my conceptually confused, impressionistic, and unproven comparison between the U.S. and the Netherlands nonetheless states the obvious and ignores the writings of my old friend Gosta Esping-Anderson. (They were more polite, of course.) To be sure, my peculiarly American, New York-tinged perspective, my inability to speak or read Dutch, and the brevity of my sojourn in Amsterdam all clearly limit my capacity for comparative analysis. I do not pretend to be an expert on the labor market and educational experiences of first and second-generation immigrants to the Netherlands and must rely on what others have written about them.

That said, my original charge was to look at Amsterdam through American eyes and describe what seemed interesting about that experience. As someone deeply involved in studying immigrant generations in New York City, who cares about social justice across ethnic groups in urban settings, and who admires the Dutch welfare state, my attention was naturally drawn to these issues in Amsterdam. The result was a meditation on the unexpected role of an egalitarian welfare state in reproducing inequality. It was designed to provoke discussion, not provide a definitive comparison. My argument may well be wrong or unfounded, but at least it succeeded splendidly in arousing debate.

Even after taking all my readers' comments into account, my argument retains some substantive merits. One purpose was to suggest to U.S. readers that the lack of comparative vision among American scholars limits our ability to conceptualize effective remedies for our national problems. Among American intellectuals of a certain generation, it is almost instinctive to believe that conditions in American cities would be far better if only we had an egalitarian welfare state. Alas, most of my European readers think that it is obvious (and inevitable?) that European welfare states create strong insider-outsider cleavages that put immigrants on the wrong side. Center-left American intellectuals, on the other hand, distressed by the repeal of social guarantees dating from the New Deal, believe in the original egalitarian aims of the welfare state and think that increased public intervention should slow the growth of inequality, protect weak participants in the labor market, and improve prospects for native and immigrant minority groups. While Americans can read what Europeans say about how welfare states reinforce certain forms of inequality,

particularly by maintaining certain groups outside the labor market, we tend to resist that conclusion and cling to our hope that a stronger welfare state would produce greater equality and social solidarity. It is bracing to learn that so many European observers think this hope is naive, if not daft.

Welfare states were predicated on the notion that the state could and should offset the inequalities and market failures generated within the private sector by providing such social goods as pensions, unemployment insurance, public assistance, and housing. While the political causes, forms, and consequences of welfare state growth varied considerably, they all depended on high levels of labor force participation. Despite the cultural revolution of the 1960s and the alleged emergence of "post-materialist" value frames, work remains the core value of advanced economies. Whatever its specific form, social welfare cannot remain viable without national economic productivity and a favorable balance between the actively working and dependent populations. Indeed, the Netherlands has stood out as a strong welfare state that managed both high benefit levels and good economic performance through the 1980s and 1990s. Welfare states have gotten in the most trouble when they have emphasized maintaining dependency (especially for groups that the majority believes to be unworthy) over helping virtuous "working families" to weather the vicissitudes of structural change. Therefore, we cannot treat it lightly, consider it to be inevitable, or think it only a minor unfortunate side effect of an otherwise good system, when a welfare state systematically relegates groups to non-working status. This reinforces a Weberian class conflict around the core value of work by deeming some citizens to be worthy and productive while others are unworthy drains on society. As bad as welfare reform has been in the United States, at least it has shifted welfare policy toward enhancing labor force participation and deprived the right of a club it has used to beat the left for the last thirty-five years. And as good as the Netherlands is, we must be honest enough to consider the possibility that its welfare state systematically subordinates immigrant minorities.

My respondents also raise a host of empirical and analytic issues concerning whether my article suitably compares (big) apples with (Amsterdam) oranges. My general reaction is that while these problems of data and comparability are real, my approach does not fatally mis-specify the problem. Have I correctly identified trends in outcomes across the two cities? My reading of the most recent data is that, while the recent economic expansion has broadly increased employment and labor force participation in both cities, including employment of immigrant minorities, unemployment remains far more persistent among immigrant minorities in Amsterdam than in New York. In Amsterdam, it is interesting that Dutch-speaking citizens from Surinam and the Antilles have a far better experience than Moroccans or Turks, despite being of African descent. In New York, the decline in unemployment among native-born African-Americans and Puerto Ricans has been slower than among immi-

grant minorities (including Anglophone Afro-Caribbeans, Chinese, other Asians, and South Americans), who have had substantial increases in their employment rates. It is interesting that, despite the persistence of racial prejudice, Afro-Caribbean immigrants in both cities are doing better than some other immigrant groups racially classified as white, i.e., Turks in Amsterdam and Dominicans in New York. When all is said and done, however, immigrant labor force participation rates (as well as earnings and household incomes) remain higher relative to the overall median in New York than in Amsterdam even in the current period of economic upswing.

Do differences in the first generation's levels of education explain the larger gap in Amsterdam, as Vermeulen and Venema claim? Unfortunately, they rely on twenty year old, inaccurate data for New York City. As of 1999, only 34 percent of native whites aged 15 to 65 had only a high school diploma or less in New York City, but this was true of 58 percent of Colombians, 63 percent of Chinese, 67 percent of Dominicans and Jamaicans, and 96 percent of Mexicans. While Indians (43 percent high school or less) and Koreans (44 percent) had more education than other immigrants, they still lag considerably behind native whites. It is therefore probably not the case that New York's immigrants have better employment trajectories than those of Amsterdam because they have higher relative levels of education. In passing, it should be noted that African-Americans do not occupy the worst socioeconomic position in New York, to which we consign Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. Native stock blacks have also experienced a good deal of improvement in their economic and educational attainment, although they still lag significantly behind whites and some immigrant groups.

The most important indicator of long-term trends will be, however, the fate of the young adult children of the first immigrant generation who are now making their way through and out of the two cities' educational system and into their employment hierarchy. Until now, we have simply not had reliable evidence of what has happened to these groups. The Immigrant Second Generation Study undertaken by Philip Kasinitz, Mary Waters, and the author, is providing such evidence for New York City. While our analysis is still in its earliest stages, it points to considerable variation across immigrant groups as well as small but still discernable differences favoring black and Latino immigrants relative to their native-born minority counterparts. We are beginning to analyze the antecedents of these outcomes, and how local public school systems sort and shunt different groups will play a central role in our analysis. Evidently, there is not enough comparable data on the second generation in Amsterdam for a comparable analysis. Hopefully, more such data will be forthcoming; analysts will then be able to compare notes in a fruitful and rewarding cross-national conversation. It still seems to me, however, admittedly on the basis of incomplete evidence, that Amsterdam's results are not particularly impressive and that its public school system may also play a key role in reproducing social stratification. It is noteworthy that not one reader faulted this part

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of my argument.

Let me conclude by expressing my gratitude that these wise readers took the time to offer such incisive reactions to my attempt to generate dialogue. Immigrant minority groups offer a lens for examining some of the most basic issues facing our two societies, and these responses offer much for us to ponder.