

Society and Social Interaction: adapting to Montenegrin/American Culture

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Introduction to Multicultural Studies in the 21st Century (WI)

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Fall 2021 Term

Final Paper

Society and Social interaction.

December 15, 2021



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Society and Social interaction

Introduction

This research paper is written as a draft for my final exam for the class CLDV 100.

The class name is also known as Multicultural Studies in the 21st Century. The introduction gives an outline of the different sections below. The first section of my paper talks about what socialization is and the many different aspects that define it. How important socialization is because it makes up so many aspects of who we are. The differences after the war in Yugoslavia and how everyone obtained their own cultures and societies. As well as how socialization, has a huge factor in participating in the process of everything changing to become their own individual countries. Socialization has so many important factors to it. Three main important things to note from socialization is, society, cultural interaction and observations. As well as how beliefs, language and how your family raised you and taught you things is all part of the socialization processes.

The second section of this paper is how Montenegrin cultures differ from other cultures. As well as the differences between people who have migrated from Montenegro to America and how that has affected their daily lives. It can affect them by beliefs, personal experiences and cultural differences. From everyone's day to day lives, things change, and you can see that from social interaction and how people are with each other. It's important to note that the adaptations from cultures into a new society is very important because that's how people "fit in".

The third section in this research paper is about the inequalities from each culture and the issues mainly focuses on religion and social issues.

Socialization

We make up a society by all the interactions we encounter with one another every day. Speaking, acting, eating, dancing, singing and gestures all link to our social environments that we are around. It's the process by which individuals acquire social skills, beliefs, values, and behaviors necessary to function effectively in society or group ("APA Dictionary of Psychology," 2020). We all have our own characteristics that define who we are, some include languages. For example, in my culture when my cousins and aunts come over, we always have music on and dance. Typically, we dance "shota" which is a form of dancing that is also in weddings; this is an example of how our society is.

As well as food which is the time where we all will sit down and enjoy a meal together and have family time. Our traditions and society started a while ago. Dating back to the 1990s, Yugoslavia used to be known as a communist country. Yugoslavia consisted of six republics known as Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Albanians, Slovenes; the war lasted until 1999. All 6 republics divided and became their own individual countries. In August 1995, Croatia and Bosnia were fully independent. Slovenia and Macedonia had already gone. Montenegro left later. In 1999, Kosovo's ethnic Albanians fought Serbs in another brutal war to gain independence. Serbia ended the conflict beaten, battered and alone (BBC News, 2016).

The interactions between people and the government, friends, media, school, families and churches really brought people to fight for their independence from Yugoslavia. Montenegro has changed so much from once being part of one whole communist country to being their own independent country. This shows us how socialization is the core of human interaction. Montenegro gaining its independence creates new languages, traditions, relationships which introduces people to a new way of life by adapting into a new society.

People are shaped by their society and the interactions that they have each day with others. The way we speak, dress, carry ourselves is so crucial to our social environment especially in Montenegrin people even if you were born back there or in America. Today, all Balkan cultures have a division between classes. Even if it isn't said people always think the same things about who has more money and who is more educated. In general, Montenegrins are very proud of their culture and speak of their country with an intense passion, because the Montenegro culture truly is a definition of their national and ethnic belonging, traditions, arts, music, language, food, and drinks are major (Porto Montenegro).

Summary

Socialization is a key process to having a society. There are so many elements that require societies to function. Societies have values and a set of rules that people follow. It can be indirect or direct relationships between individuals and the society they live in. However, social processes can have their ups and downs. Some people do not respect others freedom, values, relationships, gender. For example, Montenegrin people do not really support gay marriage so if someone's parents talk down on gay marriage, kids might learn to be homophobic. Sometimes I question why socialization is so structured. Although times have changed, there are old fashioned people who believe that things should stay how it was. The follow paragraph outlines the overview and about socialization in Montenegro.

Overview and Conceptual Approach

Over the years, people have adjusted their lives to fit into a society. This is a necessary thing to happen so that people's cultures can level up and became more advanced. Over time people have socially categorized themselves into groups for financial brackets. In Montenegrin

culture, one thing that people really care about is how wealthy they are, and if someone isn't as wealthy, they look down on them and exclude them from their society. Society is based on the social construction of everyone around us. Humans are necessary towards socialization and interaction with each other.

I am writing about Montenegrin culture because it is what I am part of. From all the values and norms that we have to encounter each day. Such as, when someone in your family has a baby, you have to go visit them and have social interaction with one another. Another example is, when you have a guest in your home, the women serve the men coffee, drinks, appetizers as a form of respect and a welcome into our home. This is a very traditional thing in our culture. One time my father went to my cousins' home and she didn't have any appetizers on the table which left a really bad impression on my father.

Seeing my Montenegrin culture is so different than American culture. One reason are holidays, we don't celebrate some holidays like 4th of July like Americans do. Social interaction is a key component in societies. Society is so important because we seek protection and comfort from it. It enables the formation of social groups and shapes cultures. Society can be defined as a group of people who share a common economic, social need (Opinion front 2008). The following paragraph explains my cross-cultural experiences being born in America but having a Montenegrin background.

My Cross-Cultural Experiences

I was born and raised in Queens, New York a very diverse borough made up of so many cultures. Going to school in NYC really shows you how everyone is different and how they celebrate holidays differently, their language, their clothing, etc. A cross cultural experience is

very important because based on my experiences, you get to learn multiple cultures and how you can relate to each. Being born in America you have so many cultures around you. Majority of my friends are Spanish, so I see how they celebrate holidays, what they wear, etc. I also learn how my friends value their parents and that teaches me a lot of things. Seeing other cultures teaches people a lot of things and makes them think outside of what they are used to.

Once I came home from school, I didn't speak English, we spoke Montenegrin in our home. Speaking different languages depending on where I am really helped me identify myself and grasp on each culture. My parents are both Montenegrins, I have one brother and I am the youngest. Being the youngest sibling, you do get the special treatment sometimes. In my case I am the only daughter, which is something I want to point out because you have a lot of responsibility. The daughter in the family needs to be respectful, conservative, classy and religious. My brother on the other hand doesn't have those responsibilities but to only carry on the last name.

Family is a very important relationship in our culture because, they teach you how to grow up, how to value people and how to be a strong person. The women in my family really demonstrate hard working women especially my aunt who lost her husband and had to raise two kids on her own. My mother raised me and my brother while my father was working, whenever she tells me stories about how it was so difficult being alone majority of the time; it breaks my heart. Men aren't really so active in raising kids because they are supposed to be working and supplying the money for the family. Throughout my childhood and my adolescents, I got to witness and grow into my culture more than my American culture because it was my day-to-day lifestyle. Some norms are respecting elders, make sure your parents approve on your marriage,

don't marry the same sex. Having respect for your elders and anybody who is older than you is very important and if you don't do that, you get frowned upon.

Having a marriage is very important but is not okay if the marriage is with the same sex.

The Montenegrin Society

Montenegro used to be part of Yugoslavia, until they gained their independence and became their own country which then established their own culture and norms.

Montenegro is a republic country and has mapped their own way of governing a country within the last twenty years by gaining their first constitution and branches of government (Poulsen).

Montenegro is known for its amazing architectural heritage and murals. Some amazing towns consist of Budva which has beaches and amusement parks. The capital of Montenegro is Podgorica. When I land in Montenegro, I arrive in Podgorica. The beaches are a very popular place in Montenegro, this is where lots of tourist will go. Some of the beaches are called, Kotor, Budva, etc. The towns are so beautiful and have so much culture to them.

Montenegro has developed a wide range of cultural institutions that has helped society. Some of these include, theaters, art, galleries museums, and libraries, as well as academies (Poulsen). Throughout all the norms and cultures, the social institutions help to develop the society in Montenegro. In my family, we are very close. We always see each other on the weekends because we work throughout the week. When there is a new baby in the family, each of us would have to go to that person's home and bring gifts and money to celebrate the baby.

We always have dinners every weekend and have food such as burke, cevapi. These foods are part of our culture. Whenever we are sitting around the table, the oldest sit at the end and the youngest in the middle. The kids and young adults are serving the older people as a sign

of respect. For example, my father when he is sitting, it is rare for him to get up for dinner because people always ask him if he needs anything. Food is a very important thing in our culture.

Whenever Montenegrin people go out for dinner, they order large amounts of food to feed the whole town. We cannot eat pork since it is against our religion. Whenever someone cooks in the family, we always invite each other to come over and have a meal. Some meals that are common are plasma cookies with milk as a late-night snack. This was a very common meal for me when I was in Montenegro. Burek with spinach, cheese, ground beef, potatoes. Cevapi with pita bread, Ivar, lettuce, etc. These are all types of meals that we have in our culture that represents us. All these little characteristics that define our society makes us unique.

There are many different traditions in a Montenegrin culture. In marriage, the women have a bridal shower called “Kana” this is when her side of the family hosts a party and showers her with gifts to celebrate her as a bride. Another tradition is when the couple gets married. Each side of the family must go to each other’s’ homes and meet each other. When they have these events, they each bring gifts for one another. For example, when my cousin got married her fiancé brought her perfume, a purse, shoes, etc. These traditions are very important in my family because its how we respect each other, and these things get passed down to other generations. It is also how I distinguish myself from my American culture.

The American society

American as well have come such a long way in gaining their independence like Montenegro. The Declaration of independence was created which is when Americans have declared their independence from Britain and have become their own society and their own structure. By guaranteeing certain fundamental rights-including freedom of speech and religion,

the right to bear arms and the right to a fair trial (Pruitt, 2018). The American society is less judgmental about who you are. One reason I believe that is going through high school and college. There are so many different cultures and people that attend schools and people can care less if you have darker or lighter skin or whoever you are dating.

Being born in America gives you so much more freedom than anyone in Montenegro could imagine. Whenever I go back home to Montenegro, everyone wishes they can come back home to America with me because; there is so much more freedom. There aren't expectations on you like how a woman would have living in Montenegro. That is one thing I am so thankful for, having my freedom. In America, I have so many friends from so many multiple cultures. This has been one of my favorite things because it has taught me not to judge anyone, to educate myself on other cultures and to be more caring. Another thing that really stands out to me in American culture is people protest for what they believe in. This defines America so much because it is what our country fought for. Having both cultures in my life really makes me feel special because, it has taught me so much on how to view people and love what I have. Although there are so many positives to both cultures, the following section provides suggestions and recommendations to adapt to both American and Montenegrin cultures.

Suggestions to adapting to Montenegrin/American Culture

Having both cultures in my life I tend to learn different things from each. In my Montenegrin culture, it is definitely more structured than my American culture. Mainly because, my American culture is outside of my family so I can really be free spirited. I feel like I am more accepted in my American culture because there are less requirements to fit in. Also, I personally

feel like New York, is such a democratic state, that people don't like to judge others. When I go out with my friends they dress more freely and express themselves, in my Montenegrin culture I have to be more conservative and "classier" Meanwhile in my Montenegrin culture, how you look is one thing that you are judged about. When my family comes over, they always like to mention your insecurities. Overall, I do feel accepted into both societies but in different ways. I love being part of my Montenegrin culture more because I feel so much more connected to it. Whenever I hear music playing, I immediately want to get up and start dancing. I mean it is what's in my veins. I hope one day I can pass on my traditions to my children and make them feel part of something. The only thing I would change is for women to have more expression and a say in their life in Montenegrin culture because it is so often that the men get to control them. Another thing I would change in my Montenegrin culture is for the stigma to end on gay marriage. Times have changed so much, and it isn't fair for lots of people to have to hide who they are. Celebrity makeup artist, Makeup by Mario is from Montenegro, living in New York and he came out as gay and it came with a lot of tears.

Parents approval for marriage is the most common thing in Montenegrin culture as well as marrying in the same religion and culture. Interacting with people in our society is very important because, it shows your elders that you are respectful and know how to appreciate your surroundings. Especially in family because people tend to gossip and spread rumors about people. That is such a common thing in Montenegrin culture, making sure you're a structured and a well taught person goes a long way. While interacting with others, people tend to put evil eye on others sometimes without knowing, sometimes intentional. There are many ups and downs between social interaction, which honestly will always be an issue because, many people have

disagreements. The following paragraph concludes my research about my Montenegrin culture and American culture.

Conclusion

This research paper is about society and social interaction about my Montenegrin culture as well as my American Culture. I truly feel like I have been accepted into both cultures because I have found my place in each. It's sort of like a balance. From my observations, American culture is less structured than Montenegrin culture. Especially in terms of marriage, freedom, relationships and respecting elders. Throughout my childhood and adolescent life, there were many things that have contributed to my life because of my society and how I interact with people. The social structure is a very important dynamic that impacts people's day to day lives in our culture. The gap between what men and women can do causes these social interactions and continues onto the children and generations repeat. People gather together and celebrate with food, music and their hometowns to feel like a society again.

The culture is made up of social interactions, behaviors, beliefs, wealth, religions, and values in this society in particular. The American society is more diverse and has more freedom. Especially between marriages and women's rights. Although there are some similarities like women can go to war. People in America have more room to be expressive without being judged.

Annotated Bibliography

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Apa Dictionary of Psychology*. American Psychological Association. Retrieved November 19, 2021, from <https://dictionary.apa.org/socialization>.

APA is the leading organization for psychology. With more than 12,000 researchers, educators, clinicals, organizations, students. As experienced scientist, their definitions have lots of sources and are primary sources. This definition in particular mentions what socialization is.

BBC. (2016, March 18). *Balkans War: A brief guide*. BBC News. Retrieved November 19, 2021, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17632399>.

BBC News is a reliable source that talks about past and present news and history. The intended audience is for people who want to research about past events; as well as be up to date with what's going on around them. This source was written March 18, 2016 and has key facts about how Montenegro gained independence. This website covers a wide variety of topics that have occurred throughout years to spread knowledge to people. Throughout all the images of maps to show how Yugoslavia became independent, the author puts these on the website to show each event that has occurred.

Porto Montenegro. (2021, July 26). *Montenegro culture - unique tradition of our country*. Porto Montenegro. Retrieved November 19, 2021, from <https://portomontenegro.com/blog/montenegro-culture/>. Porto Montenegro is a website that provides travelers and inside about what Montenegro has to offer when coming to visit. The website has subcategories that talk about the different things the Montenegrin

culture has to offer while visiting. Some include, restaurants, cafes, shopping, fashion, press, events. The website gives a brief history about what type of town Montenegro is.

Why is society important and how does it bring people together. Opinion Front. (2008, November 8. Retrieved November 19, 2021, from <https://opinionfront.com/purpose-of-society-why-is-society-important>.

This web page is written by Opinion front who captures the idea about why society is so important. The author discusses how the formation of culture occurs, the formation of social groups, regulation, common goals that people share.

Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. (n.d.). *Government and society*. Encyclopædia Britannica.

Retrieved November 19, 2021, from

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Montenegro/Government-and-society>

This website is so interesting because it breaks down how Montenegro has gained their independence and what steps they had to take; to become a government. The author examines the hardships that Montenegro had to face to become a strong independent country.

Pruitt, S. (2018, June 29). *8 great strides for freedom in U.S. history*. History.com. Retrieved November 19, 2021, from <https://www.history.com/news/8-moments-freedom-us-history>.

The article published by Pruitt explains the hardships the Americans had to face to gain their independence. It breaks down how the Declaration of Independence was created, the abolition of slavery, bill of rights, immigration, 19th amendment, D-day, the civil rights

movement, freedom of marriage. All of these categories have impacted America so much and has engraved so much history into our soil.

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