**Reading Questions drawn from “From One Man a Channel”**

**The author, Roberto Suro, has a Puerto Rican father and an Ecuadorian mother.**

1. Describe in detail how the migration network grew through time (answers scattered throughout the chapter).

2. What is the name of the community that Juan comes from, and what country is it in? How long had the ancestors of the community been living in the region, according to the author?

3. What was the approximate population of San Cristóbal when Juan left, and how had it changed by 15 years later? **(note, there is a community from the Mexican State of Michoacán that has a similar history and population change story. Perhaps half of that community now lives in Salem, Oregon. There are many communities in Latin America that have similar migration histories)**

4. Before Juan left his community to go to the United States, where had the “most adventurous” people from his community been going?

5. What did middle class US women do in the 1980s and 1990s that led to more jobs for women from San Cristóbal (p. 33)?

6. On pages 33 and 34, Suro describes the annual week-long fiesta in San Cristóbal. He finishes by stating that “when the festivities end, the channel between Texas and Totonicapán has become busier and more efficient. Explain how the festivities could lead to such changes in the channel.

7. Explain how the gaining of legal residence status for some creates the context in which more people come, some legally and some without documents.

8. What changed pre- and post-migration for the Guatemalan women in terms of what was “work” for them?

9. Characterize the nature of the conversation between Juan and the author as written on page 39.

10. “Positional Spending” means keeping up with the Joneses. Give several examples of this from the reading, and discuss its effects on the growth and size of the migration network.

11. List half a dozen examples of how the people of Juan’s community help each other.

12. Describe what led to the growth of Gulfton in the 1970s, and identify the global/national economic change that caused the fall of rents in the 1980s.

13. Describe the meaning of “role reversal” on page 39. (note: we will use the term in another way later in this course).

14. This question regards the concept of step migration. Describe what led to Juan’s first move, and identify all of the conditions and events that led to it (p. 39-40). What was the role of overcoming fear?

15. From where did the money come from to build the factory in Quetzaltenango? What are the products of the factory, and where are they sold? What else “ended up” going north from the region? Are the two somehow connected? (just in case you missed this in the last question)

16. How did Juan first learn a bit about the US? What was the actual crisis that led to his first trip to the US?

17. Was Juan one of the poorest in his community? Could one of the poorest have made this initial pioneering trip?

18. What does Suro mean by “culture of injustice? Give examples.

19. Suro refers to Horatio Alger as if you knew who he was. Look him up in Wikipedia or a similar source. I am having you do this because his ideas were formative in the folklore and mythology of American life, including to some degree regarding what was expected of immigrants. (I am using the term mythology to refer to stories that are formative in the worldview of a people, rather than as falsehoods per se) Summarize briefly what Alger’s basic narratives were about.

20. On the last sentence that appears as a quotation on page 43, Juan summarizes one common view of immigrants in the United States. Continue Suro’s take on this as he continues writing on page 44. Be familiar with the basic idea of the quote and of the author’s interpretation.

21. On page 44, Suro states that Juan left Guatemala with no more than a phone number of two sisters from San Cristóbal who now lived in Houston. Describe the circumstances and situation that led up to these sisters migrating to Houston.

22. Describe the concept of Randall’s supermarket in Houston, including the profile of the customer they catered to, the kind of service they specialized in, and why the Guatemalans were considered ideal employees.

23. From the earlier story about the growth of Gulfton which eventually became a “gang factory”, to the narrative on page 45, and perhaps elsewhere, describe how the greater Houston Texas metropolitan region became ethnically segregated through time.

24. Suro talks about a book titled “The Work of Nations” on page 46:

a) describe what is meant by “in-person servers” (qualifications & types of jobs they do)

b) How many new jobs were created for “in person servers” in the 1980?

c) Which group of people does Suro state are employed in these service jobs?

25. Summarize the main points about why the newcomers were able to find so many jobs in the suburban economy (p. 47). Be sure to connect your answer to the spatial segregation of the races, suburbanization, and the other themes mentioned.

26. Describe how the language progression in Juan’s family went from Quiché Maya, to Spanish, and to English.

27. Juan is described on pages 49-50 as working 16 hour days to finish his house in Guatemala and out of concern about what is happening to his eldest daughter. Describe what is happening to her. (see also page 52). Is this happening primarily to the Guatemalan immigrants who come here as adults, or to their children who were either born in the US or came here while still school age?

28. The description of Juan and his generation that came as adults contrasts sharply with what is happening with the second generation. What do authors Herbert Gans and Alejandro Portes say might help immigrant children the most (p. 51)?

29. Suro compares the children of some Asian nationalities with those of some Latino groups in terms of how well they seem to be progressing in the United States. Summarize the differences, and reasons given for the differences.

30. How are some Guatemalan parents responding to the problems their children are having (page 53-4)?

31. Overall, does Juan consider his effort at migration to be successful? Why or why not? How would you view your success if you were in Juan’s shoes?

32. In this story, Suro engages in some comparative descriptions of different ethnic groups in a way that will seem to some as being stereotypical. Describe which groups I am referring to, and summarize the comparative descriptions. (Note, I am not specifically referring to the Asian groups referred to three questions back.)