

Chapter 17

Canada, a Fertile Ground for Intergroup Relations and Social Identity Theory

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Social identity theory (SIT) has impacted Canadian social psychology since its inception, and it is noteworthy that some Canadian social psychologists were of some influence in its development. This mutual influence began when Henri Tajfel (University of Bristol) had a visiting appointment at the University of Western Ontario in 1964 where he collaborated with Robert Gardner (e.g. Tajfel, Sheikh, & Gardner, 1964). Then in the early 1970s, Donald Taylor (who trained with Gardner) from McGill regularly visited the University of Bristol where he formed intellectual alliances with Howard Giles, Rupert Brown, and John Turner. As part of the McGill-Bristol exchange, Richard Bourhis (UQAM), a McGill graduate, went on to do his PhD with Giles, but he also collaborated with Tajfel (Bourhis, Giles, & Tajfel, 1973) and later with Turner (Turner & Bourhis, 1996). Taylor and Bourhis were active collaborators with Giles, and much of their work focused on issues of language and ethnicity. While early work on Canadian social identity issues was summarily dismissed by certain social psychologists as being of borderline relevance (Rule & Wells, 1981), this view was countered by a seminal book entitled *A Canadian Social Psychology of Ethnic Relations*. This book, edited by Gardner and Rudy Kalin (1981), germinated while they were both on sabbatical leave at the University of Bristol in 1976. In this chapter we revisit some of the intergroup issues identified by Gardner and Kalin through the lens of SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the social identity approach (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

We discuss three different Canadian contexts of intergroup relations that offer a fertile ground for SIT. The first context is that of Aboriginal Canadians and their evolving relationship with non-Aboriginal Canadians. The second context focuses on French–English relations, as their history and languages lay the foundation

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for a bilingual and bicultural context of intergroup relations. The third context focuses on immigration (i.e. older vs. newer Canadians) and how changing patterns of immigration have led to different intergroup issues involving social identities based on language, ethnicity, race, and religion. For each of the three contexts we delineate (1) the nature of social identity, (2) the disadvantaged status of the target group, and (3) the strategies used by group members in each context to achieve a positive social identity.

Aboriginal Peoples and Social Identity

The Nature of Social Identity of Aboriginal Peoples

The selection of the term Aboriginal for this chapter underscores the complexity of Native identity in Canada. It was chosen because it is an inclusive label that encompasses more than 600 First Nation communities, the Inuit, and the Métis peoples. Data from the National Household Survey (Statistics Canada, 2011) indicate that about 4.3 % of the Canadian population identify with an Aboriginal group (First Nation at 2.6 %, Métis at 1.4 %, and Inuit at 0.2 %), and although national statistics are not available for the many possible ethnic ancestries of Aboriginal Canadians (e.g. Anishinaabe, Cree, Haida, Mi'kmaq), they do report that over 60 Aboriginal languages are still spoken (Statistics Canada, 2014). The tragic reality, however, is that these languages are nearing extinction with few exceptions (Cree, Inuktitut, and Ojibwa). Although the term Aboriginal as a group label is useful, it is so broad that it may, in fact, be removed from the lived experience of the individuals to whom it applies. For example, one might use the term Aboriginal to identify oneself when interacting with a government official, but could use Indian or Haudenosaunee in another social context. The lack of a good collective label has been aptly observed by Thomas King (2012)—“the fact of the matter is that there has never been a good collective noun because there was never a collective to begin with” (p. *xiii*).

Given the cultural variability of Aboriginal groups in Canada throughout history, and the conflictual relationships that existed between some of these groups, why should we expect a unified Aboriginal *collective identity*? Moreover, it has been difficult for Aboriginal peoples to pass along their distinctive or shared histories given that their languages and cultural traditions have been decimated through colonisation and its aftermath. Taylor and de la Sablonnière (2014) have summarily observed that colonialism destroys cultures, and Aboriginal peoples find themselves in a cultural identity vacuum.

When viewed from a SIT perspective, the absence of a unified collective identity should make it difficult for Aboriginals to engage in strategies that would be beneficial for their collective. We would like to argue, however, that there are two key identity features that are shared by all Aboriginal peoples and that these can be instrumental for facilitating a unified basis of identity. The first key marker of identity is a traditional one that involves a deep psychological connection to the

Land (often referred to as Mother Earth). The second identity marker is their shared experience of an oppressive colonial past.

What is meant by a deep connection to the Land? The meaning of First Nations refers to the fact that these Aboriginal peoples, along with the Inuit, were the first humans to live on what is now Canadian soil. Although this landscape has changed dramatically over the past three centuries, almost half of First Nations people live on reserves and thus are closer to more natural environments and farther away from urbanisation (Statistics Canada, 2006). The psychological connection to the Land, however, is far more than a geographic proximity. There is a cultural history that binds Aboriginal peoples to their natural environments, and the idea of coming from the earth is rooted in their mythology (Highway, 2003). This traditional connection to the land has been described as spiritual ecology by Cajete (1999)—“For Native people throughout the Americas, the paradigm of thinking, acting, and working evolved because of and through their established relationships to Nature (...). They understood ecology not as something apart from themselves or outside their intellectual reality, but rather as the very centre and generator of self-understanding” (p. 6). This psychological connection to the Land is still very much alive today and is underscored by all of the major Canadian Aboriginal organisations: the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council.

The Aboriginal conception of Land stands in sharp contrast to the notion of land as property that was brought to North America by French and English colonisers, for whom private land ownership is a cornerstone of their economy and culture. Thus, when First Nations are involved in disputes with governments over land treaties, the dispute is one that is steeped in cultural identities. For Native people, Land is a defining cultural element. For colonisers, land was something to be appropriated, and for governments, land is a resource to be bought and sold, and not something to be shared by all peoples. We will return to the Aboriginal conception of Land when discussing the application of social identity theory for constructive social change, but first we address the dark reality of Aboriginal peoples' disadvantage in Canada.

Aboriginal Peoples and Social Disadvantage

The second shared identity marker for Aboriginal peoples is the social disadvantage that ensued from their history of colonisation. The disadvantaged position that is held by the majority of Aboriginals in Canada is appalling and well documented. King (2012) offers an accessible introduction to the tragic history of colonisation and Native people (past and present) in North America in *The Inconvenient Indian*. His narrative paints a devastating picture of the ways in which Aboriginal peoples have suffered at the hands of European colonisers. For a more academic account, Taylor and de la Sablonnière (2014) document the challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples in five domains that have significant psychological consequences: academic underachievement, unemployment, suicide, substance abuse, and crime, violence and sexual abuse. Recently, Gilmore (2015) compared the situation of Aboriginal

Canadians to that of African Americans (whose deplorable situation has been well documented), only to find that the Aboriginals fared worse on a number of important social indicators, including rates of employment, life expectancy, and educational attainment.

Ironically, the mistreatment of Canada's Aboriginal peoples has also been the subject of Canadian government enquiries (e.g. Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples, 1992). The most recent enquiry delved into the residential school system which took Aboriginal children away from their homes and put them in schools where Christian missionaries "educated" them using a rigorous assimilative approach that forbade them to follow their cultural and linguistic traditions ("Truth and Reconciliation", 2015). The lingering effects of this form of systemic racism and linguicide (see Wright & Taylor, 2010), as well as the brutal improprieties of many of the teachers, are still being felt by former First Nation, Inuit, and Métis school residents.

Aboriginal Peoples and Social Identity Strategies

Given the social disadvantage of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, how can they strive to achieve a positive social identity? When it comes to the conceptualisation of identity-related strategies for maintaining or improving social identity, SIT makes predictions depending on what types of beliefs the individual holds regarding the social structure (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). If the individual believes that the boundary conditions between social groups are permeable, they will likely hold individual mobility beliefs. If the boundary conditions are perceived as being impermeable, they are more likely to hold social change beliefs.

It would be difficult for individuals from Aboriginal groups to have a social mobility belief given their history of disadvantage and the impermeability of group boundaries that have been created by a colonial system. It has been argued that a shared belief in disadvantage likely cuts across Aboriginal groups and, in social identity terms, this would translate into individual group members being more likely to hold social change beliefs. Rather than categorising identity management strategies as involving social creativity or social competition, however, we believe that both strategies can be combined for positive change.

We have presented evidence of two shared features of social identity across the diversity of Aboriginal groups in Canada. One is a history of oppression that is likely to motivate social change strategies for achieving a positive social identity. The other is the intimate link between Aboriginal identities and the centrality of the Land in conceptions of self. These two features are linked, as the loss of Aboriginal languages with the endemic oppression of colonisation has likely weakened the ties of the Land in the conceptions of self. Aboriginal languages such as Cree are rooted in nature and the earth, and it is partly through language that Aboriginals traditionally acquired their sense of self and of place (Highway, 2015). We maintain that the Land still plays a central role in Aboriginal identity and we present two studies that demonstrate its importance for constructive social change and the maintenance of positive social identity.

A landmark study by Chandler and Lalonde (1998) demonstrates the importance of cultural continuity as a buffer against suicide vulnerability. Their study revealed that First Nation communities that had more markers of cultural continuity (e.g. cultural facilities) also had lower suicide rates, a problem that is endemic in many Aboriginal communities. The two cultural markers associated with the greatest reduction in suicide were self-government and land claim negotiation—both markers reflect the importance of the Land in the social identity of healthier First Nation communities; self-government involves some control over traditional land and land claim negotiations reveal an active strategy for exerting further control of traditional land.

A study by Giguère, Lalonde, and Jonsson (2012) provides further evidence of the importance of the Land for Aboriginals. They found that the more First Nation individuals held traditional beliefs (e.g. *Appreciating the interconnection between all things—such as spirits, animals, humans—is important to the well-being of Native people*), the more likely they were to support a land-claim action that involved blocking housing development on traditional land. Claiming Aboriginal land rights is an assertion of the traditional and cultural worldview that places the Land at the core of an individual's life, as it offers balance and health (Wilson, 2003).

The *Idle No More* movement provides an illustrative example of how a core belief in the Land as a marker of a shared cultural identity can be tied to social change beliefs that involve both social creativity and social competition. In December of 2012, this grassroots protest movement was started by a group of four women—three were First Nation and one was a non-Native ally. The growing and active movement calls upon people to “join in a peaceful movement to honour Indigenous sovereignty and to protect the land and water” (<http://www.idlenomore.ca>). Although a full discussion of the movement is beyond the scope of this chapter (see Wotherspoon & Hansen, 2013), it demonstrates the creative strategy of coalition building between individuals from different groups (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), who can share a common identity that can be used to fuel social protest and positive social change. A psychological attachment to the Land is at the core of Aboriginal identity, but it also reflects a form of ecological identity that is part of our common humanity (e.g. Mayer & Frantz, 2004). The beauty of the *Idle No More* movement is that it uses a social creativity approach—specifically that of redefining the value of land—in order to bring about social competition and social change and the capacity for peace building between groups (Aboriginal groups and environmental activists) that share a common identity.

French–English Relations in Canada: Focus on Québécois Social Identity

The second oldest context of intergroup relations in Canada is French–English relations. The French (sixteenth century) and the British (seventeenth century) had a long history as rival colonising powers in North America. Within Canada, one of the key turning points in this rivalry was the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759 that was won by the British. This eventually led to the Treaty of Paris (1763) which

gave Great Britain possession of what was referred to as New France. The French (Canadians), who had been members of the dominant colonising power, were now forced to become subjects of the British Empire. The British had to contend with the fact that the French were a numerical majority in large parts of their new territory. The French-speaking community was primarily concentrated in the province of Québec. Although there are several French–Canadian communities outside of Québec with their own intergroup issues (e.g. Sioufi, Bourhis, & Allard, 2015), as well as groups within Québec who do not have French as their mother tongue, we limit our focus to the Québécois, as they are the most prominent of the French–Canadian communities. We use the term Québécois with the accents, rather than Quebecois or Quebecker, to highlight that our focus is on Francophones in Québec.

Québécois Social Identity

French Canadian identity was traditionally rooted in the interaction between colonial French language and culture, the Catholic Church, and rural-agricultural practices. Language, as a marker of identity, is commonly used when discussing intergroup issues in the province of Québec where distinctions are made on the basis of one's mother tongue; there are Francophones, Anglophones, and Allophones (neither French nor English). Since the early 1960s, however, French–Canadian identity within Québec shifted from an ethnic identity that was focussed on religion, language, and the *Survivance* of the group, to a Québécois nationalist identity that asserted this group's power within their province (see Breton, 1988). Given their long endogamous tradition in Canada, there is an element of essentialism within this nationalistic identity (i.e. perceived biologically inherent *peuple Québécois*) for many Québécois; for these individuals, Québécois is largely defined by a blood lineage that can be traced to early settlers who came from France (see Bourhis, Barrette, & Moriconi, 2008). This is made apparent through the use of expressions *pure laine*, meaning “pure wool”, or *de souche*, meaning “of origin”. It should be noted that not all Québécois subscribe to this essentialist viewpoint, but the notion of the bloodline as defining for Québécois identity forms part of the cultural narrative.

Debates persist about what it means to be Québécois (and Quebecois), with several key factors shaping this identity as its status has shifted with time (see Gagnon, 2004). Throughout their history, the Québécois have sought recognition for the distinctiveness and preservation of their society within Canada (Bourhis, Montaruli, & Amiot, 2007), and they have fought for equitable treatment and opportunities relative to the dominant Anglophone majority (Bourhis, 2012). Given their place in the legacy of British imperialism and Canadian Anglophone dominance, the fight for the favourable status of their group has yielded movements calling for sovereignty or separation from the rest of Canada. Yet there is much variability within Francophone Québec society regarding Québec's autonomy. Some Québécois still hold a Canadian identity, while maintaining their desire to recognise Québec's uniqueness; others disidentify with Canada and focus on Québec as an autonomous nation (Beauchemin, 2004).

Changing immigration patterns in Canada and Québec (see Part III) add complexity to issues of social identity in Québec, particularly within the sovereignty movement where a number of identity questions are raised (Beauchemin, 2004). Should being Québécois be based on Caucasian French bloodlines? Should identifying with a Québec nation involve the recognition of cultural diversity? A bloodline identification with Québec takes a defensive stance against “outsiders”, favouring an exclusive identification with the ethnic in-group while failing to recognise the diversity of Québec’s population. Recognising the plurality of a Québec nation may call into question the grounds of sovereignty itself, if there is no clear demarcation between a diverse Québec and a diverse rest of Canada. Another perspective suggests that there can be a simultaneous French majority backdrop within Québec, along with the recognition of plurality within the Québécois nation (Beauchemin, 2004). These different perspectives demonstrate the complexity of a Québécois social identity that can be rooted in a strongly surviving community that is simultaneously fragile and threatened by the ever-present dominating presence of English in North America. SIT can assist in providing a nuanced examination of Québécois identity through the lens of past and current intergroup relations.

Québécois and Social Disadvantage

With the advent of British colonial rule in 1763, clear economic, social, and political disparities between the Anglophone and Francophone communities emerged. British officials consistently attempted to assimilate the French Canadian community into the Anglophone community by excluding the use of the French language in official contexts and by limiting the degree of power held by French Canadians in official positions (Bourhis, 2012). The majority of Québécois were relegated to lower status positions, while Anglophones (including the minority in Québec) held positions of power and prestige in the private and public sectors. One significant exception to this social disparity could be found in the domains of education and social welfare, which were controlled by the French Catholic Church (McRoberts, 1988). Although the Church supported the preservation of Québécois culture and the French language, it enabled British dominance through agreements with Anglophone authorities (Laxer, Carson, & Korteweg, 2014). This changed in the 1960s (see below), when language came to replace faith as the pillar of *la survivance*.

The dominance of English–Canadians over the French for two centuries seriously threatened the ethnolinguistic vitality of French Canadians. A group’s ethnolinguistic vitality “makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations” (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977, p. 306). This collective ability to survive and thrive is based on the degree to which the members hold positions of influence (i.e. status), the number of members a group has (i.e. demographics), and the means to control their fate (i.e. institutional support). By the 1970s, following the Quiet Revolution (see below), clear threats to the ethnolinguistic vitality of the Québécois were identified: (1) the birth rate of Québécois

saw a decline from the highest to one of the lowest in North America, (2) immigrant families were choosing English over French for their children's education, and (3) Anglophones dominated the economy (Bourhis, 2012). Moreover, English was the dominant language of public signage, making the visible public space highly Anglicised relative to French (Bourhis et al., 2007). We now examine how social identity strategies discussed within SIT were used to address the social disadvantage of the Québécois.

Québécois and Social Identity Strategies

The history of clear ethnolinguistic divisions between the French and the English in Québec made strategies of social change (i.e. social competition and creativity), as opposed to individual mobility, especially prominent. We cannot address the full history of these French–English relations, but we will refer to a pivotal time of change in Québec that begins with the “Quiet Revolution”. During the 1960s, an increasing number of Québécois began to spurn the authority of the Catholic Church, including its presence in education, its power in marriage and the promotion of large families, and its existence as the community's moral compass. It was during this time that the focus of Québécois identity shifted from a narrative that was heavily based on faith, to a narrative that was more language based. This change in narrative can be seen as reflecting both social creativity (i.e. redefining the focus of social comparison) and social competition (i.e. turning away from traditional authorities to bring on social change). These strategies were captured by the slogans that were used by the political party that started this quiet revolution (*Il faut que ça change*—Things have to change and *Maîtres chez nous*—Masters of our own house). This revolution quickly led to the formation of a new political party, the Parti Québécois (PQ), whose goal was to achieve political, economic, and social autonomy for Québec. It needs to be noted that many key players in the Quiet Revolution and the independence movement had previously adopted individual mobility strategies, as they had received some of their education in English and/or had participated in the federal (i.e. Canadian) political arena.

The Quiet Revolution and subsequent sociopolitical policies enforced in the 1970s turned the tide from Québécois marginalisation to valorisation, and the preservation of the community's language and culture which is quite apparent today. The most notable of these policies were the language laws (e.g. Bill 101), which put restrictions on the public use of English and favoured French as Québec's official language (Bourhis, 2012). Bill 101 required (1) most parents to send their children to French schools, (2) public signage to be in French (additional languages had to be in smaller script), and (3) French to be the official language for the workforce. At the federal level, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism moved the government to officially recognise both English and French as official languages, giving French greater value in the rest of Canada (Yalden, 2013). From a SIT perspective, the above examples demonstrate that social change is possible with relatively little social conflict.

Consistent with SIT, the perceived disparity between the Québécois in-group relative to the Anglophone Canadian out-group (i.e. social disadvantage) can certainly be seen as a contributing force behind the social initiatives taken for the Québécois community. Research examining relative deprivation and Québec's nationalist movement (Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983) demonstrated that when Québécois perceived disparity between their in-group and the Anglophone Canadian out-group, they reported stronger Québec nationalist attitudes and greater endorsement of making French the dominant language in the province. Moreover, Québécois' perceptions of disadvantage, relative to Anglophone Canadians, were related to endorsement of greater political autonomy for Québec.

Although the Québécois are now an advantaged and ruling majority in their province, the perception of threat from the English influence of the rest of Canada and America still exists for many (Bourhis, 2012), and there are still a significant number of Québécois desiring an independent state (i.e. an ultimate social change strategy). Two provincial referenda on Québec sovereignty (1980 & 1995) were put forward by sovereigntist PQ governments, and the slim margin of difference in the 1995 vote draws attention to a continued fragility of Québécois identity within Canada. With the ensuing debates during these referenda, and the push to favour French over English and other languages, Québec has seen a decline in the presence of its Anglophone and immigrant communities (Bourhis, 2012). Recent evidence of how a perceived threat to Québécois identity can result in a backlash against new Canadian communities will be presented in the following section (see Charter of Values).

Immigration and the Changing Cultural Mosaic of Canada

The Nature of Social Identity of Newer Canadians

The nature of Canadian immigration started changing rapidly in the latter part of the twentieth century, marked by a significant increase not only in numbers of immigrants, but also in the number of countries of origin of these immigrants (Reitz & Banerjee, 2007). These demographic shifts together with policy changes (i.e. *Multiculturalism Act* of 1971) marked an important step in Canadian multiculturalism. (See Stathi & Roscini, 2016; for a full description of multiculturalism.) Canada is now home to individuals representing over 200 different ethnic groups (Chui, Tran, & Maheux, 2008), who speak over 200 different languages (Corbeil, 2012), and who represent all of the major religions. (See Law & Mackenzie, 2016; for a discussion of multiculturalism in Australia.)

A discussion of social identification among these newer Canadians is not an easy task, primarily because there is no single social identification that is at play. For most immigrants, social identities associated with their heritage culture (e.g. Chinese) remain important in how they see themselves and are seen by other Canadians. In addition, given that most immigrants arrive in Canada with the intention of making Canada their permanent home, they also are likely to begin to endorse

a Canadian social identification. These two social identities are usually successfully negotiated by new Canadians (e.g. Indian at home and Canadian at school), although there are instances when the values and norms associated with each might clash and become problematic for the individual (Giguère, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010).

In addition to the above two social identifications, newer Canadians are also ascribed a third type of social identity, that of “immigrant”. The term immigrant encompasses individuals that come from vastly different ethnic, religious, or linguistic backgrounds. Whereas this term might be a convenient heuristic for the majority, there is some evidence that immigrants themselves endorse this higher-order identity and that this endorsement can be tied to greater perceived discrimination (Lalonde, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1992). In part, this is because many are faced with similar challenges and obstacles as they settle in Canada. These experiences may help create a sense of a shared immigrant identity and being part of this larger collective may at times offer new Canadians opportunities for engaging in strategies for establishing positive social identifications and improving social standing. This might be especially important for members of smaller communities (e.g. Albanian Canadians), who on their own would not have the power and leverage to improve their situation, in contrast with large communities (e.g. Chinese Canadians).¹

In addition to the *immigrant* identity, many new Canadians, as well as some established Canadians, share yet another higher-order social identity, that of a visible minority. According to Statistics Canada, the category of visible minority includes individuals who are non-Caucasian/non-White and who are not Aboriginal. Data from 2011 indicates that just over 19 % of the population identify as visible minority (Statistics Canada, 2013), and population estimations predict that by 2031 between 29 and 32 % of the Canadian population could belong to a visible minority group (Statistics Canada, 2011). Visible minorities consist of ethnic groups (e.g. Asian), but also religious groups (e.g. Muslim). Members of these groups often share certain physical characteristics (e.g. skin colour) or symbols (e.g. the veil) that are not common among many of the more established Canadians, and which can serve to set them apart from mainstream society. Importantly, the label of “visible minority” can carry over through generations, and affects both 1st and future-generation Canadians.

The Disadvantaged Status of Newer Canadians

Whereas most immigrants face numerous challenges to their successful integration in the host society, certain racial or ethnic groups, such as visible minorities, are particularly at risk of prejudice and discrimination (Esses, Dietz, Bennett-Abuayash, & Joshi, 2007). While 1st generation Canadians, on the whole,

¹Whereas such higher-order identities are certainly a practical choice, they also carry the risk of overgeneralisation. There are differences between as well as within immigrant groups, which may have distinctive impacts on social issues and attitudes (e.g., Haji, Lalonde, Durbin, & Naveh-Benjamin, 2011).

suffer from higher unemployment (Statistics Canada, 2015) and underemployment rates compared to their Canadian-born counterparts, these differences are starker for certain groups in particular. Specifically, those groups originating from South and Southeast Asia appear to have the highest rate of mismatch between their level of education and type of job held in Canada (Galarneau & Morissette, 2004).

Visible minorities involving religion have also been in the spotlight in Canada. At a federal level, the government of Canada established the Office of Religious Freedoms in February 2013, with the purpose of protecting religious minorities, opposing religious intolerance, and promoting religious pluralism and tolerance. Nevertheless, this narrative of tolerance is not necessarily mirrored across Canada. There was a recent failed attempt in the province of Québec by the then governing PQ sovereigntists to enshrine a “Charter of Values”, which would have forbidden the bearing of religious markers by public servants; the charter was widely criticised as a threat to religious diversity, tolerance, and freedom (Bourhis, 2013). Although the Charter was presented as an attempt at furthering State secularism, many critics argued that it targeted particular groups, whose faith prescribes the use of visible religious symbols, such as the hijab, the kippah, and the turban.

Social Identity Strategies of Newer Canadians

Most, if not all, immigrants come to Canada for a better life for themselves and their families. Many are well educated, communicate well in English and/or French, and are driven by a belief in individual mobility. They believe that this can be achieved by successfully integrating in Canada’s economic system (e.g. getting a job) and social life (e.g. making Canadian friends). Canada’s multiculturalism ideology further supports these expectations. In practice, however, getting ahead proves to be a difficult endeavour, particularly if one is a member of a visible minority. Group boundaries may not be as permeable as once thought, and there are power and status differences among groups that can hinder individual mobility. Over time, 1st generation Canadians may come to realise that individual mobility might never happen for them, and some eventually resign and accept the reality of being “immigrant working class poor”. Official data lend support to this assertion, with newer immigrants and visible minorities in particular suffering from higher levels of unemployment and underemployment, and being more likely to live in low-income households (see Reitz & Banerjee, 2007).

Nevertheless, many newer Canadians manage to move up the social ladder, by pursuing higher education and becoming respected professionals. Academic and professional achievements have the potential to bring the individual closer to the higher-status, dominant group and thus foster a positive identity, especially if they are recognised by the majority. This strategy, however, is more likely to be effective for 2nd generation Canadians. Recent research has also examined another potential individual mobility strategy, that of baby-naming. Newer Canadians who decide to give their Canadian-born child a name that is common in mainstream Canadian

culture, as opposed to a name that reflects their heritage culture, are doing so in part to facilitate their child's identification and belonging with the majority group, thus increasing their child's similarity with its members (Cila & Lalonde, 2015; Haji, Cila, & Lalonde, 2015).

For many newer Canadians, particularly those that belong to socially disadvantaged groups such as visible minorities, individual mobility may be severely restricted. From a SIT perspective, these individuals will be more likely to hold social change beliefs, and consequently engage in social competition or social creativity strategies in the pursuit of a positive social identity. Let us examine a few examples of how these strategies may be adopted by immigrants.

Social competition and collective strategies can be either normative (e.g. political lobbying on behalf of one's group) or non-normative (e.g. rioting). The strategies that have been typically adopted by newer Canadians have predominantly been normative. Some research by Lalonde and Cameron (1993) found that 1st generation Canadians who perceived greater group disadvantage were more likely to endorse collective strategies that were normative in nature. For 2nd generation Canadians, however, they found that the link between perceived disadvantage and collective acculturation was more likely to be found for individuals from a visible minority group (i.e. Canadians of Caribbean heritage) than for individuals who blend in with the majority (i.e. Italian Canadians). It is apparent from this study that when attempts are made to predict social change strategies from a SIT perspective, the generational status as well as the visible-minority status of the groups need to be taken into consideration. In addition, context may also play an important role in deciding which specific strategies newer Canadians employ to achieve positive distinctiveness. Specifically, opportunities for individual mobility, or at the very least beliefs in mobility as well as social change, may be higher in large metropolitan areas with a high immigrant population, compared to smaller places that are less diverse.

We now turn to a discussion of social creativity strategies that immigrants may adopt to achieve positive distinctiveness of their group. First, immigrants may choose to redefine the value attached to specific attributes. For instance, Ruby's (2006) qualitative research with Muslim Canadian women revealed that for many of the women who wore a veil, the importance attached to that veil seemed stronger in Canada than in their countries of origin. In Canada, where Muslims are a minority, wearing the veil was interpreted by some women as a way to publicly proclaim their religious identity and to bring about positive feelings about being a Muslim woman in a non-Muslim country.

Another possible social creativity strategy employed by immigrants is that of identifying new relevant out-groups against which to compare one's own group. Because more established Canadians tend to be at an advantage compared to newer immigrants, comparing oneself with the former would not prove beneficial, as it would not lead to a positive identity. Consequently, immigrants may choose to compare themselves (e.g. how well they have integrated in the labour market) to other immigrants, rather than to more established Canadians. Usually this comparison will involve a group that is seen as lower status or as doing more poorly than one's

own group. This downward comparison has the potential to provide a more positive social identity.

A third social creativity strategy that may be employed by newer Canadians is that of choosing new dimensions of comparison. Research suggests that one way in which out-group members are viewed and evaluated is in terms of competence and warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), and minority group members would rarely be perceived to have both. For instance, Asians are typically stereotyped as being high-achievers, but lacking social skills and warmth. Thus, an Asian Canadian striving for a positive social identity would likely compare herself to out-group members along the competence dimension, while possibly downplaying the warmth dimension, thus bolstering a positive social identity.

Our discussion for this third section focused exclusively on “mono-racial” individuals. We were not able to discuss issues of social identification among bi/multi-racial individuals. This is a growing demographic in Canada and one which presents new theoretical and empirical considerations (e.g. Lou & Lalonde, 2015; Yampolsky, Amiot, & de la Sablonnière, 2015), such as the development of overarching identities (e.g. a global identity), which may help promote a focus on group similarities and a more peaceful coexistence.

Conclusion

In this chapter we briefly touched upon three contexts of intergroup relations and social identity in Canada. When these are examined within a global perspective and within the context of SIT, it can be observed that although intergroup conflict is present in Canada, these conflicts are currently being played out in relatively peaceful ways. This does not mean that there are not groups who are at a serious disadvantage in Canada (i.e. Aboriginal groups) or that the intergroup climate will always be stable.

From a SIT perspective, we believe that three factors facilitate the maintenance of this relatively peaceful climate. One is that there is no clear majority group that is attempting to assert its dominance over other groups. Given that Canada is a country with two official languages, one linguistic group cannot fully dominate over the other. For more than 200 years, the English and French have had to negotiate their coexistence and biculturalism is now enshrined in many Canadian institutions. A second factor that is related to the absence of a clear dominating majority (particularly outside of Québec) has been the magnitude of immigration to Canada during the twentieth century; huge numbers of immigrants came from continental European countries in the first half of that century, with a sizeable shift to visible minority immigration starting in the 1970s. Given the influx of new Canadians has been primarily evidenced in the larger Canadian cities where the majority of the country's population resides, these centres are quite multicultural. No distinct ethnic majorities dominate in cities such as Toronto and Vancouver. A third factor bolstering peaceful relations is that multiculturalism is now a defining feature of Canadian national identity (e.g. Lalonde, 2002)

Maintaining peaceful intergroup relations is always a challenge and SIT offers a rich theoretical framework for understanding the importance of positive social identities for the maintenance of such a peace. In this chapter we presented a number of possible strategies that individuals from disadvantaged groups can engage in to bring about positive social identity. The various factors that influence the adoption of these strategies, how successful they are, and the implications they may have for the individual and the group, are all topics for further inquiry.

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