Identity in a Changing World

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Byron G. Adams
Fons J. R. van de Vijver *Editors*

Non-Western Identity

Research and Perspectives

Identity in a Changing World

Series Editor
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The Identity in a Changing World book series explores the many facets of adult identity in a complex, global, rapidly changing, individual and social landscape and seeks to offer guidance on surviving and thriving in these changing environments. While humanity has always faced unparalleled (for that time) changes that impact identity, never before have information and interactions come at the current pace. This may include changes and demands in the conception of self, changes and demands coming from the local, national and global environment, and changes and demands from rapidly changing ideals and values. Contributors to the series come to it from many directions of scholarship and application, in an attempt to elucidate the many ways human psychology influences, among other things, politics, economics, values, ideals, relationships, selfhood, culture, and institutions. These explorations will culminate in suggestions for ways to mitigate the individual problems and distortions coming from a culture of rapid and confusing change. This series serves a general readership and college level students, as well as readers in many fields including researchers, practitioners, psychologists, educators, sociologists, political scientists, business administrators, philosophers, international relations experts, medical practitioners, and conflict specialists.

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Non-Western Identity

Research and Perspectives

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ISSN 2523-7802 ISSN 2523-7810 (electronic)
Identity in a Changing World

ISBN 978-3-030-77241-3 ISBN 978-3-030-77242-0 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0

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For my family, both biological and chosen.
Thank you for the love and support which has provided the foundation for this book.
For Fons (1952–2019), teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend
For the underrepresented, understudied, and often misunderstood groups and people in the world. Without you, we would be unable to move towards a more inclusive science.

Foreword

It is a pleasure and an honor to write a foreword for this highly innovative volume on identity in predominantly non-Western cultural contexts but also non-Western groups in Western settings. As someone who has been working in the personal and cultural identity literatures for more than 25 years, I have been pleased to see how work on identity has expanded globally, as well as how cultural (an aspect of social identity) and personal dimensions of identity have become increasingly interwoven. Indeed, the present volume integrates work on personal and social identity—something that would have been unthinkable 20 years ago. The present volume is an extremely important step.

Here, I will recount some of my observations on the identity literature over the course of my career. I first started working in the identity literature in 1993, when I was a master's student in family and child sciences at Florida State University. At that time, the various lines of theory and research in identity were largely separated from one another. Someone working in neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research, for example, would have been unlikely to interact meaningfully with someone working in, say, social identity theory or discursive theories of identity. (Jean Phinney's 1992 work on ethnic identity was a notable exception: Phinney developed a model of ethnic identity that brought together Marcia's 1966 focus on identity exploration and commitment with Tajfel and Turner's 1986 focus on solidarity with and attachment to a social or cultural group.)

Another important trend—at least with regard to personal identity—was that the vast majority of research and theory was conducted in Western contexts. In the late 1990s, the United States, Canada, and Western Europe represented the overwhelming majority of personal identity research (Waterman, 1999). An implicit, but untested, assumption was that neo-Eriksonian personal identity theory and research applied only to Western contexts, and that studies exploring neo-Eriksonian constructs could not be conducted outside of North America, Western Europe, and Oceania (see Bosma & Kunnen, 2001, for an extended treatment). It should be noted that the present volume includes a chapter on personal identity development in non-Western contexts in general (Klimstra & Adams, this volume) but also

specifically in East Asian contexts (Sugimura et al., this volume). Many of the other chapters touch on neo-Eriksonian understandings of identity.

Yet another challenge was that the majority of personal identity research was conducted on ethnic majority populations (Sneed et al., 2006), whereas the majority of cultural identity research was conducted on immigrants and ethnic minorities (see Causadias et al., 2018, for a review). Furthermore, although some cross-cultural studies examined cultural identity processes across national contexts, very few personal identity studies did so. This lack of overlap in study populations served as an impediment to integrating personal and cultural identity theories and literatures. The present volume helps to address these disciplinary boundaries by situating cultural identity within the larger auspices of social identity—where social identity includes other dimensions such as national identity, gender identity, sexual identity, and religious identity, among others.

Prior work (primarily since 2010) has also helped to address many of these disciplinary barriers. My colleagues and I (Schwartz et al., 2011) co-edited the *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*, where we brought together lines of theory and research across the identity landscape. A number of cross-national personal identity studies have been conducted (e.g., Berman et al., 2011; Crocetti et al., 2015). These studies have suggested that, although exploring a broad range of alternatives tends to be a largely Western phenomenon, other forms of exploration may occur in non-Western contexts (e.g., Skhirtladze et al., 2016). Research has explored indigenous forms of identity development in non-Western contexts such as Pakistan (Hassan et al., 2018) and Iran (Crocetti & Shokri, 2010). Scholars (e.g., Syed & Juang, 2014) have begun to examine the interplay between personal and cultural dimensions of identity across a range of ethnic groups. We (Schwartz et al., 2013) have proposed ethnicity and culture as domains of personal identity—and we called for more research on this personal–cultural identity interplay and how it operates in different parts of the world. The present volume suggests that, in non-Western contexts, personal identity concerns are far more culturally embedded than they appear to be within Western contexts. For example, career choices, relationship decisions, and religious affiliations are often as much a property of the family and larger community as they are of the individual person. Such an observation is consistent with that of Vignoles et al. (2016), who found that people in non-Western countries are often less self-directed and more susceptible to external influences, compared to people from the Western world.

Henrich, Heine, and Norenzayan (2010) have called for expanding psychological theory and research beyond Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) contexts, and Arnett (2008) has underscored the need to make psychology "less American." In other words, we know far more about identity processes in the United States, Germany, and Australia than we do about identity in South Africa, India, and Argentina. In addition, the Internet, social media, and other tools have made the world much smaller—we can participate in video-conference calls with people based in Europe, Asia, and Oceania, and the meeting will likely proceed much as though everyone were in the same room. This points towards the importance for considering the impact of social media when people interact with one

another and how they negotiate their identities online and in real time (see Blommaert et al., this volume). An important consequence is that the classical demarcation between the WEIRD world and the rest of the world has rapidly decreased (and is continuing to decrease). It is beyond time for social science research and theory to focus on people from parts of the world that have long been neglected. The present volume is much needed.

Pembroke Pines, FL, USA Seth J. Schwartz

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Also, to those reviewers who chose to remain anonymous.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Kevin Walker (style and language editing), Gill Rodgers (language editing), and Zeynep Saruhanlioglu (junior editorial assistant for book) as well as Arushi Arora, Nadine Jait, and Nikola Novoselec (research interns) for their assistance in completing this volume.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Byron G. Adams

Introduction

Every person grapples with the question "Who and/or what am I?" at some point in their life. The answer to this question speaks to their identity, both in terms of process and content. Identity as a process accounts for how people go about (un)consciously (re)constructing and (re)negotiating a meaningful sense of self; this results in identity content or aspects (e.g., gender, ethnicity) that the person uses to define themselves as either similar to or distinct from others. Aspects of identity are critically shaped throughout a person's life, for example, during adolescence or during the process of them establishing a career. People seek to establish a clear "sense of self" because knowing oneself helps in decision-making and informs how one behaves (Farmer et al., 2003). However, this self is not established in isolation; it is co-created with others, both within the confines of particular contexts and across the intersections of different contexts. Answers surrounding questions about identity are essential for how well people are doing, no matter where in the world they are.

Henrich and his colleagues (2010) categorize the world as either WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) and non-WEIRD (viz., non-Western contexts, the majority world, or the global south). What distinguishes the non-Western from the Western (terms used in this book) are often the social complexities faced by people in non-Western contexts—complexities brought on by the historical, socioeconomic, and health-related challenges, as well as ethnic,

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_1

cultural, and religious diversity, and the beliefs and norms of different groups within these contexts. In non-Western contexts, these complexities contribute substantially toward how people go about "carving out" an identity for themselves within a particular setting.

As a representation of the multifaceted and intersectional nature of the self, their identity allows people a facility to resolve two eternal needs with which they continuously grapple: to be unique and to belong (Brewer, 1991). Identity accommodates both the personal and relational/social aspects of the self. First, personal identity accounts for what makes a person distinct from others, captured by their personality, personal attributes, values, and goals. Second, relational identity accounts for social roles people hold and the interpersonal relationships that define them (e.g., mother, doctor, and employee). Third, social identity accounts for the groups to which people belong and the similarities they have with others. Social identity accounts for people's affiliations, connections, and memberships within and toward groups (see Adams & Van de Vijver, 2015, 2017). Many aspects of identity are predetermined and relatively stable (e.g., biological sex and race). However, people also have many choices available for how they go about defining themselves (e.g., hobbies and work), which makes relational and social aspects of identity more fluid or malleable. In combination, these relatively stable and more fluid aspects allow people to determine "who and what they are" as unique individuals, within the roles they embody and the groups to which they belong.

Identity is important both theoretically and practically because it is associated with (a) how people are doing in in terms of well-being and health (Bauer et al., 2008; Dimitrova et al., 2013; Galyapina et al., 2020; Schwartz et al., 2019), (b) how well they adapt to new contexts (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017; Berry, 2013; Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012), and (c) how well they get along with others both interpersonally and at the group level (Gaertner et al., 2016; Hogg et al., 2017; Sanders, 2002). Identity has implications throughout people's development from childhood (Pnevmatikos et al., 2010; Rogers, 2020) and adolescence (Arnett, 2007; Klimstra & Van Doeselaar, 2017), through to adulthood (Beaumont, 2017; Fadjukoff & Kroger, 2016). Given the importance of identity both as a developmental task and for psychosocial functioning, it is essential to gain a better understanding of what identity is in non-Western contexts and for non-Western groups. In light of the contextual factors presented by non-Western contexts, we are able to (a) find new and interesting ways to study identity, (b) define the role identity plays as a developmental task, and (c) better explain the variability in psychosocial functioning of identity across different groups.

It has become and remains evident over the last two decades that a significant limitation in psychological science has been the underrepresentation of non-Western peoples and contexts in psychological research (Arnett, 2016; Henrich et al., 2010; Thalmayer et al., 2020). A primary objective of this book is to take into account the rich and diverse contexts in which identity develops. With this aim, we distance ourselves from perspectives in Western psychology that strive to decontextualize psychological constructs and offer untested, culturally bound, and blind claims of universality. In this book, we accomplish this by seeking to balance established

Western views on identity by amplifying the non-Western perspective in two ways. First, we seek insight into how identity is conceptualized, understood, and studied in non-Western contexts using a bottom-up, more indigenous psychological approach (Bender & Adams, 2021). Second, we consider the value of established Western theoretical perspectives for understanding identity in non-Western contexts through a more top-down, (cross-)cultural psychological approach, which takes into account the limitations of the applied theoretical perspectives and models (Bender & Adams, 2021). The combination of these approaches allows for a better understanding of what identity is for peoples in different non-Western contexts, and we therefore contribute to the established literature in two ways. First, the rich and diverse contributions from the non-Western world contribute toward developing a holistic view of identity. Second, this holistic view of identity provides insight into processes crucial for enriching and enlarging established Western theoretical perspectives and models.

Overview

We present perspectives for identity in non-Western contexts and groups in three parts: (1) identity in underrepresented world regions and contexts, (2) identity of specific non-Western groups, and (3) identity perspectives important in non-Western contexts.

Part I, Identity in Underrepresented World Regions, begins with an overview of identity in sub-Saharan Africa by Naudé in Chap. 2. She evaluated both Western and sub-Saharan perspectives about different (in particular, social) identity aspects important for examining people in sub-Saharan Africa. Naudé provides an overview of the importance of national, ethnic, religious, and cultural identity perspectives. In addition, she evaluates how indigenous, spiritual, and postcolonial identities and the symbols, stories, poetry, and folklore through which these identity aspects are formed are articulated. All of these facets are considered while accounting for the impact of acculturation and globalization for identity in the region. In Chap. 3, Sugimura, Umemura, and Nelson examine identity in East Asia from a developmental perspective. In particular, this chapter focuses on the importance of personal identity development and attachment in changing societies, accounting for the shifts in the cultural dimension of individualism (Greenfield, 2016). Herein, the authors consider a more cross-cultural perspective by examining identity in East Asia using established models and theoretical perspectives while accounting for the importance of the nuance provided by the particular context. In Chap. 4, Gibbons, Poelker, and Hasbun provide an overview of how identity might be understood in Central and South America. They present empirical research from the region and provide an account of the extent to which traditional or heritage identities, global and Western identities, and hybrid identities can be classified within the Cheek and Cheek (2018) identity domains. In Chap. 5, Jessop examines Caribbean cultural identity through the socio-historical identity formation theory (SHIFT) and postulates a framework

to capture the complexity associated with the cultural identity of the Caribbean peoples and diaspora. In the last three chapters in this part, the authors take a closer look at more specific settings (as opposed to broader geographical contexts). In Chap. 6, Ng Tseung-Wong examines different identities in the multicultural Mauritian context, in particular the importance of the relationship between subordinate (ethnic and religious) and superordinate (national) identity. In Chap. 7, Javakhishvili examines identity aspects in the South Caucasus. She focuses on personal and social (gender, national, ethnic, and religious) identity aspects and argues why these are important for people from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Given the dearth of empirical psychological studies across these contexts, she does this by relying on neighboring social science perspectives that have studied identity within this region. In Chap. 8, the final chapter in this part, Lebedeva, Galyapina, and Van de Vijver examine how different social identity aspects, such as ethnic identity, ethnic self-consciousness, religious, civic, and regional identities, have become deconstructed since the collapse of the USSR. Given the complexity of the post-Soviet space, the authors relate these social identities to intercultural relations in the post-Soviet environment.

In **Part II, Identity of Specific Non-Western Groups**, we present aspects of identity for specific non-Western groups, both in non-Western and Western contexts. In Chap. 9, Buzea provides insight into the complexity of the Roma people, particularly in Eastern Europe, and the difficulty associated with the ethnic identity of a group that experiences such high levels of discrimination. Similarly, in Chap. 10, Fleischmann and Verkuyten examine the importance of identity for the Muslim minority in Western societies. Specifically, the importance of social identity aspects, such as religious identity and multiple group identification, is considered and how these inform intragroup and intergroup processes. In Chap. 11, identity aspects of the Kurdish and Alevi minority groups in Turkey are examined by Acar, Sandal Önal, and Şen. The authors specifically consider the boundaries of Turkish national identity for these groups in relation to their own ethnic identities. The authors sought to understand how inclusion and exclusion are understood both for mainstream Turkish and the minority Kurdish and Alevi people. The last chapter in this section provides some interesting insights into how identity is constructed for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders. Dudgeon and Bray discuss the impact of colonization on these groups and unpack the challenges they have overcome in the quest for cultural identity. They present a model in which they (a) examine the importance of relational aspects for the cultural identity and (b) position social and emotional well-being as central for understanding the cultural identity of Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

In **Part III, Identity Perspectives Important for Non-Western Contexts**, we sought to consider a few general perspectives important for the study of identity in non-Western contexts. These chapters in particular provide an overview of established Western literature, its applicability to and application in non-Western contexts. In Chap. 13, Klimstra and Adams consider how developmental perspectives, especially related to personal identity, may be relevant for non-Western contexts. Specifically, we examine how personal aspects of identity might not be as distinct

from relational and social aspects as theorized in Western contexts. In Chap. 14, Blommaert, Lu, and Li delve into online identity—their conceptualization of the "selfie" is imbedded in specific examples from China. They consider how identity is negotiated on digital platforms and the implications this has for our general consideration of identity. In Chap. 15, Tavitian-Elmadjian and Bender focus on the role identity plays for intergroup processes by considering the role and importance of self-affirmation, first in terms of how it is studied in relation to threat theory in Western contexts and after that, its applicability within a diverse non-Western context such as Lebanon. In Chap. 16, the final substantive chapter, Crafford examines the central role played by the work in which people are engaged in how they define themselves. The author provides an overview of how work identity is conceptualized and studied. This allows insight into the value of work in non-Western contexts and how people give meaning to their lives through work.

Concluding Remarks

Given that much of the theory around identity remains rooted in predominantly Western understanding, conceptualization, and lines of inquiry, this book aims to serve as a bridge between Western and non-Western perspectives on models of identity. What is evident in many of these chapters is that we need to account for the indigenous perspectives and culturally situated experiences of non-Western people when studying identity. Within their chapters, contributors to this book have gone about integrating important developments and advancements in identity research in primarily non-Western underrepresented contexts, regions, and groups. Given the nature and complexity of identity as a construct, it is essential to consider this book an introductory text for understanding non-Western identity. It is by no means exhaustive as many vital aspects still need to be covered, including (a) identity politics, (b) the multidimensionality of identity, (c) methodological considerations of identity, (d) LGBTQI+ identity (in non-Western contexts), and (e) the identity of native, indigenous, and diasporic groups across the world, to mention but a few. While we were unable to consider these topics in this volume, we consider these areas of research as crucial for the continued broadening of our understanding of non-Western identity.

However, despite these limitations, through this book we have gained a better understanding of non-Western identity, and we move closer toward a more holistic view of identity by integrating non-Western theoretical perspectives and models into the Western perspectives. Through the authentic representation of what identity is across the non-Western world, we have sourced authors from different parts of the globe and provided them with extensive scientific freedom to develop their discussions. While predominantly psychological, some authors have also considered additional social (e.g., sociological and anthropological) or managerial (e.g., critical management studies) scientific perspectives to enrich our understanding of identity. The result has been a volume that provides novel and unique insights into identity,

with implications and suggestions for how to move identity research forward more inclusively and critically.

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Part I
Identity in Underrepresented World Regions and Contexts

Chapter 2
Identity in Sub-Saharan Africa

Luzelle Naudé

Africa has her mysteries, and even a wise man cannot understand them. But a wise man respects them.
Miriam Makeba (South African singer-songwriter)
The notion of identity is curiously puzzling; the lived experience of identity is mysteriously contradictory.

Elliott (2011, p. xii)

Introduction

The above quotes find an echo when approaching a chapter on identity in sub-Saharan Africa. Both *identity* and *sub-Saharan Africa* are terms associated with mystery and complexity but also regarded with curiosity and interest. The subcontinent of sub-Saharan Africa is seen as a region replete with diversity and contradictions, as well as tensions and potential. Similarly, the construct *identity* has been described as an enigmatic paradox, referring to the complex interactions between the dualities of subject and system, individual self and social network, as well as in the way in which subjectivity and objectivity are intertwined (Elliott, 2011). Defining identity within context is thus of paramount importance. One of the challenges to advancing the knowledge base in the psychological and social sciences is the failure to transact with the widely available literature of non-Western scholars. In this chapter, rather than framing identity solely from the perspectives of Western scholars such as Erikson, the voices of leading African scholars such as Bame Nsamenang, Robert Serpell, Kofi Marfo, and others will be integrated.

The web of meanings that inform people's lives is accumulated through culture, context, and social history (Nsamenang, 2003; Serpell & Marfo, 2014). When considering identities, both content and context should be recognized, in other words

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_2

the interaction between the individual and society (Nsamenang, 2003; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell, 1993; Syed, 2017). To know oneself is not a private, isolated activity, but a relationship between the person and the world. A sociocultural theory on human development (which emphasizes the relationship between development and systems of social activities and cultural meanings) can best explain this interface between psychological and sociocultural aspects (Serpell, 1993). This idea is reiterated in Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory, providing a seminal image of the ecocultural embeddedness of human development, where individuals are viewed in interaction with nested layers of micro-, meso-, macro-, and exo-systems, as well as in relation to the chronosystem, the *zeitgeist* in which they live. With agency, individuals and societies consider both place and time when constructing their identities. Beyond any doubt, identity content in the contemporary African subcontinent will be filled with unique dynamics and nuance – the diversity of this subcontinent will be reflected in the diversity of sub-Saharan African identities.

The conceptualization of identity is embedded in the tension between sameness and difference (Elliott, 2011). We perceive ourselves through the eyes of others, and self-understanding is thus bound by communicative interdependence (Serpell, 1993). Individuals find a sense of self by contemplating their place in the world and where they feel they fit (sameness) but also in their uniqueness and how they differ from others. Similarly, when contemplating identities in sub-Saharan African, consideration should be given to both sameness and difference. The diversity both within and between the various cultures and countries in sub-Saharan Africa implies that a multiplicity of overlapping identities exists. It requires recognition of the plurality and intersectionality of identity. This results in a complex and exciting theoretical endeavor that this chapter aims to capture. First, before turning the focus to the construct of identity, a short introduction to the sub-Saharan African context, as well as the demographics of its countries and its peoples, is provided. Next, themes regarding identity that emerge in the sub-Saharan context will be presented, framed by reflections on an African philosophy and worldview, political and socioeconomic trends, and a multiplicity of indigenous, postcolonial, national, ethnic, and cultural identities. The chapter then concludes with reflective thoughts regarding future directions and implications for sub-Saharan African identity research. In this chapter, the term "Africans" is used to include all people from sub-Saharan Africa who consider themselves African, irrespective of their cultural or racial origin. Furthermore, while the terms Afrocentric, Africentric, and African-centric (Nwoye, 2017a, b) are often used interchangeably in literature, "Africentric" is used in this chapter to emphasize relatedness and closeness to Africa.

The Contextual Setting of Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa, also known as *Afrique Noire*, is the region located south of the harsh climate and sparsely populated Sahara Desert. Sub-Saharan Africa is distinguished from Northern Africa, where individuals with an Arab background are predominantly present. The term itself is not without contention. Some regard it pejorative, a "racist geopolitical signature" (Ekwe-Ekwe, 2012). Furthermore, the attempt towards homogeneity, as if one Africa exists, is also criticized by many. In addition to this, there is no consensus on which of the 54 African countries comprise sub-Saharan Africa. The debate regarding terminology and categorization continues when considering the regions within sub-Saharan Africa, as there is no clarity regarding which countries are included in the eastern, western, central/middle, and southern African regions. Some advocate for abandoning regional descriptions in totality and recognizing countries independently. A focus on each African country in itself, rather than a vague regional reference, will prevent a stereotypical and forced grouping of heterogeneous countries into a homogenous region and will highlight the uniqueness and identity of individual countries. The heterogeneity that exists is not only seen between the sub-Saharan African countries but also within each country.

With more than a billion inhabitants, sub-Saharan Africa is diverse. In addition to the various nationalities, there are a multitude of ethnolinguistic groupings. For example, Cameroon can be regarded as one of the most ethnically heterogeneous countries in Africa, with an estimated 250 different ethnic groups; Zambia has approximately 72 and Kenya an estimated 42 (Adams et al., 2016). Depending on the type of definitions and classification systems used, the number of indigenous African languages ranges between 1000 and 2500 (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Due to migration and the territorial boundaries set by the colonial powers, there are no monolingual states in Africa; languages are spread across country borders. In addition to the indigenous languages and their dialects, European languages stemming from former colonial powers (mostly anglophone and francophone) are prominent in African countries (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Africa also has strong religious roots. Many religions in Africa, often described as religious hybrids, have elements of Christianity or Islam combined with traditional beliefs (Hlatshwayo et al., 2018; Mbiti, 1990; Simwaka et al., 2007).

Together with Southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa is regarded as one of the poorest regions in the world (FocusEconomics, 2018). Many people live in poverty, and inequality and the increasing gaps between the "haves" and "have-nots" cause tension and instability (Solomon, 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered slavery, the legacies of colonialism, interethnic conflict, and the AIDS pandemic. Despite various calls for an African Renaissance (Matthews, 2011; Sesanti, 2015), Africa's governments and institutions are fragile and often described as failed or failing "shadow" states fraught with political conflict, ungoverned spaces, and a history of exploitative oppression of citizens. Furthermore, there are challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and limited education opportunities (especially in rural areas), as well

as environmental concerns such as pollution and the exploitation of resources (Serpell, 2011; Solomon, 2015).

Despite these challenges, sub-Saharan Africa is known for its vibrancy, energy, and resilience. It employs its wealth of natural resources to participate in the global economy and is a major exporter of crops, oils, and minerals. While it contains many of the least developed countries across the world, Africa is also one of the fastest developing regions in the world (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). As an emerging market, it is of importance in the global economy with its potential for rapid growth (FocusEconomics, 2018). In addition to its natural resources, sub-Saharan Africa is rich in cultural resources and in its diversity (Serpell, 2011). It has a young and growing population, with African youngsters as social agents who can make valuable contributions through practicing social responsibility (Nsamenang, 2003, 2013; Serpell, 2011).

The sub-Saharan African context is thus marked by vast multicultural diversity, a variety of ethnolinguistic groupings, continuous transition, and social complexity, as well as sociopolitical concerns. It is in the balance and integration of both its richness and its challenges that Sub-Saharan African identities can be understood in context.

Conceptual, Theoretical, and Empirical Themes in Identity in the Sub-Saharan African Context

In this section, the prominent themes regarding identity that emerge in the sub-Saharan context will be summarized. The discussion will be embedded in the practical geographical, contextual, sociopolitical, and cultural realities of finding an identity, as well as the theoretical explanations that have been proposed by prominent philosophers and theorists to understand these realities.

African Philosophy/ies: What Does It Mean to Be African?

When considering an African identity, arguments regarding Africanization are at the forefront. Africa has been the recipient of imposed influences, resulting in the externalization of African outlooks and a hybrid cultural milieu. In the search for universal truths, cross-cultural validity is often tested against dominant Eurocentric Western theories from a position of little flexibility and openness (Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell & Marfo, 2014). In this regard, Nsamenang (2007, 2013) is of the opinion that scientific psychology is an imperialist, ethnocentric, and racialized discipline. Western psychology rejects rich oral traditions and spirituality and neglects the tacit wisdom embedded in, for example, African proverbs, folklore, and practices (Nsamenang, 2007). To liberate African psychology, a critical

dialogue with external knowledge systems (i.e., Western psychology masquerading as universal psychology) should be a priority (Nwoye, 2017a, b).

Both Hountondji (2009) and Mkhize (2006) warn against the dangers of Western analyses and explanations of African philosophy and African people. Hountondji invites the development of the discipline by Africans in Africa, in order to move away from a discourse *on* or *about* Africa towards a discourse *from* Africa, produced *by* Africans. African scholars should proactively move beyond *received* psychology, to transcend perspectives that exclude or trivialize the sociohistorical and psychological experiences of Black peoples and to infuse "the timeless wisdom and ingenuities intrinsic in Africa's heritages into global knowledge systems" (Nsamenang, 2007, p. 289). The answer to the question "What does it mean to be an African?" is thus embedded in the peoples of African descent (African voice and discourse), their lived experiences, and their collective cultural traditions (Nsamenang, 2007; Wiredu, 2004). Authors such as Nsamenang, Hountondji, Oruka, Nyerere, and Wiredu have contributed much to the debates regarding African philosophy. For example, Nyerere proposed African socialism and the philosophy of Pan-Africanism. He drew on the principles of liberation, communalism, collective production, egalitarian distribution, and universal obligation, as well as the historical memories and realities of indigenous African identity (Otunnu, 2015).

Africentric psychology will take different ecologies and communities of *Afrique Noire* into consideration, promote an eco-culturally relevant understanding of African phenomena, and contribute novel theoretical ideas and fresh methodological approaches (Nsamenang, 2007). Serpell (2014) warns against the uncritical, cross-cultural transportation of knowledge. Rather than to decontextualize them, formal theories should be tested against reality and local ecologies, using perspectives such as mediated learning, situated learning, and participatory appropriation (Serpell, 2014). A good psychological theory will be contextually responsive and culturally appropriate, resonate with the perspectives of the society, and make a practical, useful, and intelligible contribution to the life circumstances of the people of Africa (Nsamenang & Dawes, 1998; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell & Marfo, 2014). Mkhize (2004) argued for the importance of acknowledging indigenous philosophy and worldviews, as this is what people use in their attempts to try to make sense of themselves and the world. In addition to this, Wiredu (2004) recommended that honest attempts to form a true African perspective will only be possible if the African vernacular is used as people dream, desire, have consciousness, and locate their understanding in their first language.

Some African scholars are of the opinion that it is not necessary to discredit everything non-African. An African philosophy needs neither to conform to nor completely deviate from Western norms. Ratele (2017), for example, views African psychology as a multidimensional conceptualization, which can include universal, cultural, critical, and unique components. Other scholars, however, call for a new philosophy that is qualitatively and quantitatively unique. For Nwoye (2017a, b), there does not exist a psychology (whether Western or African) that is free of a cultural background, and, in the same vein, a postcolonial psychology can never be without critical engagement. Nsamenang (2006, 2007) refers to the strands in a

braid to describe Africa's triple inheritance and the coexistence of African, Eastern, and Western thought, traditions, and legacies. He warns against a yearning for African essentialism and advocates for a blended approach, with the inclusion of global perspectives and local knowledge bases. A dignifying psychology of human diversity can be reached if various ethnocultural realities and theoretical strands are integrated into a unified conceptual system. Supporting this argument against exclusion, and in recognition of inclusion and diversity, Pence and Nsamenang (2008, p. 43) propose "introduce[ing] a 'stutter' into a powerful international narrative, to create a space for other ideas and perspectives, in this case from Africa, to be heard and considered."

An important argument to consider when referring to an African philosophy is what Hountondji (2009) refers to as the "unanimist illusion" (p. 6). Since African culture is alive and well, African philosophy will be replete with internal debates, contradictions, and intellectual tensions – lively and vivid, as it should be. There is not only one Africa, and therefore theorists should refrain from making sweeping generalizations and unwarranted assumptions of uniformity. In this regard, there is a call for a move away from universalism towards the "virtue of pluralism" (Hountondji, 2009, p. 6). While Pan-African identities have been imagined, these are not consolidated (Mama, 2007). Due to the multiethnic, multilingual, and multireligious life on the continent, African identities and "Africanness" are multidimensional and fluid, historically and institutionally constructed, and continuously contested and redefined. African identities are less homogeneous, less clearly imagined, and do not portray the singularity seen in North American and European identities (such as "Englishness" or "Germanness").

Ubuntu? The Individualism–Collectivism Debate

There are many debates regarding the categorization and placement of countries on the individualism–collectivism continuum (Hofstede, 2011; Triandis & Suh, 2002). According to Hofstede's calculation, African countries are more collectivistic than many other countries in the world. Various scholars who also regard African countries as more collectivistic are of the opinion that the culture of the society has an impact on the way individuals construct their identities (Adams et al., 2012, 2016; Fidzani & Read, 2014; Ferguson et al., 2015). For example, collectivistic cultures are associated with a more interdependent self and are relation orientated. A greater interpersonal orientation, focusing more on relational or social identities than the personal ego, has often been associated with African cultures.

Ubuntu highlights the unquestionable interconnectedness of people (Mkhize, 2006; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008). It can be described as a holistic view that is situated in an understanding of the context and focused on a united consciousness and interrelationships with others (Mkhize, 2006; Nsamenang, 2007; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008). Despite the diversity of the African continent, the notion of *ubuntu* seems to be a commonality and distinct to the African identity. Although the term is contested by many, it is regarded as a way of thinking, knowing, and acting

particular to the African socioethical sense of cultural unity (Mkhize, 2006; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008). It is associated with moral norms of openness, kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, respect, cooperation, and affirmation of others (Nsamenang, 2007; Vogel, 2009). It implies communal embeddedness and connectedness that affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others. This can be seen in expressions such as, "It takes a village to raise a child" (socialization is the responsibility of the whole community), "*Motho ke mothe ka babatho babang*" ("I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am"), and "*Umuntu umuntu abantu*" ("a person depends on others just as much as others depend on him/her" or "a person is only a person with [through/because of] other people"; Fidzani & Read, 2014; Haron & Jensen, 2008; Mkhize, 2006; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008).

African theory and social thought do not emphasize the autonomous self ("lonesome individualism") but the becoming of the self through rootedness in interpersonal connectedness and engagement in cultural life. "African 'individuality' is not sovereign but embedded in the psychosocial and emotional matrices of a human community" (Pence & Nsamenang, 2008, p. 26). This differs from the more individualistic accounts of development and individuation proposed by Western scholars such as Freud and Jung. When viewing psychological development from a Western perspective, the outcome points towards understanding one's inner essence, a separation of the self, autonomy, differentiation, and individuation. One of the problematic consequences of this individualistic understanding of the self is a distinction between inner and outer lives, a sharp separation between the inner worlds of thoughts and emotions versus the social world. The African emphasis on an interdependent or relational script thus challenges (or complements) the individualistic ideology of mainstream developmental psychology.

In what this means for identity, African identity is social, and Mkhize (2006) emphasizes that a social identity is not fixed and can be reconstructed through social engagement, as well as social and ritual transformations towards personhood. In constructing an identity, there is thus a "dynamic, irresistible tension" (Mkhize, 2006, p. 194) between person and society. Conceptions of personhood will inevitably link with others and the natural environment. A sense of self emerges through a process of connecting individual personal identity to a changing social identity through group affiliation, identification with traditional social values, and developmental rites that extend individual identity via the assimilation of meaningful social roles and relationships. Personal identity and a sense of community are connected, and social responsibility is needed for full personhood. The shared and social aspects, rather than unique and individual aspects of identity, are emphasized as Africans individuate through connectedness (Pence & Nsamenang, 2008).

A specific example of how the above arguments relate to the understanding of identity development is provided by Nsamenang (2006, 2007, 2013), in his theory of social ontogenesis. Nsamenang (2003, 2006) visualizes human development as a cyclical ontogenesis of systematic socialization. Social ontogenesis is embedded in both biology and socialization and explains how individuals develop through participating in social and cultural life. Nsamenang (2006) explained that the human life cycle develops through three phases of selfhood: First, spiritual selfhood that

starts with conception—or even before, when the ancestral spirit reincarnates—and ends with a ceremony when the newborn's name is conferred; second, social or experiential selfhood consisting of the periods of the newborn, social priming, social apprenticing, social entreé, social internment, adulthood, old age, and biological death; and third, ancestral selfhood following biological death.

It is thus clear that development does not occur in a vacuum. African children live and develop into culturally competent citizens through participation in cultural activities and gradual social integration (Nsamenang, 2006, 2013). The ways of the world (moral life and social values) are learned through a spirit of mutuality and a sense of community. Childcare is shared between parents, siblings, peer groups, neighbors, and the wider society, and educational practices are embedded in daily family, social, and community traditions and routines that provide a socioaffective base for the development of a sense of selfhood (Nsamenang, 2006; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008; Serpell, 2011). In addition to this, the foundational principle of an Africentric developmental ethos is that a child is not actually "raised" but primed to "emerge" into maturity. The youth should be seen as partners and agents of their own developmental learning and afforded participative spaces and opportunities for exploratory learning, child-to-child learning, self-generated learning, and self-education (Nsamenang, 2006; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008). Nsamenang's developmental theory of human ontogenesis can thus be seen in partial alignment with but also going beyond, theories such as Erikson's tenets of psychosocial development, Vygotsky's theoretical spaces/zones of proximal development, and Piaget's theory of interactive–extractive processes (Pence & Nsamenang, 2008).

The Role of the Colonizer: Indigenous and Postcolonial Identities

The story of Africa cannot be told without recognizing colonization, alignment with and reactions against Western colonization, as well as the processes related to decolonization. In the "scramble for Africa," colonial mapmakers created artificial societies by dividing or combining existing social groupings (Mattes, 2004, p. 1). This resulted in deeply embedded divisions in many African cultures. Marginalization and historical trauma serve as the ideological setting and collective psychological context for identity development (Syed & Fish, 2018); it is thus a fundamental necessity to consider the trauma of colonization in order to understand identity.

Indigenous people, the first people of a territory in genealogical, historical, and cultural descent lines, are generally politically, socially, and economically marginalized through conquest and colonization (Vogel, 2009). According to Moran (2011), the term Indigenous identity is often embedded in defensiveness or associated with political movement, with reference to a historical community with a distinct culture, traditions, and language practices that had been transmitted over generations before invasion or colonization. In seminal works such as *Black Skin, White Masks*, and *The Wretched of the Earth*, prominent anti-colonial African writer Franz Fanon analyzes the role of colonialism and Whiteness on the African identity (Musvoto, 2017; Ratele, 2017). Fanon regards Black identity as a navigation against

Whiteness and refers to the importance of class, culture, race, and violence in the quest to find a true African identity. The psychological scarring of colonialism, stemming from irrevocable domination and submission, results in insecurity. For example, reflecting on the identity question in contemporary Nigeria, Suleiman and Maiangwa (2017, p. 270) referred to native–settler dichotomy, north–south essentialization, and Christian–Muslim polarities that result in a combative, fragile, and segmented identity without cultural solidarity (a hydra-headed identity crisis). Biko (2005), too, is of the opinion that colonization condemns indigenous cultures to exist (indeed, to rot) on the margins of European culture. He feels strongly that the rediscovery of a true identity, Black Consciousness, happens through the evolution of the genuine culture. Agency is found in the liberation struggle, in the tension between settler and native, where people can articulate their own destiny and a new identity can be formed.

The African Renaissance, Africans' quest for self-rediscovery and reconstruction, is the movement away from psychological damage towards decolonization, liberation, rediscovery, and rebirth (Sesanti, 2015). Internalized oppression and the atrocities of their history should not continue to define people (Nsamenang, 2013). Moran (2011) argued that many Indigenous peoples in contemporary societies experience only degrees of decolonization since they are still in the process of struggling against and surviving colonial conditions that threaten their authentic lives and identities. The process of moving beyond colonialism is thus still incomplete, and colonial categories still affect contemporary identity constructions. According to Bawa and Ogunyankin (2018), "Africa rising discourses simultaneously challenge and interrupt problematic colonial constructions … still re-centre the West as the progenitor of progress, thereby reiterating the colonial tale" (p. 1). Suleiman and Maiangwa (2017) also mentioned that the current functioning of postcolonial states such as Nigeria accentuates and entrenches the combative ethnoreligious differences created during colonialism. They called on contemporary African societies to take responsibility to decolonize their societies. Mama (2007) acknowledged that although colonialism and globalization impacted economic, political, and paradigmatic development negatively, they have also facilitated an ethic of engagement in postcolonial identities, with a focus on liberation, development, and democratization.

National, Ethnic, and Cultural Identities

A social identity is how one situates oneself in the world (Parekh, 2008). Social psychological perspectives, such as the theories of social identity, self-categorization, integrated threat, and intergroup contact (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Stephan et al., 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), shed light on how people define themselves in relation to the groups with which they are in contact. Cultural diversity challenges and redefines collective (i.e., social) identities. Parekh (2008) warns against the imposing of a unity to "create false antinomies between closed wholes" (p. 36). In divided

countries, people share a citizenship, but not necessarily a collective view of history (Parekh, 2008).

Parekh (2008) regards national identity as a dominant form of collective identity. National identity entails membership in a political community that has evolved over generations with a shared history and memories. From a social identity perspective, ingroup–outgroup inequalities can be overcome by recategorization. In ethnically diverse – or even fragmented – countries, the striving towards a common identity is thus understandable. A stronger national identity might lead to less instability. A national identity can be regarded as a form of "political glue" (Mattes, 2004, p. 1). It is, however, difficult to form a national identity when strong and diverse notions regarding ethnicity, language, tribal membership, and religion exist (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). In what Parekh (2008) called the politics of collective identity, he argued that each society prioritizes a set of norms and beliefs, met by its members with either pride and unity or a need to be liberated from it. In many African countries, national identity is transcendent. While it bridges different forms of identity, it also coexists with strong (sub)group identities (Mattes, 2004).

Ethnic identity is emphasized in plural societies (Adams et al., 2016). In multiethnic sub-Saharan Africa, people define themselves according to ethnolinguistic and tribal affiliations (Adams et al., 2016). Africans' ethnic identification is not uniform and unidimensional, and the salience of ethnicity varies both across and within African countries (Bannon et al., 2004). The salience of ethnic identification has been associated with the role of colonialism, the size of the ethnic group, ethnic inequalities, the power of the core ethnic group, and the struggle for symbolic dominance. Ethnic inequality is the source of much instability and political violence in Africa (Higashijima & Houle, 2017). In their research in sub-Saharan Africa, Higashijima and Houle (2017) demonstrated that between-ethnic group inequality strengthens ethnic identities, while within-group inequality weakens this relationship. Drawing mostly from work in Uganda but also other African countries, Green (2017) argued that national identification will be salient when the core ethnic group is in power, while ethnic group identity will be more important when the specific ethnic group is out of power. Adams et al. (2016) found that exposure to ethnic strain in multicultural societies will result in more salient ethnic identities. Socioeconomic status and individual economic mobility are associated with, and negatively influence commitment to, African identity concepts. According to the research of Bannon et al. (2004), in Kenya and other African countries, the salience of ethnicity results from not only the region's political and economic development but also the individuals' exposure to education, nontraditional occupations, and political competition.

Thus the idea of "mainstream culture" is challenged in the African context. Sub-Saharan contexts are complex and multicultural, with much variation in ethnic groupings, and rarely a clear majority (Green, 2017). Without clear dominant groups in all domains, there are no clear lines between dominant and nondominant in social, political, economic, and cultural spheres (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). The pluralistic nature of sub-Saharan African societies and the complexity of dominance is different from the more binary minority–majority or mainstream–migrant

categorizations in most Western societies (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). Multiethnic/ethnolinguistic diversity (including tribal, ethnic, cultural, and national constructs), and the resultant complexity regarding multidimensionality and intersectionality of these constructs within transitional African societies, is thus clear. African identities, while striving towards some form of unity, will thus always be filled with plurality.

Language

Language is another important symbol of group identity. Language is not only a means of communication but also a marker of identity and a mechanism for self-realization (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Since language is at the core of how people make meaning of the world, it has a deep association with identity. A shared form of speech can construct, consolidate, and strengthen a sense of belonging and cohesion. Language can also play a role in forming a local, regional, or national identity (Simpson, 2008).

Due to colonial endeavors, English and French were prioritized in various African countries. Colonial languages are still regarded as the languages of economic success and higher levels of education and are associated with social prestige and privilege. English and French are seen as a "window into the rest of the world," facilitating globalization and contact with other countries of the world (Simpson, 2008). This is what Hountondji (2009) calls the "lingua franca of international scholarship" (p. 8). English and French are preferred as the medium of education (providing access to bureaucratic structures and better jobs), often at the expense of Indigenous languages (Green, 2017). The practicality of the use of universal languages in government and teaching material moves African languages to the periphery and informal domains, creating a separation between formal education and the social environment (Ouane & Glanz, 2010). Fanon regards the use of a colonized language as predatory and a form of oppression (Musvoto, 2017; Ratele, 2017).

Various national attempts at finding a unifying identity through language can be seen in sub-Saharan Africa. However, due to immense multilingualism and the absence of a majority Indigenous language grouping, no Indigenous language can be regarded as a full representation of a national state. Language can be used as a unifying force towards the creation of a valued national identity and a sense of belonging, such as the spread of Swahili in Tanzania. In the quest for an identity, some countries use the merging of languages as symbols of ethnically neutral local identity, such as "Camfranglias" in Cameroon (a combination of English, French, and Cameroonian languages). While the dominant use of French in Côte d'Ivoire might facilitate an Ivorian identity, it remains on the surface and does not completely conceal deeper ethnic disunities. In South Africa, English is associated with the anti-apartheid movement away from Afrikaner rule, representing hope and opposition to Afrikaans (Simpson, 2008). As a way of promoting the symbolic representativeness of language, in many African countries, a variety of languages are declared national languages. This acceptance of multiple languages and support of

pluralism might in itself be seen as a form of national unity (Simpson, 2008). These arguments allude to the difficulty of finding an identity through language in Africa.

Africans have a rich background of storytelling that is deeply embedded in their sense of who they are. African languages and the oral traditions of Indigenous societies should be recognized as important sources of identity (Moran, 2011; Ouane & Glanz, 2010). The voices of people who are often muted and marginalized should be heard. This dialogue is based on connectedness and often entails a struggle against dominant cultural scripts (Mkhize, 2006; Wiredu, 2004). It corresponds with the tenets of critical race theory, where storytelling and counter-storytelling are used as mechanisms to give voice to the silenced and to challenge the ideology, hegemony, and distortions of racism, sexism, and classism. In this dialogue, a space is created for a grounded approach in which lived experiences can be foregrounded and reframed. In addition to exposing privilege and complacency, this can lead to liberation (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Globalization and Transition

Living in the contemporary context of an interdependent global world, it is important to recognize that sub-Saharan Africa does not exist in isolation. Africa is in conversation with various strong forces from the West and the East. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017) referred to the "global melting pot" (p. 119) to explain how, through multicultural contact, cultural identities have become more fluid.

Interdependence is seen in the common challenges faced by humanity, such as climate change, the spread of disease, and terrorism. This requires a focus on collective solutions and enforces the realization that, even if physically far removed, we are involved in a shared humanity. Also, the revolution of transport, import–export practices, and the media bring the people of the world and various cultural communities into contact with each other. This necessitates a reflection on diversity, not only between but also within cultural settings, requiring a reconsideration and reconstruction of identities (Parekh, 2008). In this regard, Parekh (2008) distinguishes between three interrelated identities: a personal identity (what makes one unique), a social identity (focused on membership of a particular group or collective), and a human identity (being part of the universal human community). The universal human identity becomes real and less abstract when rooted in particular identities and within specific contexts. Through globalization, traditional identities (such as national, ethnic, cultural, and religious identities) are challenged (Parekh, 2008).

Globalization challenges sub-Saharan African societies to consider more deeply what it means to be African. In reaction to globalization, some members of communities want to incorporate new waves into their way of life, while others want to strengthen traditional forms of life (Parekh, 2008). Nsamenang (2003) refers to this as the interface between traditionalism and globalization. While some will embrace change, incorporate new trends, and enjoy the developments from the West, others will opt for a more traditionalist view, wanting to maintain cultural tradition. Some,

even more interestingly, will find a balance or combination. For example, in analyzing the items Batswana adolescents use to express their identities in their bedrooms and personal spaces, Fidzani and Read (2014) found an obvious absence of traditional cultural items and a strong preference for Western (European and North American) items, indicative of the adolescents in Botswana exploring new cultural identities in the face of multicultural exposure. In contrast to this, Samper (2004) found a hankering for the past and tradition, as well as the promotion of African heritage, among Kenyan rappers. Examples of a more hybrid approach to identity are provided in the work of Ferguson et al. (2015, 2017).

In addition to the above, in developing countries, national identity experiences a difficult tension between reacting to global change and remaining the same. Sub-Saharan Africa is often described as developing, emerging, transitional, and "in the making." This has various implications for identity formation. Erikson was of the opinion that a changing historical and social context may hamper the construction of a healthy identity, as it is difficult to connect the past to the future (Syed & Fish, 2018). Individuals find personal continuity over time, that is, temporal integration, through synthesizing their past, present, and future selves (Syed, 2017). The way in which individuals maintain their sense of self during transition is intricate. In a context of transition, people are prompted to redefine themselves and their roles in their societies, in their nations, and in the world (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). For example, in post-apartheid South Africa, many individuals have needed to rethink their identities and redefine themselves, their identity structures and aspirations being shaped in the context of sociopolitical transformation (Matthews, 2011).

As social power shifts when countries transition, the practices that have been confirmed by established social spaces and institutions are also challenged (Moolman, 2013). The role of changing norms in aspects such as gender identity, sexual identity, and career identity need to be recognized. This relates to the openness (and pride) or restrictions (or shame) with which the self can be explored. In more liberal cultures, certain aspects of identity might be taken for granted, while in more traditional cultures, these same aspects might be hidden or contested. For example, in their research in South Africa, Shefer et al. (2000) explained how heterosexual relationships are bound in gender inequality and violence against women. Moolman (2013) considered the importance of the intersectionality of race, class, sexuality, and gender and the importance of contesting "taken-for-granted social identities" (p. 93).

It is in this combination of interconnection and heterogeneity, in the tension between following global trends and adhering to traditional values, that a more nuanced identity is formed. Bayart (2005) captured this sentiment by saying, "the modern world is haunted by the specter of difference vanishing. It fears that everything will become uniform and, as a result, there is a general anxiety with regard to identity" (p. 1).

Acculturation

Closely related to the theme of globalization is acculturation, which also emerges as a prominent topic when considering identity in Africa. Acculturation in its core refers to the changes that occur when individuals and cultures that differ from each other are in contact (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017; Berry, 2013). It relates to the complex ways in which individuals living in an increasingly multicultural and globalized society negotiate multiple identities.

Africans are challenged to embrace diversity inside and outside their borders and thus negotiate various identities between different domains of varied salience (Adams & Ali, 2016; Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017). Considering the complex interplay that exists between various cultures, and in the absence of one dominant culture, various theorists have advocated for a move beyond unidirectional or even bidirectional acculturation (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017; Mkhize, 2004). Mkhize (2004) criticized selective or unidimensional acculturation and highlighted the dangers of unilateral acculturation of Africa into the ways of the West. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017) shed light on the complexity of acculturation in referring to multidimensional acculturation models and their impact on identity development. In the multidimensional model of acculturation, plural cultural contexts are acknowledged. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017) referred to polyculturalism, wherein individuals identify with various groupings and cultures. This challenges individuals to embrace the multifaceted realities of their lives, requiring continuous negotiation, integration, and reintegration, resulting in more complex and fluid identities.

Another interesting form of acculturation, which is particularly relevant in sub-Saharan Africa, is remote acculturation. The influence of the West through indirect means, such as the media and social media, is a reality in many African countries (Ferguson & Adams, 2015; Ferguson et al., 2015, 2017). Remote acculturation bring geographically and historically separate groups of people into contact. It provides people with the opportunity to include multiple distant, non-native worlds into local spaces, with many options for identity exploration and many possibilities to imagine a future. This might also result in polyculturalism, where individuals identify with various groupings in what Ferguson et al. (2017) called *AmeriBritSouthAfricanZambian* in one of their articles. This polyculturalism will inevitably be reflected in different combinations and variations of multicultural identities. Remote acculturation is a new twenty-first-century mechanism through which individuals can actively pursue their own development by negotiating global ideals and local realities (Ferguson & Adams, 2015). Since it is not limited to the physical milieu nor dependent on geographical proximity, it can be a powerful form of globalization and acculturation for people from Africa.

Religion and Spirituality

Alongside ethnicity and language, the importance of religion as a group identity should be recognized (Simpson, 2008). Religion and traditional spirituality play an important role in many African cultures. For Africans, "the whole of existence is a religious phenomenon, man is a deeply religious being living in a religious universe" (Mbiti, 1990, p. 15). Religion is an ontological phenomenon, and African traditional religion is interwoven into all aspects of life (Haron & Jensen, 2008; Mbiti, 1990). Although conventional religious categories do not do justice to religion in Africa, the important religious strands in contemporary Africa can be categorized as African theology, Christianity, and Islam (Nsamenang, 2007; Suleiman & Maiangwa, 2017).

Just like other religious traditions across the world, African religion is evolving, influenced by colonialism, postcolonialism, secularization, modernization, and globalization (Haron & Jensen, 2008). The evangelistic fervor of colonial times (mostly Christian and Islam) banned traditional African religions. Despite persistent missionary activities, traditional religion remained resilient (Haron & Jensen, 2008). While African concepts of spirituality are diverse, a distinctive feature is the spiritual phenomenon of ancestral consciousness, the belief that a person's spirit continues to exist in some form and that these ancestral spirits (or the living dead) have a strong emotional bond with living descendants. Ancestral spirits can communicate and provide strength and comfort through dreams or through an *Isangoma* as medium (Bojuwoye & Edwards, 2011; Hlatshwayo et al., 2018; Mbiti, 1990). Vogel (2009) also refers to the anthropocentric perspective whereby human beings and their ancestors are connected. Ancestral consciousness and beliefs in Africa include the experiences, customs, and rituals in memory of personal, familial, and communal ancestors, revealing the universal and endless cyclical nature of life (Bojuwoye & Edwards, 2011). In African cosmology, traditional healers use a holistic approach, including physical, mental, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects (Simwaka et al., 2007).

Allegiance to diverse and sometimes competing religious traditions, as well as exposure to conflicting secular values introduced by globalization, disrupts religious homogeneity and results in a religious pluralism that Haron and Jensen (2008) call a schizophrenic identity (p. 191). According to Nsamenang (2007), Africans are comfortable with integrating the values of indigenous and Christian religions, as well as the practices of ethnomedicine and biomedicine. Many religions in Africa have elements of both traditional and Christian values (Bojuwoye & Edwards, 2011; Hlatshwayo et al., 2018; Mbiti, 1990; Simwaka et al., 2007). Haron and Jensen described this fluidity as a marriage of convenience. This existential hybridism can either be edified as innovative and creative or vilified as absurd and primitive (Nsamenang, 2007).

Symbols, Stories, Poetry, and Folklore

Identity formation is also related to how individuals retain cultural symbols (scripts, sayings, images, symbols, and ways of doing; Mkhize, 2006). Simpson (2008) refers to the importance of national symbols, landmarks, sports teams, and music as identity markers. Clothing, art, and music can also be used as an expression of identity. For example, one of Africa's richest and oldest dress cultures, that of Benin, was rejected during colonialism and abandoned in the face of Christianity. Okpokunu et al. (2005) associate this with a loss of cultural security and identity and regard contemporary Benin dressing as an attempt to explore and promote African identities in modern Africa. Another example of creative art as identity work is the weavers in northwestern Senegal, who regard their weaving as an expression of their identities (Cochrane, 2009). Samper (2004) explained how Kenyan rappers use music to reclaim youth identity. Through music, they confront social issues, promote the relevance of African heritage in young people's definition of self, integrate tradition and modernity, and bridge the gap between the local and the global in order to reinvigorate individual and group identity among Kenyan youth.

The role of poetry and prose in identity work has also been explored in Africa. For example, Musvoto (2017) described how Zimunya, one of the most prolific Zimbabwean poets, uses his collection of poetry, *Thought-Tracks*, to reimagine the past, cultural spaces, and precolonial identity. Another example of the quest for an identity is the archetypal modern African novel, *Things Fall Apart*, written by Nigerian author Chinua Achebe (1958). While written in English, it portrays an insider's view on precolonial life in a local community and the arrival of British colonialism and Christian missionaries. It relates both the internal dynamics, ambiguity, and conflicts of a local society and the ethnocentrism and arrogant presence of the West and the resulting cross-cultural misunderstanding. In doing so, Achebe reflects on African identity, nationalism, and decolonization. He counters stereotypes of Africa and portrays the complex nature of cultural identity and change (Gandhi, 2012).

In addition to the symbols mentioned above, the meaning of places (such as oceans, mountains, forests, grasslands, deserts, lakes, and rivers) shapes people's cultural and spiritual experiences and subsequently also worldviews and identities. This view is echoed by statements such as: "each one of us is as intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as are the famous jacaranda trees of Pretoria and the mimosa trees of the bushveld" (Mandela, 1994) and "I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land" (Mbeki, 1996). According to Sone (2017), cultural identity in Cameroon is resonated in the contrasts in the ecosystems and its many symbolic places.

In conclusion, through the arguments above, it is clear that reflections on an African philosophy and worldview (such as considering what it means to be African and the individualism–collectivism debate), political and socioeconomic trends (such as colonization, globalization, transition, and acculturation), and a

multiplicity of indigenous, postcolonial, national, ethnic, and cultural identities (embedded in language, religion, spirituality, symbols, and stories) result in rich and unique African identities (as opposed to a single African Identity).

Future Directions and Implications for Sub-Saharan African Identity Research

There is not one Africa. "Africa ought to be seen as constructed, abstract, material, plural and confusing in order to account for its complexities" (Bawa & Ogunyankin, 2018, p. 1). Attempts to explain what constitutes identity in sub-Saharan Africa should refrain from finding a uniform and unanimous view. Just as identity across the world is multifaceted, with foci on various content areas and processes, even more so is this true in sub-Saharan Africa.

The aim of this chapter was to synthesize certain common themes that are prominent in sub-Saharan African identities. Trends in the sub-Sahara African identity discourse were summarized, with a specific focus on the nuances, unique applications, and contextual variations in identity themes. This concluding section will reflect on some critical questions and propose suggestions for the advancement and development of sub-Saharan African identity research.

"The field of identity development needs an identity" (McLean & Syed, 2015). This introductory statement by the editors of the *Oxford Handbook of Identity Development* alludes to the fragmented nature of identity studies worldwide. This complexity is also evident in identity studies in Africa. As in other countries, there is a vast interest in studying this field, and many have focused on the topic. Still, an overarching framework is not clear.

Throughout this chapter, there was evidence of both universal/transferable (sameness) and unique/novel (difference) themes. Certain common threads are clear in discussions around, for example, globalization. In addition to this, conversations regarding national identity, ethnic identity struggles, and identity politics are surely not unique to Africa. However, two aspects that have specific prominence in the sub-Saharan African identity setting need highlighting.

First, the diverse and heterogeneous nature of the subcontinent in terms of its geopolitical, multiethnic, and multilingual nature provides a fertile ground for contemplating what identity means for the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa. While heterogeneity may complicate unity, it also instigates a deep deliberation. Diversity provides a lens for considering identity. Ethnolinguistic heterogeneity, and the resulting intergroup comparisons, conflicts, and interactions, creates a variety of vantage points from which to view, understand, and reconstruct one's identity.

Second, pertinent challenges in Africa, such as the liberation from the oppressive influence of the colonizer and the West, have acted as catalysts for a concerted movement to find a true African identity that is not measured or judged by restrictive unidimensional models. While this is an ongoing quest, finding an identity that

is true to the rhythm of Africa is clearly noticeable in sub-Saharan African identity research.

This has certain implications for future research on sub-Saharan African identities. First, in his work and philosophy, Nietzsche alluded to the importance of respecting that there are no facts, only interpretations. This is very true when theorizing on identity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Rather than a quest to find a decontextualized, unified, and universal truth, there is a need to respect and provide space for a variety of nuances. To truly embrace the value of diversity and pluralism, researchers should be mindful of Hountondji's (2009) and Nwoye's (2017a, b) warnings of unanimist illusions and masquerading universal psychologies. Researchers should set out to find contextually responsive and culturally appropriate truths that resonate with and contribute to the life circumstances of the people of Africa (Serpell, 2014).

Second, Hountondji (2009) criticizes that much that is said about Africa is "extraverted" (p. 1) and entails a vertical discussion that is orientated towards the theoretical interests and practical needs of the Global North. In addition to this, many theoretical and empirical deliberations on what it means to be African emerge from non-African scholars, resulting in a philosophy for Africans rather than a philosophy from Africans (Nsamenang, 2003, 2013; Serpell, 2014). Recognizing Foucault's warning on "the indignity of speaking for others," and in moving the field of identity studies in Africa forward, the majority of voices joining the discussion should be from Africa.

Third, considering the diverse nature of its peoples and the intricate ingroup–outgroup relations in the absence of clear dominant groups necessitates a reflection on identity from a multidimensional intergroup/acculturation approach. Not enough is known about acculturation in multicultural Africa. Adams and Van de Vijver (2017) suggest that scientific studies towards understanding identity, intergroup relations, and acculturation in African societies should incorporate both emic (more culture-specific and more qualitative) and etic (cross-cultural and more quantitative) approaches. In addition, these models should account for remote cultures (see remote acculturation) which also bear influence on the identity aspects in sub-Saharan Africa.

Fourth, considering the diversity of the continent, models that allow for multidimensionality and that incorporate complexity should be prioritized. While this is true of many identity models, the more integrative and ecocultural models (Adams & Van de Vijver, 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Nsamenang, 2003, 2013; Serpell, 2014) seem appropriate. Lessons learned from Western models might be incorporated, but models suitable for local contexts should be given precedence. In addition to this, since many African countries are endeavoring to acknowledge and integrate an array of formal and informal power relations (Solomon, 2015), identity studies can be informed by theories that deliberate power, such as critical race theory, feminist studies, and perspectives on intersectionality. While both status and narrative approaches to identity are applicable, oral culture and the importance of dialogue in African settings lend themselves to a narrative approach.

In writing this chapter, there is a deep awareness that richness in identity is found in the tension between difference and sameness and that the depth of identity is facilitated by an honest reflection on how to balance these combinations.

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Chapter 3
Identity Development in East Asia

Kazumi Sugimura, Tomotaka Umemura, and Larry J. Nelson

Introduction

Young people develop a coherent sense of identity as they strive to choose and adhere to a specific set of goals, values, and beliefs during adolescence (Erikson, 1968) and emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2014). As youth do not live in a social vacuum, they are immersed in the cultural values emphasized in their respective societies during the process of identity formation (Phinney & Baldelomar, 2011). This creates nuanced features of identity and fashions diverse patterns of identity formation processes (Schwartz et al., 2012). Furthermore, in this era of globalization, people in many East Asian nations are experiencing a shift of cultural values, from emphasizing traditional collectivism to placing greater emphasis on individualism (Santos et al., 2017). Each nation now has a unique mixture of individualism and collectivism. Moreover, individualism and collectivism involve a variety of dimensions (Oyserman et al., 2002) that are all influenced in unique ways by globalization and, in turn, appear to be reflected in the processes and consequences of identity formation in a number of ways (Côté & Levine, 2015).

In this chapter, we review recent advances in research on identity formation in East Asian adolescents and emerging adults and describe (a) the characteristics of identity formation, (b) the distinct features of psychosocial problems as related to identity formation, and (c) the antecedents and mechanisms relevant to these features of identity formation among youth in this region. We mainly focus on the research on identity development in young Japanese people but also explore how the issues observed in Japan can be shared with youth in other East Asian regions

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_3

such as China and Taiwan. Overall, we suggest that contemporary East Asian youth are facing specific challenges for identity formation derived both from the contexts of traditional cultural values (i.e., collectivism) and from the contexts of changing cultural values (i.e., shifting toward a greater emphasis on individualism). In the end, we also suggest that, despite a recent growing body of research on identity formation in East Asia, more research using developmental theories (personality development theory and attachment theory) and the cultural psychology approach are needed to explore more detailed and unique processes of identity formation in East Asian countries.

Identity

Identity is defined as a sense of self, formed through a dynamic interplay between synthesis and confusion, in which healthy identity development is represented as a predominance of synthesis over confusion (Erikson, 1968). Identity synthesis represents a coherent and consistent sense of self over time and across situations, while identity confusion represents a fragmented, changeable, and confused sense of self (Schwartz et al., 2009).

Drawing upon Erikson's theory, Marcia (1966) posited two key components of identity formation: *exploration* and *commitment*. Exploration refers to the process of actively searching for one's own goals, values, and beliefs in life, while commitment involves making a firm choice regarding these goals, values, and beliefs. Four identity statuses are based upon combinations of these two dimensions: *achievement* (commitment following exploration), *foreclosure* (commitment with no exploration), *moratorium* (ongoing exploration, weak commitment), and *diffusion* (neither commitment nor exploration). Recent major extensions of Marcia's model have proposed to capture the process of forming and changing identity over time: the five-dimensional identity model (i.e., three exploration dimensions and two commitment dimensions; Luyckx et al., 2008) and the three-factor identity model (i.e., commitment, in-depth exploration, and reconsideration of commitment; Crocetti et al., 2008).

These models of identity formation have been generally applied to youth in East Asian nations including China (see Cheng & Berman, 2012, for a review), Japan (see Sugimura & Mizokami, 2012, for a review), and Taiwan (e.g., Lee et al., 2010). To date, a good amount of evidence has been gathered for Japanese youth (e.g., Hatano & Sugimura, 2017; Hatano et al., 2016; Sugimura et al., 2015; Sugimura et al., 2018), but studies focusing on youth in China and Taiwan are scant. However, there are existing cross-cultural studies that include youth from those three countries that are useful in helping us understand general pictures of identity formation in East Asia with reference to that process in Western countries (Berman et al., 2011; Crocetti et al., 2015).

Individualism and Collectivism

Traditionally, many countries in East Asia have been referred to as collectivistic societies. A collectivistic society is one in which individual and group goals are interdependent. Collectivistic cultures are often contrasted with individualistic societies, which emphasize the independence of personal and group goals, with priority given to the former (Triandis, 1995). In the field of identity research, this distinction of cultural values has often been closely tied to two different views: that of the independent and that of the interdependent self (e.g., Petrova & Schwartz, 2017; Phinney & Baldelomar, 2011). According to Markus and Kitayama (2010), many Western individualistic cultures place primary importance on distinguishing oneself as a unique, autonomous individual. In this context, the self is construed as largely independent from others (*independence*). On the other hand, in East Asian societies, maintaining harmonious relationships with others is a primary goal. In this context, the self is construed as connected and interdependent with others (*interdependence*).

Collectivism, or interdependence, is a multidimensional construct including values such as dependence and commitment to others, harmony in group orientation, and flexibility of the self across situations (for individualism and collectivism, see Oyserman et al., 2002; for independence and interdependence, see Vignoles et al., 2016). The nature of collectivism (or interdependence) tends to be rather similar across East Asian countries, even while considering numerous country-specific differences. For instance, in Japan, one of the crucial elements of collectivism refers to emotional relatedness, such as attuning to other people's feelings and expectations (Sugimura & Mizokami, 2012). Because of this, Japanese parents socialize their children and adolescents to be sensitive to these aspects (Rothbaum et al., 2000). In China, the principle of Confucianism and filial piety, which prescribes respect, love, reverence, and obedience toward one's parents and elders (Confucius, ca. 500/2015), traditionally serves as a predominant ideological guideline for social activities. Taken together, the central notion of collectivism consists of a sense of obligation and responsibility that emphasizes the needs and interests of the family and community (Badger et al., 2006). These various aspects of collectivism are interwoven with the process of identity formation.

Identity Formation and the Cultural Emphasis on Collectivism

Theoretically, due to the cultural emphasis on collectivism over individualism, the process of identity formation among youth in East Asia has been characterized by a greater concern for others and groups. To develop a sense of identity, adolescents and emerging adults in East Asia are assumed to carefully consider others' perspectives in the process of identity exploration and explore limited (or narrow) options

in important life areas, such as work and love, provided by authority figures (Phinney & Baldelomar, 2011). For example, sensitivity to others' perspectives is expressed by Japanese youth in a straightforward way (Sugimura, 2007). In Sugimura's study, female emerging adults were asked to describe how they made use of and incorporated significant others' opinions, needs, and expectations into their own identity exploration. Results indicated that they recognized their own needs and others' expectations simultaneously during the process of identity exploration, suggesting that self and other are inseparable. Also, some youth struggled to resolve overt disagreements between self and others and to integrate their own and others' perspectives into a coherent sense of identity.

Another example of sensitivity to others is found at work in China. In examining the extent to which young people see themselves as adults and the factors that influence that self-view, a list of possible criteria for adulthood was presented to Chinese emerging adults (Nelson et al., 2004). Results showed that 89% of participants endorsed "capable of supporting parents financially" as a requisite criterion for adulthood. In comparison, in the United States, this criterion tends to rank near the very bottom of criteria deemed necessary for adulthood. For example, in one US study, only 16% of participants considered this a necessary criterion for adulthood (Nelson, 2003). Although this is not a finding related to identity directly, it reflects the extent to which Chinese young people are making decisions during the transition to adulthood with an ever-present sense of obligation to others, especially parents (i.e., filial piety).

Indeed, taken together, it appears that there are clear cultural differences in the lives of young people in East Asia that result from a more collectivistic versus individualistic emphasis, with the degree of interweaving the perspectives of others with one's own perspective being much greater, on average, in youth in East Asia than among their Western peers. In this regard, cross-cultural studies are needed to compare youth in East Asia and those in individualistic cultures concerning the ways and degree to which youth make use of and incorporate others' perspectives into their own identity exploration.

It is important to study the impact of collectivistic values on identity development in East Asia because the cultural emphasis on incorporating the perspective of others into decisions made by young people may have significant ramifications for identity processes. It may be that the cultural requisite to consider the perspective of others restricts the amount of identity exploration that occurs, as the number of options for the course of one's life is limited to those approved of by others (e.g., parents). Indeed, it may be that having to incorporate so many external perspectives may prolong the period of identity exploration because a concern about hurting any number of these individuals' feelings may hinder young people from committing to one single identity. There is growing evidence from existing comparative studies to support this notion. For example, Berman et al. (2011) indicate that exploration with a wide range of options might not result in a coherent personal sense of identity in youth in East Asia (i.e., China, Japan, and Taiwan), compared with youth in the United States. It has also been shown that youths' identity in China, Japan, and Taiwan are characterized by a combination of low commitment and high

reconsideration of commitment (considering alternative commitments because the current ones are no longer satisfactory), compared with those in European countries (Crocetti et al., 2015). This possibly suggests that the collectivistic need to consider multiple perspectives from others results in difficulty in committing to an identity.

The discouragement to explore possibilities in love and work seems to be especially evident in China, due to the high pressure for controlling or suppressing one's own needs or desires and for expressing behaviors that contribute to group functioning. In particular, due to the cultural emphasis on filial piety, it is believed that one's own wishes are secondary to the wishes and desires of one's parents, and this belief may limit the extent to which young people in China are able to explore possible identities. As a result, it has been argued that identity exploration may not be considered a major developmental task for young people during emerging adulthood (Nelson & Chen, 2007).

It should briefly be noted that limits on exploration in East Asia come from other sources than just the cultural emphasis on adhering to the expectations of others. Options to explore may be restricted by educational, employment, and other familial factors as well. In a study with Taiwanese adolescents, Lee and Beckert (2012) demonstrated that youth with narrower (or nonexistent) opportunities for exploration (i.e., foreclosure) experienced higher levels of self-identified collectivism. Also, Nelson and Chen (2007) pointed out a great discrepancy in the opportunity of identity exploration between college- and non-college-bound youth in China. Only about 20% of young people in China are able to pursue a college education (Chen & Wang, 2010), thereby significantly limiting options to explore for a large number of young people. Indeed, we know very little about identity development for this "missing majority" (i.e., nonstudents; Nelson & Chen, 2007, p. 90) in China or elsewhere in East Asia, but it can only be expected that factors such as a lack of educational opportunities, poverty, and where one lives (rural vs. urban settings) limit exploration and thereby impact identity development.

In sum, although opportunities to explore one's identity may be affected by situational factors (e.g., poverty, educational options, rural settings) in East Asia, limited exploration may be largely due to the collectivistic values of the cultures that place emphasis on considering the perspectives of others in all that one does. Indeed, limited exploration is typically considered undesirable in Western cultural contexts, but the emerging, albeit little, evidence indicates that limited exploration may be the norm in some East Asian countries (e.g., China) or regarded as a strategy that some East Asian young people (e.g., Japanese youth) employ to find a balance between striving to achieve a developmental task (identity formation) and fulfilling social demands for maintaining a cultural value system (collectivism). However, there is also a small (but growing) body of research showing variation in the extent to which young people endorse collectivistic values (e.g., filial piety; Jorgensen et al., 2017). Such findings suggest that the levels of individualism and individualization at the *individual level* may affect young people's styles of identity exploration, even within East Asian nations. Hence, with increasing Western influence resulting in a greater shift from collectivism to individualism in East Asia, there is a need to consider differences *across* countries as well as individual differences *within* countries

concerning the extent to which collectivistic values (including all aspects of this multidimensional construct) are endorsed, and, as a result, identity exploration and commitment vary accordingly.

Identity Formation in a Society Moving from Collectivism to Individualism

In the era of globalization, the dichotomization of individualism versus collectivism and Western versus non-Western cultures has been considered less accurate. As traditional collectivist norms are merged with modern individualistic ones, many adolescents and emerging adults in East Asia are seeking new ways of balancing self and others (or groups) in their sense of identity. Each nation has a unique mixture of individualism and collectivism, and this appears to be reflected in the process and consequences of identity formation in a number of ways.

In contemporary Japan, the transition to adulthood is characterized as relatively individualized, with a diminishing power of traditional social norms (Côté & Levine, 2015). Japanese society has increasingly emphasized individuation and agency; educational reform since the 1990s has focused more on individual autonomy in learning and choosing one's own career, and hence, children and adolescents are strongly encouraged to engage in active identity exploration in school settings (Sugimura & Mizokami, 2012). Paradoxically, youth do not have much support for their identity formation, because previous generations may no longer be considered role models, as their transition to adulthood occurred in a context of very different values. As a result, contemporary Japanese youth are assumed to experience difficulty in forming commitments that used to be easier to achieve in previous generations who had plenty of role models in proximal contexts. In the changing society, old models and norms no longer provide youth with identity and security, and hence, there are no longer normative paths to adulthood (Brinton, 2011).

Empirical evidence has supported the notion that young people in Japan experience difficulty in making commitments and also demonstrated that a considerable number of young Japanese people spend their entire adolescence holding an apathetic attitude toward identity formation. It is striking that about 70% of youth were categorized in the identity status trajectories that reflect low commitment (i.e., the moratorium, diffusion, and moratorium to diffusion trajectories) throughout adolescence (Hatano & Sugimura, 2017). Hatano and Sugimura (2017) also found that this was more evident in urban youth than rural youth, indicating that an excessive amount of information and options for the future in urban settings may increase the risk of identity confusion – possibly because they do not have examples of how to explore so many options. In addition, youth in urban areas who need to adjust to new societal roles may encounter a gap in values and norms from previous generations, whereas youth in rural areas may not face such a wide generation gap. Future research needs to explore whether these interpretations of results are correct in Japanese youth.

As the shift of cultural values from collectivism toward individualism is more evident in urban than rural youth (Greenfield, 2016), similar evidence for differences between urban and rural young people have also been uncovered by a study conducted with youth in Taiwan. Lee et al. (2010) examined identity formation of Taiwanese rural and urban youth in relation to cultural value orientation (individualism, transitional, and collectivism) and reported results comparable to what was found in Japan: Urban adolescents were much more likely to be in moratorium than their rural peers. Moreover, Lee and colleagues also reported that Taiwanese adolescents who self-identified as collectivistic were more likely to reach achieved status and less likely to be diffused than either the individualistic or transitional groups. These findings imply that having multiple options, which urban youth (or youth living in more individualized contexts) are likely to have, may pose challenges in making identity commitments for young people in Taiwan, as well as Japan.

Furthermore, the shift from collectivism to individualism in East Asia can increase young people's risk of forming a fragmented, changeable, and fragile identity. Indeed, some distinctive features of psychosocial problems closely related to identity formation have been documented in each of the East Asian nations. In Japan, a mental health problem characterized by extreme social withdrawal – called *hikikomori* in Japanese – has been reported since around 2000 (Kato et al., 2011). The Japanese government reported that about 1.6% of young people aged 15–39 years have this syndrome (Cabinet Office, 2012). These young people withdraw into their homes and minimize social contacts in order to avoid failure in making the transition to adulthood. This growing problem represents young people's difficulties in navigating the transition from adolescence to adulthood in an affluent but complex society of shifting values from collectivism to individualism. Indeed, it is in this context of a poorly normed and a more individualized social era than that of previous eras that *hikikomori* appears to have a particularly negative impact on identity formation. It has been shown that young Japanese people in the diffusion status revealed a higher level of *hikikomori* symptoms than those in the achievement status (Hihara et al., 2019). It appears that withdrawing from the world around them precludes young people from being able to explore possible identities and, as a result, keeps them from achieving identity commitment. Taken together, young Japanese people now need to enter adult society (e.g., the workforce) without the support and security from traditional roles and social structures (Arnett et al., 2014). This is leaving many Japanese young people floundering, generally, and struggling with identity formation, specifically.

The problem of changing values as related to identity development may be even worse in China. Indeed, due to internal sociopolitical reforms such as the "opening up policy" and "one-child policy," there is a growing shift of cultural values that appears to be causing complicated outcomes regarding identity development among Chinese youth (Cheng & Berman, 2012). Specifically, the increasing influence of Western ideas and values is resulting in a shift from collectivism to individualism that is affecting groups and individuals within China. First, the benefits of a rapid economic rise and increased opportunities for the future are often experienced primarily by urban, wealthy, college-bound youth. For instance, urban college students

may enjoy the luxury of exploring areas of work as they pursue an education; in contrast, other young people may need to more quickly choose a career and enter the workplace with very few options from which to choose and, therefore, very limited identity exploration (Nelson & Chen, 2007). Such huge inequality between social classes formed in today's contemporary globalized society is assumed to produce marginalized youth who form problematic identities (Hihara et al., 2018). In sum, although scant, the research is starting to suggest differences between groups (e.g., marginalized vs. privileged youth) of Chinese young people in their identity development because of economic and political reforms that impact young people differently depending on their circumstances.

The increasing influence of Western ideas and values is also resulting in a shift from collectivistic values to individualistic values within individuals. Specifically, with increasing levels of Western influence, there is evidence to suggest that young people are starting to vary in the extent to which they adhere to cultural notions of filial piety, and these individual differences in young people's devotion to parents appear to moderate the impact of parenting on the well-being (e.g., self-esteem) of emerging adults in China (Jorgensen et al., 2017). Hence, for a growing number of young people, identity exploration may become a greater priority in their lives – but at the expense of devotion to their parents. Future work is needed to examine how individual differences within China in the extent to which young people embrace collectivistic and/or individualistic values may influence the processes of identity exploration and commitment.

Taken together, empirical attempts to examine the impact of cultural shifts in values on psychosocial development in Chinese youth have just recently started (see Chen et al., 2017, for a review), but the growing evidence suggests that identity development will be a key domain of development that is impacted by the changes. Indeed, future studies should pay special attention to the role that shifting cultural values play in changes in the identity processes experienced by young people across and within countries, not only in contemporary Chinese society but in all East Asian countries.

New Exercises in Identity Development

In this final section, we explore two important features of identity formation in East Asia: developmental antecedents and cultural meanings. To understand developmental antecedents of identity formation in the context of East Asia, two useful major developmental theories are applicable: personality development theory (McAdams & Olson, 2010) and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Furthermore, we will discuss how, in order to deepen understanding of the cultural meanings of identity formation in East Asian youth, the cultural psychology approach should be employed (see Mistry & Dutta, 2015).

Although studies have revealed important factors that influence different outcomes of identity formation, such as cultural value differences (Lee et al., 2010) and regional differences (Hatano & Sugimura, 2017; Lee et al., 2010), they are not the key components of *developmental* antecedents. Researchers should do more to investigate the personal (e.g., personality) and relational attributes (e.g., attachment)

acquired during childhood and adolescence that give individuals the skills and capacities to negotiate developmental challenges in changing societies in order to explore identity options in contemporary (and complicated) adolescence and emerging adulthood. We believe it is extremely important to examine the developmental antecedents (i.e., aspects of personal and relational competence) that might account for individual differences in identity exploration and commitment, given that identity development is a dynamic process of person–context interactions (Kunnen, 2012; see also Witherington, 2015).

Personality Development Theory

We propose that in societies that would previously have been described as almost entirely collectivistic but that are now rapidly shifting toward individualism, children and adolescents are required to develop and exercise a sense of *agency* – traditionally less valued and pronounced in collectivistic cultural contexts – in aspects both of their relationships and their accomplishments, in order to optimally explore their sense of identity. Agency is a personality trait that articulates personal motivation, plans, and values and that organizes one's own life around goal pursuit in a consistent manner (McAdams & Olson, 2010). McAdams and Olson proposed that agency, which is based on dispositional personality traits (i.e., the Big Five) and formulated through childhood and adolescence, enables youth to successfully implement their acts of exploring and selecting (or integrating) identity options during emerging adulthood.

Côté and colleagues provided empirical evidence for the importance of agency in identity formation with samples of youth in the United States and Japan (Côté et al., 2016). Using a multidimensional construct of agency including self-esteem, purpose in life, ego strength, and internal locus of control, they demonstrated that the dimensions of agency that are effective in dealing with individualization (e.g., internal locus of control) were more important to identity formation among American youth, whereas dimensions of agency that are effective in coping with novel and difficult situations (e.g., ego strength) were more important among Japanese youth. In sum, emerging individualism in Japan may require young people to develop and exercise agentic attributes such as ego strength that enable them to tackle challenging tasks of identity formation in a complex society, where many young people experience a threat to identity integration (or self-*continuity*) caused by social, cultural, and generational *discontinuity* (Syed & Fish, 2018).

Attachment Theory

The relational context of identity formation should be further elaborated in light of relational resources for young people's proactive exploration and ability to cope with difficulty in forming identity in East Asian contexts. Attachment theory

(Bowlby, 1969/1982) provides a fruitful framework to understand identity development around adolescents in a changing world. In Erikson's (1950) model, caregivers provide a basic condition in which children recognize the outside world as a trustworthy and secure place (i.e., basic trust). Drawing upon a model from attachment theory (Ainsworth et al., 1978), this basic trust facilitates the child's ability to explore from the secure base provided by the attachment figure in each developmental period in relation to their caregivers (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2018). Children develop an expectation that they can safely and confidently explore the world to pursue new experiences while immediately being able to seek support from that secure base when they experience difficulty. During adolescence, youth also develop a confidence in exploring identity across diverse domains away from parents but with the assurance of parental support when confronting challenges.

To some degree, however, this attachment relationship seems to function differently in Western and Eastern cultural contexts. According to Rothbaum et al. (2000), US infants are considered separate individuals from birth, and, therefore, mothers function not only to meet their children's emotional need for security but also to foster children's exploration of the outside world. In contrast, Japanese infants are regarded as dependent upon their caregivers, and, therefore, mothers are presumed to fulfill all of their children's needs. Thus, children's volition and initiative in exploring the outside world has been less emphasized and encouraged in Japan. Again, this underscores the notion that developing a secure attachment is a universal task for children's healthy development, but the cultural context for that attachment can have different meanings and result in different functions (viz., preparing children to explore the world with the support of but independent of caregivers vs. preparing children to look more within the family system for guidance and need fulfilment).

The question then becomes whether exploration is really necessary for Japanese children and adolescents. We believe that whereas Japanese youth on average conduct a limited (narrow) level of exploration, those who do not have any support from attachment figures (parents and teachers) may experience difficulty conducting even this limited amount of exploration. For example, a study with Japanese youth examined the associations between the level of attachment knowledge (i.e., the extent to which individuals have the knowledge of using an attachment figure to comfort their anxiety and then return to their normal condition) and several psychosocial indices including cultural values and psychological dysfunction (Umemura et al., 2018). While having the attachment knowledge was not linked to Japanese cultural values (high interdependence or low independence), a low level of attachment knowledge was linked to a psychological dysfunction including *hikikomori* symptoms (symptoms of extreme social withdrawal). This finding is consistent with our idea that low support from attachment figures is closely related to having difficulty to conduct even a limited (narrow) level of proactive exploration in Japanese youth. This finding seems to suggest that, indeed, identity exploration is necessary in Japan but is displayed in Japanese society in a subtle and implicit way.

The needs for adolescents' identity exploration and their caregivers' support to foster it are becoming more important in contemporary Japanese society, where

adolescents are struggling with the complex demands caused by the rapid change from collectivism to individualism. However, today, exploration has not yet been granted enough by Japanese adults (Rothbaum et al., 2000). For example, adults (parents and teachers) may believe themselves to be right based on their own experiences from previous generations and attempt to change young people's values, even threatening them (e.g., saying, "If you went that way, you would not be able to feed yourself"). It is easy for youth who are worried by such threats to choose to simply give up on exploring. In sum, we believe that attachment relationships may be particularly important for today's young people to have the confidence to explore their identity within the shifting cultural values of East Asia. However, we are also aware that secure attachments in a collectivistic context may not fully equip them to outwardly explore the changing environment because they tend to orient children to depend on the family to fulfill needs rather than orient them outwardly to explore the world around them. More evidence is needed to unpack whether and how the secure attachments in East Asia influence young people's proactive identity exploration.

Future Work: Understanding of Cultural Meaning in Identity Development

Although all of these detailed processes of culturally unique developmental pathways are hypothetical, these ideas could be tested by the cultural psychology approach (see Mistry & Dutta, 2015). One limitation of the current identity research in East Asia is the sole focus on the "top-down" approach, that is, testing whether ideas and findings that have previously been derived from Western Europe are similar or different in East Asia, with the assumption that the construct exists or has the same meaning in East Asia as it does in the Western culture in which the construct was previously observed (also known as an imposed etic; Berry, 1989). Cultural psychology is an approach that focuses on in-depth "bottom-up" understanding or an emic (arising from the culture; Berry, 1989) approach in which concepts are identified from the lens of that culture. This might include, for example, using interviews and observations within the culture of study, rather than comparing concepts and processes through the lens of another culture (i.e., comparison of cultures on concepts and processes already observed in another culture).

Although cross-cultural studies have provided important insights into cultural similarities and differences, the cross-cultural approach does not necessarily clarify whether the same results will have the same meanings across cultures. Future studies on East Asian identity need to employ both top-down (etic) and bottom-up (emic) approaches, utilizing both cross-cultural and cultural psychology. For example, in the area of psychopathology research, *hikikomori* is a good example of the "bottom-up" approach, as it was a concept originally from Japan that was identified by observing Japanese pathological youth. In identifying something originating in

Japan, researchers were able to enrich our understanding of an aspect of Japanese youth's pathology. In identity research, a cultural psychology approach to research will enrich the understanding of East Asian youths' identity formation. This may also contribute to the development of education and intervention programs that target those adolescents and emerging adults who have difficulty in exercising agentic capacities and identity exploration, in order to prevent them from developing indices of maladjustment, including *hikikomori*.

Conclusion

In sum, identity researchers are increasingly acknowledging that, in contemporary East Asian societies, youth are facing the challenge of identity formation derived both from the contexts of traditional cultural values (collectivism) and from the contexts of changing cultural values (shifting more and more toward an emphasis on individualism). Moreover, potential factors associated with the features and problems in identity in this region are unraveling at individual, relational, and sociocultural levels. Future studies should proceed to examine how these factors are related to each other and intertwined into a whole sense of identity among youth in this region, from the developmental as well as cultural and cross-cultural perspectives.

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Chapter 4
My Social, Political, and Hybrid Self: Identity in Central and South America

Judith L. Gibbons, Katelyn E. Poelker, and Katherine Hasbun

Introduction

During a recent visit with a Guatemalan family from Jocotenango, the first and second authors were chatting with a 12-year-old girl, her 11- and 7-year-old brothers, and their mother. Sitting across from us, the girl and her eldest brother were quietly giggling. When we inquired as to why, they sheepishly pointed at the second author and with big smiles blurted out (in Spanish), “You have an Apple watch!” The early adolescent children in this Guatemalan family, a family that regularly struggles to put food on the table, were still aware of and captivated by the latest technological devices. Like many of their peers in other Central and South American countries, this brother and sister duo recognized and were impressed by the ways in which technology could expand their access to information and the global community. That access to the larger world also shapes teenagers’ sense of self, contributing to their identity development and their views about how they fit into society.

Despite being a central feature of developmental and social psychological theory for decades, identity research in Central and South American contexts is scarce and most often approaches the topic from a universal rather than emic perspective. Many of the popular existing models of identity development are simply not appropriate for the majority of Central and South American youth (Galambos & Martínez, 2007; Juárez & Gayet, 2014). Galambos and Martínez (2007) argue, for example, that in Latin America the luxury to explore lifestyle options is restricted to a privileged few. Moreover, research concerning individuals from (or originating from)

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_4

Latin America is extremely scarce; in two recent analyses, it represented less than one percent of studies published in leading psychology journals (Nielsen et al., 2017; Rad et al., 2018). In this chapter we focus on what is known about culturally embedded models of identity development of youth from Central and South America and also the consequences of their exposure to technology and globalization.

Contexts of Identity Development in Latin America

Central and South America comprise the majority of the Latin American region. Although Mexico is part of Latin America and shares many cultural features with the rest of the region, it is specifically excluded from this chapter, as are countries in the Caribbean (see Jessop, this volume). Latin America is often referred to as a homogeneous entity, and consequently the diversity of the countries and the people is underemphasized. There are some similarities across the region. These include the prevalence of the Spanish language, a large population of youth, a general collectivistic orientation, and membership in the community of the Global South (Gupta et al., 2002; Hofstede, 2001; Wolseth & Babb, 2008). In spite of these commonalities, diversity abounds. Chipana Gutierrez (2020) called Latin America a "synthesis of cultures," describing Latin American identity as an "identity of identities." Together, Central and South America are made up of 19 countries: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama in Central America and Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela in South America. There is variability among ethnic groups, languages, religion, and climate, among others. For example, indigenous populations are highest in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Peru, while there are few indigenous people in Costa Rica or Venezuela (United Nations Development Programme, 2018).

The countries also vary in their levels of economic development. More specifically, the World Bank (2020) categorizes Bolivia, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua as lower-middle-income countries (LMICs), where annual incomes range from 1006 USD to 3955 USD per person per year. Upper-middle-income countries include Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela, where individual incomes range from 3996 USD to 12,375 USD annually. The only high-income countries are Chile, Panama, and Uruguay, with annual incomes of 12,276 USD and higher.

The diversity of the region demands attention regarding how its cultures and values shape people's sense of self (e.g., Galambos & Martínez, 2007). Cheek and Cheek's (2018) four-part model may provide a useful framework. They propose that identity is comprised of four domains: *personal*, *relational*, *public*, and *collective* (also referred to as *community*). The personal domain relates to one's wishes, goals, values, and morals. In addition, it relates to the ways in which people differ from one another or are unique and to how one views or evaluates oneself. The relational

domain, as the name suggests, encompasses personal relations with friends, family, and close others. It speaks to the importance of interconnectedness with others and having meaningful interpersonal relationships. Public identity is oriented towards the external – elements of the self that are quickly observable by others. Included in the public identity domain are characteristics such as physical attractiveness, reputation, and body language. The final domain, collective identity, speaks to people's association with their communities, countries, and religious and ethnic groups. In other words, it is characterized by one's affiliation with larger communities and is less concerned with their intimate personal relationships (which are characterized by the relational domain) and more about how people fit into broader social groups.

In today's world, it is impossible to discuss identity without considering the roles of globalization and technology. Jensen and Arnett (2012) argue that contemporary youth approach identity development differently from previous generations. In particular, those authors highlight the need for a hybrid identity in which young people negotiate potential tensions between the values promoted by their traditional cultures and those perpetuated by WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) countries (Henrich et al., 2010). In order to cope with the potential friction between those worldviews and value systems, youth create a bicultural or hybrid identity. Although the term "bicultural" has been used for decades to describe one possible outcome of intercultural encounters (e.g., Berry, 1997), "hybrid" has a broader connotation, in that multiple cultural perspectives may be merged and integrated. Indian adolescents aptly termed this approach to identity development as creating a "remixed" identity (Rao et al., 2013). When cultural mixing of values and identities occurs without a physical or geographic encounter, the process has been termed "remote acculturation" (Ferguson et al., 2017). Barbero (2002) uses the metaphor of the "palimpsest" to describe the mixed identities of Latin American adolescents in the digital era. A palimpsest is a manuscript that has been reused but still bears traces of the earlier writing. Thus, adolescents remake their identities upon exposure to the globalized world, but the earlier version is still discernible. An example from Guatemala shows shifting identities; adolescents and university students may be modifying their values to more closely align with their peers in the Global North, but nonetheless retain some core values, such as the importance of family (Flores et al., 2016).

Technology is a central means by which views from the Global North and elsewhere are shared among youth around the world (Kimball, 2019). A global youth culture that values altruism, relationships, and activism is emerging, fueled by electronic media (Kimball, 2019). "I'm not a citizen of France. I am a citizen of the world," professed Rene, an 11-year-old boy from France (Kimball, 2019, Chap. 1, para. 3). Central and South American youth are no strangers to the influences of technology and rapid global communication. In a report on Guatemalan youth, the opening line reads, "*Estoy conectado, luego existo*" ["I am connected, therefore I exist"] (Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo [United Nations Development Programme], 2012, p. 100). In 2019, 63% of Central Americans and 73% of South Americans were internet users; in Colombia individuals used digital devices for an average of 9 hours per day (Kemp, 2019). The social networking site

Facebook was third in popularity to Google and YouTube in that year. In a study by the Pew Research Group (Poushter et al., 2018), an average of 59% of people from seven Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela, as well as Mexico from North America) regularly used social media. Those rates are higher than several minority world European countries (e.g., Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom). Given that internet use is more prevalent among adolescents than adults, it is likely that youths' global connectedness is greater than those data suggest (UNICEF, 2017).

We conducted a search for research on the identity of adolescents and youth in Latin America using three search engines: PsycINFO, Redalyc, and SciELO. The search terms were "identity or self-concept" or their equivalents in Spanish, coupled with the names of any of the 19 Central and South American countries or the term Latin America. We focused on studies of adolescents and emerging adults and excluded most studies of immigrants. After reading the abstracts and scanning the articles, we categorized them according to a two-dimensional matrix: the four domains of identity as described by Cheek and Cheek (2018) and a second dimension of traditional/heritage, Western/global, or hybrid identity. (See Table 4.1.)

Traditional or Heritage Identities in Latin America

The most frequently studied identity domain within Latin America is national identity, a form of collective identity. National identity is built from historical recollections (e.g., Rottenbacher & Espinosa, 2010) and is affected by international relations and international aid (Quan, 2005). Scholars have written extensively about the correlates of national identity in Latin America (e.g., Cleveland et al., 2016; Espinosa et al., 2017; Huhn, 2009; Lee, 1986; Martín-Baró, 1990; Monsegur et al., 2014; Olson, 2013; Quan, 2005). A strong national identity may confer a positive benefit, as it is associated with social well-being in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Peru (Espinosa et al., 2017). National identities may in part derive from national stereotypes. National stereotypes can also promote positive self-views; for example, Salvadorans see themselves as hardworking, happy, good, and kind (Martín-Baró, 1990). Costa Ricans see their nation's identity as peaceful because it does not have an army (Huhn, 2009). Not all national stereotypes are positive but may be negative, mixed, or neutral (Monsegur et al. 2014; Rottenbacher & Espinosa, 2010).

Closely aligned with national identity is political identity. "Political identity is the extent that being a politically interested and involved person is important to one's core self" (Porter, 2013, p. 241). Political psychology is a prominent and growing area in Latin American research (Polo et al., 2014). In a study of different domains of identity, factor analysis revealed that in both Costa Rica and Brazil, political issues loaded on the same factor as sense of self. That was not true in the United States or Sweden (Briones, 1997). Informed by information from the Internet, political identities and consciousness have often led Latin American youth to engage in activism as agents of change (Amadeo, 2007; Hernandez Santibañez,

Table 4.1 Matrix of articles: domain by tradition/heritage, Western/global, or hybrid

	Personal	Relational	Public	Collective
Traditional/Heritage	Bayer et al. (2010) – Peru. Chirkov et al. (2005) – Brazil. Church et al. (2014) – Venezuela. Coatsworth et al. (2005) – Chile. Eppinger Garr (2002) – Brazil. de Araujo Gil et al. (2016)* – Brazil. Kenny et al. (2005) – Belize. Lee (1986)* – Venezuela. M. L. Martínez et al. (2014) – Chile. I. Martínez et al. (2007) – Brazil. M. L. Martínez et al. (2017)* – Chile.	Barker (2001) – Brazil. Barrera-Herrera and Vinet (2017) – Chile. Frederick and Stewart (2018) – Nicaragua. Margiotti (2013)* – Panama. M. L. Martínez et al. (2017)* – Chile. Monsegur et al. (2014)* – Brazil. Oliveira et al. (2016) – Brazil. Santo et al. (2013)* – Colombia. Tapia-Valladares et al. (2015) – Costa Rica. Valdez Medina et al. (2001) – Peru.	Altuzarra and Zegers (2007) – Chile. Drury et al. (2013) – Colombia. England (2010) – Honduras. Gordon (2013) – Brazil. Guerrero and Tinkler (2010) – Colombia. Henry et al. (2015) – Ecuador. Lee (1986)* – Venezuela. Manzi et al. (2018) – Chile. Margiotti (2013)* – Panama. McFee (2016) – Colombia. Monge-Rojas et al. (2017) – Costa Rica.	Ariel de Vidas and Hoffmann (2012) – Colombia. Backlund (2013)* – Ecuador. Coe and Vandegrift (2015) – Latin America. Cuenca (2015) – Colombia. Moreira et al. (2018) – Brazil. Espinosa et al. (2016) – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela. de Araujo Gil et al. (2016)* – Brazil. Golash-Boza and Bonilla-Silva (2013) – Latin America. Harris (2018) – Brazil and Colombia. Harris et al. (1993) – Brazil. Haug (1998) – Belize. Huhn (2009) – Costa Rica. Ibarra Melo (2008) –Colombia.

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

	Personal	Relational	Public	Collective
Traditional/heritage (Cont.)	Martínez Ortiz and Castellanos Morales (2013) – Colombia. Monteiro et al. (2010) – Brazil. Montes González et al. (2012) – Colombia. Novelle and Gonyea (2016) – Colombia. Pérez-Sales (2010) – Chile, El Salvador, Colombia. Rengifo-Herrera and Uchoa Branco (2014) – Colombia. Santo et al. (2013)* – Colombia. Sarriera (2001) – Brazil. Schnell et al. (2018) – Ecuador. Sharp et al. (2007) – Chile. Smith Castro (2005) – Costa Rica. Unemori et al. (2004) – Chile.		Perreira and Telles (2014) – Brazil, Colombia, Peru. Telles and Paschel (2014) – Panama, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Colombia. Valencia-Garcia et al. (2008) – Peru. Ugarte Guevara et al. (2012) – Nicaragua. Vera-Máquez et al. (2015) – Colombia. Wessells (2016) – Colombia.	Kenny et al. (2005) – Belize. Lee (1986)* – Venezuela. Martín-Baró (1990) – El Salvador. M. L. Martínez et al. (2017)* – Chile. Monsegur et al. (2014)* – Argentina. Monsegur et al. (2014)* – Brazil. Espinosa et al. (2017) –Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru. Rico et al. (2017) – Colombia. Rottenbacher and Espinosa (2010) – Peru. Salazar and Salazar (1998) – Cuba, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Argentina. Schutte (1993) – Latin America. Silva Dreyer and Martínez Guzmán (2007) – Chile.
Traditional/ Heritage (Cont.)	Vargas-Trujillo et al. (2006) – Bolivia, Peru.			Smith Castro (2005) – Costa Rica. Varela et al. (2015) – Chile. Vera-Márquez et al. – (2015)* – Colombia. Wade (2010) – Latin America.
Western/ global				Hayes (2015) – Ecuador.

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

	Personal	Relational	Public	Collective
Hybrid	Donoso and Ribbens (2010) – Chile. Eraseren (2014)* – Brazil. High (2010)* – Ecuador. Lopez (2014)* – Belize.	High (2010)* – Ecuador. Lopez (2014)* – Belize.	Aceto (2002) – Panama. Anderson-Fye (2003) – Belize. Boothroyd et al. (2016) – Nicaragua. Vander Wal et al. (2008) – Guatemala.	Arenas and Urzúa (2016) – Chile. Backlund (2013)* Ecuador. Cleveland et al. (2016) – Chile. Corredor et al. (2011) – Colombia. Ek (2009) – Guatemala. Eraseren (2014)* – Brazil. Fonte and Ranaboldo (2007) – rural Latin America. Gonzalez et al. (2017). – Chile. High (2016) – Ecuador.
Hybrid (Cont.)				Jette et al. (2008) – Brazil, Colombia, Argentina. Jette et al. (2008) – Brazil, Colombia, Argentina. Lundgren (1992) – Belize. Martín-Barbero (2002) – LA. Matthei and Smith (2008) – Belize. Medina (2003) – Belize. Merino and Tileagă (2011) – Chile. Quan (2005) – El Salvador. Webb (2014) – Chile. Zúñiga and Asún (2010) – Chile.

Note. Domains are those of Cheek and Cheek (2018). Each cell includes the references and the countries studied. *Articles with an asterisk are represented in more than one category

2013; Wolseth & Babb, 2008). Studies of Chilean and Brazilian youth revealed that relational and collective identities were closely linked to civic engagement, commitment, and activism (M. L. Martínez et al., 2012; Moreira et al., 2018).

Ethnic identity is the focus of much research in Latin America, especially the ethnic identity of minority and marginalized groups. Among Afro-Costa Ricans and majority Costa Ricans, self-esteem correlated positively with ethnic identification and negatively with perceived discrimination (Smith Castro, 2005). For the Garifuna of Belize, ethnic identity is associated with the values of "caring, daring, sharing and family" (Lopez, 2014, p. 2). Maya girls and women (and some men) in Guatemala proudly wear their traditional clothing (*traje*) that reveal not only a Maya ethnic identity but a specific village identity as well (Hendrickson, 1995). Trauma, such as war and political violence, can interfere with identity development – for example, among the Mapuche of Chile or the Embera of Colombia (Pérez-Sales, 2010). Thus, as in other parts of the world, while ethnic identity can serve as a positive force (e.g., Merino & Tileagă, 2011; Smith Castro, 2005; Webb, 2014), affirming an ethnic identity can be a source of stigma (e.g., Bennett, 2017).

The second most common domain of identity represented was that of personal identity – one's dreams, self-esteem and self-worth, values, autonomy, and uniqueness. This domain appears to be particularly relevant for youth in Latin America. Profound experiences that are self-defining and provide the sense of "this is who I am" were reported during voluntary activities, including sports and socializing, by adolescents in Chile (Coatsworth et al., 2005; Sharp et al., 2007). In a study of possible selves of European American, Chilean, Japanese, and Japanese American college students, the personal domain characterized about 40% of both the expected and feared selves of Chileans. Although this percentage was somewhat higher for European American students, it was significantly lower for Japanese and Japanese American students (Unemori et al., 2004). Self-esteem or self-worth was found to be positively associated with parental support among children and adolescents in Brazil (Eppinger-Gatt, 2002), with parental warmth among adolescents in Brazil (Martínez et al., 2007), with younger age among adolescents in Colombia (Montes González et al., 2012), and with ethnic identification among adolescents in Costa Rica (Smith Castro, 2005). Perceptions of autonomy and internalization of cultural norms were positively associated with well-being among Brazilian university students (Chirkov et al., 2005). In Peru, adolescents' views about sexuality were closely linked to their personal values, an element of personal identity (Bayer et al., 2010). Personal fantasies and high expectations about the future shaped adolescents' occupational identity in a Brazilian study (Sarriera et al., 2001). Thus, personal identity, including self-esteem, values, and dreams for the future, appears to be a salient domain for Latin American adolescents (Lens & Herrera, 2005).

The domain of public identity is represented most often in studies of skin color and how shades of skin are related to personal and ethnic identity, as well as the attributions of others (e.g., Telles & Paschel, 2014). The term *mestizo* (defined as a person of mixed European and Indigenous descent) is widely used in Latin America, sometimes as a way to express similarity or to emphasize the unity of a collective (e.g., Ramirez, 2017). It is also a highly contested identity used to further racism

against indigenous and "mixed blood" persons under the pretense of cultural differences (e.g., de la Cadena, 2001). Skin color continues to be a significant attribute for stigmatization and social exclusion: A study in Brazil, Colombia, and Peru revealed that individuals with darker skin reported greater discrimination and lower socioeconomic status (Perreira & Telles, 2014). In another study, high school students with darker skin tones in Brazil and Colombia experienced more discrimination than their peers with a lighter skin (Harris, 2018). Moreover, the term *mestizo* also overlooks ethnic differences and arbitrarily categorizes individuals into static groups. As a reaction to the homogenous *mestizo* ideology, the Garifuna of Caribbean Honduras have begun to advance a "monoracial notion of themselves as primarily black or of African descent" (England, 2010, p. 197).

Another public identity is self-portrayal in social media, such as Facebook, Fotolog, or other digital platforms. Although media can be a source of exposure to the globalized world, social media can also be used to explore and develop one's own heritage identity in a public forum (Torres Fernández & Pérez Sánchez, 2013). A study of adolescents in Chile revealed that they used the site Fotolog to explore and maintain social relationships, as well as to receive social validation for their attitudes and appearance (Donoso & Ribbens, 2010). In another study of adolescents in Chile, Facebook served to satisfy identity motives including self-esteem, efficacy, belonging, and continuity (Manzi et al., 2018). On the other hand, Facebook was rarely used for identity exploration or trying out new identities. Throughout Latin America, digital platforms, as noted above, provide opportunities for community engagement and development of political and social identities (Coe & Vandegrift, 2015).

Although there are relatively few studies that address the relational domain of identity for youth in Latin America, there is evidence that young people's interpersonal relations may be a central identity component. For example, in Chilean youth organizations, the quality of relationships with other members fostered both identity development and political efficacy (M. L. Martínez et al., 2017). Interviews of women in Nicaragua revealed that one route to a feminist identity was through relationships with feminist activists or strong, independent mothers (Frederick & Stewart, 2018). In Panama, social bonds are strengthened through the *mola* blouse, a symbol of Kuna ethnicity (Margiotti, 2013). Young girls are first recipients of the carefully sewn pieces from mothers, grandmothers, or other kinswomen; after they learn to sew, they nurture social bonds by offering them as gifts (Margiotti, 2013).

A unique kind of interpersonal relationship constitutes one of the stereotypes of the typical Argentinian, a person who is "*avivado*." The term was translated by the authors as "crafty" but can also refer to a person who is a "wise guy" or opportunist (Monsegur et al., 2014). This image has positive elements of adaptability and creativity but also the more negative trait of sanctioning transgressions (Monsegur et al., 2014). Among Colombian adolescents, social competence was closely linked to self-worth, implying that this relational domain of identity was especially important to their self-concept (Santo et al., 2013). Similarly, among Costa Rican adolescents, peer and family relationships were central to identity achievement (Tapia-Valladares et al., 2015). Among boys from the *favelas* (slums) of Brazil,

family and peer relationships were essential in maintaining their identity as "peace boys," rather than gang members (Barker, 2001). In a study of the factor structure of self-concept of young adolescents in Peru, interpersonal characteristics such as kindness, responsibility, and respectfulness loaded together on the factor accounting for the most variance (Valdez Medina et al., 2001). What these studies show is that interpersonal relationships may be more central to the lives of Latin American adolescents and emerging adults than the absolute number of articles in this domain indicate.

Global or Western Identities

Exclusively Western or global identities are rare or absent among Latin American youth. However, a study of expatriates from Canada and the United States living in Ecuador sheds light on how people from the Global North might navigate maintenance of an outsider identity in Latin America (Hayes, 2015). North American migrants to Ecuador experienced discomfort associated with Whiteness and difference; they tried to mitigate those feelings by being kind and respectful and attempting to "fit in."

Hybrid Identities

A vivid example of a hybrid identity can be found among Belizean girls, who – like many adolescents around the world – must negotiate an identity that incorporates both the transnational messages they receive through tourism and the media and their diverse Caribbean heritage (Anderson-Fye, 2003). The girls described their primary strategy as "never leave yourself," a commitment to being authentic, to resisting pressure from outside. From globalization, girls had learned to label gender-based mistreatment as abuse. Therefore, in being true to themselves, they rejected and resisted sexual and physical violence. On the other hand, being true to oneself meant rejecting media images of the cultural pressure to be thin. In contrast to many girls around the world, they reported high rates of body satisfaction and feelings of attractiveness unrelated to weight. This ethnographic study reveals the complexity of a selective response to globalization and Western influences. For Belizean girls, "never leaving themselves" was key to acceptance or rejection of external messages (Anderson-Fye, 2003).

The majority of the literature on hybrid identities in Latin America deals with collective identity. A study of identity construction of Colombian adolescents addressed their use of social media to both frame and reflect cultural identity (Corredor et al., 2011). The two major functions of media use were social interactions, such as expressions of emotional support, and expressions of "solidarity" or membership in a region, country, or other collective. An important observation in

this study was that global influence is not uniform. Consistent with the uses and gratifications theory of media use (e.g., Ruggiero, 2000), adolescents selectively adopted media depending on their own needs and interests.

Three articles address hybrid identities in Belize. Lundgren (1992) attributes children's need for a hybrid identity to the colonial history of Belize; all Belizean children have had to deal in some way with the images of White and blond dolls and the replacement of African Obeah (traditional spiritual and healing) practices with the paternalism and ethnic hierarchies inherent in Christianity. Similarly, the Garifuna ethnic group has a history of double exploitation, having suffered both the colonization of the British and marginalization as a minority group within Belize (Matthei & Smith, 2008). Those past experiences of exploitation have led many Garifuna to define their collective history as one of resistance, opposition, and transnationalism. A third study from Belize addresses the country's Maya community (Medina, 2003). In response to tourism and to make their products more marketable, communities have reclaimed their Maya heritage identity through reference to ancestry, language, and knowledge of Maya rituals (Medina, 2003). Those examples from Belize emphasize the complexity of responses to outside influences that include reestablishing or restoring aspects of heritage identity and resisting imposed identities.

Powerful depictions of the constructed identities of the Mapuche, indigenous inhabitants of Chile and Argentina, reveal that ethnic identity is "creatively, flexibly and contextually constituted" (Merino & Tileagă, 2011, p. 87). Young Mapuche interviewees expressed their Mapuche identity in terms of names, family ties, and "not feeling like them [the majority Chileans]." Another study of Mapuche youth in Chile revealed cultural exclusion in the educational system, views of the countryside as a more comfortable space, and maintenance of the Mapuche value of respectfulness (Webb, 2014). Civic participation was defined by Mapuche youth as participating in protests and marches in support of land and water rights and social justice (Webb, 2014). Mapuche young people in this study also argued that exposure to international media had led to their adoption of alternative identities and practices, distinct from the traditions of their grandparents (Webb, 2014).

In indigenous movements that extend throughout Latin America, indigenous peoples are defining well-being in autochthonous terms. An example is the term "*el buen vivir*" instead of "*bienestar*" to express well-being; "*buen vivir*" connotes living in harmony with others and the environment, as opposed to the definition of well-being as life (self) satisfaction derived from WEIRD contexts (Gudynas & Acosta, 2011). This implies that for Latin American Indigenous people, identity and well-being are rooted in relationship rather than autonomy.

Consumer culture and products may play a role in youth's formation of identities. Acculturation to global consumer culture can affect individuals' choices of products. In general, food is least susceptible to global influence because it is often closely linked to heritage identity and practices (Cleveland et al., 2016; Spang, 2014). In rural communities of Latin America, residents sought to develop products and services that reflected their own cultural identity and would be marketable globally, representing one more example of hybridization of identity based on exposure

to globalization (Fonte & Ranaboldo, 2007). Moreover, culture and identification with sports teams can be used as marketing tools, as in the case of the beer industry's attempts to increase sales in Latin America (Jette et al., 2008). Beer companies sponsor sporting events and market them to youth via the Internet and other media that are attractive to young people (Jette et al., 2008), attempting to link a "modern" lifestyle to beer consumption.

The consequences of exposure to international media on the eating disorders of adolescent girls have been widely studied. It is clear that a preference for public presentation of oneself as thin is an idea that has infiltrated much of the world. For example, a study of Guatemalan girls showed that incorporation of the thin ideal predicted body dissatisfaction and disordered eating (Vander Wal et al., 2008). Girls in that study watched television (with mostly international content) for an average of 4 hours daily. Findings from rural Nicaragua showed a clear relation between television viewing and internalization of the thin ideal for women (Boothroyd et al., 2016). Yet, as described above, Belizean girls explicitly rejected the thin ideal, despite exposure to that international norm (Anderson-Fye, 2003).

A rarely studied public identity is that of one's name and naming practices. In an interesting study from Panama, Aceto (2002) found that almost every Afro-Panamanian had two names – a Creole name that was used locally and a Spanish-derived name that was used on all official documents. The use of two names (e.g., *Skip* in Creole and *Demetro* in Spanish) is a formal expression of a dual identity resulting from two distinct cultural influences (Aceto, 2002).

Although very few studies have addressed hybridization of personal and relational identities in Latin America, it is clear that personal values can change as a result of globalization. (See Anderson-Fye's 2003 study with Belizean girls.) Another example stems from a digital inclusion program in the *favelas* of Brazil. Youth reported increased feelings of self-worth through involvement with digital media, in part because digital technology helped them obtain meaningful employment (Eraseren, 2014). Among Waorani Amazonian men, exposure to minority world culture instigated a shift in their views of masculinity. The previous ideal of man as warrior and hunter was, under the influence of Westernization, replaced by that of peaceful wage earner. Because women were less likely to participate in the workforce, this has led to greater gender inequality (High, 2010).

Additional Components, Functions, and Qualities of Identity

In using the identity categories of Cheek and Cheek (2018), issues emerged that did not fit neatly into personal, relational, public, or collective identity categories. Occupational identity was often a salient category (e.g., Fajardo Castañeda, 2011, on the development of a teacher identity). Also absent from the four established categories was meaningfulness in life, a concept that may be of central importance to youth (e.g., M. L. Martínez et al., 2017; Martínez Ortis & Castellanos Morales, 2013; Schnell et al., 2018). Among youth in Ecuador, the absence of

meaningfulness was a predictor of suicidality over and above depression (Schnell et al., 2018). Other elements of identity that were not clearly represented in the Cheek and Cheek (2018) framework included possessions, materialism, interests, and activities (e.g., de Araujo Gil et al., 2016).

A critical aspect of identity is that identity can be flexible and fluid. For example, in Guatemala, the two major ethnic groups are Indigenous (mostly Maya) and Ladino (the Guatemalan term for individuals with both European and Indigenous heritage). One's self-presentation as either Maya or Ladino is socially constructed and can be modified by changing clothing and language (Gibbons & Ashdown, 2010). For example, a Maya identity may be invoked for marketing handicrafts (Bennett, 2017; Little, 2004). However, Maya may define themselves in terms of their national identity as Guatemalans in response to government officials (Little, 2004).

Identities can also be protective. Barker (2001) has described the adoption of the identity of a "peace boy" among adolescents of the *favelas* of Brazil. The peace boys defined themselves in opposition to gang members; as peace boys, they strove to be hard workers and were (somewhat) protected from gang activities and being perceived as delinquents.

Other identities are stigmatized and can have negative consequences for youth. Stigmatized identities in Latin America include a positive HIV status, being a former combatant in post-conflict societies, and living in poverty. AIDS and HIV are severely stigmatized in Latin America. Of HIV-positive individuals in an Ecuadorean sample who had disclosed their HIV status, about half thought disclosure had been a mistake. They also had significantly lower self-esteem and self-efficacy than those who did not think it was a mistake to reveal their status (Henry et al., 2015). Like other stigmatized groups, ex-combatants in Colombia often feel that it is necessary to hide their former identity (McFee, 2016). Poverty can be another stigmatized condition, one that is unfortunately far too common in Latin America. According to Vakis et al. (2016), "one of five people in Latin America and the Caribbean lives in chronic poverty" (p. 5). Poverty creates difficulties for identity development for adolescents and youth. According to Phillips and Pittman (2003), adolescents living with scarce resources may face stigma, marginalization, and discrimination. They also experience multiple stressors in everyday life and may lack access to educational and occupational opportunities (see also Juárez & Gayet, 2014).

The processes of identity development – and even age-related differences – are underrepresented in the Latin American literature. One study of age-related differences among adolescents (aged 9 to 19) in Colombia revealed lower self-esteem with increasing age (Montes González et al., 2012). Another study of age-related differences in Chile revealed that older teens (aged 14 to 18) were more likely than early adolescents to be consistent in their identity portrayal in chat rooms (Altuzarra & Zegers, 2007). Although age-related differences were not evaluated in a study of autonomy development, both adolescents and their parents agreed that autonomy increases with age (M. L. Martínez et al., 2014).

A study using Marcia's (1980) identity status model evaluated identity status in three domains among university students from Costa Rica, Brazil, China, the United

States, and Sweden: personal development, interpersonal development, and worldview (Briones, 1997). If Latin American youth had less opportunity for exploration, we would expect them to have higher rates of foreclosure than students from other countries. This did not happen. In the personal and interpersonal domains, Swedish students had the highest percentages of foreclosure, while in the worldview domain, students from Brazil and the United States had similarly high rates of foreclosure (42.4% and 40.8%, respectively). Therefore, among the relatively privileged group of university students, Costa Ricans and Brazilians were no more likely to suffer from a lack of opportunity for exploration than students from other countries (Briones, 1997). In another study of identity status among adolescents from seven countries, youth from Peru scored high in both identity exploration and commitment, compared to those from Europe (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2018b). In sum, these findings do not support the contention that there is little opportunity for identity exploration among Latin American youth.

A recurring issue in identity studies is whether identity varies or is consistent across situations. A research study in nine countries, including Ecuador and Venezuela, evaluated the consistency of self-concept across situations (Locke et al., 2017). In general, Latin American university students reported more consistency in their personality traits across situations than did their counterparts from North America or Asia.

Other studies have investigated factors or experiences that further identity development, as well as the positive and negative consequences of specific identities. Self-defining experiences of flow during some kinds of activities may spur identity development among youth, but this has not been explicitly tested (Coatsworth et al., 2005; Sharp et al., 2007). Novelle and Gonyea's (2016) study of orphans in Colombia revealed that their identity development was fostered by bonds with non-parental adults in their environment. In Colombia, identification with peaceful groups and peaceful resistance was associated with peace activism as well as with efficacy, hope, and moral satisfaction (Rico et al., 2017). On the other hand, some facets of identity can have adverse consequences; for example, Costa Rican girls' concern with their physical appearance led them to be less likely to participate in physical exercise, a self-imposed limitation to healthy development (Monge-Rojas et al., 2017).

To what degree do identity development theories fit youth in Latin America? Although individual personal identity is important, relations with others – and especially collective identities – assume greater relevance for Latin American youth. Compared to youth from WEIRD cultures, Latin American adolescents and young adults may follow more diverse paths. Both extremes of development are present, from identity development curtailed by poverty or stigma to an extended developmental process for those fortunate enough to have the time and resources for exploration. In light of such diverse experiences, it is important to acknowledge the variability present in the process of identity development for Latin American youth.

Policy Implications

Latin American youth are actively constructing their identities in a rapidly changing world, impacted by exposure to the global youth culture, political movements, economic disparities, and increasing migration, alongside local traditions, practices, and beliefs. The challenges they face, their strategies for navigating their roles, plans, and future selves, as well as the salient domains of their identity development, have implications for policies in the areas of education, civic participation, and employment. Because identity exploration often takes place in educational contexts, school policies should provide space for collaborative work (given the importance of relationships for Latin American youth), provide an accurate historical curriculum (for the development of national and political identities; Bellino, 2016), and foster technological expertise (so that students can critically evaluate information gleaned from the internet). Support for the development of political identities can promote civic engagement and foster the development of youth movements, including those unaffiliated with adult movements (Coe et al., 2015). Businesses and other organizations can take advantage of youth's expertise in digital technologies to develop state-of-the-art means of communication and products.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

The extant literature on identity of adolescents and emerging adults in Latin America reveals that (a) collective identities, including national, political, and ethnic identities, are central concerns for many Latin American youth; (b) interpersonal relations are fundamental to identity development; and (c) exposure to globalization and international media has led many Latin American adolescents to construct hybrid or remixed identities.

A caveat, however, is that the existing literature may not accurately reflect the actual concerns of youth in Latin America. Given that the salient domains of self-concept and identity vary across cultures (e.g., Cheng, 1998; Gibbons & Stiles, 2004; Watkins, 1988), what is sorely needed are qualitative studies that use open-ended questions to assess the content of identity (e.g., "How would you describe yourself?"). A second urgent need is for longitudinal studies to identify age-related changes in identity, as well as processes of identity development.

In order to capture the diversity of Latin American contexts, there should be more "horizontal" studies of youth across the region, rather than the comparisons of youth from one or two Latin American countries to those from North America or Europe. The importance of context, including culture, nationality, economic condition, and access to the media, cannot be overemphasized. In a recent study of identity and other factors in psychopathology of adolescents from seven countries (including Peru), culture (as marked by nationality) was the most salient predictive variable (Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2018a). Cultural variables hypothesized to be related

to the national differences need also to be measured. The essential requirement is that the full diversity of the experiences of Latin American youth should be adequately represented and the diversity in those experiences be informed by the adolescents themselves. Only then will we arrive at an understanding of the culturally and situationally embedded experiences of identity development for the youth of Central and South America.

Acknowledgments The authors would like to thank Natalia Marsicovetere Fanjul for her thoughtful insights that shaped some of the ideas described in this chapter and for her assistance with a literature review.

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Chapter 5
Caribbean SHIFT: A Theory of Cultural Identity for Caribbean People and Diaspora

Nadia Jessop

Introduction

> "Limbo for your life; limbo is your life."

Limbo is a form of dance created in the Caribbean. Performers require the flexibility to lean backwards and glide lower and closer to the ground with each rendition, with their backs off the ground, their arms outstretched and hands turned upwards, and their torsos not touching the horizontal bar, which delineates the expectations for satisfactory performance. Its challenging, core-strengthening movements engage almost every muscle of the body and require utmost concentration to be executed successfully. As narratives go, some believe that the dance is a reenactment of slaves' entry into the gallows of slave traders' ships, where they were packed like books on a shelf or sardines in a tin can, for the duration of the months-long journey across the Atlantic. However, traditionally, it was performed at wakes (funeral memorials) to symbolize the spiritual transition from one world to the next.

Coincidentally, transitioning between worlds was what indigenous Amerindians did when they migrated from South America up the Caribbean archipelago; what Afro-Caribbeans' ancestors did when forced to migrate to the New World; what other ethnic groups from Asia, the Middle East, and Europe did when they came willingly though often under false pretenses; and what Caribbean natives do when they emigrate to form diasporas in other parts of the world. In this chapter the limbo is presented as a metaphor for Caribbean cultural identity and the associated themes that characterize narrative and performative aspects of this identity. Through exploring the central theme of transience, as well as narrative themes (displacement resistance, continuity, and essentialism) and performative themes (flexible hybridity,

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_5

transcendence, and remittance), I illustrate how social history can shape the formation of cultural identity through intersection with individuals' life history and the presence or absence of conditions such as cultural diversity and socioeconomic mobility.

Contributions to a Cultural Psychology of Identity

The construction and experience of Caribbean identity informs the study of identity in general by providing a standpoint from which to articulate a broader, cultural psychology of identity. The cultural psychological character of this account of Caribbean identity is evident in two ways. For one, this chapter emphasizes the mediation of individual experience (e.g., of personal and/or collective identity) via cultural psychological tools. For example, the narratives that shape the history of Caribbean society are conceptualized as a vehicle through which the collective consciousness influences the enactment or performance of identity in daily life. Another way the account is cultural psychological is that it offers a particular cultural take on the general process of identity (Shweder, 1999). There are other examples in cultural psychology where psychologists have used the specific to illuminate the general. As one example, Jones (2004, 2011) presented the TRIOS (time, rhythm, improvisation, orality, and spirituality) theory of African American culture as a cultural psychological framework for understanding how aspects of one's cultural system can facilitate a capacity for psychological resilience in the face of pervasive and systemic oppression. Similarly, Caribbean SHIFT (sociohistorical identity formation theory) presents a framework for understanding Caribbean people and the Caribbean diaspora, in their psychological response to coping with challenges posed by historical and contemporary forms of transience, which can be applied more generally to other diasporic cultures.

As a theoretical model, Caribbean SHIFT draws heavily from theories proposed by Caribbean authors and research conducted with Caribbean populations both in the Caribbean and among the diaspora. The *narrative* and *performative* themes explored in Caribbean SHIFT were extracted inductively from the review of Caribbean literature. However, there was some hegemony of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in representation of Caribbean islands, and of Canada and the UK in representation of the diaspora, which might limit its generalizability. Therefore, though these themes are meant to represent a comprehensive list relevant to Caribbean identity, it is not an exhaustive list of possible themes. A glossary of key terms is provided in Table 5.1 to help clarify the terminology used throughout the chapter.

Although the author of this chapter is trained in psychological theory and research, a concerted effort was made to consult literature from multiple disciplines. As a result, an interdisciplinary theory is presented that incorporates perspectives and research grounded in sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, economics, political science, history, literature, education, psychiatry, and psychology and that

Table 5.1 A glossary of key terms relevant to Caribbean SHIFT

Key term	Definition
Narrative identity	The personal and cultural meaning generated by and constructed from narrating memories of one's personal life history and collective social histories
Performative identity	The continuous construction of the self through the reproduction of culturally mediated expression. For example, performative identity answers the question, "how does one act Caribbean?"
Transience	A psychological state of impermanence of culture related to the physiological impermanence of location and people on the move across national boundaries
Displacement resistance	A form of internal psychological resistance in reaction to being physically and socially displaced by external forces
Continuity	A psychological need for connection with a romanticized past or cultural heritage in order to surmount limitations of a present (assumed transient) situation
Essentialism	A cognitive structure for representing categories, which assumes an inherent underlying defining trait, but that can be problematic when applied to cultures as a way of conceptualizing identity and parsing diversity
Flexible hybridity	A form of psychological flexibility that is needed to navigate challenging transitions and encounters with new and diverse cultures
Transcendence	The psychological integration of transnational or transcultural identities into the self-concept, which affords a sense of community and security in the absence of access to one's origin culture
Remittance	A form of psychological sustenance that maintains the transfer of cultural values across physical borders. Migrants keep their cultural practices alive in the new country, but they also transfer new cultural values, beliefs, and practices back to their home countries

is therefore useful for a wide cross-section of academic inquiry. Given the unique characteristic of the Caribbean as both comprising and producing diasporas, SHIFT may be a useful theory of cultural identity for other diasporic populations in both non-Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (non-WEIRD; e.g., Africa, Latin America, Singapore) and WEIRD cultural contexts (e.g., the United States, United Kingdom, Europe, Canada, and Australia).

Conceptual Framework

Defining Narrative and Performative Aspects of Cultural Identity

Like the limbo, both the narrative and performance are important to grasping the significance of Caribbean cultural identity. To some extent, the concept of cultural identity is prioritized above ethnic, racial, and national identity in this chapter as a way to maintain some fidelity to the elusive concept of "Caribbeanness," which

requires a degree of transcendence in thinking about social identity and place (Gosine, 2008). Hall (1990) viewed Caribbean cultural identity as "always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative, and myth" and Caribbeanness as "not an essence but a positioning" (p. 226). The distinction between narrative themes and performative themes articulated in this chapter is comparable to the distinction, respectively, between *content* and *process* among identity researchers. A cultural psychological shaping of identity is not simply about variation in content of a naturally structured process but also extends to the performance or doing of identity. Narrative identity is the personal meaning generated by and constructed from narrating memories of one's personal life history (McAdams, 2018; McLean & Pasupathi, 2012), and it can be extended on a collective level, where cultural meaning derives from social histories of changing diversity and varying socioeconomic conditions. Meanwhile, performative identity is the continuous construction of the self through the reproduction of culturally mediated expression (Butler, 1988).

Performative identity is shaped by varying conceptions of time (everyday time, historical time, and lifetime) and varying degrees of modernity; as modernity increases, identity changes from stable to positional to performative (Rosa, 2011). In today's modern world, performance – not positions or stable values – tends to predict everyday life outcomes and success. The narratives created about Caribbeanness seek to preserve some form of continuity in shared and lived experiences, but when this narrative is disrupted or challenged, a turn to cultural practices and forms of socialization allows a reproduction or reimagination of the social self through performative identity. Narrative cultural identity is the storied motivation for performative cultural identity, which is the behavior that manifests as an embodiment of that which is distinctly Caribbean and that either bolsters old narratives or creates new narratives (Fig. 5.1).

Transience: A Central Theme in the Caribbean Story and Lived Reality

One connotation of the word "limbo" is to be in a transitional or intermediate state of uncertainty. Ortiz (1947), writing about the diverse and often revolutionary processes of culture change that occurred in the Caribbean island of Cuba, noted that except for the decimated indigenous groups, the groups of Spanish, Africans, Indians, Jews, and Chinese who came after were all exogenous to the island and had expectations of *transience*. Similarly, Best (2001) highlighted that the Caribbean's history of colonial exploitation was characterized by the decimation of the indigenous population; the introduction and transplantation of landless enslaved and indentured; laborers producing for export, rather than consumption; absence of a class of settlers; groups existing without a connection to one another; and their lacking a desire to own or govern the land. In this state of *transience,* the different bases of classification (e.g., class, ethnicity, race, or color) rendered a necessary and functional *fluidity* to Caribbean identity that nevertheless provided a sense of sociohistorical belonging to the displaced. According to Hall (1990), it was this transience

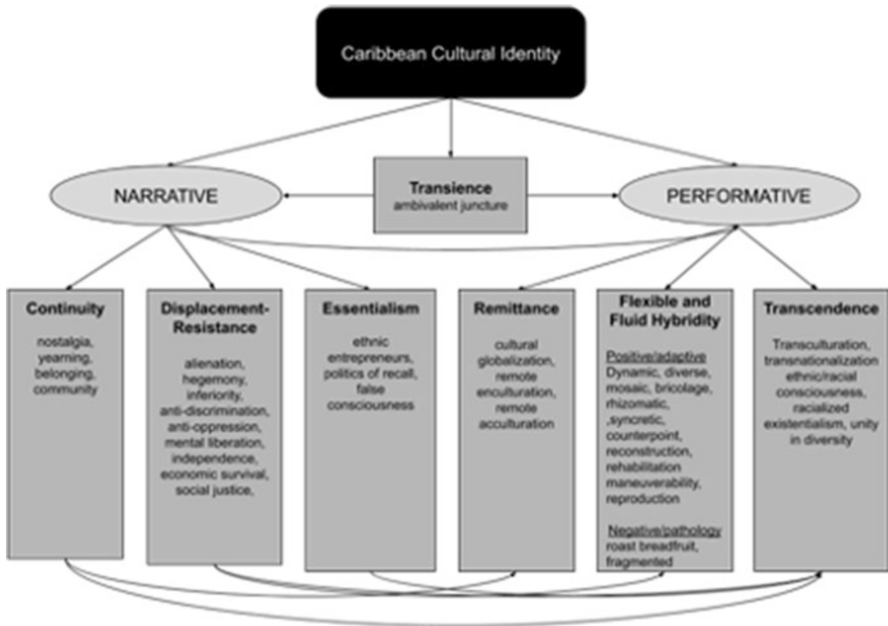

Fig. 5.1 A conceptual representation of the key components of Caribbean SHIFT as a theory of cultural identity

and fluidity that gave the Caribbean its unique characteristic as a "juncture-point where the many cultural tributaries meet the 'empty' land (the European colonizers emptied it), where strangers from every part of the globe collided … the space where the creolization and assimilations and syncretisms were negotiated" (p. 234). As a theory, SHIFT acknowledges that these sociohistorical characteristics of the Caribbean's narrative are reflected in the identity of the people – an identity that manifests as a never complete production, continually in flux.

Research on transience among the Caribbean diaspora has shown that it might affect certain ethnic groups more than others and it can be state sanctioned, but is generally overcome through using cultural socialization to foster resilient cultural identities. For example, Indo-Caribbean emigrants to Toronto, Canada, in particular, struggled with not belonging as Canadians, West Indians, or East Indians (Plaza, 2006; Premdas, 2004). They were not Caribbean enough due to Afro-Caribbean hegemony but also not Indian enough, having been separated from the Indian motherland for many generations. Consequently, they formed their own Indo-Caribbean community in Ontario, separate from other diasporic groups they might previously have identified with back in the Caribbean (Premdas, 2004). Meanwhile, Burman's (2001) metaphor of the Caribana[1] sign "music ends here," as a culture-ending sign, shattered the romanticized notion of Canadian multiculturalism to reveal a regulated

[1] Caribana is an annual Caribbean carnival festival that takes place in Toronto, Canada.

cultural tolerance with a preference for ethnocultural transience in deference to mainstream culture. In such a context, culture is perceived as that which can be objectively contained and released only on a discretionary basis, with some invisible line that demarcates where to “grab your culture and walk” (Ozer et al., 2017, p. 16) or when to leave your culture at the door, until further notice. However, research suggests that the ability to participate in cultural practices gives a feeling of “authentic cultural socialization” to migrants from the Caribbean (Plaza, 2006, p. 214). Sports, church-going, liming (hanging out), gossiping, cooking, and partying were socialization spaces that allowed a “therapeutic” enactment of Caribbean cultural identity and offered a sense of belonging and continuity that facilitated coping with transience caused by displacement.

Themes of Narrative Caribbean Cultural Identity

Displacement Resistance

African slaves who created the limbo were forcibly displaced from their native birthplace and transplanted across the sea to foreign land. The Caribbean is both “a place and a narrative of displacement” (Hall, 1990, p. 236). A common reaction to displacement – especially when externally imposed – was resistance. Safa (2001) advocated and proposed an approach to Caribbean cultural identity that recognizes the impact of key themes of both displacement (e.g., migration, societies historically stratified by class, ethnicity, and race) and resistance (e.g., major events such as the Cuban revolution). Contextual factors such as historical legacies, social change, and watershed events interact with social, economic, and political institutions to influence group identity development (Price, 2003; Safa, 2001). The history of race and ethnic relationships in the Caribbean affect cultural practices and the construction of identity. Alleyne (2002) addressed the sociopsychological effects of slavery that included both acceptance of and active resistance against racial and cultural hegemony in order to achieve political independence, economic survival, and mental liberation. Alleyne (2002) argues that “the Caribbean dilemma has been how to reconstruct an identity, while avoiding a representation and definition imposed from outside” (p. 111), giving as an example how the pervasiveness of Eurocentric symbols “perpetuated the trauma of inferiority, alienation and anomie in Caribbean people” (p. 90). The assignment of Eurocentric names to slaves was an example of psychological control of identity, and therefore, choosing Afrocentric names (as was the custom during the Black power movement) could be considered a form of resistance.

The oppositional narrative of displacement resistance acts as a major organizing schema for the construction of Caribbean cultural identity. Specifically addressing Black Caribbean identities, Hall (1990) proposed that cultural identity is “framed by two axes or vectors, simultaneously operative: the vector of similarity and

continuity; and the vector of difference and rupture" (p. 226). Meanwhile, Singh (2001) compared and contrasted the ways that descendants of colonized, enslaved Afro-Caribbeans and indentured Indo-Caribbeans imagine their original homelands. He noted that both seem to resist having been economically, politically, and therefore culturally dominated and oppressed by Europeans by idealizing their respective original homelands. However, while Afro-Caribbeans have ideologies of return based on physical return to their ancestral African homeland, Indo-Caribbeans have ideologies of return based on symbolic – via diasporic belonging – return to their ancestral homeland of India. Furthermore, Frederick (2002) used the case of a novel about a Jamaican worker on the Panama Canal to emphasize the importance of narratives and the extent of Caribbean authors' contribution to the region's cultural identity. Oppositional narratives of displacement and resistance represented symbolically in Caribbean literature function to showcase working class communities' potential for resilience (e.g., self-transformation, survival, and success) in the face of adversity (e.g., death, disease, and racism).

Empirically supported examples of oppositional narratives and ways in which individuals can make meaning of their life events, are the psychological concepts of *contamination* and *redemption*, which can emerge as affective themes in the retelling of one's life stories (Alea, 2018). Using the narrative interview, participants were asked to recall low points, high points, and turning points in their lives. Results showed that among the sample of Trinidadian adults, contamination was indicated by the participant's interpretation of a positive experience as having a negative outcome, while redemption was indicated by the reinterpretation of an emotionally negative experience as having a positive outcome (Alea, 2018). At a collective level, the affective themes of contamination and redemption also have sociohistorical relevance for the broader population of Caribbean people and diaspora. The displacement of indigenous peoples, slaves, and indentured laborers brought to the islands might be collectively remembered as a period of contamination. For example, attempts to recall pride in one's original heritage are tainted or contaminated by the reality of one's forefathers' oppression and experiences of forced labor on which the Caribbean was built. Nevertheless, the region's history of resistance via revolutions at difficult time points (e.g., Haitian independence, Jamaican Maroons, emancipation, and the Cuban Revolution) might be reinterpreted as periods of redemption in Caribbean cultural narratives such as Bob Marley's *Redemption Song*.

Rastafarianism (a religion that developed in Jamaica in the 1930s) epitomizes the theme of displacement resistance in Caribbean cultural identity. DeCosmo (2002) applied the terms *pariah status* and *homelessness* to describe the feelings of displacement behind the Rastafarianism movement among Afro-Caribbean people. Rastafari philosophy (e.g., cultural resistance, self-identification as Black children of Africa, and repatriation) and Rastafari practice (e.g., "reasonings") reflect a desire to acquire dignity, pride, and self-respect by rejecting Eurocentric hegemony. Social processes such as activism and social critique contributed to defining Rastafarianism as a liberating religious ideology and positive identity (for Blacks in Jamaica and internationally) that is anti-systemic and anti-capitalism but also anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and anti-inequality (i.e., anti-labor exploitation,

anti-discrimination, and anti-class and anti-race-based stratification; Price, 2003). These resistance narratives are the motivation behind the group's goals of identification, empowerment, and solidarity and economic, political, and social justice. According to Alleyne (2002), "Rastafarians have transformed Jamaican creole both in form and function. Their language is now a powerful force, copied by persons all over the world" (p. 93). The displacement resistance of Rastafarians arguably looms largely in the imaginations of most Caribbean people, and not just Jamaicans, partly due to the popularity of reggae music and its narratives of critical consciousness.

Continuity

Despite the fact that the middle passage journey across the Atlantic was traumatic to slaves, they gave new meaning to their experience through the ritualized enactment in the limbo. Continuity is important for the survival of cultural traditions; for example, Dominican Caribs relied on legends and stories to help keep their culture alive (Alleyne, 2002). According to Burman's (2001) social analysis, Caribbean people's desire for continuity manifests as nostalgia and yearning, which creates a romantic mythical narrative of past heritage that acts as a ladder that can be used to surmount limitations of the present (assumed transient) situation. While nostalgia alone can lead to disengagement from the present, the addition of yearning promotes engagement with the present and the future. Part of the desire for continuity emerges in reaction to experiences of displacement, as discussed in the previous section. For example, while maintaining a sense of nostalgia about their home nation and culture, Caribbean immigrants in Canada felt a sense of ambivalence regarding access to better opportunities in their host nation due to challenges of discrimination, cold weather, and other factors contributing to culture shock (Henry, 1994). Specifically, they felt nostalgic about "the need to be with their compatriots … among their own" (Henry, 1994, p. 49). Living among other Caribbean nationals was seen as desirable because it afforded socialization opportunities that helped to mitigate feelings of isolation and marginalization, especially as it pertained to the ethnic composition of neighborhoods.

The *ethno-local* Caribbean identity[2] is communal, manifesting as closely knit, peaceful, and exclusive ingroup relationships, and characterized by group-specific beliefs, values, and behaviors (Premdas, 1998). In an ethnographic study of Afro-Caribbean men living in Canada, Joseph (2014) found that cricket was a sport culture central to the identity of members of the Caribbean diaspora, creating a feeling of community and belonging. However, she distinguished between the homing desire (making the new place feel like home) and the desire for the homeland (wanting to return). The cricket matches provided a "homespace" with familiar

[2] The other three Caribbean identities – *ethno-universal*, *national*, and *trans-Caribbean* – will be discussed in other sections.

foods, music, and recreational activities, complemented by interpersonal relationships that provided a sense of belonging. The study participants used sport to socialize and enact cultural practices, for example, speak in dialect, tell jokes, share stories, retrace familial ties, and so forth. It also presented an opportunity to reminisce and share nostalgic stories and therefore "break the discontinuity between past and present" (Joseph, 2014, p. 678). However, it is important to note that the "symbolic attachment" participants felt was to the Caribbean culture and not the physical homeland.

Although narratives of continuity can facilitate positive adaptations in the face of transience, there are some drawbacks. For example, Premdas (2004) theorized that among Indo-Caribbeans living in Canada, ethnic conflicts and communal struggles from back home persisted in the new sites of the diaspora. He noted that though ethno-local identities and networks might provide relational ties, comfort, and a degree of continuity, the narratives they create are not exactly efficient in motivating positive change through political and economic empowerment. Meanwhile, James (1993) contended that ethnic/racial identity diminishes as a tool of continuity for the Caribbean diaspora because the pigmentocracy of the islands (which is grounded in essentialism) is displaced upon migration and the only hope for continuity is in everyday cultural practices.

Essentialism

Some question whether the limbo should be considered an African tradition or a Caribbean tradition, while others question the value of such a distinction in the first place. Essentialism is a cognitive structure for representing categories, which assumes an inherent underlying defining trait (Newman & Knobe, 2019). However, the characteristic simplicity of this otherwise useful schematic strategy can be problematic when applied to cultures as a way of conceptualizing identity and parsing diversity. This form of cultural essentialism leads to erroneous theorizing and can be detrimental to intergroup relations (Henrich et al., 2010; Markus, 2017; Morris et al., 2015; Muthukrishna & Henrich, 2019). For example, Allahar (2010) argues that neither Afrocentrism (a form of ethnocentrism among African descendants) nor *Hindutava* (a form of ethnocentrism among Hindu Indians) truly serve the interest of Caribbean people because they promote a form of false consciousness based on race and ethnicity that downplays the importance of inequality among social classes. Such identity politics are too reliant on ideology and the essentialization of race. He criticizes the proponents of these ideologies (so-called ethnic entrepreneurs) for manipulating cultural narratives as part of the "politics of recall" to serve their own personal benefit (Allahar, 2010, p. 23). Discriminatory institutional practices, such as the use of ethnic rather than commercial distribution of resources to maintain political power, impede economic development (Depres & Premdas, 1998), and in return, as Alleyne (2002) suggests, "economic deprivation will continue to nourish racial/ethnic assertion and polarization" (p. 252).

This is illustrated in Costa Rican nationalism and its past preoccupation with a projection of cultural homogeneity or *blanqueamiento*, which succeeded in stifling the cultural identity of *afrocaribeños* who made up the Caribbean diaspora (Harpelle, 2002). In the interest of economic and social mobility, *afrocaribeños willingly* traded their Caribbeanness for Costa Rican identity, which presented distinct advantages such as citizenship. Harpelle (2002) suggested that it was the socioeconomic standing of Blacks in the Limón province that afforded them the ability to "select" a Costa Rican identity in the first place. However, having chosen Costa Rican identity over Caribbeanness, they remained an "invisible" subpopulation to the outside world, while within Costa Rica they were ironically still perceived as an essentially separate Caribbean population. This essentialism that separated Costa Rican and Caribbean cultural identity, though aided by socioeconomic concerns, was initiated in systematically sanctioned discriminatory policies akin to geographic apartheid (Miller, 2015). According to Harpelle (2002), by assimilating, *afrocaribeños* traded their Caribbean cultural identity for socioeconomic survival.[3] Other authors also note that under conditions of concern for social mobility (such as educational and career aspirations), essentialist perspectives of cultural identity could create tensions and pressure members of the Caribbean diaspora to abandon, repress, or compartmentalize their Caribbean cultural identity (Gosine, 2008; Henry, 1994; Plaza, 2006; Rattansi & Phoenix, 2005).

Themes of Performative Caribbean Cultural Identity

Flexible Hybridity

> Hybridity is implicitly opposed to any notion of cultural hegemony or dominance, seen as another essentialism. In this view transnational exiles seek new identities, and are led to the remaking of the self in a process that looks less to the past and more to the future. (Alleyne, 2002, p. 246)

Flexibility is perhaps the most central skill required for performing the limbo. The Caribbean and its diaspora are diverse and have a legacy of adjusting to changing and transient environments that require creative and flexible solutions. Perhaps there is no characteristic more typical of performative cultural identity than the flexible hybridity inspired by cultural diversity. According to Rosa (**2011**), one of the defining characteristics of a performative identity is "both capacity and willingness for a flexible redefinition of identity" (p. **218**). The acronym SHIFT is both meaningful and an intentional since one of the defining characteristics of Caribbeanness that emerged from the literature was a sort of shifting flexibility in navigating transitions – not necessarily the kind of physical flexibility needed to

[3] Bourgois (1986) offers an alternative account, which contends that rather than passively assimilate, *afrocaribeños* did engage in resistance.

perform a limbo dance, but the psychological flexibility needed to navigate a state of limbo such as that encountered by the Caribbean migrant or ancestor who found themselves in the third space of in-betweenness (Bhabha, **2012**) and thus needed to learn to shift among competing identities. There are two ways of thinking about this characteristic. One way is to malign it as a form of shape-shifting pathology and failure to commit to a single coherent identity. The other way is to frame it as a form of positive adaptation and resilience. Both approaches were present in the reviewed literature.

Negative Interpretations of Hybridity as Pathology

Plaza (2006) described diasporic identity development as "characterized by constant shifting and assembling of new hybridized identities" (p. 227), but he viewed Caribbean migrants' desire for closeness to the dominant group in the host country as the motivating factor for identity shifts, whether that be in terms of changing one's physical appearance or seeking to upgrade one's social/cultural capital. Thus, while one outcome of identity shift could be a transformational process of constructing transnational hybrid ethnocultural identities, other less desirable identity outcomes such as *marginal man situation* and *linear assimilation model* were also possible (Plaza, 2006). High rates of mental illness among Afro-Caribbean diaspora in metropolitan areas in the United Kingdom and United States were associated with the low social status and high acculturative stress that often accompanied minority group membership more generally (Caplan, 2007; Hickling et al., 2013; Hickling & Hutchinson, 1999; Sirin et al., 2013). Hickling and colleagues (Hickling et al., 2013; Hickling & Hutchinson, 1999) studied the source of this mental illness or "psychosis," which they concluded was *roast breadfruit syndrome*. A roasted breadfruit is black on the outside and white on the inside. More specifically, roast breadfruit syndrome was described as "an overwhelming desire for acceptance by European society, being ashamed of one's indigenous culture with an exaggerated rejection (in language and manners), and an attempt to appear more white" (Hickling & Hutchinson, 1999, p. 133).

In line with that analysis, identity confusion and disturbance in response to racial discrimination led Afro-Caribbeans to assimilate to European values and norms in an attempt to rationalize their identity (Alleyne, 2002). However, Alleyne (2002) also suggested that contradictory "performances" such as bleaching skin and straightening kinky hair could be identity congruent with participation in a traditional African dance group, owing to the separation of phenotypic and social forms of ethnocultural identification – a remnant of the Caribbean's colonial past. While Hickling et al. (2013) pegged the Caribbean's colonial history and legacy of pigmentocracy or colorism as a built-in risk factor for maladaptive mental health outcomes among its diaspora, they also noted that resilience and social/cultural capital could be protective factors, hence the importance of socializing, keeping traditions alive and communication channels open, as well as forging transcendent cultural identities.

Hybridity as Positive Adaptation

Depending on the level or type of diversity present, Caribbean resilience could also manifest as hybrid, fluid, and flexible cultural identities. Scholars such as Maingot (2002) have been critical of what has been termed the "psychopathology school" that implicates the *social maneuverability* of Caribbean diaspora identity as a negative outcome. Rather, the author views "playing the field" (changing cultural expressions to suit social situations) as a particular skill of Caribbean people, the flexibility of which presents a certain freedom and distinct advantage for successful adaptation to the migrant's newfound position in their host country (Maingot, 2002). Thus Maingot focused on a concept of identity that is goal oriented, allowing for multiple identifications, vis-à-vis multiple goals. There is a distinction between other-defined and self-defined national identity; the latter is focused on unwavering national pride that lends emotional and functional strength to Caribbean identity while remaining unaffected by multiple allegiances with other groups (e.g., forging a transcendent Black identity or integrating into the mainstream culture). Similarly, Hall (1990) suggests that "diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference … a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity" (p. 235).

The Role of Diversity in Constructing Flexible Hybridity

Caribbean identity manifests as open culture. Historically it has had to assume this reality in order to exist – the Caribbean both comprises and produces diasporas: It consumes exogenous cultures to produce the distinct and uniquely hybrid materialities, and one might argue that this makes the Caribbean diaspora more vulnerable to acculturation. Joseph (2014) referred to Walcott's (2003) use of the term *rhizomatic cultural forms* to describe Caribbean cultural identity. The term rhizomatic comes from a philosophy of learning that emphasizes multiple pathways to attaining and defining success: "The rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectible, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21). That imagery also recalls the concepts of equifinality and multifinality in developmental psychology. The former implies an open system and a diversity of pathways to the same outcome, while the latter implies flexible adaptations to different systems (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1996). On one hand, the hybridity of Caribbean cultural identity derives from the many different diasporas of which it is composed and has since formed (i.e. its sociohistorical diversity). On the other hand, the hybridity of Caribbean cultural identity derives from the transient, fluid lifestyle narratives created to reflect that social history, and champion the resilience and adaptability needed to navigate it.

While studying syncretic Caribbean religions in New York, Schmidt (2008) noted the never-ending spontaneous process of changing cultural composition,

rearranged by the influence of new situations and available resources, which alter expectations. Schmidt (2008) theorized that the Caribbean (diasporic) cultural model can be summed up in the process of bricolage, using the example of syncretic Caribbean religions in New York City. Five key elements of bricolage are (a) open and dynamic mixtures of diverse elements, (b) creative actors, (c) interplay between reaction and action, (d) dependence on context and situation, and (e) addressing all the senses (e.g., music, movement, ornaments). This calls to mind the social psychological concept of social identity complexity, whereby the individual's open embrace of discordant group memberships is associated with greater inclusivity and complexity of identity (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). According to Schmidt (2008), "bricolage signifies that a culture will be arranged according to the wishes and expectations of the people and that the composition of a culture depends on the materials and tools that are available" (p. 160). Outside of religion, another Caribbean cultural tradition that embodies the concept of bricolage is Carnival. Best (2001) cited mas (masquerades) during Carnival time in Trinidad as an example of the performance of hybridized identity and the complexity of the Caribbean personality. He described mas as a subversive but purposeful activity where playing "the other" and oneself in various incarnations helped "lubricate" society and ease relationships among diverse groups, as it facilitated perspective taking, empathy, and shared experiences.

In his theory of transculturation, Ortiz (1947) used the metaphor of counterpoint, borrowed from music, to describe cultural hybridity in Cuba. In music, a counterpoint is the simultaneous use of different voices, notes, or instruments to create a harmonious melody; it presents a unique situation where both independence and interdependence are necessary elements for success. Counterpoint as a metaphor therefore is the epitome of the fluidity that results from the relationship between diversity and hybridity in Caribbean culture. Best (2001) argued that the different bases of ethnicity (e.g., class or race) render fluidity to Caribbean ethnic identity. Meanwhile, Khan (2001) used the concept of "Spanish" as an ethnic category to discuss the fluidity of mixed ethnic identity in Trinidad, where social identities are ambiguous and depend on individual perception of appearance and background, as well as emphases on combinations of phenotypic and contextual attributes. For example, anthropological field research with Indo-Trinidadians indicated that "Spanish" was a fluid ethnic modifier (signifying Amerindian or Hispanic mixed heritage) that improved otherwise negative perceptions of membership in the African ethnic category (Khan, 2001). Individuals can thus define themselves by combining different combinations of ethnic categories, depending on the social situation, in order to resist hierarchical color-class-based systems of social stratification.

Nevertheless, there can be both downsides and upsides to ethnosocial diversity. On the downside, Nakhid (2005) noted the divisiveness between the African and Indian dominant ethnic groups in Trinidad and Tobago, who used derogatory interethnic group comparisons to make their ingroups distinct from the outgroup, each group perceiving the other as a threat to their representation in the nation's politics and social hierarchy. Nakhid (2005) concluded that preoccupation with African and

Indian ethnic identity in Trinidad disregards the nations' indigenous heritage (e.g., interethnic conflict between Arawaks and Caribs or Caribs and Europeans), which precludes Afro-Indo interethnic harmony and the construction of a national identity. On the upside, evidence also suggests that openness to diversity could be important for identity development in general. For example, Worrell and McFarlane (2017) examined racial identity among Jamaican university students, and found that Afrocentricity *and* multicultural attitudes were positively related to a composite of ingroup ethnic identity exploration and commitment.

Transcendence

In many ways, the limbo is a near-impossible feat that requires its performer to transcend some of the limitations of the human body through skillful contortions. The migrant experience often motivates the desire to discover and embrace shared ethnocultural roots (Gosine, 2008; Hall, 1990). This often led to the adoption of transcendent identities that were transnational or transcultural in nature. Allahar (2010) defined diaspora as a "living, breathing, moving, and changing body … made up of migrants whether forced or voluntary, who form communities away from home and who share a set of common experiences, feelings, myths, beliefs, and even values and memories of home" (p. 9). In this way, psychologically transcending national or cultural boundaries can afford a sense of community and security or "we-ness."

Transnational Caribbean Identities

Although research has shown that the Caribbean diaspora abroad tended to adopt hybridized sociocultural identities such as "Black Canadian with Caribbean heritage" (Gosine, 2008), transcendent Caribbean identities or transcendent Black identities are also common. Safa (2001) argues that in the anglophone Caribbean, cultural identity remains problematically fragmented in its historical and cultural diversity due to a less distinctly creolized identity in comparison with the hispanophone Caribbean. However, according to Alleyne (2002), "the idea of 'unity in diversity' may be very appropriate in capturing the sociohistorical essence of the Caribbean" (p. 84). While *unity* refers to common features across the region (e.g., colonization), *diversity* refers to nuances such as varying racial/ethnic subgroups and each island. Being a migrant helps with feeling a sense of Caribbeanness or Blackness where only Jamaicans, Trinis, Guyanese, or Bajans might have existed before (James, 1993). People of the diaspora "have a better sense of and empathy for the cultures of the Caribbean as a whole, and are therefore more 'pan-Caribbean' than the majority of their counterparts who actually reside in the Caribbean" (James, 1993, p. 255).

Joseph (2014) used the framework of transnationalization to help explain the "production of cultural heritage experience" through cricket in a way that "transcended its sporting function" (p. 673) by Afro-Caribbean men living in Canada. Qualitative research with participants of Afro-, Indo-, or mixed-Caribbean descent and from a variety of Caribbean islands (e.g., Trinidad, Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, etc.) also revealed "the importance of maintaining a transnational link" by regularly visiting the Caribbean after migration to Canada (Plaza, 2006, p. 211). However, there were pros and cons associated with a transnational lifestyle as it can act as a safety net of belonging or be the cause of torn feelings and anomie. Additionally, "what many returnees forget, is that when they 'return' … they inevitably return to a different place—because place is bound by time" (James, 1993, p. 248).

Among the four[4] types of Caribbean identities proposed by Premdas (1998), the *national identity* – focused on exclusive national beliefs, values, and behaviors—though useful to Caribbean islanders is perhaps least useful to members of the Caribbean diaspora abroad, who may instead search out solidarity with their island neighbors. As a result, many scholars have noted the pattern of an emerging transcendent Caribbean identity for members of the diaspora. This is what Premdas (1998) described as either *ethno-universal*, an identity transcending the Caribbean region to include international groups to which Caribbean people belong and with which they maintain relationships (e.g., ethnic (Amerindian, Asian Indian, etc.) or religious (Muslim, Rastafarian, etc.)), or *trans-Caribbean*, the identity of the Caribbean diaspora, emerging from a combination of memories of the Caribbean as homeland and the experience of living abroad. Rattansi and Phoenix (2005) also acknowledged the existence of a pan-Caribbean identity among British nationals of Caribbean descent, as well as strong identification with being "Black" among those of Afro-Caribbean descent.

Transcultural Black Identities

In his seminal work, Ortiz (1947) coined the term *transculturation* to describe the diverse and often revolutionary processes and outcomes of culture change that occurred in Cuba: from the evolutionary culture change from Paleolithic to Neolithic among indigenous populations; through syncretizing Old World culture with New World conditions among diverse Spanish and deculturation among diverse Africans; to reciprocal culture changes among Indians, Jews, and Chinese. However, the term *transcultural* can also be used to describe the transcendent Black identities adopted by members of the Caribbean diaspora living in majority White/European contexts.

A qualitative study of social identity among Black Canadian migrants (Caribbean and African descent) found that the embodiment of a transcendent Black identity acted as a protective factor providing a sense of belonging (Gosine, 2008). Additionally, adopting such a transcendent identity could lead to increased Black

[4] The first type of Caribbean identity – *ethno-local* – was discussed in the section about continuity.

consciousness and awareness of inequality. For example, quantitative research on the Caribbean diaspora indicated that Afro-Caribbean participants in encounter and immersion–emmersion stages of racial identity development recognized the salience of Blackness and openly embraced it and, as a result of this strengthened identification, were more likely to perceive racial discrimination (Hall & Carter, 2006). In that study, there were also some generational effects to suggest that the result was more pronounced for second-generation Afro-Caribbeans. That latter finding could support James's (1993) argument that over time hostile sociopolitical forces such as systemic racism and discrimination facilitate the decreolization or de-Caribbeanization of the diaspora. Cantres (2018) described the experiences of Caribbean students in the United Kingdom between the 1950s and 1970s as *racialized existentialism*, whereby everyday life was understood and made sense of in reference to experiences defined by race and various forms of racial hostility from native British citizens that rendered all Caribbean natives as Black. Several scholars noted that the overly deterministic nature of racism and racial discrimination in countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States motivate a certain solidarity to the sense of Blackness or Caribbeanness among Caribbean migrants (Cantres, 2018; Hall, 1990; James, 1993). This aligns with the rejection–identification model by Branscombe et al. (1999), which proposes that experiences of discrimination strengthens identification with one's group and steer the individual away from the majority.

However, research findings have also suggested that there are varying degrees of identification with this transcendent Black identity since it can place certain limitations or constraints on self/social perception that might contrast with the socioeconomic aspirations of educated Black Canadians, mainly from the Caribbean (Gosine, 2008). There was also the issue of middle-class Blacks having to defend/negotiate their Blackness as being Black enough while representing Blacks in a White world, as opposed to assuming a nonthreatening post-racialized stance, and policing the identity of those Blacks that do the latter, all while coming to terms with the "agency-constraining" burden of representing their entire race. Therefore, members of the Caribbean diaspora learned to shift their identities based on the situation at hand. Additionally, qualitative research suggested that while regret about the decision to migrate was associated with experiences of racial discrimination, satisfaction hinged upon age of migration (older meant more satisfied), achievements in employment and education, and material possessions such as housing, cars, furniture, and so forth (Henry, 1994).

The Issue of Hegemony and Transcendence

With transcendent identities, what may at first appear a simple and straightforward concept masks tensions about what best represents Caribbeanness. James (1993) referenced a Jamaican hegemony in the imaginations of Caribbeanness due to it being the most populous, its proximity to the West (e.g., the United States), and its popular cultural forms such as reggae and Rastafarianism. Furthermore, Joseph

(2014) addressed the hegemony of Afro-Caribbean culture in the region, and her research showed that Afro-Indo tensions were reenacted on the cricket field among the Caribbean diaspora. It is important to note that this Afro-Caribbean cultural hegemony was also reflected in the Caribbean identity theories proposed by several authors cited in this chapter. Much of the work on transcendent identities among Caribbean peoples and diaspora focused on a Black racial identity, which only in some cases (such as in the United Kingdom) also subsumed or attracted Indo-Caribbean populations. As Premdas (2004) notes, "for Indo-Caribbean persons, their self-ascribed cultural particularity was rendered invisible by virtue of their being subsumed under a wider polyglot Caribbean identity" (p. 550). Other research also suggested that the Indo-Caribbean diaspora struggled with not belonging as Canadians, West Indians, or East Indians (Plaza, 2006). Lastly, Rosa (2011) cautions against a fundamentalist type of performative identity characterized by essentialist views and the search for a transcendent truth that motivates the formation of antisocial groups such as terrorists and fascists. Thus, under certain conditions, transcendent identities could turn down a darker pathway to fundamentalism.

Remittance

Positioning the limbo as a distinctly Caribbean cultural artifact helps to construct a sense of shared identity among diverse Caribbean people. Although traditionally used in an economic sense, Burman (2001) used the term *cultural remittance* to describe the performance of Caribbean identity commonly found at diasporic cultural events such as Toronto Caribana. She viewed the practice of keeping Caribbean traditions such as Carnival festivities alive in new host countries as motivated by the tension between nostalgia and yearning. However, traditionally, the term remittance has been used to mean a financial transfer of money from the host country to the home country. Allahar (2010) mentions that members of the diaspora sustain their communities back home primarily through economic means but at times also through cultural values. Expanding the concept of remittance beyond economics to include cultural implications is particularly useful in understanding the different ways that Caribbean people perform cultural identity. Cultural globalization facilitates the transfer of cultural values across borders, and it is a two-way street. Migrants keep their cultural practices alive in the new country, but they also transfer new cultural values, beliefs, and practices back to their home countries.

Cultural Remittance from Home to Host Country

This form of cultural remittance is evident in homages paid to ancestral homes in the Caribbean and in homages paid to the Caribbean by the diaspora. In the Caribbean, the Rastafari movement was partly motivated by the desire to find a positive identity for Afro-Caribbean people (Price, 2003). This led Rastafarians to look to Ethiopia

and incorporate cultural remittances such as worship of the Ethiopian royal family, Afrocentric hairstyles, dress, music, and customs. For Alleyne (2002), this type of cultural remittance from the ancestral home to New World hosts was a "process of psychological reconstruction and rehabilitation" (p. 108). According to Joseph (2014), among the diaspora, "playing and watching cricket [was] central to the making of homes away from home" (p. 670). However, she determined that neither globalization nor transnationality was appropriate to describe sport culture and instead proposed a multidimensional diaspora theory of culture, community, and consciousness. Ferguson et al. (2016) also describe a process of remote enculturation, whereby migrants (typically of the second generation and beyond) endeavor to keep their home culture alive in their host countries through conscious enactment of everyday cultural practices such as speech/language, dress, music, and dance, among others. In this sense, research by Plaza (2006) suggested that enrolling in Caribbean history classes or joining Caribbean clubs at universities could lead to a reawakening or "reprogramming" of Caribbean identity for some members of the diaspora. Meanwhile, choosing non-Black romantic partners created concerns about losing Caribbean identity and a sense that cultural socialization efforts for children of such unions would need to be doubled up as a way of compensation.

Cultural Remittance from Host Country to Home

This form of cultural remittance is evident in the adoption of external cultural values and practices by people in the Caribbean and frequently takes place via cultural globalization. As Caribbean nationals endeavor to "maintain a transnational link" (Plaza, 2006, p. 211) by regularly visiting the Caribbean after migration, they inevitably help spread their host culture to the homeland. However, cultural values and practices can also transfer to the Caribbean through tourism, trade, media, and popular culture. For example, Ferguson and colleagues' (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012, 2015; Ferguson et al., 2012, 2018) seminal work and research on remote acculturation showed that media and popular culture had an outsized influence on Jamaican adolescents' Americanization (identification with and adoption of US cultural values and practices), which could then result in intergenerational conflict and unhealthy eating habits (e.g., preference for fast food over home-cooked meals). Alleyne (2002) also warned of cultural globalization's potential to "weaken ties with cultural backgrounds and heritages" (p. 252) but remained optimistic about its simultaneous potential to "remove racial and ethnic tensions" (p. 252).

A Hypothesized Caribbean SHIFT Model

To summarize, a testable model of the relationship among components of the theory is proposed, which might be useful for both researchers and practitioners in psychology (see Fig. 5.2). As a concept central to the formation of Caribbean cultural

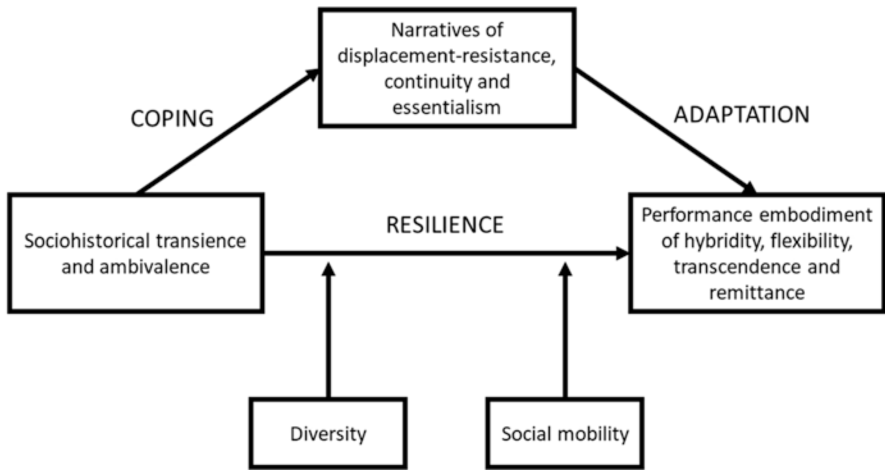

Fig. 5.2 A simplified, testable version of the hypothesized Caribbean SHIFT model

identity, transience can be good or bad. It can add to feelings of ambivalence, displacement, and struggle, but even when imposed and sanctioned by the state, transience can foster new ways of coping, adaptation, and resilience. In the hypothesized model, sociohistorical transience and ambivalence necessitate coping, which is achieved through narratives of displacement resistance, continuity, and essentialism. These narratives tap into the cognitive-affective components of identity and motivate behavioral adaptation to various situations and contexts. For the Caribbean people and diaspora, these adaptations are manifested as the performative embodiment of flexible hybridity, transcendence, and remittance. Via the mediational path, narrative identity mediates the relationship between sociohistorical transience and performative identity and explains why, for example, nostalgia and yearning for continuity might motivate cultural remittance or why various forms of displacement resistance might motivate the adoption of transcendent identities. Alternatively, via a direct pathway, sociohistorical transience fosters a resilient performative identity. However, that relationship is probably moderated by diversity across both social history and an individual's life history such that under conditions of greater diversity, hybrid and flexible identities are more likely and under conditions of lesser diversity, transcendent identities are more likely; but either outcome is only likely to the extent that they afford socioeconomic advantages such as social mobility.

Methodological Implications and Future Directions

The importance of socialization in shaping and maintaining Caribbean identity figured prominently in the works cited in this chapter. Nakhid-Chatoor and colleagues (Nakhid-Chatoor et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2019) have suggested that Caribbean

socialization practices such as "liming" and "ole talk"[5] are legitimate indigenous methodologies for conducting research with Caribbean people and the diaspora. They proposed a form of participant observation (distinguishable from typical focus group settings in being less structured, more egalitarian, and democratic in the Friereian sense) that uses these narrative and performative Caribbean traditions to study social phenomena. Adams et al. (2015) make a similar argument in their proposition of accompaniment as a decolonial research method. This could have implications for the ways that Caribbean scholars study identity development, moving away from the use of WEIRD concepts, theories, and measures that originate from WEIRD countries (Henrich et al., 2010) that are unrepresentative of populations in the Caribbean.

From this new theory, changes in the types of research questions that are used to investigate Caribbean identity and identity among other diasporic cultures are anticipated. For example, it would necessitate research questions that reflect a perspective of social identity that goes beyond concerns of emotional attachment to social groups across developmental stages or social situations, to also consider sociohistorical influences that distinguish the narratives, motives, and behaviors of one cultural milieu from the next in a non-essentialized way. Some of these questions might be:

- Is there evidence to suggest that in diasporic cultures, the theme of transience figures more prominently in narrative memories of social history and life history than in non-diasporic cultures?
- What other sociohistorical factors contribute to a predominance of transience in narrative memories (e.g., war, crime, and conflict)?
- To what extent are narratives of continuity, displacement resistance, and essentialism related to embodiment of flexible hybridity, transcendence, and remittance in performances of Caribbean identity?
- Under what conditions (e.g., diversity and social mobility) is transience associated with coping versus adaptation and resilience?

Conclusion

The Caribbean SHIFT model presented in this chapter rests on a major assumption that one must go beyond individuals' life histories to include the key elements of social history that give meaning to Caribbean cultural identity. Once the sociohistorical dimension of identity comes under investigation, this illuminates its narrative and performative aspects, which tend to be understudied in much psychological research. The themes that then emerge as a result of this examination present fertile ground for authentic inquiry into original Caribbean theories and testable models

[5] "Liming" is analogous to hanging out. "Ole talk" is a spontaneous form of conversation (sometimes relaxed, sometimes spirited) where participants riff off one another's contributions.

that guide research methods best suited to the Caribbean people and diaspora while promoting a greater understanding of Caribbean identity.

Acknowledgments The author would like to thank Mary Jane Arneaud for early contributions to the conceptualization of this work, Glenn Adams for pivotal suggestions on strengthening the current chapter, and members of the Culture Collaboratory at the University of Michigan for their supportive feedback.

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Chapter 6
National and Ethnoreligious Identities in Multicultural Mauritius: Group Positions and Belonging

Caroline Ng Tseung-Wong

Introduction

According to the 2018 World Migration Report (IOM, 2018), 1 in every 30 people is a migrant, whether voluntary or displaced. This means societies, mostly across the developed world, are facing an unprecedented level of cultural diversity and the accompanying collective identity (re)definition. Across and within borders, conflicts often center around issues of identity, namely, belonging, entitlement, and recognition. Social commentators argue that at the heart of events in liberal democratic societies such as the election of the United States' President Donald Trump and the vote for Brexit lies political rallying around a group's interests, that is, identity politics and the quest to be recognized and valued in one's group affiliation, in other words identity dignity (see Fukuyama, 2018; Goodhart, 2017). Identity politics is unfortunately not the preserve of WEIRD countries (Henrich et al., 2010) and permeates many of the challenges, conflicts, and strength of developing countries. Can the social theories on diversity ideologies and intergroup relations inform practice in social contexts other than the ones for which they were devised?

The current chapter discusses the importance of ethnic and religious identities to the construction and negotiation of national identity in Mauritius, a decolonized, multicultural island state. Foremost, two factors stand out from studying intergroup relations in Mauritius that help frame an understanding of cultural identities and social cohesion: (a) the positive correlation between ethnic and national identification, that is, dual identity for all, and (b) normative representation of the nation in terms of cultural diversity and tolerance. The sociohistorical context of Mauritius is first described, especially the group positions of the different ethnoreligious groups that make up the Mauritian mosaic. This will serve to highlight that both majority

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© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_6

and minority groups can be understood and studied in terms of the mainstream framework of ethnic identity and acculturation applied to mostly minorities and immigrant groups in the Western literature. Historical aspects specific to Mauritius, such as the absence of an indigenous group and a shared past of oppression by most ethnic groups (even the one currently in a dominant position), provide a social context that shapes the understanding and meaning of ethnic and national identities. The chapter then reviews empirical work on the associations between superordinate (national) and subgroup identities (ethnic/religious) and the negotiation of multiple identities. The factors that facilitate compatibility between national and ethnic identities are discussed in terms of normative representations of the national category. Finally, the generalizability across contexts of a diversity paradigm (Jones & Dovidio, 2018) are considered, and the chapter concludes with the challenges of making sense of a "rainbow" nation for the identity construction of those who "do not belong."

Factsheet on the Making of a Cultural Mosaic: Mauritius

Mauritius is a densely populated, small island state off the east coast of Madagascar and is renowned as a tourist paradise for its sandy beaches. Less known to the resort tourist is the cultural diversity of the people and their inevitable daily interactions, whether at the workplace, school, the community, or through extended contact. This cultural diversity is the result of colonization. Though Mauritius was first occupied by the Dutch, who introduced sugarcane, the French were the ones to formally colonize the island in 1715, bringing in slaves from the east coast of Africa and Madagascar. Descendants of the French settlers, Franco-Mauritians – commonly known as Whites – make up about 2% of the population. Creoles of slave descent but highly of mixed ethnicity comprise about 27% of the population. Creoles have been doubly dispossessed, first by enslavement and then by being left to their own devices after the abolition of slavery (Vaughan, 2005), and to this day are the most disadvantaged group. In 1810, the British took over the island from the French but did not interfere in the day-to-day life of the colony and importantly allowed the French sugarcane planters to retain their language and land monopoly. French is still more spoken than English, and most of the land is currently owned by Franco-Mauritians, albeit by only a handful of families (see Salverda, 2015). Under British rule, slavery was abolished, and indentured labourers (mainly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in northern India) replaced the slaves in the sugarcane fields. The majority of current Mauritians are of Indian descent (about 70%), but after the separation of India and Pakistan, which resulted in a local ethnic power game, the following two groups are viewed as distinct on religious grounds despite cultural similarities: Hindus (about 52%) and Muslims (about 18%). Contrary to the slaves who were purposefully mixed on the plantations in terms of country and language of origin in order to curtail collective action that could result from common group identification, the indentured labourers were placed in "camps," where language, rituals, and

group cohesion were maintained and thus flourished. The last group to settle were the Chinese (Hakka and Cantonese in origin about 3% of the population), who were economic migrants and work mostly as shopkeepers.

In 1967, following ethnic riots between those in favor of independence (Muslims and Hindus) and those against (mainly Creoles who were afraid of Hindu hegemony), Mauritian nation building was – and still is – about managing ethnoreligious identity recognition and the related unequal economic and political distribution. To ensure ethnic minority representation in parliament and appease the fears of ethnic minorities, the Best Loser System (BLS) was put in place.[1] The BLS is still current but has been formally contested at the Privy Council by a civil movement called Blok 104, which argued that political candidates should not have to state their ethnic group when running for election. This is currently the case and is needed so that the members of parliament who are elected through the BLS can be determined. The BLS is used and abused by politicians because "Mauritian politics are above all, ethnic politics" (Minogue, 1987, p. 133). This is illustrated in the double standards of the main political parties who, on the one hand, support the BLS because of fear of losing their ethnic minority votes and, on the other hand, are not in favour of having an ethnic census because it would be "divisive." The grapevine argues that an ethnic census would reveal changes in ethnic group proportions, with the numerical majority Hindus no longer as strong. Recently questioned by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (2018) on the lack of data disaggregated by ethnicity, the Attorney General representing the Mauritian government argued he was confused by such a demand because an ethnic census would harm the Mauritian social fabric. In reply to this, the Vicar General of the Catholic Church, Jean-Maurice Labour (a Creole), commented in the local press that without an ethnic census, there is no way of concretely demonstrating that Creoles are systematically discriminated against at all levels of civil servant job opportunities.

In managing such a culturally diverse polity, Piagetian equilibration has been sought in two main ways for Mauritian nation building: (a) accommodation of different ethnoreligious groups and (b) homogenized ethnolinguistic nationalism promoting Kreol as the national language. The dominant approach promoted by Indo-Mauritians, that is, both Hindus and Muslims, is to seek accommodation of the different ethnoreligious groups by drawing on ancestral languages and rituals. These ancestral cultures are considered important for social cohesion because they provide stabilizing moral anchors in the face of rapid economic development (Eisenlohr, 2011). By drawing on ancestral cultures, the multiculturalism discourse is one of celebration of unity in diversity and the nation as a "fruit salad" or cultural mosaic (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2015a). The state promotes

[1] Mauritius is divided into 20 electoral constituencies, each with 3 elected members through a first-three-past-the poll system. Moreover, eight members of parliament are elected through the BLS, which involves complex calculations of the proportion of vote obtained by an ethnic minority candidate, while ensuring that the political party that wins remains so. For instance, Sino-Mauritians often get elected to parliament through the BLS, if they do not make it through the first-past-the-poll system.

multiculturalism not through top-down (institutionalized) multiculturalism as is common in Western countries (e.g., Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, and the UK) but through state sponsorship of sociocultural centers. These centers officially promote ancestral languages but also support religious identity in a thinly veiled manner. Multiculturalism as unity in diversity is not a policy reaction to deal with (visible) minorities, but more a grassroots initiative driven by Indo-Mauritians' desire to maintain their language, culture, and religion. The state thereby "legitimately" supports such practices. However, this ancestral-culture multiculturalism effectively promotes symbolic recognition of cultures with distinct origins and maintains the dominant position of Hindus.

The alternative approach to nation building is a more homogenizing ethnolinguistic nationalism promoting Kreol as the national language and the assimilation of Mauritians under "*enn sel lepep, enn sel nasion*" ["one people, one nation"], akin to a colorblind approach. The Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM), in power in 1982, was driven by such an ideology and eliminated the ethnic census but kept the BLS. The MMM commissioned the broadcast of a Kreol version of the national anthem because it argued a "real" nation can only come into being through internal homogenization (see Eisenlohr, 2018). It was the death knell for the MMM's power. Promotion of Kreol as the official language received strong opposition, mainly from the Hindu bourgeoisie.[2] In the same way, the view of Mauritius as a "Creole island," hybrid and mixed, as is the case in French plantation islands such as Guadeloupe or Martinique (Benoist, 1985), does not have currency in Mauritius. Both Kreol linguistic nationalism and a Creole island would not be to the advantage of Hindus because it would imply the loss of their majority status and legitimize a more prominent position for Creoles.

Endorsement of Diversity Ideologies and Group Positions

It is argued that preference for a diversity ideology is functional, whereby majority group members tend to endorse the ideology that supports the maintenance of their cultural identity, status, and power position in society (Dovidio et al., 2009). In Western countries, endorsement of multiculturalism is (a) stronger among ethnic minorities than majorities (see Rattan & Ambady, 2013; Ryan et al., 2007), (b) associated with more positive intergroup evaluations when there is no threat (see Plaut et al., 2018), and (c) positively linked to minority ethnic identification (Verkuyten, 2006). However, multiculturalism, in terms of cultural group

[2] Kreol as the national language for all was resisted, but Kreol as an ancestral language that fits in the ancestral/diasporic rhetoric was accepted. So Kreol was the "ancestral" language of Creoles, on par with other Asian languages taught at school such as Hindi, Urdu, Mandarin, and Arabic. The latter two, the ancestral language of none, have received recognition and are taught in primary schools as optional languages. The Creole-speaking Union, funded by the state, was created in 2011.

recognition and rights, is also perceived to be *for* minorities, and many (mostly working-class) majority individuals view the policies of cultural diversity as having gone just too far: "What about us?" (see Goodhart, 2013, 2017). The rise of political parties with an anti-immigrant agenda – UKIP in the UK, Front National in France, PVV in the Netherlands, or One Nation in Australia – attest to this.

An appreciation of intergroup relations is only possible when the sociohistorical context and the collective ideological beliefs and theories about the social structure are understood (Turner, 1999). The case of Mauritius stands in stark contrast to the current European discourse on multiculturalism and its purported threat to social cohesion. In Mauritius, multiculturalism is mainly a majority group strategy to maintain power and benefits. Therefore, it should not be a threatening ideology to majority Hindus. Indeed, we found through both a survey (study 1) and semi-experimental design (study 2) that multiculturalism is nonthreatening for the majority Hindu group (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2018). Survey data with 140 self-categorized Hindu university students showed that endorsement of multiculturalism was associated with less ingroup bias and ethnic identification was associated with more ingroup bias. As expected, there was a significant interaction of ethnic identification with endorsement of multiculturalism, and results of simple slope analysis showed that for those who strongly endorsed multiculturalism (+1SD), ethnic identification was not significantly associated to ingroup bias, whereas for Hindu participants who had a lower endorsement of multiculturalism (-1SD), stronger ethnic identification was linked to stronger ingroup bias. This suggests that multiculturalism is nonthreatening to Hindu participants and indeed confirms and legitimizes their dominant position in society.

Study 2 also supported the nonthreatening effect of multiculturalism by examining the causal impact of diversity ideologies. Using the principle of lay theories activation (Levy et al., 2005), 160 Hindu participants randomly answered one of four versions of a questionnaire in which they were encouraged to think in terms of multiculturalism, color blindness, or polyculturalism (and a control condition in which no cultural diversity ideology was primed). After the experimental manipulation, participants answered an ingroup feeling bias measure, namely, a thermometer measure like the one used in study 1, and an ingroup stereotype bias measure. In line with prediction for both dependent variables (ingroup feeling bias and ingroup stereotype bias), there was a significant interaction effect between condition and ethnic identification. In the multiculturalism condition, there was no significant association between ethnic identification and ingroup bias, but in each of the other three conditions, the association was significant. Both studies demonstrated the buffering effect of multiculturalism for Hindu participants on the well-established link between ethnic identification and ingroup bias. In Mauritius, it is to the advantage of Hindus to maintain the social representation of the nation as united in diversity.

Moreover, such a representation of the nation is also attractive to minorities such as Muslims and Chinese, who can maintain their valued cultural distinctiveness. As social norms and beliefs regarding diversity are communicated and spread in a society, they become its "cultural representations" (Guimond et al., 2013; Moscovici, 1988) and convey "who we are and what we do." "Who we are" in Mauritius is

repeatedly symbolized by public figures as a beautiful rainbow, a fruit salad, or a cultural mosaic; "how we do it" is through the promotion of sociocultural centers, language unions, and public holidays linked to specific cultural-religious group celebrations. On a day-to-day basis, it means (a) ethnically heterogenous public spaces and neighbourhoods where intergroup contact is inevitable, (b) an expectation that you share cakes with your neighbours and colleagues when it is your cultural festival day, and (c) a shared understanding of the different language registers to be used depending on context and interlocutor. The underlying pillar is mutual recognition and respect for difference – a multiculturalist approach. In a large-scale survey among Mauritian adolescents ($N = 2327$), an open-ended question on what it means to be Mauritian showed that the most important criteria in the belief of "who we are" across the three main ethnic groups (Hindu, Creole, and Muslim) were "caring about others," "being tolerant," and "respecting cultural diversity" (van der Werf et al., 2018). The second most important criterion, however, was "to be born in Mauritius." The latter could suggest a static form of cultural diversity – there are only so many colors that a rainbow can take.

To further explore understanding of nationhood and the association to outgroup attitudes, van der Werf et al. (2020) looked at the lay conception of nationhood in a large sample of adult Mauritians ($N = 1770$), of whom 43% were Hindus, 28% Muslims, and 29% Creoles. They used the conceptualization of ethnic self-identification as falling under the dimensions of feeling, doing, and being, as suggested by Verkuyten and de Wolf (2002). The results supported the distinction between *being* (e.g., citizenship, being born), *doing* (e.g., speaking Kreol, living in the country, and being religious), and *feeling* (e.g., celebrating cultural diversity, tolerating different religions, serving the country, and feeling Mauritian) across the three ethnic groups, with some small differences for Creoles. For the latter, the marker "speaking Kreol" did not only load on the *doing* component but also on the *being* component. Across the three groups, the *being* component was not associated with either attitudes towards established outgroups or attitudes towards migrants (foreign workers and expatriates), but the *feeling* component was associated to positive attitudes towards both outgroups. Of interest from the two large-scale studies is the consensual view of Mauritians in terms of tolerance and diversity – *feeling* Mauritian – and this feeling was positively linked to outgroup evaluations. Furthermore, there is strong endorsement of multiculturalism across the three ethnic groups (e.g., "In Mauritius, all the ethnic and religious groups should be recognized and respected," "In general, Mauritians should value the ethnic diversity in the country"; Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, 2015b). Contrary to Western concerns about diversity undermining social cohesion, the case of Mauritius suggests there is no inherent contradiction between diversity and unity. A consensual multiculturalist approach is viable, as demonstrated in other countries such as Canada, New Zealand, and Singapore.

Multiculturalism at the Individual Level: Diverse (Compatible) Cultural Identities

Cultural diversity at the societal level invariably translates to access to multiple social identities. According to Berry's (2001) model of acculturation, multiculturalism at the societal level is related to integration at the individual level. Integration is understood in terms of maintenance of ethnic culture and simultaneous participation in the larger society. This approach was developed for immigrants coming into a new setting and has been adapted to understanding intergroup relations between majority and minority groups (e.g., see Dovidio et al., 2007). Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) proposed that individuals become psychologically connected to the social structure by way of their group memberships. Through the process of self-categorization, the group is "placed in the person's head," making it possible for people to think, feel, and act in the name of the social group. Importantly, individuals are motivated by positive differentiation, that is, maintenance of positive social identities. Therefore, when individuals derive positive esteem from their ethnic group membership, it would be counterproductive to ask them to relinquish this valued identity.

The common ingroup identity model (CIIM) proposes that an overarching sense of "we" is positive for intergroup relations because previous outgroups ("them") are recategorized as "us" (Dovidio et al., 2007). However, the CIIM also recognizes that for ethnic minorities it might not be feasible or desirable to replace ethnic or religious minority identities with only a sense of national belonging, as they would lose their sense of distinctiveness. A dual identity would satisfy the twin need for distinctiveness and commonality (Brewer, 2007). Dual identification conceived this way has been conceptualized for and researched among ethnic minorities. For instance, dual identification has been linked to better management of the psychological distress of migration by immigrants, better intergroup relations, and more political engagement in minority groups (see Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016). This focus of dual identification as the concern of minorities mirrors the tacit perception, even among researchers, that (visible) ethnic minorities are the ones in need of adapting, integrating, and negotiating their ethnicity within the (existing) national category. However, their very presence in the polity changes the dynamic and the content of the national category by challenging the status quo and creating a disequilibrium in what it means to be a national, for instance, being American or Dutch. Could dual identification for *all* be a route to equilibrium?

As Deaux and Verkuyten (2014) argued, the relationship between ethnic and national identities depends on the national context, and in Mauritius dual identification is for all. Majority Hindus promote a multiculturalist approach that draws on maintenance of ancestral cultures and religion: the imaginary homeland (Eisenlohr, 2006). Muslims can also find meaning and cultural gain in this multicultural projection because they draw from the Ummah. The Creoles have found it most difficult to navigate the cultural mosaic landscape. Because slavery meant cutting ties to a homeland, the Creoles have no ancestral language or distinct cultural rituals to

maintain; rather, it is the cultural markers of Mauritian-ness that have roots in Creole culture: the *Sega* and, importantly, the Kreol language, which is the vernacular of most Mauritians. Paradoxically, Creoles are often considered to be the "real" Mauritians, and being "only Mauritian" is perceived as becoming Creole and hence resisted by Hindus and Muslims.

Empirical survey research supports dual identification for all. Adolescents of all three groups (Hindus, Creoles, and Muslims) reported high levels of ethnic group identification and even higher levels of religious group identification. (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, 2013). Importantly, across participants the correlation between ethnic identification and national identification was significantly positive. Both majority Hindus and minority Creoles and Muslims preferred a dual identity, whether measured as (a) a self-identification choice on the Moreno (1988) question, where participants were asked to indicate how they predominantly feel using five options ranging from 5 (*I feel only Mauritian*) through 3 (*I feel both Mauritian and my ethnic group*) to 1 (*I feel only my ethnic group*) or (b) as high national identification combined with high religious or ethnic identification. Large-scale survey data among adult participants collected by Afrobarometer (2015a, 2015b, 2017) also used the Moreno scale. Looking at the Round 5 questionnaire collected in 2012 (Q85B), the Round 6 questionnaire collected in 2014 (Q88B), and the Round 7 questionnaire collected in 2017 (Q85B), the category most chosen by all three ethnic groups was also dual identity, respectively, 59.5% of 1079 participants, 56.9% of the 1050 participants, and 62.7% of the 1203 participants (see Table 6.1). It is noteworthy that the Hindus were least likely to label themselves as "mainly Hindus" because majority group members are more inclined towards stronger national group identification (e.g., see Staerklé et al., 2010).

In line with the predictions of the CIIM that both a superordinate national category and dual identity are linked to more positive intergroup relations, national and dual identifiers rated the outgroups more positively than ethnic identifiers (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010). Dual identifiers measured by cluster analysis of participants' ratings on national identification and religious identification reported higher self-esteem compared to religious identifiers, individual identifiers, and neutral identifiers (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2013). We specified a priori four clusters to match Berry's (2001) four identity positions, but the data did not map completely onto the four theoretical positions. Instead of a "national group identification cluster" (high on national identification and low on religious identification), we obtained a "neutral" position, where participants reported scale midpoint levels on religious and national identification. Again, not finding a "national group identification cluster" highlights that it is problematic and ill-defined to be just Mauritian.

Acculturation theory and research make a strong case for integration or biculturalism because they are linked to positive psychological and sociocultural adaptation in immigrant and minority groups (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013; Phinney et al., 2006). However, research on how individuals achieve integration is nascent (Ward et al., 2018; West et al., 2017). Ward et al. (2018) proposed that individuals have two strategies available to integrate their cultural identities: hybrid and alternating. A hybrid identity style (HIS) involves

Table 6.1 Percentage of participants in the three identity categories by ethnic group

	Adolescents data set			Afrobarometer Round 5			Afrobarometer Round 6			Afrobarometer Round 7		
	Hindu %	Creole %	Muslim %	Hindu %	Creole %	Muslim %	Hindu %	Creole %	Muslim %	Hindu %	Creole %	Muslim %
Mainly nationals	35	24	35	32.5	38.4	15.2	37.9	37.8	16.1	25.8	28.5	16.5
Dual identifiers	54	58	47	64.1	50.2	62.7	57.8	49.7	64.2	68.6	58.8	69.1
Mainly ethnics	11	18	18	3.4	11.5	22.1	4.3	12.5	19.7	5.3	12.4	12.8

picking and choosing desirable elements of two (or more) cultures and blending them in a way that suits the individual. As such, HIS reflects dynamism, flexibility, and, to some extent, novelty. An alternating identity style (AIS) which entails shifting cultural identities contingent on the social context is likewise a dynamic identity response. The scale was validated across three different countries: New Zealand, Israel, and Mauritius. Only in the latter was the scale used in both majority and minority participants, namely, Hindus, Creoles, and Muslims. Hindus reported significantly higher HIS scores than Muslims or Creoles. This further supports the proposition that depending on the sociohistorical context of the polity and markers of nationhood, it is possible for majority and minority group members to view integration or dual identities as a viable option.

*Taking Stock of the Mauritian "*Vivre Ensemble*"*

If there is one conclusion that can be drawn from research on diversity ideologies and outcomes, it is that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach or best ideology that works across individuals and contexts (Apfelbaum et al., 2016; Plaut et al., 2018; Wilton et al., 2018). It depends on the group position of the individual, perceived levels of threat, and societal norms (see Table 1 in Plaut et al., 2018). However, one common denominator in what is increasingly viewed as an umbrella "diversity approach" (see Apfelbaum et al., 2016) is the "diversity = minority/immigrant" equation. In this zero-sum language of diversity, White Americans felt left out and were then less supportive of diversity goals (Plaut et al., 2011).

More recently, Jones and Dovidio (2018) set out a road map for a diversity paradigm that considers influences at multiple levels of analysis and posed four challenges for such a framework. These four challenges provide an informative lens through which to evaluate Mauritian cultural diversity.

1. "Is opposition to diversity inevitable?" The short answer is "not necessarily when diversity is the default in a country." As illustrated by the main argument of this chapter, recognition and respect of cultural diversity is normative and thereby accepted by most in Mauritius. At the individual level, this acceptance of diversity takes the form of dual identities for individuals from the three main ethnic groups. Ironically, in such a context, diversity *within* the individual, that is, being mixed, poses challenges of group belonging and location within the discrete colours of a rainbow nation.
2. "Is diversity destined to lead to conflict?" Jones and Dovidio's (2018) answer is in line with the "unity in diversity" mainstream view of Mauritius. A common superordinate identity around the shared value of diversity connects different groups and its members (see van der Werf et al., 2018, 2020).
3. "How should ideological diversity be included?" One important way, they argue, is through full participation where everyone can have the opportunity to succeed and contribute to the well-being of others. The difference between symbolic and

concrete participation is the biggest hurdle for Mauritian Creoles. It is one thing to acknowledge the Sega on promotional tourist brochures or to submit a Truth and Justice Report (2011) on the legacy of slavery and indenture but quite another to implement the recommendations on land rights and the underrepresentation of Creoles in public service jobs. Mauritius is a reminder that "unity in diversity" does not preclude group-based hierarchies and perceived entitlements. Normative "unity in diversity" can be a deterrent to real social change because, by flagging ethnic group-based inequalities, there is the risk of being accused of disrupting the "social harmony."

4. "Should members of socially dominant groups become part of a diversity conversation, and if so, how can this be achieved?" The Mauritian answer to the first part of the question is a resounding "yes." Contrary to empirical findings in Western immigrant-receiving countries, Hindus in Mauritius are the main drivers of the national cultural diversity representation. When diversity is viewed not as a zero-sum game but where all groups (and in the Mauritian case especially the majority) can see something in it for them, diversity is accepted. However, there are two cautionary points to be made: (a) Mauritius is not a traditional immigrant-receiving country, and its policy on citizenship is strict and restrictive, and (b) symbolic cultural diversity can mean that hard conversations on ethnicity and economic and educational inequalities are seldom held. It is telling that cultural diversity in Mauritius is not equated to advocacy for non-discriminative practices. For a start, it would need an ethnic census.

Future Directions

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown yet again that despite dire forecasts, Mauritius has managed to contain the spread of the virus by having one of the strictest lockdowns in place and, importantly, by having a united population who were, by and large, compliant to the measures. As the country comes out of the lockdown and faces internal and global economic challenges, there are two areas in which research can guide policies for a sustainable and just society. First, recognizing and understanding the link between ethnicity and economic disparity or advantage and, second, investigating attitudes towards guest workers (low income) and expatriates (high income) and the contribution and place of these groups in the rainbow nation.

Research so far has mainly looked at the compatibility of ethnoreligious and national identities and the associations to intergroup relations. Economic status has rarely been added to the equation. This is unfortunate because in Mauritius, ethnicity and economic status are intricately linked and influence outcomes. Anthropologists have studied specific ethnic groups, such as the elite position of Franco-Mauritians (Salverda, 2015) and the malaise Creole (Boswell, 2006). What is missing and needed is cross-sectional and longitudinal research looking across ethnic groups at individuals' understanding and attitudes towards their ethnic group and its economic situation from a within-group but also comparative perspective. This would

inform policy-makers in understanding people's attitudes and behaviors towards, for instance, implementation of affirmative action and the role of privilege and prejudice on economic and educational access.

Guest workers (mainly Bangladeshi) and expatriates (mainly White South Africans and French), live and work on the island but are absent from discussions and representations of the Mauritian nation. Both groups contribute to the economy, but little is known about their and the host nation's attitudes on migration, acculturation, and group entitlements in Mauritius. The latest financial budget for 2020/2021 has eased what were stringent conditions for foreigners to have a residency or occupational permit. For instance, the minimum investment needed to obtain an Occupation Permit will henceforth be 50,000 USD instead of the current 100,000 USD. Partners of those who hold such a permit will also be able to work, and permit holders will be able to have their parents live with them. Permanent residency permits have been extended from 10 to 20 years. The reason put forward for these more relaxed measures towards migration by the finance minister is the decline in population growth in 2019 and the need to open the country to skilled individuals and investors. As discussed in the current chapter, Mauritian multiculturalism points to cultural diversity with a pre-set number of cultural groups. How accommodating are Mauritians to newcomers? This is a question that begs an answer for the sake of social cohesion.

Conclusions

The challenges of Mauritian cultural diversity are not in terms of cultural acceptance or recognition – in other words, to culturally "be." This is quite different from what is played out in Western societies, where ethnic and national identities can be incompatible – for example, the Muslim problem in Europe (see Verkuyten, 2014). The high compatibility between ethnic and national identities, a shared understanding of the nation as diverse, and the recognition of cultural diversity at societal and individual levels are commendable factors for a peaceful society. From this perspective, Mauritius has found social equilibrium, and lessons can be drawn from its "getting along." However, Mauritius also serves to highlight that "unity in diversity" can be a deterrent to (a) addressing economic ethnic inequality because the rainbow should not be disrupted and (b) those who do not belong in one of the cultural categories or choose not to. Identity is at the heart of many of the discontents of Western and non-Western societies; the Mauritian case shows that solving the identity riddle may be a major step towards tolerant societies but is not necessarily the answer to equitable ones.

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Chapter 7
Identities in the South Caucasus: Still Salient and Contested

Nino Javakhishvili

Introduction

Three former Soviet Union republics – Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia – have held the status of nation-states since the dissolution of the Soviet Union almost 30 years ago. On the surface, the South Caucasus might be perceived as a homogenous space, sharing a common Soviet past and the influence of the much larger countries in the region (Russia, Turkey, and Iran) albeit to highly varying degrees. These countries are economically disadvantaged: In 2019, the GDP per capita was 4,622.70 USD in Armenia, 4,793.60 USD in Azerbaijan, and 4,769.20 USD in Georgia (World Bank, 2020). Many dissimilarities exist, however: three different languages and alphabets, different religions, and political aspirations, to name a few.

The chapter considers personal and social identities in the South Caucasus through a discussion of articles – one third are from the psychology field, while two thirds are from other social sciences, such as sociology, political sciences, and anthropology. It must be noted that social sciences were not welcomed by the Soviet Union and have developed relatively recently in these areas, resulting in a small number of publications overall, with almost all relevant ones discussed in this chapter. Authors of these publications from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia apply existing Western theories and models to describe and explain local situations. However, this approach is not always effective, as illustrated by the psychological studies cited below. The psychological studies conducted in the last 6 years in Georgia have used quantitative data, either with a correlational or experimental design. The instruments were validated for Georgian samples, and, quite often, the factor structure of Georgian versions deviated from the original ones (Javakhishvili et al., 2016; Khechuashvili, 2015a; Skhirtladze, 2019; Vardanashvili et al., 2017).

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_7

These deviations lead us back to the specifics of the local context that shape identity development and its structure in different domains.

Personal Identity in the South Caucasus

In the publications discussed, personal identity is understood from the developmental perspective as something that evolves over a course of maturation, according to Erikson's classic theory of psychosocial development, and is, overall, established in the young adulthood stage when a person has answered the question "Who am I?" Answering such a question means making decisions or commitments, which usually follow processes of exploration. Western psychologists study these developments in a number of domains, such as work/vocational, education, relationships, and religion. Some antecedents and consequences of personal identity have been studied in the seven articles considered below, three of which utilize the identity formation construct (Luyckx et al., 2006, 2008), one of the most recent developments of Marcia's status model (see also Klimstra & Adams, this volume).

Personal Identity Formation Processes and Profiles in Goals, Plans, and Values Domains

In the first study (Skhirtladze et al., 2016), the authors found certain deviations from the usual pathway of identity development in the goals and future lifestyle domains found in Western European and North American emerging adults: Young people explore and consider a number of various opportunities before making any decisions – exploring in breadth and making commitments, double-checking their choices and either keeping them or changing their minds, exploring in depth, and identifying with commitment. Ruminative exploration, one of the five processes of identity development, is characterized by negative emotions, feelings of indecisiveness, and uncertainty. In the Georgian case, similar to Greek and Swiss cases (see Mastrotheodoros & Motti-Stefanidi, 2016; Zimmermann et al., 2013, respectively), exploration in depth may be further divided into reflexive exploration in depth (thinking about endorsed commitments) and reconsideration of commitment (doubting the existing ones). The latter, as well as exploration in breadth, is highly correlated with ruminative exploration. This means that the two processes are intertwined in Georgian young adults. The authors explain the differences by local context: First, job market opportunities are limited, and quite often young people are inclined to seize the first available job to be able to support not only themselves but their parents and siblings. Second, young people are expected to follow and listen to their parents' views, while individual initiatives are rarely supported. The process of

exploration in breadth is therefore less developed in Georgian than in Western emerging adults.

This is also apparent in identity profiles that emerge as a combination of identity development processes. This person-centered approach examines the joint effect of identity processes in identity formation. The same six profiles (achieved, moratorium, foreclosed, troubled diffusion, carefree diffusion, and undifferentiated) were found in Georgia, but the architecture of achieved profile is somewhat different. The level of exploration in breadth is lower than in their Western counterparts, where the achieved profile characterizes a person who makes commitments after exploring possible opportunities, while one with a foreclosed identity profile explores much less and mainly follows directions of important persons (parents, peers, etc.). Also, the achieved profile shows the healthiest adjustment, followed by foreclosed (Schwartz et al., 2011). In Georgia, the achieved profile provides the highest scores on life satisfaction, and achieved and foreclosed profiles have the lowest scores on anxiety and depressive symptoms. These profiles are close to each other, with less developed exploration and adjustment results; thus, in conditions where career opportunities are lacking, one can still have an achieved profile, with low scores on the exploration-in-breadth dimension (Skhirtladze et al., 2016). These profiles were studied via different inventory by other Georgian psychologists who have demonstrated some gender differences in identity statuses – boys follow advice of others and explore less than girls – and attributed them to the traditionally prevailing gender roles in the country, which assign boys to preserve family values (Mestvirishvili et al., 2014).

In the another study, the contextual influences were also considered, by adding qualitative data of life-story interviews to the quantitative data obtained through the identity development questionnaire. This approach enabled the authors to show how different contexts, such as family relations and lack of career opportunities, “interact with identity dimensions and profiles” (Skhirtladze et al., 2018b, p. 430). The method of life-story interviews was successfully applied by another Georgian author, Khechuashvili (2016), who demonstrated the difference between two generations via extracting data from narrative accounts of life stories. For those who came of age in the 1980s, the dissolution of the Soviet Union was one of the major turning points in their lives, while the younger generation, for whom no such major event was identified, named more biographical turning points, such as graduating from school, or university, or starting a job (Khechuashvili, 2015b).

The identity development model and the respective measures used in the aforementioned studies were initially developed in the future plans and goals domain; the values domain aspect was added later and used for the first time in a 2019 study by Skhirtladze et al. Since “values are general beliefs about how the world should be, and future plans and goals are individual end points specified by concrete life circumstances” (Skhirtladze et al., 2019a, p. 1), it was suggested that identity dimensions of exploration and commitment unfold differently across these two domains. The authors further explored the specifics found in Georgian young adults by having a closer look at the identity processes in the values and goals domains simultaneously. Indeed, less exploration, observed initially in Georgian young adults in the

goals and plans domain (Skhirtladze et al., 2016), appeared to be even less in the values domain. Values domain identity formation is accompanied by weaker exploration and stronger commitment, while goals domain identity formation goes with stronger exploration and weaker commitment. This finding was again accounted for by the context: Georgians view traditions and values as very important. Parents would expect their children to follow values and traditions, as shown in a nationwide study of youth (18–29 years old), with 61% of young Georgians attaching importance to maintaining traditional values (Omanadze et al., 2017). At most, 30% of shared variance was found between the values and goals domains in Georgian young adults, which points to a remarkable gap between these two domains. However, it has not yet been explored whether such distance is also maintained in Western cultures. If young people in these cultures are free to explore in general, there might be more shared variance between values and goals.

Psychological Antecedents of Personal Identity Resolution

Despite such a distance between the goals and values domains in Georgian young adults, making decisions in both domains is nevertheless needed to achieve personal identity resolution, one of the concepts of the identity capital model developed by Côté et al. (2016), denoting the climax of identity development. Two aspects of identity resolution have been investigated: personal (considering oneself a mature adult and feeling as such) and societal (finding one's own place in a society; Côté et al., 2016). For Georgian emerging adults, societal identity resolution is linked mostly with the crystallization of goals, while personal identity resolution is linked more with crystallization of both goals and values (Skhirtladze et al., 2019a).

Yet another study (Skhirtladze et al., 2019b) found further psychological predictors of identity resolution: motivation and psychological need fulfillment. According to Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory, a number of different motivation types can be considered on a continuum from the autonomous (self-determined) to the extremely controlled motivation. The partial mediational model showed that self-determined motivation is a positive predictor of both personal and societal identity resolutions, and this relation is mediated by three types of need fulfillment: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Self-determination theory also considers amotivation, which denotes a total absence of motivation. Amotivation is a negative predictor of personal and societal identity resolution, and this relation is mediated by autonomy, relatedness, and competence need fulfillment. In addition, personal identity resolution is best predicted by competence need fulfillment while societal identity resolution by relatedness need fulfillment, which is a logical finding. The fact that these links were observed in Georgia, where job opportunities are limited, speaks of the robustness of these connections. A practical recommendation offered by the authors on how to foster self-determined motivation in young people and thus support their smooth identity resolution is to provide an autonomy-supportive environment, whether it be a family system (i.e., parenting), educational, or

organizational settings (e.g., job design and managerial climate). Implications for practice might be targeted at the environment or individuals. The authors also recommended using attributional retraining programs for youth that facilitate transition to adulthood. However, such programs first need to be adapted to the local context.

Family Role/Parenting for Personal Identity

The family context was studied using three parenting dimensions – psychological control, behavior control, and support – separately for mothers and fathers of emerging adults in Georgia, as well as their relations with identity styles (information-oriented, normative, and diffusive-avoidant). The model developed by Berzonsky (2011) states that people use these three social-cognitive processes to process self-relevant information: They alternately try to obtain information and consider the task/problem, avoid the task/problem, or follow the instructions of important others (Berzonsky, 2011). Supportive parenting is usually associated with an information-oriented style while controlling parenting with avoidant or normative style. Indeed, in Georgia, both maternal and paternal support fosters information-oriented style development in young people, and both mother and father psychological control is a predictor of diffusive-avoidant and normative styles. In addition, father psychological control is negatively linked with an information-oriented style, and father behavior control is positively linked with normative style development. These paths coincide with those observed in the West; however, some findings, namely, correlations among identity styles, have proved to be different: In the Western context, the information-oriented and normative identity styles were positively linked, while the normative and diffusive-avoidant styles were negatively linked with each other. In the Georgian sample, the normative identity style positively correlated with the diffusive-avoidant style and not correlated at all with the information-oriented style. Traditional Georgian parents would expect their children to share their parents' views and follow their parents' directions, resulting in avoidant and normative style offspring. This may point to the fact that traditional controlling upbringing no longer produces adapted individuals. Overall, all these differences point to a transitional period in the country's development when traditional, extended families, with traditional relations within them, are maintained to some extent, and at the same time, new, more West-oriented processes have started. Skhirtladze et al. (2018a) recommend working on enhancing identity capital and improving family relationships, which includes decreasing pressure from parents.

Skhirtladze et al. (2018a) point to the possibility that these findings of personal identity may be generalized to other post-Soviet countries. Similar to Georgia, these have relatively poor economic conditions, lack jobs, and are collective societies with a strong commitment to one's family members. All these factors push emerging adults to explore less and seize existing job opportunities. Indeed, youth studies conducted in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia bring forward that unemployment is the main problem leading to a low degree of freedom of vocational choice

(Mkrtichyan et al., 2016; Omanadze et al., 2017; United Nations Development Programme, 2014). This context plays an important role for the shaping of a personal identity, and default individualization seems to work in such cultures.

Overall, the findings of the articles considered are to be interpreted from two perspectives. The first is general, where the models obtained can be used for most of the cultures and demonstrated relations among different identity variables enrich knowledge on the nature of these constructs: Identity development in goals and values domains is considered as a predictor of identity resolution; a meditational chain of different types of motivations followed by need fulfillment leads to personal and societal identity resolutions, and this chain is moderated by the work/education status of an individual. The other perspective is more specific as the findings can be generalized only to some societies that are similar to those in the South Caucasus and be interpreted in the light of the local context. For example, South Caucasian emerging adults explore less, which, however, does not interfere with adjustment difficulties for them; or normative-style young adults are less adjusted than those with an information-seeking style. Such findings enrich knowledge about the environment in which these variables function. The latter approach is even more important for understanding social identities in the South Caucasus.

Social Identities in the South Caucasus

Multiple identities coexist in any person and some are more salient than others are. In this section, I consider social identities, such as gender, national, ethnic, and religious. A number of articles and books, as well as policy papers and research reports in sociology, anthropology, and political sciences, that discuss issues of social identity share a general theoretical framework of modernization that was initially articulated in and for the Western culture. These were later expanded to other cultures and climaxed in the notion of “multiple modernities” (Filetti, 2014, p. 221), which tries to understand and explain ongoing changes in social, economic, and political lives and, in doing so, use (among others) the construct of shared values introduced and studied by Inglehart and Welzel. They argue that the advancement of emancipative values – tolerance over conformity, autonomy over authority, and gender equality over patriarchy – should be considered as characterizing modern societies (Filetti, 2014). This value theory is widely used in World Value and European Value nationwide surveys. In line with this approach, Caucasus Barometer was introduced in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia about 20 years ago, and its data have been used in this chapter (Caucasus Research Resource Centers [CRRC], 2013, 2015, 2019) as well as in a number of the studies considered below.

Gender Identity

Gender identity is discussed to a much lesser extent in the South Caucasus. It is considered to be less important relative to ethnic, religious, and national identities. On the other hand, gender equality issues are widely highlighted by representatives of nongovernmental organizations, sometimes with the inclusion of university researchers, who bring more explanatory power to the mostly descriptive results. These studies touch upon antecedents and outcomes of gender identity, following postmodern feminist theories (de Lauretis, 1987; West & Zimmerman, 1987), according to which, gender is socially constructed (Javakhishvili, 2012). Community-shared attitudes and understanding of gender roles shape gender identities, which, in turn, result in unequal gender representation in all spheres of public life – politics, military, finances, transportation, and construction industries are mainly for men, while education and food industries are mainly for women. However, all leading positions are held by men, even in female-dominated fields (Khitarishvili, 2016; Mandl, 2011; World Bank, 2017a, b). These studies do not provide theoretical perspectives for examining gender equality issues, and the data are mainly provided as frequency distributions in percentages. For example, United Nations (UN) agencies periodically study the prevalence of domestic violence associated with gender attitudes, but the data are not linked via correlational analysis, such as multiple regression (Chitashvili et al., 2010; United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], 2011; UN Women, 2018). Some of these studies show a homogenous gender identity picture (albeit to varying degrees) in the South Caucasus with prevalent clear definitions of gender roles and responsibilities, expectations, and ascribed limits. Men are supposed to be the heads of their families, which involves making major decisions, representing their families outside their homes, and being the main breadwinners, while women are supposed to take care of their family members, support their husbands in their working life, and obey them in everyday life (National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2016; UNFPA, 2016; UNFPA & State Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan for Family, Women and Children's Affairs [SCFWCA], 2018; UN Women, 2018). A few studies show that women's sexual lives are controlled. For example, a woman having a sexual life before marriage is still taboo. More than 98% in Azerbaijan (UNFPA & SCFWCA, 2018), 63% in Georgia (CRRC, 2019), and 85.9% in Armenia (UNFPA, 2016) think that women must not have sex out of wedlock.

LGBTQ identities are less visible and are almost exclusively studied in terms of their discrimination, highlighting the problems people who identify as LGBTQ encounter in their daily life or how widely shared homophobic views often result in their forced migration (Aghdgomelashvili, 2016; Meaker, 2016; Mestvirishvili et al., 2017; Minasyan, 2018). These societal attitudes are also reflected in a psychological study in which Georgian students (students, in general, are considered as the most tolerant part of society) were the most prejudiced against homosexuals and the least distanced from people with disabilities such as wheelchair users (Vardanashvili, 2018).

Gender identities of South Caucasians are thus more traditional, with a rather clear division of gender roles and responsibilities, as well as expectations: Men should be breadwinners and work, while women should look after their family members; men are expected to be dominant, leading, and strong both emotionally and physically, while women, on the contrary, are expected to be weak and submissive. Both men and women are supposed to have heterosexual identities, meaning that LGBTQ individuals are excluded from the society. Together with personal identity, discussed above, gender identities are less salient in the South Caucasus and are dominated by other types of social identities considered below.

National Identity

Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia are nation-states, with 98% ethnic Armenian, 92% ethnic Azerbaijani, and 88% ethnic Georgian, respectively (IndexMundi, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c). National identities of the citizens of these nation-states are, respectively, Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian, which coincide with their ethnic identities. In addition, language plays an important role as an indicator of identity associated with the nation-state: Georgian and Armenian languages and their respective alphabets are unique in a sense that they are spoken, written, and understood only by the representatives of these two nations and have played an important role in the formation and maintenance of national identity throughout their long history (Matveeva, 2002; Panossian, 2002). Azerbaijani as a language belongs to a group of Turkic languages and was documented as Turkish by the Parliament after the Soviet Union breakdown, in 1992. Three years later, it was renamed Azerbaijani (Tokluoglu, 2005). Thus, all the South Caucasian countries have their national identity grounded in their own language and ethnicity, as well as in religion: 94.8% of Armenians belong to the unique Armenian Apostolic Church (National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia, 2013), 98% of Azerbaijanis are Muslims (CRRC, 2013), and 83.4% of Georgians are members of the Georgian Orthodox Church (which is similar to Orthodoxy in Greece, Russia, and some Eastern European countries; National Statistic Office of Georgia, 2016). The unresolved territorial conflicts around Abkhazia, Tskhinvali Region (South Ossetia), and Nagorno Karabakh, in which South Caucasus states are involved but regional powers (especially Russia) are also implicated, put even greater strain on the issue of national identity. The large and powerful neighbors – Russia, Turkey, and Iran – contain an open or latent threat to the territorial integrity and peace of the three South Caucasian states, and these threats may account for the salience of national identity, along with ethnic and religious identities considered further on in this chapter.

For some scholars, national identity is based on shared values (Jalagonia & de Jonge, 2019). According to these authors, debates about patriarchal, Islamic, and national values, on the one hand, and liberal values, on the other, are ongoing in Azerbaijan. In Georgia, pro-European-Union integration and pro-European-value aspirations coexist with fears of losing one's own identity and with anti-minority

attitudes (Javakhishvili et al., 2018; Mestvirishvili & Mestvirishvili 2014; Tsuladze, 2017). Armenian researchers found that affiliation with family, relatives, and close friends, as well as normative behavior, is prevalent in the country; hence, the values of conservation (conformity and security) dominate over the values of enhancement (achievement and dominance) and transcendence (care and tolerance), according to Schwartz's (2006) value system. These researchers are of the opinion that "security and safety needs become salient against the backdrop of prevailing uncertainty and social mistrust" (Khachatryan et al., 2014, p. 105). These findings show that, like national identity, the value system has not been stabilized as more traditional, safety-related values, and more modern, liberal/transcendent values compete with each other, too, according to a more recent source (Ishkanian & Manusyan, 2019).

The national identity of the majority of the population in the three nation-states equals their ethnic and religious identities and is supported by their own languages. Azerbaijan's national identity is based on ethnicity, having been additionally influenced by linguistic and religious factors (Huseynov, 2010). In the Georgian media representation of national identity, even individual identity has been equated with national and ethnic identities (Maisashvili, 2010); the importance of maintaining own language was considered in life-story interviews (Khechuashvili, 2015b). In Armenia, some equate national identity with ethnic and religious identity, while others assign it to a civic dimension (Harutyunyan, 2006). The contestation of more inclusive (the civic version of national identity) and more exclusive identity (the ethnic and religious version of national identity) is found in all three countries.

Ethnic Identity

Economic instability and the fear of losing sovereignty trigger a strong sense of ethnic belonging (Javakhishvili et al., 2018; Jones, 2006). Unemployment, territorial integrity, and poverty are the most serious problems in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia (EU Neighbours East, 2018; International Republican Institute, 2018a, b). This search for ethnic identity, which simultaneously unites the population and delineates it from other identities, especially those from neighboring countries, creates fruitful grounds for intolerant attitudes toward the small percentage of minorities living in these countries. The minorities are, in the first place, those having other ethnic and/or religious identities. Armenians (4.5%) and Azerbaijanis (6.3%) constitute the largest minority groups in Georgia, where ethnic minorities total 12%. Armenia is home to 2% ethnic minorities, including Georgians, while Azerbaijan has about 8% minorities, with 1.3% being Armenians and 0.11% Georgians (IndexMundi, 2019a, b, c). The discussion of intolerant attitudes displayed by majority groups toward minorities has gained momentum in public discourse. A number of Georgian print media outlets, not mainstream but quite popular, have been publishing negative articles with elements of hate speech about religious, ethnic, and sexual minorities (Kharchilava & Javakhishvili, 2010; Media Development Foundation, 2019; Tolerance and Diversity Institute, 2017). Discriminatory

discourses targeting minority groups were found in Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian mainstream media outlets as well, with dominant majority representatives viewing minority groups "not necessarily as equal citizens" (Arslan et al., 2018, p. 43).

In line with public discourse, Georgian psychologists studied ingroup favoritism and outgroup prejudice as psychological consequences of ethnocentrism and conservative values, moderated by integrated threat (Makashvili, 2018, Makashvili et al., 2018), and various forms of religiosity, moderated by perspective taking and empathic concern (Vardanashvili & Javakhishvili, 2016). The findings are explained by Tajfel and Turner's social identity and other related theories of integrated threat, realistic group conflict, and self-categorization, which, overall, understand group identity as a positive sense of group belonging. However, in the case of threats to identity and feelings of uncertainty accompanied by negative emotions, ingroup favoritism and outgroup prejudice may increase. The received models are generalizable, with the exception of the religiosity variable, which is context specific: What is true about the Orthodox Christian believers may not be true about the representatives of other Christian denominations, not to mention other religions, such as Hinduism or Buddhism.

The shared socialist past was the reason why Grigoryan et al. (2019) decided to compare 9 samples from postcommunist countries to 38 samples from capitalist countries by using stereotype content model (SCM). The combination of perceived warmth and competence creates four groups of stereotypes, where ingroup is warm and competent, while outgroups vary from cold and incompetent to either cold and competent or warm and incompetent (see also Fiske, 2018). Working class was valued more and high class less in postcommunist societies, including Armenia and Georgia (Azerbaijan was not considered in this study). Almost all samples placed working class either in the ingroup combination of warm and competent or in the bordering warm-but-incompetent cluster. According to Fiske's model, the warmth and competence stereotypes are ascribed to outgroups based on their competitiveness and status. If a group has a high status in a society, it is perceived as competent (e.g., rich people), while if the status is low, the group is perceived as incompetent (e.g., poor people); likewise, if a group competes over jobs, for example, it is perceived as cold (e.g., ethnic minorities), while if it is not competitive, it is perceived as warm (e.g., housewives). The authors found that unlike the capitalist samples, in postcommunist samples, some links are stronger, and others are weaker: Competitive groups are considered to be cold to a higher extent, while high-status groups are considered competent to a lesser extent. These interesting findings were explained by a lower level of meritocracy beliefs and higher priority of embeddedness, which is the valuing of conformity, obedience, and order more than initiative, freedom, and independence (autonomy) in postcommunist societies. Valuing order more than initiative means more penalization of competition. The less people believe that hard work and better education bring success, the weaker the perceived path from competence to status is. This study shows that the context – in this case, different ideological legacies – shapes stereotypes (Grigoryan et al., 2019).

Ethnic identity in the South Caucasus, which, at the same time, is salient but threatened, may lead to prejudiced stereotypes and even discriminating behavior toward minorities.

Religious Identity

Religious identity is considered as important as ethnic identity: 82% of Azerbaijanis, 90% of Georgians, and 94% of Armenians believed that religion was very important in their lives (CRRC, 2013, 2015, 2019). While officially, these countries are secular and, in line with secularization theories (as secularization theory has been modified many times, some authors recommend using the plural form), there is relatively rare observation of religious practices. Overall, these theories state that the significance of religious institutions and consequently of religious practices and trust has been declining (Charles, 2010). However, these theories cannot account for South Caucasians' high trust in religious institutions and for the importance of religion in their everyday lives (Charles, 2010). As we will see in the following paragraph, this is especially true in the case of Georgia, which considers the Orthodox Christian religion as one of the main pillars that helped Georgians maintain their identity through the history of multiple invasions, mainly by Islamic states (Gamsakhurdia, 2017).

According to some scholars, religious identity is extremely important for Georgians: A focus group study found that religious identity is more important than ethnic (Tolerance and Diversity Institute, 2017); the majority of respondents (65.9%) in a survey study identified themselves more with a "veritable Christian" rather than with a "citizen of Georgia" (34.1%; Sumbadze, 2012). Religious symbols and rituals penetrate public spaces such as workplaces and schools (Gurchiani, 2017a, b). The Georgian Orthodox Church "subordinates Georgian nationality to Orthodox Christianity" (Ladaria, 2012, p. 7). These findings are summed up in the notion of "religious nationalism" that was coined to denote the argument that "religious affiliation to orthodoxy is an essential factor in determining national identity" (Zedania, 2011, p. 125).

Religion plays a crucial role in reshaping Armenian and Azerbaijani national identities as well and manifests itself through a greater focus on religious education and increasing church involvement in public life. However, church has never gained high power and importance in Azerbaijan, which can be considered as the most secular country in the South Caucasus, as people only partially follow conditions of Islam, and Armenia, where similar may be said about Christianity. Religious identity is less salient in these countries (Antonyan, 2011; Filetti, 2014; Hug, 2014; Musayev, 2015; Nuruzade, 2016; Valiyev, 2005).

None of the studies cited in this section is from the field of psychology, and none of them clearly articulates an understanding of religious identity. However, we can conclude from these studies that religious identity is understood not merely as affiliation with a religious denomination and a parish but as having a high trust in

religious authorities and adhering to religious ideas to the degree that they influence one's everyday life, including decision-making, and thus play an important role in understanding one's national identity. Based on the studies considered above, it can be argued that national identity in the South Caucasus is partially based on shared values of security; it equals ethnic and religious identities, and one of its consequences is prejudice toward minorities.

Directions for Future Research

Skhirtladze et al. (2018a) note the extreme importance of studying identity in the former Soviet republics, "given the massive reconfigurations of national identity that have been ongoing" (p. 37) in these contexts since the fall of the Soviet Union; thus, more studies from this part of the world would be welcomed. The proposed chain from shared values to national identities to outgroup prejudice can be further investigated. Also, more cross-cultural studies are needed not only across the countries discussed in this study but also comparing other non-Western and Western contexts and groups. This would provide valuable information on how identity formation unfolds and what can be done for improving identity adjustment in the South Caucasus. For example, in one of the studies on personal identity formation considered above, it was suggested that the shared variance of the values and goals domains may be larger in Western emerging adults; another study suggests that the link between the dimensions of religiosity and prejudice toward minorities may be different in other religions. Also, it would be interesting to examine the clash of the Soviet past with the present situation and the rapid changes, for example, to study intergenerational influences, where most of the parents grew up in the Soviet context versus their children, or to study value systems of different generations and their implications for individual as well as group identities. Another consideration might be to examine the intersectional nature of the social identities within the South Caucasus contexts, as the interaction between social identities is crucial for gaining a holistic view of how people define themselves.

Conclusion

Identity, especially social identity, is a "hot issue" in public life of the three South Caucasian countries, being a salient and widely disputed topic among social science researchers. This is not surprising, considering a relatively recent emergence of these countries from the former Soviet empire and their relatively young nation-state status. Filetti (2014) points out that "since the Soviet collapse, the newly born Caucasian states have found themselves engaged in identity building" (p. 223). In the Soviet Union, the ruling Communist Party's ideology focused on a supranational Soviet identity, rather than national or ethnic identities, and banned religion

and church. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the populations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia have been in the process of rediscovering their ethnic, national, and religious identities, and the search for identity is ongoing and disputed: “the core issues of identity and independence remain unresolved” (Matveeva, 2002, p. 12) on the backdrop of a sense of insecurity and rapidly changing economic, political, and social realities (Khechuashvili, 2015b). Considering the specific context of the South Caucasian countries and the findings of the works cited, it is clear that the theories developed by Western scholars are only partially supported by data in the South Caucasus, as there are local specifics that change the already established picture of personal identity development, as well as the components of social identities and their interrelations. The most salient ethnic and religious identities are followed by less salient gender and personal identities. The main message for researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers, then, is that the “Western” models and theories should be generalized very carefully and only after considering different contextual factors; the local context always needs to be considered while studying various aspects of identity (Schwartz & Petrova, 2018). The three South Caucasian countries differ from the rest of the world not only by a unique combination of traditions, beliefs, and perceptions but also by contextual dynamics of rapid and dramatic ongoing changes. This, in turn, enables scholars from these countries to contribute to the international research not only with new generalizable findings but also with a valuable input on the modification of the existing theories.

Acknowledgments The author thanks her colleagues for useful comments: Leila Alieva, affiliate of the Russian and East European Studies, University of Oxford; Nino Butsashvili, research assistant, doctoral student, Ilia State University; Sona Manusyan, assistant professor, Yerevan State University; Ghia Nodia, professor, Ilia State university; and Nino Skhirtladze, researcher, assistant professor, Ilia State University.

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Chapter 8
Multiple Social Identities in the Post-Soviet Context

Nadezhda Lebedeva, Victoria Galyapina, and Fons van de Vijver

Introduction

The collapse of the USSR in 1991 led to the formation of newly independent countries, namely, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan, Kirgizstan, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. After becoming independent, these countries faced various challenges. Some of them had no experience of existing as separate, independent states, and their local populations had no experience of being dominant and responsible ethnic groups in their "own" independent states. Others had a specific and controversial history of a relationship with Russia during both the USSR period and the subsequent post-Soviet era (Abdelal, 2002). For some countries, the dissolution of the USSR was an act of receiving freedom and an opportunity to get rid of the "Soviet" identity (Berg, 2002), while others faced a need to urgently develop and incorporate entirely new identities (Schatz, 2000). However, for all these countries, this historical event played a crucial role in the formation of social identities that now exist in the post-Soviet space.

Social identity is based on the concordance of individual interests, values, and attitudes with those of the group. Identification occurs with "real" groups (family, work collective, city), as well as with "symbolic" groups (nation, country, the world as a whole). In transitional periods, the social identity with the closest social environment increases (Yadov, 1995). This chapter evaluates social identity in three parts. First, based on early studies, we analyze how the collapse of the USSR triggered the mechanisms of the formation of new identities and the main trends of identity changes in the post-Soviet space. Second, we provide an overview of studies of different kinds of identities and their impact on attitudes and intercultural

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_8

relations in post-Soviet countries. Third, we present some recent studies of identity changes in the post-Soviet space.

Crisis of Social Identity After the Collapse of the USSR and Its Consequences

Social identity is a complicated and diverse phenomenon for two reasons. First, it developed and evolved in different fields using different methodologies. Second, it became an umbrella term for the social identification processes for gender, professional, ethnic, religious, regional, or national aspects. Thus, “identity” became an integral part of psychological concepts such as motivation, meaning, and reflection. As a result, there is a legitimate question of how to define boundaries of identity research. Recently, scholars have begun to pay special attention to this problem. Some of them restricted the interdisciplinary character of the identity phenomenon (Rasskazova & Tkhostov, 2012) and opportunities of interdisciplinary analysis (Sokolova, 2014). Others dwell on the problem of identity crisis in the situation of radical social change (Andreeva, 2011; Belinskaya, 2015) or specify methodological approaches to a crisis (Asmolov, 2014) and socialization (Martsinkovskaya, 2014). Klimova (2002), when studying identity crisis, concluded that in a changing society, people are freed from the old identity and are forced to engage in self-identification – to compare, choose, and create new commonalities – focusing on the coincidence of personal values with those offered by a particular community. An individual recognizes the society as being “their own” not only because they share its goals but also because the ways of achieving these are morally acceptable for them.

Obviously, a central aspect of identity remains the problem of volatility or sustainability, which, as many scholars acknowledge, has two underlying causes: First, the question of whether one’s ideas about oneself are consolidating and integrating personality constants – the unchanging “core” – or whether this reality is volatile and multiple (Belinskaya, 2015) and, second, the understanding of the volatility/stability of the “self” is inextricably linked with the social and historical concepts of a person (Martsinkovskaya, 2014).

Belinskaya (2015) elaborates on the idea of multiplicity and potentiality of identity from two perspectives: through (a) a more detailed understanding of the cognitive processes underlying the formation and development of identity and (b) increased attention to its situational and contextual manifestations. The specificity of the domestic “identity crisis” is associated with the actual absence of an image in which the personal and social future is emphasized. The instability of society has affected almost all aspects of social identity (Danilova & Yadov, 2004) in that the hierarchy of social identities is also becoming particularly mobile (Ilyin & Mikhailova, 2012).

The Vectors of Changes in the System of Self-Identification After the Collapse of the USSR

The years after the USSR collapse yielded much research on changes in values, attitudes, and identities of people in different post-Soviet countries (Lebedeva et al., 2018). During the Soviet period, the so-called "Soviet" identity was the most inclusive social identity, uniting all citizens of the USSR regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation. This Soviet identity lost its importance after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Other different inclusive identities replaced it: national, religious, regional, republican, and place identity. We present five common vectors of changes in the system of self-identification from the theoretical analysis of early sociopsychological research, conducted in several of the newly independent states: Belarus, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan (Lebedeva, 1996).

Vector 1: From Stable to Unstable (Diffusive, Uncertain) Identity The transitional character of self-identification was shown in Russia and Eastern Ukraine by Pavlenko and Korzh (1998). The authors pointed out the mixed character and discrepancy of the social identities of Russians and Ukrainians. The structure of the social identities of Eastern Ukrainians was presented as more conflicting and unstable than that of the Russians, as it consisted of two ethnocultural components: Ukrainian and Russian. Soldatova (1998), who studied interethnic tensions in the Russian Federation republics (Tuva, Sakha, North Ossetia, and Tatarstan), stated that the common national (Soviet) identity had been split and disappeared.

Vector 2: From Uniform to Diverse Within this vector, varied and diversified systems of social categories for self-identification replace the limited number of previous social categories. Stefanenko (1998) wrote that the experiment for obtaining social uniformity resulted in the annihilation of many social groups, such as the nobility, peasant communities, parishes, and different political parties. The dogmatic ideological machine of the Soviet era meant that people knew only the one state, the one party, and the one youth and children's organization. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the system of self-identification changed towards the diversity of social categories during the first years. In her 1996 research of interethnic relations in the Baltic countries, Lebedeva revealed significant variation in identification among Estonians, Lithuanians, and Russians: citizens of the world, Europeans, Soviet citizens, citizens of their own republic, many kinds of ethnic and religious identifications, as well as local identifications, among others (Lebedeva, 1996). Other works show a similar picture in other post-Soviet countries (Pavlenko & Korzh, 1998; Soldatova, 1998).

Vector 3: From Collectivistic to Individualistic (Uniqueness) Orientation There was a decrease in the significance of global social categories (e.g., ideological, civil) in favor of more specific, individual, and unique ones (e.g., gender, age, ethnic, religious, and professional). Kuzmickaite (1996) showed the increased significance of identification with Lithuania or a local region in comparison with more global

(world or European) communities. In her research, Soldatova (1998) pointed out the growth of specific group characteristics (e.g., refugee, jobless, vagrant) and subjective individual features (e.g., plodder, maker) among the respondents from different ethnic groups in the Russian Federation. Research in the Baltic states also revealed the increase of more unique personal characteristics (e.g., passionate fisherman, skilled lover) in comparison with global ones (e.g., citizen, human being; Lebedeva, 1996). It is evident that the collapse of the social system of care resulted in individuals' highlighting their personal survival and the everyday tasks associated with these.

Vector 4: From Need for Positive Self-Esteem to Search for Meaning and Understanding This vector means that to adapt to a changing reality, people in an unstable society tend to define themselves through social categories belonging to that which is not prestigious or respected (often quite the contrary). Such a choice means that self-identification through these categories is more truthful, realistic, and, consequently, more adaptive. It also increases the feeling of control over one's life. In unstable circumstances, the search for meaning and understanding answers the central question of self-identification – "Who am I?" – much better than the search for the positive distinctions of one's group. Research shows the growth of negative self-identification: social outcast, alien, second-class citizen, without kin, without a homeland, refugee, jobless, or vagrant, among others (Lebedeva, 1997; Soldatova, 1998). A clear understanding of one's real position in the world, combined with unexpected negative evaluations from members of other groups, probably gives an individual better grounds for necessary decisions concerning their future life.

Vector 5: From Polar Dichotomies to Antinomy Unity (Ambivalence) The final vector focuses on how strong positive or strong negative evaluations (e.g., the Black-White dichotomy) of social realities have been replaced by an interpretation of these realities as inwardly ambivalent, consisting of both positive and negative components. For example, Andrushak's (1998) research in Uzbekistan revealed that the change of status of both ethnic groups (i.e., growth of Uzbek status and reduction of Russian status) resulted in the growth of ethnocentrism in both groups. It means that even such a positive tendency as the improvement of the status of certain ethnic groups may lead to negative consequences (Andrushak, 1998). The research on the New Russian Diaspora in post-Soviet countries (Lebedeva, 1997) showed that the role of the so-called syndrome of imposed ethnicity was ambivalent. On the one hand, it promoted attitudes for separation or assimilation among ethnic Russians. On the other hand, it stimulated the search for a positive ethnic identity and biculturalism. In any case, it forces individuals to solve the problem of cultural and ethnic self-identification in search of an adequate and positive social identity in the changing world. This often starts with the negative evaluation of one's own ethnic identity (there were strong correlations between ethnic self-identification and negative feelings attributed to own ethnicity). An individual might obtain a positive group or ethnic identity by joining a "respectable" social group through migration towards their ethnic homeland, assimilation within the dominant group, or

recategorization with a more respected subcultural group such as the Cossacks (Lebedeva, 1997; Tatarko, 2002).

Thus, we can notice that the vectors of changes in post-Soviet societies from global, uniform, and polar self-identification to those that are more diverse, unique, and ambivalent are the symptoms of stabilizing the processes in people's consciousness through times of turbulent change.

Research on Different Types of Identities

Next, we discuss some prominent social identities in the post-Soviet space: ethnic identity, religious identity, civic identity, and regional identity. It is important to note that the list of social identities presented here is not exhaustive but rather representative of the most prominent identity aspects relevant in the post-Soviet space.

Ethnic Identity or Ethnic Self-Consciousness

In Russian studies, the problems of analyzing ethnic identity from the standpoint of the ethnic group were raised, based on the broader concept of ethnic self-awareness in the works of ethnologists, historians, sociologists, and psychologists (Arutyunyan, 2009; Arutyunyan et al., 1999; Drobizheva, 2010; Soldatova, 1998). The studies of ethnic self-awareness conducted by scholars from the Russian Academy of Sciences remain the object of large-scale empirical research at the junction of ethnosociology, political science, and social psychology. The methodology of these studies is based on the principle of interaction between the society's structural characteristics, the ethnosocial and ethnocultural environmental features, and the individual's cognitive-motivational sphere. This approach provides a multidimensional study of ethnic identity as a complex social and psychological phenomenon.

Stefanenko (2009) wrote about a terminological ambiguity between the concepts of *ethnic self-awareness*, *ethnic identity*, and *ethnicity* in Russian literature because, in most studies, they were used as synonyms. In Western works, the concept of ethnicity is used with ethnic minorities, whereas in Russian literature, such specification is absent (Ryzhova, 2008). In most works, ethnicity and ethnic identity are used as equivalent concepts, while ethnic self-awareness is usually separated from ethnic identity (Arutyunyan, 2010; Stefanenko, 2009). According to Arutyunyan (2010), this division depends on whether or not this process is conscious.

Components and Types of Ethnic Identity Researchers identify *cognitive*, *affective*, and *behavioral* components in ethnic identity (Lebedeva, 2014). The cognitive component refers to certain notions of what in "own" ethnic groups is different from the "others"; these components are called *ethnodifferential features* (Lebedeva, 2014). The study of such ethnodifferential features, namely, language, religion, values, customs and traditions, myths, and history, as well as their contribution to the

formation of ethnic identity, is of particular interest to researchers (Bogatova, 2009; Drobizheva, 2006; Stefanenko, 2009). Thus, Achkasov (1999) stressed the crucial role of language as a form of categorization of culture that found its confirmation in empirical studies (Dontsov et al., 1997; Pavlova, 2015). Language is regarded as the link between generations and the main way of transferring knowledge and cultural traditions (Achkasov, 1999). Based on this position, some later researchers wrote that the prevalence of English in the Russian discourse contributed to the formation of a kind of *supraethnic identity* – "citizen of the world" (Aleshinskaya & Gritsenko, 2014).

A feature of research on the components of ethnic identity is the consideration of the emotional component through the prism of *valency* and *certainty of identity*. Here valency concerns the positive or negative attitude to one's ethnic group, and certainty of identity is the clarity and depth of ideas about one's ethnic group and the clarity of awareness of belonging to it (Tatarko & Lebedeva, 2009).

Arutyunyan et al. (1999) divided ethnic identity into seven categories that determine how an individual relates not only to one's group but also to other groups: (a) *normal identity* (a positive image of one's group in combination with a tolerant attitude to other groups), (b) *ethnocentric identity* (high significance of one's own ethnic identity), (c) *ethno-dominating identity* (beliefs about the superiority of own group combined with discrimination of other groups), (d) *ethnic fanaticism* (exaggerated ethnic identity followed by the exaltation and devotion to own ethnic group's goals), (e) *ethno-indifferent identity* (lack of interest in ethnicity as a whole), (f) *ethno-nihilism* (complete denial of own ethnic identity), and (g) the *ambivalent* or *multiple identities* (the combination of two or more ethnic identities).

The studies of ethnic identity can be conventionally attributed to the following areas: the ethnic identity of the national majority, the ethnic identity of ethnic minorities, as well as migrants from the post-Soviet republics. Ethnic minorities in Russian studies are primarily understood as ethnic groups smaller in number than the national majority (Drobizheva, 2010). It is therefore possible for minorities to be both "Indigenous" peoples of regions and groups of people who have arrived from other countries and are living in the territory of Russia. The additional direction is the study of ethnic identity in diasporas in the territory of Russia. According to Popkov (2003), the diaspora identity is fragmented and combines elements of several cultures – native and host – as well as linguistic, religious, and regional identity. Several researchers note that the collective ethnic identity of the diaspora is a fundamental factor of the its existence (Mukha, 2013; Popkov, 2003).

The Role of Historical Events in the Formation of Ethnic Identity Stefanenko et al. (2017) found that cultural memory – being the link between the past, the present, and the future of the social group – ensures the continuity of social identity. The authors inquired how the continuity and maintenance of social identity were carried out from generation to generation. Particular attention was drawn to the memory of the traumatic past of the group, such as repression and deportation, as this contradicts the widespread view of social identity as a tool for achieving positive individual self-esteem based on a positive image of the group.

Quite often in empirical studies, ethnic identity is considered in conjunction with religious identity. These components always interplay with one another (Bogatova, 2009; Pavlova, 2013, 2015; Shcherbakova, 2009).

Religious Identity

The sociologist of religion, Mchedlov (2006), remarked that during periods of national calamities and ideological confusion, the role of ethnic and religious identities sharply increases. Pavlova, in her studies (2013, 2015), found that among representatives of five Muslim ethnic groups of the North Caucasus (viz., Chechens, Balkars, Kabardians, Ingushes, and Adygs), religious identity is the second most pronounced identity after ethnic identity. At the same time, for many respondents, these two identities are merged into one. Studies show that in Russia, the relationship of ethnic and religious identity exists at the associative level: to be Russian means to be an Orthodox Christian; to be Chechen is to be a Muslim (Mchedlov, 2006).

Types of Religious Identity Some researchers made attempts to develop typology of religiosity or religious identity. For instance, Mchedlova (2008) distinguished *internal religiosity* (faith itself) from *external religiosity* (following traditions and rituals). Borisov (2014) identified several manifestations of religious identity: *hyper-positive identity*, associated with religious fanaticism and narcissism; *positive religious identity*, related to positive acceptance of one's confession and tolerant attitude towards others; *negative religious identity*, indicating a negative perception of one's religious group; and the fourth type, *atheism*. Ryzhova (2012) noted that the modern Orthodox identity of Russians has lost its religious character and acquired cultural features. The critical concept of Orthodox identity is not faith, but Orthodox traditions and national culture. Ovcharov (2012) found that only 7% of the surveyed Orthodox Russians strictly followed religious traditions (e.g., Lent). For the majority of modern Orthodox people in Russia, religion is not related to faith in God, but to following moral norms (Khukhlaev & Shorokhova, 2016).

Relations of Religious Identity to Values and Attitudes Many authors have studied the interrelation between Orthodox identity and values. Lepshokova et al. (2016) found that the religious identity of Russian Orthodox adolescents in Kabardino-Balkaria is positively related to the similarity of the parent-child values. Shcherbakova (2009) found that the religious identity of the Orthodox respondents was positively related to the tolerant intergroup attitudes and negatively related to the negative ones. A study of the relationship between religious identity and the economic attitudes of Muslims and Orthodox Christians (Efremova, 2010) showed that a strong religious identity is associated with the denial of the importance of money in both groups. At the same time, Muslims have productive economic attitudes related to the strength of their religious identity and Christians with the positivity of their religious identity. Frequent formal religious participation, as well as a

high level of expression of one's religious identity, positively influences individual psychological well-being (Efremova, 2010; Lepshokova, 2012).

Civic Identity

Multidimensional Understanding of Civic Identity Civic identity has actively been studied by Russian sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, and teachers (Drobizheva, 2006). At the same time, until the 1990s, it was included in the concept of "national self-consciousness" (Ivanova & Mazilova, 2008). At the moment, civic identity is understood as a multicultural and ethnic structure operating with supraethnic, global values (Arutyunyan, 2009). Several large-scale studies at the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences dedicated to the formation of a general civil Russian identity in Russia have been conducted since the late 1990s (Yadov, 1995). According to the data of the late 2000s, the "common state" is still the main factor of citizens' consolidation. However, the second most important factor is "responsibility for the future of this country," which bears an appreciable emotional content (Semenenko, 2015). Sociological studies demonstrate the growth of the significance of civil identity throughout the country. According to the data of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in 2011, 95% of respondents felt themselves citizens of the country, and 72% experienced a significant closeness to Russia (Marshak, 2015).

Relationship of Civic Identity with Ethnic Identity A feature of the Russian state-civil identity is its stable relationship with ethnic identity (Arutyunyan, 2009; Ivanova & Shulga, 2010). According to Drobizheva (2008), in regions where the ethnic Russian population dominates, up to 80% of respondents considered themselves Russians. A similar "united" civil-ethnic identity is characteristic of the Tatars (Drobizheva & Ryzhova, 2016). Nevertheless, in their combined identity, the Tatars give the predominant role to ethnic group, while the ethnic Russians attribute it to citizenship. The work of Maksimova and Morkovkina (2016) found that among the inhabitants of the border regions of Russia (i.e., the Far East and southern Siberia), civil identity dominated over all other types of social identity, regardless of ethnicity. In contrast, among the representatives of the peoples of the North Caucasus, civil identity was poorly expressed and ranked below ethnic and religious identities in the hierarchy of identities (Usmanova, 2013).

In the context of the national and cultural diversity of the peoples of the Russian Federation, the study of the relationship between civil and ethnic features is of particular importance. Combinations of different facets of civil and ethnic variables can constitute both constructive and destructive profiles of the social identity matrix and are of academic interest as a separate subject of research. For example, Murashchenkova (2013) explored the relationship between different types of civic identity, based on the combination of patriotic and extremist components, with characteristics of ethnic identity. She found that higher levels of self-perception as

a patriot resulted in clearer ethnic and cultural affiliation and higher positive self-esteem. However, a clear-cut idea of one's ethnic belonging and its positive evaluation, combined with pronounced ethno-isolationism, ethno-fanaticism, and ethno-egoism, takes the form of patriotism with a fluctuating extremist orientation. Civil indifference is combined with more pronounced ethno-nihilism and ethnic indifference. There is, therefore, a close positive connection between the civil and ethnic identities of Russians, and one strengthens the position of the other.

Among representatives of ethnic minorities, pronounced ethnic identity, on the contrary, weakens civil identity. However, a variety of factors that affect the peculiarities of the combination of civil and ethnic identity set several other patterns. Thus, Phinney (1990) found evidence that the ethnic identity of the majority is less pronounced than that of a minority and may, for a long time, be in a diffused state. In the research of Bocharova (2014), correlations between civil and ethnic identities among the members of different ethnic groups (Russians, Armenians, Kazakhs) provided the basis for determining the different types of relationships between these two identities: complimentary, ambivalent, and conflicting.

Structure of Civic Identity and Its Relationships with Attitudes Civic identity is often differently operationalized. Some researchers rely on a two-factor model of civil identity (i.e., patriotism and nationalism; Efimenko, 2013; Grigoryan & Lepshokova, 2012). Grigoryan (2013) showed civil identity in Russia in three independent dimensions (i.e., nationalism, pride in the achievements of the nation, and pride in the sociopolitical system in the country). Vodolazhskaya (2010) has argued for five components (i.e., common historical past, the name of the civil community, language, culture, and rallying emotional experiences), and Drobizheva (2008) added common territory to these.

Grigoryan and Lepshokova (2012) introduced the empirical model of the role of national (civic) identity and attitudes towards immigrants in the economic beliefs of Russians. Using structural equation modeling, they revealed that patriotism was connected with positive attitudes towards immigrants, while nationalism was connected with negative ones. There was a positive relationship between subjective economic well-being and positive attitudes towards immigrants. Tatarko and Lebedeva (2009) found that high civic identity was positively associated with economic well-being and – among young people – with psychological well-being and satisfaction with their lives. Ryzhova (2008) found a relationship between the expression of civic identity in different ethnic groups within Russia and positive intergroup attitudes. Sanina (2013) found that a developed civic identity contributed to the successful socialization and well-being of individuals. Tatarko (2012) considered civic identity as a component of society's social capital. Multiple regression analysis showed that such characteristics of civic identity as valence (the degree of positivity) and strength (intensity), along with other components of social capital, related to productive economic and democratic political attitudes of Russians. In general, we can say that empirical studies have shown that a positive civic identity is a necessary condition for the successful existence of both individuals and modern Russian society as a whole.

Regional Identity

Concept of Regional Identity in Russian Science The study of regional identity in Russian science emerged in the 1990s. The collapse of the USSR intensified the processes of understanding the problem of the integrity of a region as a sociocultural and administrative-territorial unit.

In sociology, there is no consensus on the content of regional identity. Krylov (2010) viewed regional identity as a systemic set of cultural relations associated with the notion of "home grounds." It combines both spatial aspects and aspects of internal energy, the forces of identity where the term *local patriotism* is appropriate. Eremina (2011) viewed regional identity as based on a reflexive sense of personal self-identity and integrity, continuity in time, and space. Regional identity is manifested in the influence of peculiarities of the local climate and landscape on local people. Therefore, a symbolic connection of the inhabitants with the surrounding space occurs (Eremina, 2011). In a stable society with a stable national (civic) identity, regional identity does not come to the fore in the hierarchy of territorial identities. Under normal conditions, it manifests itself in the formation of a certain system of values and norms of behavior of the inhabitants of the region, regardless of ethnicity. In conditions of weakening or crisis of national (civic) identity, regional-ethnic identity can compete with it and, having received a political shade, threaten the unity of the country (Eremina, 2011).

Drobizheva (2011) considered the emergence of regional identity as a form of psychological protest against universal unification, which is a natural phenomenon in conditions of modernity and postmodernity. Amid the unification and common "Europeanization" of culture in the ex-Soviet countries, people often feel a need for regional identification (especially in the Asian parts of Russia). At the same time, from the psychological standpoint, this process can be considered as a phenomenon of *psychological contamination*, whereby the need for regional identity is actualized by the popularity of regionalism in neighboring countries and regions (Bespalova, 2008).

In multicultural regions, the common regional identity might unite different ethnic and religious groups. A study by Baranov (2016) determined the trends of the transformation of regional, ethnic, and religious identities of the Crimean community during the reunification with Russia (between 2014 and 2016). The regional community of Crimea is multicultural, with a clear segmentation among the Russian, Ukrainian, and Crimean Tatar communities. Russian ethnic identity of Crimeans is unique, but it is integrated into the larger Russian ethnic and civil identity. The manifestation of Ukrainian identity in Crimea is the weakest one. Intergroup distances are asymmetric: The Russian and Ukrainian communities demonstrate the closest proximity; the least proximity is among those of the Russian and Crimean Tatars. Radical Islam or ethnocentric projects may disrupt the constructive balance of identities. Some strategic measures have been suggested to reintegrate Crimea and Russia, based on the principles of strengthening civil and regional identities, and an equal dialogue of the ethnic and religious communities (Baranov, 2016).

What Makes Regional Identity Important Among the factors that contribute to the greater importance of regional identity, researchers most often recognize the following:

1. **Ethnic specificity of the region:** Differing from the neighboring ones, it gives a "naturalness" to the corresponding identity. In this connection, some authors point out the importance of ethnic homogeneity of the territory (Pen'kovcev & Shibanova, 2007). Others, noting that this specificity is neither indispensable nor sufficient basis for the formation of a regional identity, recognize that it can strengthen "the demand for the latter on the external and internal markets" (Gel'man, 2003).
2. **The development rates of the territory in social and economic terms and the associated higher standard of living of the population:** This circumstance prompts the elites to formulate an identity policy (Busygina, 2006, p. 163). In some cases, it is the low economic potential that impels local authorities to intensify the development of a regional image-building strategy (Bogatova, 2016).
3. **The marginality of a region and its special geographical location:** Remoteness from the center often acts as a factor leading to a smaller manifestation of the sense of belonging to a country and the strengthening of local points of attraction. This can be facilitated by the presence of external borders, especially if the territory had passed from one state to another in the past. Regional elites often use some specific location (e.g., the intersection of East and West) or climatic conditions as a tool for constructing a local identity (Makarova, 2017).
4. **"Stability of administrative-territorial division" and "degree of the rootedness of the population"** (Pen'kovcev & Shibanova, 2007) **of a region:** Long-lasting boundaries of territories contribute to the formation of people's belief in their naturalness, the primordial existence of the corresponding communities. However, active migratory flows growing with globalization can begin to erode the ethnocultural homogeneity of the population, which negatively affects regional identification.
5. **The presence of a central city:** Traditionally, cities had been "the centers of wealth" and sometimes possessed "political autonomy" (Busygina, 2006). Stable territorial ties of the population have been formed and are still forming around them, and many modern "advanced regions" are formed precisely around large (or medium) urban agglomerations with rapidly growing suburbs.
6. **The activity of elites, the coincidence of their strategies with the interests of the majority of the population:** The efforts and willpower of the leading agents of the regional level and their ability to profitably represent their territory to the outside world and to put forward and implement social and cultural projects lead to increasing the prestige of owning the corresponding identity (Makarova, 2017).

Thus, it should be stressed that the part of the strategy of the authorities that is related to the image building of a place and its external representation is denoted by the term *regional branding*; the same actions are aimed at the formation of the territorial community and the "*identity policy*" (Tsumarova, 2012).

Problems in the Study of Regional Identity From the academic perspective, the issue of the formation and development of regional identity is far from being resolved both from methodological and methodical viewpoints. In the conditions of the federal structure of the state in different periods, regional identity can obscure civil and ethnic ones by acting as the main factor in identifying a person in the community. It acts as a process of interpreting regional uniqueness (Mukha, 2013).

There is a high degree of regional identity in the regions of Russia: About 39% of Russians feel a sense of closeness to the place where they live (Korepanov, 2009). Some researchers connect the strengthening of regional identity with the response to the "identity crisis" and the increased need for protection of one's unique identity and self-esteem (Akayeva & Borisov, 2012). Others (see Achkasov, 2005) explain the growth of regional identity by the concept of "internal colonialism" – a social situation in which the Russian periphery feels exploited by the center. Makarychev (1999) identifies three ideologies or myths, stimulating the growth of regional identity: (a) the "ethnic myth," in the regions with a strong Russian national idea; (b) "Moskvo-struggling myth," in the regions with motives of confrontation with the capital; and (c) the *myth of the* "last turn," in remote regions of Russia. These myths reflect the variety of the new search for inclusive identities since the collapse of the former Soviet identity. The first myth is about maintaining strong common civil identity. The second myth is about searching for their own new collective identity, independent from the central power associated with Moscow. The third myth is typical for very remote regions as the Far East or Kamchatka, where people felt more connected with neighboring countries than with central Russia.

A separate area of Russian science is the study of the contribution of the geographical (spatial) component in the formation of regional identity. Turovskiy (2003) developed the concept of *cultural landscape* – a phenomenon that includes a geographical component, landscape, and cultural content. The cultural landscape is a key component of regional identity.

Studies of Social Identity in the Context of Modern Sociocultural Changes

Some studies on the changes of contemporary social identities on the post-Soviet space are presented in the book *Changing Values and Identities in the Post-Communist World* (Lebedeva et al., 2018). In one such study, Lepshokova and Lebedeva (2018) demonstrated the important role of social disidentification with large inclusive categories in the acculturation preferences of ethnic majority and minority members in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (KBR) in the North Caucasus. Social disidentification (national for the Kabardino-Balkar majority and regional for the ethnic Russian minority) makes a significant contribution to the explanation of acculturation preferences of both minority and majority group members. The distancing of the ethnic majority groups of KBR from Russia as a state leads to intolerant attitudes towards ethnic Russians living in the KBR. However, the level of national disidentification among ethnic majority group members, as well as the

levels of regional disidentification among ethnic Russians in KBR, is extremely low, and mutual acculturation attitudes are largely positive. Nevertheless, this research sheds light on the distractive power of possible disidentification for peaceful intercultural coexistence and successful mutual acculturation in rapidly changing social-political contexts.

Concerning variations in identities across generations, Galyapina and Lebedeva (2018) revealed changes in multiple identity structures among three generations of Ossetians and ethnic Russians living in the North Ossetia-Alania Republic. They showed that the patterns of correlations between group identities among three generations of Russians, as well as Ossetians, suggest two bases for identification: Russian national background and North Caucasian Republican background. Republican identity serves as a bridge between the two largest inclusive identities (national identity and regional identity) among three generations of Russians, as well as among Ossetians. Its role is significant in this multicultural republic because national identity is more pronounced among Russians, while regional identity is stronger among Ossetians, and the republican identity is the basis for uniting different groups regardless of their ethnicity.

Isaeva et al. (2018) found that identities that are more inclusive (national and ethnolinguistic) are positively associated with interethnic attitudes and practices, while the opposite was found for ethnic identity in Uzbekistan. This pattern suggests that social identities can be used to include some and exclude others. Because the Russian-speaking population in Uzbekistan is culturally diverse, profound knowledge of the cultural context is needed to understand the complex patterning of identities and interethnic habits and preferences. More research is needed to understand different Russian-speaking ethnic groups. The Uzbek context illustrates how structural variables of society (such as the nature and history of linguistic diversity and the power differential of the ethnic groups) can influence individual and group identities and interethnic habits and preferences.

In her study in Moldova, Caunenco (2018) noted that the ongoing process of self-determination of the Moldavian majority is the result of its change in status to that of a nation-state. Young Moldovans have a close cultural distance to the Romanian, Russian, and Ukrainian groups. The important ethnic markers shared by the young Moldovans, which bring them close to the other ethnic groups, are a common history, religion, and region of residence. The author concluded that it is crucial to think about the ethnic matrix of the Republic of Moldova, as ethnic groups can contribute to the building of a common future once they achieve a consensus.

Conclusion, Implications, and Future Directions

This short review of identity changes in post-Soviet countries demonstrates that it is important to consider the relations between the observed changes in identities in specific populations and the widespread worldwide changes in socioeconomic level and degree of modernity (Inglehart, 2016). Other factors that may affect these

identity changes are the dominant economic, political, and social structures (Rupnik, 1988), the status of majority or minority, and the long-term history of intergroup relations and religiosity (Fontaine et al., 2005). This means that in the long perspective, we need to develop a multilevel approach to study the multiple predictors and consequences of social identity changes in order to understand the deep nature and functions of social identification. As it continues to denote the integrity and identity of the human cognitive world, the concept of identity demonstrates inconsistency and variability. In this regard, we conclude that it might be productive to conduct the study of identity with the support of the qualitative methodology of latent changes and antinomies. These methodological developments might facilitate the study of complex and transforming cultural and psychological realities in the streams of their natural mixing and interaction.

Implications

The research on changing social identity in the post-Soviet space allows us to outline some possible practical implications of these studies for preserving interethnic peace and harmony in multicultural countries. Special attention should be paid to the development of a positive, unifying national (civil) identity, for which it is necessary to increase the ethnocultural competence of the members of all ethnic groups. It is necessary to facilitate access to historical memories and monuments of majority culture for representatives of ethnic minorities and migrants, which would help them to know and understand it more deeply. A similar introduction to the cultures of other peoples could be carried out for the members of majorities. Such measures will contribute to the mutual intercultural integration and the formation of a positive civic identity. Familiarity with the cultures of neighboring peoples and the experience of positive interethnic relations can lay a kind of psychological barrier to the formation of biases and stereotypes among Russians in the future.

It is also recommended that a special program be developed for schoolchildren and students that includes training in intercultural relations with exercises aimed at developing common collective identity in friendly communication and interaction based on grounds other than race, ethnicity, or religion.

Future Directions

It is important to note that not all identities mentioned in this section have been accounted for in this chapter, and this might provide some basis for future consideration. Possible areas of identity research in the future may include studies of positive inclusive identities in multicultural societies, their compatibility and incompatibility, as well as predictors and triggers of such disidentification and identities incompatibility. Analysis of changes and development of "global" identities, for example, "European" or "Asian," is a furthermore important direction for future research. We see significant research potential in the development of intergenerational research of

social identities in the post-Soviet space, as each generation is formed in new sociocultural conditions and the inclusive identities of older generations lose their appeal to younger ones. Which foundations for social identification are becoming the leading ones in the context of digitalization and new global risks associated with social isolation (e.g., pandemics) can also be an intriguing challenge for researchers of social identity in rapidly changing global world.

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Part II
Identity of Specific Non-Western Groups

Chapter 9
Roma Ethnic Identity: Who Is and Who Is Not Roma? Between Self-Defined and External Ethnic Identification

Carmen Buzea

Introduction

The Roma ethnic minority, also called Romani people or gypsies (usually used pejoratively), has one of the most dramatic histories in Europe and worldwide. Due to their long history of impoverishment and low social standing, Roma are nowadays among the most disadvantaged and discriminated-against ethnic group in the contemporary world (United Nations Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, 2000). The Indian origin of Roma is currently widely accepted, based on similarities between the Romany language (also referred to as Romanes or Romani) and Sanskrit, as was pointed out by linguists decades ago (Achim, 2004). Starting with the first migration wave to Persia, between 224 and 241, and continuing with the arrival in Eastern Europe and the Balkans after 1300, Roma history was dominated by oppression and discrimination. Roma were frequently labeled by mainstreamers as "cunning thieves," judged by their "terrible" appearance and treated as wild people who lacked manners, often being declared "outlaws" (Buzea & Dimitrova, in press; Council of Europe, 2003). After arriving in Europe, most Roma had the status of pilgrims, nomads, or travelers, with little improvement in their low social status over time. For example, during the Second World War, Roma were targets for genocide and mass executions (Heuss et al., 1997), while after the war, most of the socialist countries across Europe implemented a policy of forced sedentarization and assimilation, more intense in the Soviet Union and less aggressive in other countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Albania (Filipescu, 2009).

After the fall of the communist regime in Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 1990s, a large wave of Roma migrated to Central and Western European countries,

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_9

looking for a better life. Despite this, however, they are still subject to inequality and discrimination. Roma migrants' equality with other European citizens is denied in many cases, while their right to free movement is restricted, with some public pressure for their home countries to keep Roma within their borders (Nacu, 2011). In light of this long history of discrimination, isolation, and low social standing, it is nowadays largely acknowledged that Roma citizens

> are more likely to live in poverty, have a higher risk of unemployment, stay in school for fewer years, live without access to drinking water, sanitation and electricity, and live in substandard, overcrowded homes. Roma are more likely to suffer from chronic illness and have less access to health services. (United Nations Development Programme in Europe and Central Asia, 2011, para. 1)

Romania has the largest Roma population in Europe—but we are not sure what this is exactly since the estimations are not consistent. As pointed out by the European Commission report (2015),

> the Council of Europe advances a number of 1,850,000 people, while other surveys conducted by NAR and the World Bank estimated the number of people living in compact communities with a high Roma prevalence to not more than one million people. (p. 7)

According to the 2011 Romanian census, 621,573 Romanian citizens declared to be Roma, representing 3.3% from total population and placing Roma as the second largest ethnic minority group in Romania, after Hungarians, who account for 6.5% of the total population (National Institute of Statistics, 2013).

Reports from the *Strategy of the Government of Romania for the Inclusion of the Romanian Citizens Belonging to Roma Minority for 2015–2020* (European Commission, 2015) show large disparities between Roma and mainstreamers: a 14.1% illiteracy rate among Roma, compared with 1% among non-Roma; 54% of Roma face absolute poverty, compared with 13% of non-Roma. The same report points out the high rate of Roma unemployment (48.6%, compared with 7.4% among non-Roma), limited access to health services (only 52% of Roma have health insurance, and 73% do not have access to vital medication), and critical rates in terms of access to household facilities (only 36% of Roma have access to public drinking water supply networks, and only 24% have access to sanitation via public systems or septic tanks).

In this context of extreme poverty and social isolation, Roma ethnic identification (i.e., the individuals' commitment and their sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group) is a sensitive subject on the public agenda not only in Romania but also across Europe. There are at least two reasons why ethnic identification is of great interest for both policy makers and scholars. First, the discrepancy in external (ascribed by others) and internal (or self-defined) ethnic identification is important when discussing Roma inclusion strategies or Roma social movement (an initiative of Roma activists and Roma political elites aiming toward a transnational Roma identity; see details in McGarry, 2011). As significant funds are allocated by the European Union and other international bodies for inclusion measures for disadvantaged ethnic minorities, the size of the target group becomes salient in the light of eligibility to access these financial resources for the benefit of the Roma population.

The representatives of national and local authorities, who are usually entitled to apply for funding, require reliable data on the Roma population in order to access the dedicated resources (Buzea & Dimitrova, in press). Second, when investigating psychosocial mechanisms of ethnic identification in the case of Roma, scholars deal with numerous challenges. On the one hand, there is the heterogeneity of the Roma population in terms of religions, languages, ethnic and familial ties, geographical distribution, levels of wealth, and education. On the other hand, when investigating ethnic identification, there is a risk of reinforcing stereotypes, which makes the topic sensitive and scarcely approached.

In the following sections we aim to highlight theoretical and methodological frameworks of Roma ethnic identification research, along with their limits, challenges, and possible ways of overcoming them. We start by presenting theoretical models of identity and ethnic identification, followed by a review of current research and empirical findings of ethnic identification fieldwork in Romania. Finally, theoretical and practical implications for successful intergroup and social relations, well-being, and healthy identity among Roma are presented.

Roma Ethic Identity and Ethnic Identification

Ethnic identity is a component of social identity, constructed over time and defined as "a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group" (Phinney, 2003, p. 63). It was shown that ethnicity has two core elements: the individuals' commitment or sense of belonging and their self-categorization or labeling (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Attachment or affective commitment expressed as a strong sense of belonging, along with voluntary identification as a member of an ethnic group, are considered key elements of ethnic identity, although other components are relevant as well: exploration or seeking information on ethnicity, ethnic behaviors or practices, ingroup attitudes, values, and beliefs. Social psychologists argue that ethnic identity is the result of self-definition, involving a "voluntary" identity, which is typically not developed in response to oppression, but it is taken up and assumed by the group members (Banton, 1988; Verkuyten, 2004). Thus, from a constructivist perspective, ethnicity is a matter of individual assessment and personal choice.

Opposite approaches, such as the essentialist perspective, argue that race and ethnicity are determined by phenotype and other innate, biological characteristics (Ahmed et al., 2001). In this case, ethnicity is imposed by outsiders, being viewed as an external construction, usually used to distinguish White people from non-White people (Verkuyten, 2004). Although both perspectives have their supporters and opponents, nowadays it is generally accepted that ethnicity is an individual choice, with European public institutions using only self-reported data to record ethnic background in censuses. Looking deeper into the complexity of ethnic identification, there are contexts wherein people might be aware of their ethnic identity (internal or self-identification) and still choose not to declare it to avoid oppression

or for other reasons. In this context, the self-identification is a distinct process from self-reporting of ethnicity.

In the Roma case, applying internal identification (self-identification) generates much smaller figures than the data estimated by NGOs and local key informants. In Romania, differences vary between 2% and 15% of the total population (Csepeli & Simon, 2004). The reasons why Roma do not declare their ethnicity may vary according to social context, including fear of marginalization and stigmatization, lack of understanding of ethnicity issues, and ethnic identity dissolution or loss (Clark, 1998; Csepeli & Simon, 2004).

For example, the Gircin community, a large Roma community in central Romania, recorded a decrease in people who declared themselves Roma of 74.67% between two consecutive censuses, conducted in 2002 and 2011. With no major changes of economic, social, or political context, we can assume that members of the Gircin community decided that mainstream ethnicity provides better life opportunities. Either that or we are witnesses to ethnic identity dissolution and final loss, as suggested by a study conducted in this community by Buzea and Buzea (2008). Thus, although the Gircin study aimed to investigate Roma ethnic markers as language, customs, justice system, traditional clothing, and occupations, it was found that only a few people from the community related themselves to Roma. In this particular community, most people did not use the Romani language and were unaware of traditions, customs, or other markers that may suggest traits distinct from mainstreamers (Buzea & Buzea, 2008). However, the disappearance of ethnic markers has been discussed mostly in relation to ethnic minorities' language loss, as many states are still reluctant to recognize the minority status of ethnic groups that no longer speak a distinctive minority language (Schmidt, 2008). It was argued that

> after a minority has lost its distinctive language, it is still eligible for legal protection of its distinctive cultural rights on the basis of its self-assignation to a minority group and the will to maintain an identity that distinguishes it from the majority population and other ethnic or regional groups. (Schmidt, 2008, p. 15)

Ladányi and Szelényi (2001) pointed out that ethnic groups might be seen as social constructions, with significant variations regarding the definitions of ingroups and outgroups, depending on the person who does the classification. They showed that there are three classification strategies used in social sciences, which express important aspects not only about the people who are classified but also about those who do the classification (Ladányi & Szelényi, 2001). First is the self-identification made by respondents themselves, that is, self-identification or internal identification. Second is the classification made by "experts" who deal with Roma, such as teachers, social workers, police officers, and public authority officials (hetero-identification or external identification). Third is the classification performed by interviewers in commercial or scientific surveys (also a form of external identification).

Ladányi and Szelényi (2001) found, in their study of ethnic classification conducted in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, that in two thirds of the cases, the experts and the interviewers made similar identification, while in one third of the

cases, experts did not label as Roma households those considered Roma by interviewers. Other authors found that interviewers (outsiders) assume Roma identity based on ethnic, economic, and demographic markers (Ahmed et al., 2001). Thus, a person is more likely to be labeled as Roma if he or she has a Roma parent, speaks the Roma language, lives in a Roma neighborhood and a large household, is poor, and has a low education level. A study conducted in 2000 by the Yale Center for Comparative Studies found that about two thirds of Romanians and Hungarians classified by others as Roma do not consider themselves Roma (Csepeli & Simon, 2004; Ladányi & Szelényi, 2001; Revenga et al., 2002). The classification was performed by interviewers who spent about an hour in a household, observing and speaking with family members. These results support the limitation of both types of classification (performed by experts and by interviewers) and emphasize the idea that ethnic identification is a fluid construct, depending on who makes the classification, visible aspects related to Roma culture, and ethnic markers (Buzea & Dimitrova, 2016).

While Roma social and economic living conditions have been extensively documented, less systematic work has been dedicated to Roma ethnic markers and culture, in part due to the diversity and heterogeneity of Roma communities. Scholars investigating Roma culture have focused on *cultural patterns* of particular communities from Eastern Europe (Barany, 2001), *travelling habits and beliefs* (which express the separation of Gypsies from non-Gypsies) (Okely, 1983), the *history* of Roma persecution (Lewy, 1999), or *language* (Matras, 2002). Important contributions have been made by scholars from the University of Graz under the Romani Project, a complex study on Roma language and culture that started in early 1990s. Researchers involved in this project have shown that the most visible ethnic markers for Roma communities are language (called Romanes, Romaneh, Roman, Romacilikanes, etc.), appearance (in particular, women's dress), and occupation (in particular, men's occupations). For a thorough understanding of the social and psychological mechanism of ethnic identification process in relation with ethnic markers, a fieldwork inquiry on Roma outgroup ethnic identification is presented in the following section.

Outgroup Roma Identification: Fieldwork Results in Romania

An extensive fieldwork project, supported by local public authorities, was conducted in Romania in 2013 to estimate the number of Roma living in Brasov County, an important economic and tourist site in Central Romania. The aim of the project was to have a clear image of the Roma population size and living conditions in order to develop a better inclusion strategy in the region. Data collection was performed by outgroups (mainstream Romanians) in all the county's cities and villages, 58 sites in total (48 rural and 10 urban). The results of this project, including figures for each site, are presented in detail in Buzea and Dimitrova (2016); our focus here is solely on the methodology and theoretical implications of the fieldwork inquiry.

Two techniques were used for data collection: semistructured observation and unstructured interviews. Local experts were involved, with police officers from each site acting as facilitators after being trained to conduct interviews with experts from the local community, including school teachers, social workers, representatives of public authorities, and religious leaders. For each site an integrated observation protocol was filled, according to the following headings: (a) the estimated number of Roma population in the site; (b) the number of Roma population under 18 years old, estimated with the contribution of local school teachers; (c) the level of education and illiteracy, estimated with the contribution of local school teachers; (d) the number of Roma communities/groups in the site; (e) the number of socially assisted people, estimated with the contribution of local authorities and social workers; (f) a description of living conditions, property rights for land and houses, construction materials for houses, and access to utilities (drinking water, electricity, and gas supply); (g) household animals; (h) vehicles used for transportation; (i) employment description, main occupation and unemployment rate, estimated with the contribution of local authorities; (j) religious orientation, estimated with the contribution of religious leaders; and (k) language, traditions, and customs. All experts had a good level of knowledge regarding the local communities as their professional activity (and in the majority of cases, the day-to-day living) was located in the observed site.

The results of this large data collection showed significant differences between the size of the Roma population through self-identification and that estimated by experts (for details, see Buzea & Dimitrova, 2016). The size of the Roma population recorded by the previous census (i.e., using self-identification) was 3.65%, while the experts' estimates indicated 9.77%—three times that of the census data. Of the 58 sites investigated, in 24 the Roma population estimates were 3% larger than the figures in the 2011 census. In three of the sites (Ungra, Crizbav, and Budila), the estimated Roma population was 70% larger than the census data, while in 20 sites, the census data and the experts' estimates were similar.

For a better understanding of the categorization and external identification process, the figures on the Roma population have to be correlated with results regarding the presence of the main ethnic markers (language, customs, clothing, traditions, and occupations). It was found that in only 4 of the 58 sites, the majority of Roma speak Romani, while in 10 sites the Romani language is spoken by a small section of the Roma population. Other markers, such as clothing, traditional occupations, and customs (wedding, justice system), were recorded in only eight sites. We can conclude that as the main ethnic markers were identified in only a few sites, the experts based their classification on spatial and socioeconomic considerations: people living in poor, isolated communities, in large families with limited access to health and education services being classified as Roma. As pointed out by Buzea and Dimitrova (2016), further studies may extend the current inquiry by using a qualitative approach to make an in-depth analysis of cognitive mechanisms of ethnic identification among experts. In addition, future research has to include the perspective of Roma participants on both self-identification and external identification. Despite the explorative nature of the study and methodological shortcomings associated with data collection, we can ask, following Ladányi and Szelényi's rhetoric

(2001, p. 82): What if some residents labeled as Roma are simply no-hopers or poor, who ended up in these communities?

Roma Ethnic Identity: Between National Identity Endorsement and Dissolution

Who is and who is not Roma is an open question, in the light of the current research and practices in the field of ethnic identification. Ladányi and Szelényi (2001) suggested that the task of social inquiry is not to search for "real" data or the "correct" systems of classification, but to understand in an interpretative and hermeneutic manner the social mechanism of ethnic classification. In line with this recommendation, we can argue that the large differences between self-identification and external identification are the results of multiple factors. First, there are stereotypes and prejudice of outgroups performing the classification, who may label a community or a person as Roma if they live in poverty and have a large family, as well as limited access to education, health services, or employment—even if the ethnic markers of language, customs, and occupations are not identified. From this perspective, we can question the estimates regarding the size of the Roma population but not the size of marginalized groups of people living in severe poverty. Second, research on acculturation has shown that in oppressive societies, ethnic minority groups may prefer adjustment to the mainstream culture (Dimitrova et al., 2014), as ethnic heritage identity does not provide a source of strength for social adjustment (Dimitrova & Lebedeva, 2016). Roma may indeed prefer assimilation within their host cultures as the most beneficial acculturative strategy for their success in these cultures (Dimitrova et al., 2014). Third, we can argue that we are witnessing the gradual dissolution of Roma ethnic identity, with extreme poverty and geographic segregation being the dominant markers of communities that once hosted people with prominent and assumed ethnic characteristics.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Based on the above considerations, it can be concluded that investigating Roma ethnic identification is particularly valuable for both policy and practice. In the first place, it has the potential of a wider applicability to other marginalized and oppressed ethnic and indigenous groups in Europe and worldwide. As a United Nations (2018) report shows, both ethnic and indigenous groups share a history of exclusion and discrimination based on identity, being more likely to live in poverty than the ethnic majority in any given country.

In addition, following the hypothesis of Roma ethnic identity dissolution, a joint effort is required from relevant stakeholders (i.e., policy makers, regional and local

authorities, pro-Roma NGOs, Roma civil society, Roma activists and key opinion leaders, and researchers and academics focused on Romani studies) to stimulate the preservation and intergenerational transfer of Roma cultural assets and ethnic core elements. Although there is a growing number of pro-Roma NGOs promoting Roma heritage, they face a lack of resources and governmental support.

Third, research findings suggesting the hypothesis of Roma acculturation as a way of adjustment can be translated into policy and practice. For example, when financial support is provisioned by the European Union and other international bodies for marginalized groups, it might be focused more on poverty and social isolation and less on ethnicity. Finally, taking into account the mixed results on Roma ethnic identity and identification, future research is needed to disentangle this sensitive topic and to provide a thorough investigation and knowledge-based guidance for relevant stakeholders.

One major direction for further studies might be to extend the research on ethnic identity to other relevant components of social identity, such as work identity or religious identity. Work is a major dimension of our life, as Gini (1998) suggestively stated two decades ago, "Work is that which forms us, gives us a focus, gives us a vehicle for personal expression and offers us a means for personal definition" (p. 708). Investigating work identity of disadvantaged ethnic groups might reveal insights for a thorough understanding of identity dynamic and associated directions for action. However, studying work identity of Roma minority is very sensitive topic due to stereotypes and prejudice regarding Roma work values, work ethics, and associated working behaviors, which calls for an emic–etic perspectives, that is, focusing on Roma point of view.

Roma religious identity has been recently investigated in Roma adolescents (Dimitrova et al., 2017), showing that they have a stronger religious identity compared with majority counterparts. As religion is an important source of identification and well-being, future studies might address this identity facet targeting the Roma adult population.

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Chapter 10
Being a Muslim in the Western World: A Social Identity Perspective

Fenella Fleischmann and Maykel Verkuyten

Introduction

This chapter uses the social identity perspective to discuss religious group identity of Muslims living in the Western world. Our topic is an identity that has its roots in a non-Western context, namely, the Muslim Majority World, but has become the subject of academic research and societal debate because of its transferal, through large-scale migration, to Western countries (see Voas & Fleischmann, 2012). "Muslims in the Western world" are a large and internally diverse category, with an estimated group size of upward of 25.8 million in Europe and 3.5 million in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2017, 2018). Questions about Muslim identity in this context touch upon fields of research that have received broad coverage in different disciplines. Speaking about "Muslim identity" raises difficult and much discussed questions about who Muslims are, what is specific about Islam, and how identity can be conceptualized. There is a large literature on each of these questions, which cannot be addressed in this chapter. For example, there are many different Muslim groups and subgroups and many ways of being Muslim in the Western world. Furthermore, there is an increasing number of studies on Muslim identity in different disciplines (sociology, anthropology, religious studies, migration studies, social psychology), using different conceptualizations and theoretical perspectives, and different methods and forms of analysis.

Our aim is not to give an overview of this research, but rather to discuss Muslim identity in Western societies from the social identity perspective (Reicher et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). We will argue that the existing research will benefit by more fully considering the implications of the social identity perspective that relate to (a) the conceptualization of social identity, (b) the importance of

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© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021

B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*, Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_10

considering various dimensions of group identification, (c) the question of religious and host national identity (in)compatibility, and (d) the relationship between Muslim minority identity and social change.

Social Identity Perspective

The field of identity studies is large and diverse, and there are many different conceptualizations and approaches to the study of identity (Wetherell & Mohanty, 2010). The number of writings and empirical studies on "identity" has increased enormously, and the term has replaced social scientific concepts such as roles, personality, beliefs, worldviews, and the self. Whereas not so long ago it was common to describe someone as being a religious person, nowadays that person is considered to have a religious identity. Almost anything that has to do with what people think, feel, and do has been conceptualized as an identity issue, which leads to much confusion, perhaps to the point of the term losing almost all significant and coherent meaning (Verkuyten, 2018). Conceptual expansion as well as conceptual underspecification are endemic in the social sciences (Haslam, 2016). One example of this confusion is that the identity concept is interchangeably used for both the gradual development of a cultural or bicultural self in a process of enculturation and socialization and for the identification with specific social categories and groups. Yet the gradual development of an inner sense of *who* you are (a religious person) is something other than the recognition by oneself and others of *what* you are as a member of a particular category or group (e.g., a Muslim; Verkuyten, 2016, 2018). Being and feeling religious as an inner reality that results from religious socialization (Phalet et al., 2018; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011) is not necessarily the same as being considered to belong to a particular religious community. For the latter, nouns (e.g., "a Muslim," "an intellectual," or "an athlete") rather than adjectives (e.g., "religious," "intelligent," or "athletic") are used to describe a person, and the concept of social (or collective or group) identity refers to this. This concept tells us something about how people, as individuals or as a group, position themselves and are positioned by others in their social environment, and how such positions have meaning and value.[1]

The main focus in the social identity perspective is not on the ways in which a social identity is incorporated into the self and represented as an integral part of one's self-concept, but rather on the reversed process whereby the self is considered similar to the respective category or group. This is best captured by the process of depersonalization that entails "a shift towards the perception of self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and away from the perception of self

[1] The latter question is also the object of study in the more sociological literature on boundary dynamics (e.g., Lamont & Molnár, 2002), which has some overlap with the more social-psychological literature on the social identity perspective. As our focus is on the latter perspective, a comprehensive comparison of both perspectives is beyond the scope of this chapter.

as a unique person" (Turner et al., 1987, p. 50). The self becomes depersonalized, which implies a redefinition toward group-based characteristics and attributes. Through self-stereotyping, the attributes and behaviors of the individual self are assimilated *to* the representations of the group as a whole, rather than the other way around, in processes such as enculturation and socialization. With a religious identity, how one thinks and feels about oneself depends on the shared representations of the religious group and how one's group is doing. Thinking about "we" British Muslims or "we" German Muslims has significant effects on one's orientation toward others who do or do not share that identity (e.g., Christians, seculars, Americans). It involves expectations, group loyalties, and specific collective norms, values, and beliefs. It also involves a concern with the relative position of Muslims in Great Britain or Germany, or the West more generally, whereby one's self-feelings are assimilated to the fate of other Muslims. This conceptualization of social identity has various implications for research on Muslim identity in the Western world.

Religious Identity and Identity Dimensions

Approaches that focus on the development of an inner sense of self and consider different identity domains (family, religion, local, national, etc.) assume that these are all part of a single, less or more integrated overall personal identity. The focus is on a coherent overall sense of self, whereby the various identities derived from different group memberships differ in subjective importance or centrality but are all part of a single (hierarchically ordered) identity (Erikson, 1968). However, from a social identity perspective, the question of multiple identities is less concerned with establishing a sense of overall coherence. Whether the totality of all one's social identities (plural) adds up and forms a single, overarching identity (singular) is not the topic of concern (Brewer, 2001). The focus is more on how, in particular contexts, specific social identities with their particular meanings become relevant, overlap, and relate to each other. Different social identities can involve contrasting understandings, competing demands, and different loyalties and allegiances to others. This raises a question about the nature of religious identity and its various dimensions.

Religions evoke a sense of the transcendental and sacred and emphasize doctrinal beliefs and ritual practices that set religious group identities apart from other social identities such as racial and ethnic identity. Among Muslims, just like other adherents of major world religions, adopting Muslim identity has implications for how the individual views the world, what is considered right and wrong, and what the purpose of life is (Cohen, 2009). The doctrinal content (beliefs and practices) is a defining characteristic of religious identity that makes it attractive, perhaps more attractive than ethnic identities, for minority members (Verkuyten, 2007; Ysseldyk et al., 2010). Religious group identification is often found to be stronger than other group identifications among Muslim minority youth (e.g., Ajrouch, 2004; Fine & Sirin, 2008). For example, for young British Pakistanis (Jacobson, 2006) and

Moroccan Dutch (Verkuyten et al., 2012), Islam has become a more meaningful source of social identity than ethnicity. Particularly in the context of migration, where immigrants are disconnected from their previous lives and may experience a sense of being uprooted, the psychologically adaptive benefits of religious group belonging may become apparent (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). Furthermore, contemporary debates about migration and diversity that tend to focus on religious rather than ethnic differences (Alba, 2005), and that have led to the racialization of Muslim identity (Shadid, 2006; Shadid & van Koningsveld, 2002) may increase the salience of Muslim identity even more than that of their identification with their ethnic community or origin country.

Most approaches to social identities make a distinction between different identity components or dimensions such as private and public regard, cognitive centrality, commitment, importance, and values and beliefs (see Ashmore et al., 2004; Roccas et al., 2008; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Following Tajfel's (1982) well-known definition of social identity, researchers within the social identity tradition have argued for three aspects to a social identity: self-categorization, group self-esteem, and emotional commitment. Others, however, propose that identity centrality and feelings of interconnectedness and shared fate are also important dimensions (see Ashmore et al., 2004).

A distinction between different dimensions allows for a more detailed understanding of Muslim identity and its different meanings and for examining how variation along these dimensions is related to functioning and behavior. For example, the distinction between dimensions makes it possible to conceptualize group identification in terms of profiles (Roccas et al., 2008) and to differentiate between Muslims that have a more homogeneous or heterogeneous pattern of religious group identification. Muslims with a homogeneous identification profile express similarly high levels of identification across different dimensions, making one identification score sufficient for capturing the extent of their Muslim identification (Verkuyten, 2007). In that case, the different aspects are experienced as an integrated whole in which high religious importance equals adherence to religious beliefs, a sense of attachment to the worldwide community of Muslims (also referred to as *ummah*), and engagement in religious practices (such as praying, reading the Qur'an, fasting during Ramadan, or visiting the mosque) as behavioral enactments of one's Muslim identity. Such a homogeneous group identification profile might be the result of normative pressures within the Muslim community, in combination with social identity threats that Muslim minorities face from the dominant majority.

It is also possible, however, that Muslims have a more heterogeneous identification profile whereby they identify high on some dimensions and score relatively low on others. For instance, ethnographic work among Muslim youth in various European countries documents that religious self-identification is generally strong, despite an acknowledged lack of religious knowledge and practice, which is often postponed to later life stages when youth plan to live the life of "a good Muslim" (Vertovec & Rogers, 1998). Similarly, a 2012 quantitative study identified different ways of being Muslim across European cities, where young adults of Turkish descent combined high levels of religious group belonging with strict, selective, or

little behavioral involvement in religious practices such as fasting and praying (Phalet et al., 2012).

Heterogeneous profiles indicate that Muslim minorities differ not only in the extent of their group identification but also in the meaning of their group belonging. Muslims with similar overall levels of identification might have a different profile, which makes it difficult to meaningfully compare their levels of group identification. Heterogeneous profiles may also lead to intragroup disagreements and debates. Two women might have a similar sense of belonging to the Muslim community, but where for one this may imply the wearing of a headscarf, for the other it might not, and these different views can lead to strong debates about being a "true" Muslim (Hoekstra & Verkuyten, 2015). Within Muslim minority communities in the West, there are fierce debates about the acceptability of multiple ways of being a Muslim (e.g., Yildiz & Verkuyten, 2012). For example, whereas some argue for the need to develop a "Euro-Islam" or "Europeanized Islam" (Tibi, 2008), others see such a development as subverting or fundamentally altering the core of the group identity, making change or reform impossible (Bilgrami, 1992).

Multiple Group Identifications

People are always members of various categories and groups and therefore have multiple social identities. All social identities are "among–other" identities. These identities can refer to quite different forms of social categorization, separate domains of life, or different levels of abstraction but can also intersect, be combined, or be conflicting. In Western Europe, Muslims' religious group identification is often strongly entwined with their ethnic group identification, although these social identities are conceptually distinct and can carry different meanings and behavioral implications. Most Islamic communities in the West tend to be organized along ethnic lines (e.g., there are Turkish and Moroccan mosques in the Netherlands; Rath et al., 2001; for the United States, see Ebaugh & Chafetz, 2000; Warner & Wittner, 1998), and despite religious diversity within the same co-ethnic community (e.g., Sunier & Landman, 2015), the substantial overlap between co-ethnic and co-religious communities gives rise to a pattern of identification where a stronger sense of belonging to one's ethnic group mostly goes together with a stronger sense of Muslim identification (e.g., Fleischmann & Phalet, 2016; Van Heelsum & Koomen, 2016). This overlap probably has to do not only with the self-importance of their religion and embeddedness in their religious community but also with their minority position, because research has found considerably more perceived overlap between social identities of minority than majority group members (Brewer et al., 2012).

For Muslim minorities in Western societies, there is also the important question of developing a sense of host national belonging in negotiation with non-Muslim majorities: How can the prevalence of a strong religious group identification be combined with a sense of belonging to their host society? This question is at the

heart of both societal and scholarly debates that grapple with the question of the position of Muslims in the Western world, and how this sizable and growing minority can become part of traditionally Christian and increasingly secular societies. Research on this question has not so much focused on how Muslim identity and host national identity are cognitively represented and organized (Brewer et al., 2012), but rather has used two main approaches for examining dual identity in terms of the strength of Muslim identification and host national identification.

A first approach focuses on the association between Muslims' levels of religious group identification and their sense of belonging to the host nation. This approach is similar to the acculturation literature, which conceives of these group identifications as independent from each other (Berry, 2001), such that multiple combinations of high and low attachment to both the religious and the host national communities would be possible. Indeed, empirical studies show that there is great variation in the association between Muslims' level of religious identification and their identification with their Western host nation. For instance, these two identifications were more negatively associated among Turkish-origin Muslims in Germany than among Pakistani-origin Muslims in Norway (Kunst et al., 2012). In their comparative study across five European cities, Fleischmann and Phalet (2016) found the entire spectrum: positive associations (Brussels), negative associations (Amsterdam and Stockholm), and nonsignificant associations between religious and national identification (Rotterdam and Antwerp). Research among Muslim youth also suggests that these associations vary with age, such that positive associations, which reflect greater identity compatibility, are more prevalent in childhood, while negative associations become more apparent during (late) adolescence (Phalet et al., 2018; Spiegler et al., 2016; Verkuyten et al., 2012).

Such variation across localities and developmental stages notwithstanding, a pattern of negative rather than positive associations seems to be more common in Western Europe than, for example, in North America, suggesting that Muslims' religious group identification is not easily reconciled with a strong sense of belonging to European host nations. Research in five European countries among first-generation but not second-generation Muslim immigrants (Van Heelsum & Koomen, 2016) and among Turkish German adolescents (Dimitrova & Aydinli-Karakulak, 2016) found negative associations of religious identification with identification with host society and mainstream culture. Similarly, Schachner et al. (2014) found that the importance of religion at home negatively predicted mainstream cultural orientation among minority youth in Germany. Furthermore, research on host national dis-identification indicates that a substantial number of Turkish Dutch Muslims explicitly distance themselves from, and do not want to be identified with, their host nation (Maliepaard & Verkuyten, 2018; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). The level of dis-identification with the Netherlands was found to be higher the more strongly they identified with their religious community.

Focusing on the combination of two separate group identifications (British and Muslim) probably does not adequately capture the subjective meaning of dual identity (British Muslim). It is difficult to know whether people with both a strong religious and national identification actually experience this pattern as a dual identity.

The latter might have different psychological meaning and different social consequences from the former (Hopkins, 2011). Therefore, and as a second approach, one can also focus directly on the strength of dual identity identification ("feeling British Muslim"). However, the use of such a direct dual identity measure raises the question of what exactly a high and also a low score on such a measure means. For example, a low dual identity score might indicate a lack of identification with both group identities, or rather a low level of host national identification against the backdrop of a strong Muslim identification. A high score might indicate a strong identification with both groups, or rather a qualified form of strong Muslim identification to which a sense of host national belonging is added (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016).

Identity Incompatibility

Within Muslim majority countries, the sense of being a Muslim and a host national are typically interlinked. Despite variations in the extent to which Islamic traditions are formally recognized in legislation, there is a close connection in these countries (e.g., Turkey, Morocco) between what it means to be a national and what it means to be a Muslim; in some countries the state is even defined in religious terms (e.g., the Islamic Republic of Iran). In contrast, Muslims in Western societies face the challenge of developing a sense of belonging to traditionally Christian and increasingly secular societies. This can involve the difficult task of reconciling group belongings and commitments and combining contrasting moral worldviews and normative expectations. This can all induce stress and psychological conflict (Hirsh & Kang, 2016). Muslims can experience their religious and host national identities as being incompatible or in opposition to each other. For example, in the Belgian context, high scores are seen on the intrinsic values of religious faith, religious certainty, and practice, with negatively predicted mainstream culture adoption and identification among Muslim late adolescents (Saroglou & Galand, 2004; Saroglou & Mathijsen, 2007). In research in the Netherlands, it was found that the self-importance of being a Muslim predicted national dis-identification through higher levels of fundamentalist religious beliefs and an enhanced sense of belonging to the *ummah*. More standard religious practices, such as mosque attendance, praying, and fasting—which also increase with religious centrality—were, however, unrelated to identification with and dis-identification from the host society (Maliepaard & Verkuyten, 2018).

Some research has examined identity (in)compatibility in terms of individuals' experiences of identity conflict with statements modeled on the Bicultural Identity Integration scale (BII, Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005), such as "I feel torn between my Muslim and [host national] identity." In the case of Muslims living in the West, the perceived incompatibility of values (e.g., "Islamic and German ways of life are irreconcilable") has been most frequently assessed in empirical research and related to lower levels of host national identification. Moreover, the relationship between Muslim identification and host national identification was found to be

more negative among Turkish Muslims in Germany and the Netherlands the higher their perception of value incompatibility (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2012).

Because minority belonging in migration contexts always results from interactions between minorities and majorities, incompatibility between Muslim and national identification not only depends on the meaning and behavioral implications of the religious identity but also on the meanings and implications of the host national identity. There are quite different understandings of what it means to be a national (e.g., ethnic, civic, cultural), and national identification also has different aspects (political, historical, geographical). Just like majority members, minorities can, for example, identify with the host country and its institutions (e.g., Germany, Netherlands) but not with the native majority population (e.g., Germans, Dutch; van der Welle, 2011). Unfortunately, there is very little research among Muslim minorities examining what the host nation means to them and how they reason about their host national belonging. Research among young Muslim adults in the Netherlands (Omlo, 2011) found that they provide five main reasons for feeling Dutch: being born in the country (soil principle), being raised in the Netherlands (cultural principle), having one's future in the Netherlands (future principle), contributing to the country (participation principle), and feeling emotionally attached to the Netherlands (emotion principle). Thus Muslims can self-identify as a host national because they were born and raised in the country in which they imagine their future, but that does not have to mean that they identify with the majority group and have a sense of belonging, commitment, and loyalty to that group. There is also hardly any research among Muslim minorities on their profiles of identification with their religious and host national communities. An exception is a study among Turkish Belgian Muslims and Turkish Australian Muslims that found a wide range of identification profiles illustrating the broad individual differences that exist (Van Dommelen et al., 2015; see also Spiegler et al., 2019).

Furthermore, if the degree of identification with both communities corresponds, this does not have to mean that the feelings and meanings also correspond. There can be important qualitative differences in identification. People may, for example, feel emotionally involved in their religious community and have a more instrumental view toward their host national belonging (citizenship). Some aspects of a strong religious identity among Muslims are more easily reconciled with host national belonging than others (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012). For instance, if identification refers to having social ties with ingroup members, it should be relatively easy to combine a religious identity with a host national identity if one's social network includes members of both the co-religious and co-national group. When it comes to loyalties, values, or even worldviews, a sense of compatibility between group identifications is often much more difficult. For example, to the extent that Muslims adhere to more orthodox or fundamentalist variants of their belief, these beliefs will be less compatible with host national belonging in Western societies that emphasize liberal values—including gender equality and sexual minority rights (Eskelinen & Verkuyten, 2018; Maliepaard & Verkuyten, 2018)—but they should not result in incompatibility in societies where a more fundamentalist approach to religion is part of the mainstream (e.g., in the United States). Similarly, identity

incompatibility is more likely if the behavioral implications of the two group identities are contradictory (Hirsh & Kang, 2016), which might be the case for Muslim youth at an age when alcohol use and premarital sex become more common among their peers and youngsters have to make a choice between following the behavioral norms of their religious or co-national ingroup.

Variation in Identity (In)Compatibility

Previous work has not only revealed the prevalence of identity incompatibility and the specific components of Muslim identity and host national belonging that create more or less compatible identification profiles, but it has also addressed the question of under what conditions these two identities are more or less compatible. The social identity perspective emphasizes the moderating role of intragroup and intergroup dynamics, but researchers have also focused on the importance of individual differences in the subjective representation of multiple group belongings.

Subjective Representations

Social identity complexity has been conceptualized as an individual's mental representation of the interrelations among their different social identities (Amiot et al., 2007; Roccas & Brewer, 2002). The complexity is lower when the perceived overlap among different group memberships is high, and both memberships thus tend to converge into a single encompassing identification. With a simple identity structure, the same profile of identification should be found for one's religious and national group, as is the case in Muslim majority countries in which the sense of religious and national attachment, pride, belonging, and deference are likely to go together. When the perceived overlap between the two group identifications is low, the associated subjective representation is more complex, and the two profiles of group identification might differ. For example, one might feel a sense of belonging to both one's Muslim and host national community, but it might be very difficult to simultaneously subscribe to one's religious beliefs and to host national secular beliefs. In relation to a sense of host national belonging, it was found among Turkish and Moroccan Muslims in the Netherlands that lower identity complexity with regard to the combination of Muslims' religious and ethnic (i.e., Turkish or Moroccan) identity went together with lower Dutch national identification and lower endorsement of host national liberal values (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012). Thus, to the extent that youngsters felt it was necessary for members of their ethnic ingroup to also be Muslims, they identified less strongly as Dutch and with liberal values.

Intragroup Processes

At the intragroup level, two group perspectives are relevant to understanding the compatibility of Muslims' religious group identification with Western host national identification: that of the co-religious and of the co-national ingroup.[2] From the Muslim perspective, the definition of what it means to be a Muslim and how this religious identity should be enacted in Western host societies has been a topic of broad and strong debates within Muslim communities in Europe (Yildiz & Verkuyten, 2012). Research connecting the specific religious teachings of different Islamic communities in relation to Muslims' role in their host societies to the sense of national belonging of their members is lacking to date, but it is reasonable to expect a greater sense of identity compatibility among members of congregations that encourage societal involvement than in those where involvement within the co-religious community takes center stage. Relatedly, a study among Turkish-origin Muslims in Germany and the Netherlands found that those who think that their religious ingroup exerts more pressure to adhere to strict versions of the Islamic faith identified more strongly with their religion and less with the host nation (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2012). Furthermore, among Muslims in the Netherlands, exclusion by co-believers has been found to lead to more support for religious beliefs (Schaafsma & Williams, 2012), and being considered "too Dutch" has been found to be associated with stronger Muslim identification and lower national identification (Cárdenas, 2019). This indicates that identity compatibility is reduced if one's Muslim community defines religious group belonging in a more rigid manner.

From the perspective of Western host nations, the definition of what it means to be a "true national" similarly has repercussions for Muslims' ability to reconcile national belonging with a strong Muslim identity. The classic distinction between national identity content in terms of ethnic versus civic definitions (Brubaker, 1992) has been complemented with a cultural definition, such that sharing core cultural traits like the national language, but also a Christian heritage, is regarded by some majority members as a necessary condition to claim national belonging (Reijerse et al., 2013). Along the same lines, sociologists of religion have argued that Christianity has largely lost its meaning as faith and enacted practice in European societies but has shifted meaning to become a component of national identity (Storm, 2011). The rejection by some European countries to admit refugees due to their Islamic religion at the height of the European "refugee crisis" is a recent example of how exclusionary definitions of national identity content engenders identity incompatibility by making national group boundaries impermeable for religious minorities in general and Muslims in particular.

[2] We situate the perspective of the host society also at the intragroup level to emphasize that most Muslims living in Western societies are full members of these societies and that identity compatibility needs to be understood from their multiple group membership.

Intergroup Processes

At the intergroup level, a number of studies have documented the negative effects of perceived discrimination and Islamophobia for identity compatibility. Across several European societies, Muslims who reported more instances of perceived discrimination, or perceived more anti-Islamic attitudes in their receiving country, were more strongly identified with their religious community and displayed lower levels of identification with, or even dis-identification from, the nation of residence (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2016; Kunst et al., 2012; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). Furthermore, among Muslims, feelings of exclusion have been found to lead to more hostility toward majority members (Schaafsma & Williams, 2012). In contrast, national identification of (Muslim) immigrants tends to be stronger in European societies with more multicultural policies (Igarashi, 2019).

According to the social identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the particular response to devaluation and discrimination depends on the perception of the three socio-structural variables of stability, legitimacy, and permeability. *Stability* refers to the extent to which group positions are considered to be changeable, and *legitimacy* refers to the extent to which the status structure is accepted as just. *Permeability* (or openness) refers to the extent to which individual group members can leave one group and join another (passing). Depending on the nature of the social structure, minority members adopt different strategies to achieve a positive social identity. The most basic way in which this can be done is to follow an individualistic social mobility path and dissociate oneself psychologically from one's devalued religious minority group. However, this is very unlikely for Muslims and also presupposes that the group boundaries are relatively permeable or open, indicating that membership in a higher status group can be achieved. If this is not the case, collective strategies to achieve a positive social identity and to change the status quo are more likely. There is empirical evidence for this reasoning (see Bettencourt et al., 2001), including research using cardiovascular measures (Scheepers, 2013), among Turkish Dutch minority youth (Verkuyten & Reijerse, 2008), although not among Muslim minorities.

Shaping the Context

The research typically emphasizes the important role of context in shaping Muslim identity in Western societies. The proximal (family, friends) and broader social context has an impact on the feelings, norms, beliefs, customs, and ideologies of what it means to be a Muslim. For example, close contact or friendship relations with other Muslims and with members of the host national majority have been related to feelings of more or less identity compatibility. Among ethnically diverse samples of Muslim youth in five European countries, a larger share of majority friends was the strongest explanation for Muslims' level of national identification (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2018). Social network analyses reveal that friendship networks among

European youth are segregated not only along ethnic but also on religious lines (Simsek et al., in press) and that Muslim youth are the least well connected to majority peers in these networks (Leszczensky & Pink, 2017).

This research is mainly concerned with the ways in which the context shapes Muslim identity. However, from the social identity perspective, the social context is not simply an external given, but is also shaped by religious identity expression, both individually and collectively. Social identity theory argues that minority members who believe that their lower status is illegitimate and unstable, and that group boundaries are rather impermeable, will show more ingroup solidarity and will be more likely to engage in collective action to achieve a different societal order (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identities do not only reflect the world as it is, but are also instrumental in trying to make the world the place one wants it to be. A shared sense of "us" transforms individual relationships because people see each other as belonging to the same category or group and they start to act on the basis of the collective understanding, beliefs, and norms that define who "we" are and what counts for "us." Thus, a shared sense of "us" gives unity and direction and is therefore an important basis of social power for trying to achieve identity-related goals, as evidenced in the civil rights struggle and other politically normative struggles for group equality and justice around the world. For example, among Muslim minority youth in Europe, identification with Islam and religious youth organizations form the basis for collective action and protest against inequality and exclusion (Cesari, 2003). Collective action is an important strategy for challenging and changing discriminatory practices and trying to improve the rights, power, and influence of one's religious minority group. This requires a sense of "us" and can happen in the local context of school or neighborhood where Muslim minority youth act together to change a situation and also on a regional or national level when Muslim youth get involved in religious (transnational) movement by actual participation and via social media (Cohen & Kahne, 2011).

Conclusion

Muslim identity in the Western world has become the topic of strong societal debates; there are many ways of being a Muslim and important differences between Muslim communities and countries. There is an increasing number of empirical studies on Muslim identity in different disciplines using different conceptualizations, theoretical perspectives, and research methods. In this chapter we have tried to argue that the social identity perspective has important implications for research on Muslim minority identity because the perspective places its major theoretical emphasis on social identities that mediate the relationship between social structure and individual social behavior. For several of these implications, there is empirical evidence, but the implications discussed should be examined more fully and systematically in future research. For example, although there is increasing interest in different identity dimensions, multiple identities, and identity (in)compatibilities,

the research is scarce in relation to Muslim (minority) identity. Additionally, there are various other implications that we have been unable to address in the context of this chapter, such as the processes of depersonalization and self-stereotyping, and important social-motivational dynamics (e.g., belonging, esteem, and meaningfulness motives) involved in determining the meaning of Muslim identity and its (in) compatibility with host national belonging (Verkuyten, 2018; Vignoles, 2011). Much research is predominantly concerned with the ways in which religious group membership is incorporated into the individual's structured self-concept (being a religious person). The social identity perspective focuses on the reversed process of self-stereotyping, whereby the self is depersonalized toward that which typifies one's religious group of Muslims. The emphasis is on the identity processes that serve to unite and shape the thoughts, feelings, and actions of those who belong to the same religious community. These are important processes that allow research on Muslim identity to more fully consider the agency of Muslim minorities in trying to shape the social world so that it comes more into line with their beliefs, goals, and values. Thus, the social identity perspective offers a theoretical framework for systematically examining Muslim minority identity in a range of settings, which is critical for more fully understanding what belonging to this religious community can mean and whether and when this belonging is considered (in)compatible with being a member of the host society.

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Chapter 11
Falling Outside Identity: The Creation and Boundaries of Turkish National Identity and Its Consequences for Minorities

Yasemin G. Acar, Elif Sandal Önal, and Ercan Şen

Introduction

National identity and its consequences have been a major element of ongoing conflict and strife in Turkey for years. Its definition and boundaries have been a source of contention, often referenced as a culprit in ongoing struggles for rights and freedoms, since the inception of modern Turkey. The country has done its best to create a homogeneous citizenry, with only Armenians, Greeks, and Jews as recognized minorities in a country where some estimates say there are hundreds of ethnic groups (Yeğen, 2004), although no official numbers exist. In such a complex environment, understandings of self and social identity become increasingly difficult.

Through this chapter, we will address the historical and sociological background of Turkish identity. We will use relevant constructs within social psychology, such as the recognition and nonrecognition of identity (e.g., Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011) as they relate to boundaries of identity and the common ingroup identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) as it relates to attempts in Turkey's history to create a common ingroup. We will then explore examples from contemporary social psychological research on Kurdish and Alevi identities, being of groups who are not officially recognized as minorities but who make up the largest minority populations in the country. This chapter will, therefore, discuss particular contextual factors of identification, the important antecedents and consequences of that identification, and important points for the study of identity in Turkey.

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_11

Complexities of Turkish National Identity

Turkish national identity is firmly rooted in the last years of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the Turkish Republic, when the rise of the concept of nation-states in Western Europe and the ongoing and continual loss of land in the empire led to existential questions about what it means to belong. With the start of the new Turkish Republic, Turkish national identity was formed on the basis of a specific ethnic and religious background—ethnically Turkish and religiously Sunni Muslim—where those who did not fit were either assimilated through internal population exchanges and national education practices or excluded through forced migration. In contemporary Turkey, with increased revivals of minority identification ongoing since the 1980s and 1990s, understanding the origins of latent ethnoreligious construals of citizenship can help to explain the way minorities understand their own minority identities, as well as how they relate to the larger national identity of Turkey.

National identities can be understood as containers of other identities (Bhabha, 1990) within the boundaries of the nation-state; relatedly, Turkish national identity was constructed on the foundations of homogeneity, integrity, and unity (Ünlü, 2014) at the expense of disregarding or indeed denying the distinctiveness of different ethnic or religious groups (Aslan, 2007; Bilali, 2013, 2014; Göl, 2005; Saracoglu, 2009; Yeğen, 2006). The attempts of nation-states to create a sense of unity and homogeneity out of diverse communities have long been a crucial topic in the debates of politics of diversity within the theoretical frameworks of citizenship (Isin, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2007), multiculturalism–interculturalism (Guilherme & Dietz, 2015; Vertovec, 2010), migration, inclusion–exclusion, and national identities (Howarth, 2016; Verkuyten, 2014). A critical point here to be considered is that minority groups that constitute diversity are not monotypic, and hence, their claims for certain rights such as recognition might also be diverse (Modood, 2016). In a world order based on nations and nation-states, immigrants who cross borders and become the "others of the community" might be considered as symbolic threats to the homogeneity of the nation, but this can also be evident for the historical minorities who, despite not crossing borders, are considered to be "others" (Triandafyllidou, 2014).

This difference between immigrants and historical minorities is especially relevant in the case of Turkish national identity. It requires not only a context-dependent outlook on recognition but also the identity claims of the minorities. The process in which those who are not ethnically Turkish and not religiously Sunni were exposed to "othering" is historical, and the roots of this exclusion might lie in the past conflicts of these groups, as well as in how these conflicts are remembered or represented (Winiewski & Bulska, 2019). Therefore, it is important to elaborate on the content of Turkish national identity to reveal how othering of minorities stems from the historical and current narratives that construct the national identity itself.

Identity Recognition and Common Ingroups

Relying on social identity and self-categorization theory (e.g., Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1985, 1991; Turner et al., 1987; see also Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Hogg, 2006; Hogg & Abrams, 1988), we know that the self is hierarchically organized, context specific, and variable. People categorize themselves in different social situations based on representations of the self as personal or social, but social representation changes its level based on whether it is as part of a superordinate or subcategory of an identity. Therefore, in different situations, a person can be seen as ingroup or outgroup based on the salience of a particular identity (Subašić et al., 2008). It may be the case, for example, that an individual sees themselves as part of a larger category, such as European, or a subcategory of that larger group, such as German. In some cases, non-German Europeans may be considered members of the ingroup and, in others, members of the outgroup.

A particular social identity is understood and defined in terms of its differences from other social identities. Understanding differences occurs through a process of social comparison, where group members contrast their category with others in order to determine who they are and who they are not. National identity, then, is about the common traits or cultural markers held by that people living in the same territory, as well as markers that differ from those of people in other territories. However, the boundaries and definitions of the category are not objective. Reicher and Hopkins (2001) note that categorical understandings of the world are created and maintained by human agents. In many cases, those human agents have acted at previous points in history, and their particular way of organizing the categories has become institutionalized in our systems. As they state, "if it appears to us as external and objective that is because it is not a product of *our* subjectivity and not because it is independent of any human subjectivity" (p. 48). In the case of Turkey, the national category was constructed in a time of change and upheaval and has for many contemporary Turks become concrete and untouchable due to the nature of its formation (see İnce, 2012).

Once an identity has been constructed, it has to be recognized by others. Recognition of group identity is another central factor in terms of who is considered a member of the ingroup or outgroup. Recognition, broadly understood as people feeling that their own sense of identity is affirmed (Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011), and nonrecognition has an important influence on intra- and intergroup relations. Nonrecognition of identity can influence how people feel and behave in their everyday interactions in the public sphere: if people feel their identity is not affirmed, they may avoid or feel constrained by interaction and could even be the subject of threat or harm (Hogg et al., 2005; Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011). Some forms of identity threat may come about when a person is miscategorized, either as belonging to a social category into which they prefer not to be categorized, or when attention is given to their superordinate identity rather than a subgroup identity they feel is more important (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). Nonrecognition or misrecognition can also be taken as a form of oppression. As expressed by Franz Fanon, "the major

weapon of the colonizers was the imposition of their image of the colonized on the subjected people" (Taylor, 1994, p. 65). Compelling people to live their lives through an identity that has been formed or chosen for them, rather than the one they would choose to categorize themselves, could certainly fall in this category.

Often used as a means to bring people together in a single category, the common ingroup identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) utilizes multiple categorizations as a strategy to improve intergroup relations. The model suggests that by recategorizing individuals in a superordinate category, they can create a common group identity, resulting in positive outcomes including lower levels of threat, forgiveness, and improved attitudes toward individuals who were previously considered outgroup members (Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Riek et al., 2010; Wohl & Branscombe, 2005). As mentioned above, though, utilizing superordinate categorizations can be tricky, especially when individuals feel less attached to the common ingroup than they do to a subordinate group or other categorization. As we continue this chapter, we will refer back to the concepts of social identity, identity recognition, and common ingroup in order to frame the way Turkish identity was created and utilized and how minorities in Turkey view their own and others' identifications.

The Formation of Turkish National Identity

In order to provide an in-depth look into the origins of Turkish national identity, it is helpful to provide some context to the era in which it was formed. The Ottoman Empire was based on a multicultural structure, and through the implementation of the *millet system*, different communities in society were able to practice their own laws without the intervention of the state (Dönmez, 2011), meaning that an autonomous process was in practice for the diverse groups that comprised the empire. The communities were mainly defined through different religious and ethnic identities and were only really responsible to the state for paying taxes and providing military contributions. The millet system was initiated with the reforms implemented by the Edict of Gülhane (*Tanzimat Fermanı*) of 1839 to provide for the integration of different ethnic and religious groups into the empire (Akman, 2004) under the common identity of Ottoman. However, attempts at providing equity in terms of security, taxation, and justice led to conflicts between the majority Sunni Muslim group and minority Christians and Jews.

The ongoing wars at the time led to territorial losses in the 1910s and resulted in the emergence of Islamism as another common identity, given that the majority of the population in the remaining lands was of Sunni Muslim origin. Yet after the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) came into power, they put forward an ethnocentric ideology of Turkishness as a means of bringing cohesion to the state. Turkishness here refers to making the Turkish ethnic category the main pillar of Turkish national identity (Ersanlı, 2008). Ethnic Turkishness was based on a well-known article by Akçura (1904/1998), "Three Types of Policy," in which he compared three bases for a common identity that could unite people living

under Ottoman rule: Turkism, Islamism, and Ottomanism. Turkishness, as a basis for a common identity, was characterized by ethnic origin, common language, and a common cultural inheritance. Throughout the construction of Turkish national identity, this ethnically formulated Turkishness was concurrently used as a superordinate category under which ethnically and religiously diverse communities in society would be integrated.

However, the narratives of Turkishness included possessing the attributes of civilization, development, heroism, and so forth (Üstel, 2004; Yıldız, 2001), which easily allowed for the othering of minorities who are not included in the boundaries of Turkishness. Accordingly, Turkishness led to the emergence of a privileged category for the ethnic Turks who—consciously or unconsciously—perceived and gave meaning to the world through the lens of their ethnicity, compared with others who did not have this privilege (Ünlü, 2014). Prioritizing ethnic Turkishness resulted in the exclusion of not only the religious minorities of Armenians, Jews, and Greeks but also those Sunni Muslims with other ethnic identities (e.g., Kurds). The populations of non-Muslims remaining at the birth of the Turkish Republic were officially defined as minorities with the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, while other minorities such as Kurds or Alevis were either not recognized or misrecognized, and the aspects of their identities that enable them to be recognized distinctively were used to denigrate them (Saracoglu, 2009).

Contents of National Identity: Any Space for Citizenship?

Citizenship and national identity are closely related and are oftentimes viewed as interdependent and interchangeable group memberships related to a sense of belonging to a nation (Aktoprak, 2011). Utilizing national boundaries as the legitimate limits of citizenship, as opposed to defining the latter more universally, inevitably puts the historical, political, and social burdens of the nation's narrative onto the scope of citizenship. This seems to be the case in Turkey, as the content of the term "Turk" is filled with national, civic, and ethnic discourses (Aslan, 2007; Cingöz-Ulu, 2008; Özkırımlı, 2008). Both nationality and citizenship, in their interchangeable usages, refer to common ingroup categories (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), so it is important to understand the content and the limits of these categories to see their influences on including or excluding certain populations in society. As such, this section of the chapter will examine the boundaries of national identity and provide a basic overview of its content in relation to Turkish citizenship, as well as discuss which categories are included and excluded from it.

The Turkish national narrative that contributes to the construction of national identity has its roots in the early twentieth century, when, starting in Western Europe, the rise of nation-states was already well under way. Saatçi (2002) stated that the emergence of Turkish national identity was a delayed phenomenon due to its geographic position on Europe's periphery, leading to a rush to catch up with the *zeitgeist* prevailing at the time. The result of this rush was the dominance of an enmity-based identity content against others, which was also enhanced by the

political context that, at the time, favored the rise of threat and security narratives (Altınay & Bora, 2008).

Independence movements in the Balkans starting in the 1850s characterized the final years of the Ottoman Empire, which problematized the matter of nationalism for the cohesion of the empire and resulted in the rise of a securitization discourse[1] against minorities who made national claims (İçduygu & Kaygusuz, 2004; Karaosmanoğlu, 2000; Keyman, 2001). Meanwhile, the *zeitgeist* favoring the rise of nationalism made it more difficult to hold the culturally diverse empire together, and authorities utilized different common ingroup identities to provide cohesion based on Ottoman identity, religion, or ethnicity (i.e., Turkishness).

These attempts at creating common ingroups still have an effect on the culture and categorizations taking place in Turkey today and remain relevant as we attempt to fully grasp the current conditions of religious and ethnic minorities in Turkey. According to Akçam (2008), Islam and Turkishness in the Ottoman Empire developed independently from one another, where the former progressed as a result of forgetting the latter, while the developments during the reform process of the Empire led to the rise of an ethnic Turkish discourse, which "glorified" the Ottoman Turks as the only group that could lead the government. Göçek (2008) states that this idea politicized an understanding of nationalism based on ethnicity over the previous common categories that stood on cultural characteristics.[2] The constructed national identity, therefore, was more likely to be inspired by an ethnocentric discourse, which carries an essentialist core (Özkırımlı, 2008; see also Grigoriadis, 2009), and minorities can only be included in the national identity by transforming their own identities through "Turkification" (Uğur-Çınar, 2015).

Although the emergence of the Turkish Republic after the Ottoman Empire stands as a rupture in terms of the political regime, the construction of national identity is not peculiar to the Turkish Republic, as the roots of the national narrative lie in the rising political ideology of the Committee of Union and Progress, corresponding to the last periods of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The Committee was initiated by the Young Turks movement, and its ideology refers to the primacy of modernization, Westernization, and centralization of the state in its late period. The main tendency of the movement was to provide cohesion based on a homogenized nation, inspired by French nationalism, by imposing a common ingroup identity to the peoples of the state who have different ethnic and/or religious identities. Although the common identity emerged under the name "Turk,"[3] different groups of people (including Kurds, Arabs, and Alevis, among others) were considered as members of this category based on a

[1] Securitization discourse here refers to an emphasis on overprotection of societies from 'outsiders' through the social construction of security issues (Kaya, 2012).

[2] Though the boundaries between what is cultural and what is ethnic are ambiguous; this statement emphasizes the former category as more inclusive and the latter as more exclusionary.

[3] Favoring the identity of Turk rather than other commonalities such as Islam or Ottoman identity required a construction of an ethnic narrative, because this term also refers to an ethnic category in the society.

compact of citizenship. The creation of the common identity in the Turkish Republic relied heavily on the standardization of language and historical narratives transmitted through education, with the adoption of a language policy considered to be one of the most important strategies used to solidify the burgeoning Turkish identity during the transition from empire to nation-state (Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 2004).

Denial and Exclusion of Differences in Turkish National Identity

Historical representations are critical in terms of determining the criteria for the construction of "us" (Dresler-Hawke, 2005). Representations are also important in that they can be used to define "others," that is, those who will be excluded from the national category. The myths, stories, or official historical narratives of nations mostly involve the rhetoric of "us/them" in defining the friends or foes of their groups; these narratives are collectively shared by the members of the nation through the political socialization process (Uyan-Semerci et al., 2017).

Master narratives, as the "cultural scripts about the meaning of social categories that exist in cultural artifacts and mass texts" (Hammack & Pilecki, 2012, p. 17), are among the most convenient means to transmit historical representations about the nation (Hammack, 2011). These are not only critical in terms of understanding how political content is processed by a group of individuals but are also important in terms of the subjective constructions of the ingroup during the course of political socialization. Here, in order to investigate how the history of Turkey is represented and shared collectively in terms of its influences on national identity, master narratives can provide important clues about the boundaries drawn for the national identity.

The definition of Turkish national identity utilizes a master narrative that reflects the superiority of Turks while also encapsulating a justification mechanism for the exclusion of certain minority groups. Barış Ünlü (2014) describes Turkish identity as a status of Whiteness, and in order to clarify this, he suggests a (hidden) "Turkishness Contract" among the citizens of Turkey, which results in discrimination against citizens of non-Turkish origin by those who fit the definition of Turk, although the actors are mostly unaware of their advantaged and dominant position. Ünlü (2014) suggests that the initial attempts of constructing Turkishness date back to the 1910s and 1920s, in which non-Muslims and non-Turks were excluded from the Turkish nation-state. So, the Turkishness Contract encompassed different Muslim groups who were accepted as Turks and were, in return, provided a secure and advantaged life in the country. Those who were not Turks, especially Kurds and Armenians, were systematically denied or punished, and related historical narratives were suppressed (Kurtiş et al., 2018).

The critical point here concerns those who are considered to be unacceptable for Turkish national identity. Regarding the dynamic nature of identities (Hall, 1996),

including national or citizenship identities, it is clear that those who are excluded from the boundaries of identity would change based on context (Çelik et al., 2017). However, the consolidation of Turkish national identity is provided on recognition or nonrecognition of certain groups as acceptable categories for inclusion in the category of Turkishness—not only the non-Muslim minorities specified by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 but also those who belong to Muslim groups but who do not fit the ethnoreligious criteria of Sunni Muslim and Turk (Çelik et al., 2017; Çoban-Keneş, 2015; Parlak, 2015).

Turkishness and Minority Identities in Contemporary Research

As thus far described, Turkish national identity is normatively considered to be ethnically and linguistically Turkish and religiously Sunni Muslim. Those who fall outside of these categorizations, that is, those who are ethnically non-Turkish (Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, etc.) or religiously not Muslim (Armenians, Greeks, Jews) or not Sunni (Alevis), are marginalized or "otherized" in Turkish discourse. When considering the majority of the Turkish population as falling into these three categories, those that fall outside are one of two categories: recognized and unrecognized minorities. As mentioned above, the recognized minorities are Armenians, Greeks, and Jews. Anyone else who falls into a minority category is not officially recognized as such and is therefore expected to fall into the traditional narrative of civic Turkish citizenship (unlike recognized minorities, who do not face the same expectation). In this section, we discuss research on social identity conducted with two widely discussed—albeit not officially recognized—minorities: Kurds and Alevis.

Kurds are an ethnic and linguistic minority in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. In Turkey, they number approximately 10–15 million people, making them the largest ethnic minority in the country. Alevis can broadly be defined as a religious minority whose heterodox faith includes elements of Shiism, Sunnism, and Sufism (Göner, 2005). There is no reliable data to reflect the actual population of Alevis; however, estimates range between 10 and 20 million, making Alevis one of the largest religious groups in Turkey (Gezik & Gültekin, 2019). We note, though, that being Kurdish and being Alevi are not mutually exclusive; just as one can be Turkish and Alevi or Kurdish and Sunni, one can also be Kurdish and Alevi (Acar, 2020).

We focus on these two groups for two reasons: First, they are widely known; Kurds are the largest ethnic minority in Turkey, and Alevis the largest religious/sectarian minority. Second, as described above, Turkish national identity has been created on the basis of inclusion ethnically as Turkish and religiously as Sunni. Despite not being officially recognized as minorities, Kurdishness falls on the ethnic and linguistic outgroup aspect of Turkishness, while Aleviness falls on the religious outgroup aspect of Turkishness. We will detail research that describes

understandings of identity based on these two identifications as they relate to Turkish identity.

Naming Turkish Identity

Much previous social psychological research on Kurds and Alevis as they relate to Turkish citizenship have focused on ways to bring these identities into the fold, that is, to bring them under a common ingroup identity. As described above, this has been attempted numerous times throughout the history of Turkey and continues to be attempted today through the national narratives and rhetoric that are often passed on to children through the education system. This approach is oftentimes considered assimilationist, as it requires the erasure of an important identity (e.g., Kurdish ethnic identity) in order to give space to the more common identity (e.g., Turkish national identity).

Contemporary social psychology has attempted to approach the issue through the common ingroup identity model, previously applied in a number of different conflict contexts as a means of bringing together two groups who have previously been in violent conflict with one another to create a new, common group (see, e.g., Andrighetto et al., 2012; Noor et al., 2008). Attempting to replicate this work in Turkey means accurately labeling Turkey a context rife with conflict, the difference being that previous work has approached a wider identity with both groups in conflict as subgroups, whereas in Turkey, the overarching common ingroup (i.e., Turkish) is still considered to be representative of the majority, more so than both groups equally.

One major issue in approaching this research has been that different ways of "naming" Turkish citizenship have been utilized to find the most appropriate way to describe the common group. When translated into Turkish, asking about identification as a citizen becomes a complicated problem that requires a rather nuanced approach. One could, when referring to identity as a citizen of Turkey, ask participants how much they identify as a Turk (*Türk olmak*), as a person from Turkey (*Türkiyeli olmak*), how much they identify as a Turkish citizen (*Türk vatandaşı olmak*), or how much they identify as a citizen of Turkey (*Türkiye vatandaşı olmak*). Each is essentially a political choice on the part of the researcher and on the part of the participant. For example, many Turks are more likely to identify with the category of "Turk" than the category "citizen of Turkey" (Çelebi et al., 2014). This may be because minority identities are perceived as threatening to majority group Turks (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2006). While "citizen of Turkey" is more inclusive, it also inherently creates distance from the national rhetoric surrounding Turkishness. The converse is true for Kurds. At the same time, ethnic identification is also similarly politically nuanced—one may ask if someone is of Turkish or Kurdish origin (*Türk veya Kürt kökenli olmak*) or directly ask if someone is Kurdish (*Kürt olmak*). Asking about origin indicates a distancing from importance of ethnic identification and falls

into more traditional national rhetoric—citizens of Turkey can be of any origin but are all inherently "Turkish" (Yeğen, 2004).

Previous research has also indicated that Turks tend to have higher national identification than ethnic identification, while the opposite holds true for Kurds (Bağcı & Çelebi, 2017; Çelebi et al., 2014; Çelebi et al., 2016). That is, while Turks do not place much importance on ethnicity (i.e., being ethnically Turkish), they give great importance to national identity (though, of course, these two are construed similarly). On the other hand, Kurdishness is more important to Kurds than is identification as a Turkish citizen. As described above, however, different researchers have named Turkish identity differently, so when Kurds are asked about their common ingroup in regard to citizenship, responses have different degrees of identification based on the different ways it has been described.

In addition to addressing Turkishness, another approach has been to utilize Islam as a common ingroup to unify Turks and Kurds, as opposed to Turkish citizenship. This research tends to focus on the strength of identification at different levels of nationality, religion, and ethnicity. The research tends to find that while a common religious identity is a useful construct for religious Turks, it does not necessarily have the effect of curbing Kurdish ethnonationalist sentiment (Baysu et al., 2018; Sarigil & Karakoc, 2017), as the approach of using religion to bridge groups is also considered assimilationist (see also Sarıgil & Fazlıoğlu, 2013). Utilizing religion as a unifier has been used historically since the final days of the Ottoman Empire, as well as contemporarily by the current Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* [AKP]) government. Especially during the Peace Process in 2013–2015, the AKP attempted to use religion as a tool to bring Kurds in line with a common ingroup based on Sunni Islam (Merdjanova, 2017; Türkmen, 2018). However, this distanced Kurdish Alevis, who felt that using religion in this way both left them out of negotiations and failed to address their concerns regarding a potential peace (Acar, 2020; Yaman et al., 2014).

Alevism is inherently disassociated from conversations of Islam as a common ingroup. As discussed above, the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic focused on the creation of a Turkish Sunni nation-state. Sunni–Alevi divisions became increasingly apparent over time, with a number of incidents of violence against Alevis, such as the massacres in the cities of Maraş and Çorum, initiated by extreme Turkish nationalists in 1978 and 1980; the Sivas massacre by religious Sunnis in 1993; and more recently the Gezi Park protests in 2013, in which the protesters who died were all young Alevi men (Çelik et al., 2017).

Some research conducted with Alevis indicates they tend to have lower religious identification than Sunnis (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2016), but this is possibly due to the multifaceted way that Alevism is understood (PODEM, 2016). With the revival of Alevi identity in both Turkey and the diaspora communities (Göner, 2005), Alevism has started to be understood as a political and a cultural identity, in addition to a religious one (van Bruinessen, 1996). These multifaceted understandings of identity have emerged more since Alevis have migrated from rural areas to cosmopolitan cities, where they have increased contact with other groups. Some recent and ongoing work has attempted to pull apart the nuances between these

religious, political, and cultural identities (e.g., Tekdemir, 2017), though with the many schisms in identity related to Alevism (ethnic, urban vs. rural, etc.), this will likely be a line of research that will be subject to further attention in the future.

Future Directions for Research on Minority Identities

Despite the work that has been described above, there is still a great deal related to identity in Turkey that has yet to be explored. First and foremost, we see a lack of work on the dimensions of Turkish identity. Although through this chapter we have created a historical narrative to help describe how Turkish identity came to be, we believe the way that Turkish identity is described both by majority and minority citizens of Turkey ought to be better explored. How do minorities view the boundaries of the identity, for example, and how do they feel their own behavior is expected to change to match the expectations of the "acceptable" citizen? We also note here that while we have touched on how national identity in Turkey has changed over time, we have neither the space nor the capacity to accurately describe the major changes that have taken place both through the multiple military coups that have affected the country and through ongoing global changes that have impacted Turkey's perception of identity itself (Ahmad, 1993, 2014; Ergil, 2000; Keyman, 1995). We recommend, therefore, that future research addresses how the master narratives of identity have changed through the years and how this now influences the way identity has been constructed and reconstructed over time.

In a recent article, Bayad et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of psychology theses written in Turkey between 2000 and 2019. Of the 3895 theses, only 33 are directly or indirectly related to Kurds. Of those 33, only 10 actually use the word "Kurd," and only half of the 33 refer in any way to the Kurdish issue. The authors of this chapter emphasize through this research that most of the work related to Kurdish identity or the Kurdish issue is conducted outside of Turkey and that without the perspective of researchers in Turkey, what little knowledge we have of identity strategies among Kurds is limited, at best. While it is clear that more research needs to be conducted by Turkish-based researchers, the lack of a clear sense of Turkish identity, as has been described in this chapter, combined with the (self) censorship that comes with studying sensitive issues in Turkey, likely prevents this.

It is also important to remember that Turkey is a context in conflict. Ongoing and historical conflicts with Armenians, Kurds, Alevis, and others are all extremely relevant in the way identity is structured. As mentioned above, threat and security narratives have been very strongly utilized in the creation of Turkish national identity (Altınay & Bora, 2008). As such, the histories and perspectives of the other are rarely given credence. Recent work has tried to shed a more nuanced light on both majority and minority identities through perspectives on political events, such as the Gezi Park protests, which showcased solidarity between groups that had not previously worked together in order to achieve a common goal (see, e.g., Acar & Uluğ, 2016; Uluğ & Cohrs, 2019). Another approach to nuance has been through better

understanding of different narratives with regard to the Turkish–Kurdish conflict (see, e.g., Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017) or understanding the conflict from the perspective of actors whose voices are rarely heard (see, e.g., Acar, 2019). Alevi identity, which has experienced a wave of politicization since the 1980s, has been the least explored in the context of Turkey, though research related to this particular identity will have important contextual impact, as well as provide one more perspective on different religious groups in conflict.

Conclusion

Through this chapter, we have tried to provide a historical, sociological, and psychological framework to explain how Turkish identity was formed, how it has changed, and the impact of that identity on minorities living in Turkey. We have also explored the aspects of the social psychological literature that have been studied in this context, as well as the particular subjects we believe require further study in the future. Populist discourses based on us–them distinctions still prevail, in addition to the intractable conflicts that have their roots in the aforementioned historical context. It seems, too, that without constitutional assurances of minority rights, identity-related conflicts are not likely to be resolved. We believe knowing the unique cultural and political context of Turkey, and the way identity has been (and continues to be) shaped by this context, will inform the way identity can be studied in the context of Turkey in the future, especially as it relates to minority perspectives.

One of the points highlighted in this chapter is that the content and subjective understandings of national identity by different ethnic and religious groups living in nation-states are of utmost importance, especially in contexts where historical asymmetrical intergroup conflicts prevail. Research in social and political psychology that focuses on the potential for national identity to constitute an umbrella category for managing diversity in these societies should reconsider this approach and take a critical stance with regard to the subjective meanings of national identity through the images and representations that are communicated and circulated within different groups (Ardağ et al., 2017), as well as their connotations for ethnicity, descent, history, and all relevant content that has the potential to exclude certain minorities.

For Turkey, as a context where the concepts of citizenship and an exclusionary national identity are intertwined, it is important for policymakers, social scientists, and all parts of civil society to reconsider the ways in which national identity is defined and consider either a redefinition with a civic content, as suggested by Jones and Smith (2001), or to work on another common civic category that could embrace all ethnic and religious groups living in the country. It is expected that this chapter will contribute to the further studies of Turkish national identity content, its contested meanings across different groups, and the quest for a common civic category that recognizes all differences within the country.

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Chapter 12
Cathedrals of the Spirit: Indigenous Relational Cultural Identity and Social and Emotional Well-Being

Pat Dudgeon and Abigail Bray

Introduction

Cultural survival, reclamation, and identity have become a priority for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This chapter traces how Aboriginal culture and identity have survived and indeed are becoming strengthened throughout Australia. First, the repercussions of racist policies and practices on the identity construction of Aboriginal Peoples and their struggles to assert cultural recognition are addressed. Informed partly by racist, pseudoscientific ideas of eugenics and alongside the practices of genocide, government policies enforced assimilation of Aboriginal Peoples into mainstream society as second-class citizens. They sought to decimate Aboriginal culture and identity through colonization. Second, the cultural renaissance experience over the last few decades is discussed. Reclamation of culture and the construction of identity are a vital part of Indigenous well-being and extend beyond claiming equal rights. Relationality is then discussed as critical to understanding Indigenous worldviews and cultural identity. We propose that the concept of social and emotional well-being (SEWB) is a valuable framework that includes the holistic domains essential in Indigenous identity. This framework is not considered as a lay theory of well-being; it is considered a reconnection with Indigenous Ways of Knowing that existed before colonization. It is acknowledged that there is an ongoing struggle to be recognized as culturally diverse within a system and country that still reflect colonial power. Yet the cultural strengthening discussed here is reflected globally, where Indigenous Peoples are reclaiming and redefining their cultural identity despite oppressive surroundings.

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_12

Cultural Genocide

It is widely recognized that Indigenous Australians are the custodians of one of the earth's oldest continuing cultures, estimated at over 55,000 years old (Nagle et al., 2017). Prior to the 1788 invasion of the country now known as Australia, there were roughly 250 Indigenous languages spoken across the nation (Walsh, 1991). These diverse Indigenous cultures practiced sophisticated, sustainable, life-affirming knowledge systems regarding, for example, astronomy, medicine, geography, history, law, philosophy, and ecology. Communities were governed by complex ecocentric kinship laws, which delimitated social and spiritual obligations to family, community, and the Country (used interchangeably with "the land"). These laws were relational and holistic, encompassing knowledge systems that were founded on a dynamic kinship with the land.

Within this context, identity was understood to be an expression of the land, which, according to Indigenous knowledge systems, is a conscious being with a past, a present, and a future. The ecocentric relational dynamics of Indigenous identity describe what might be understood to be a culturally distinctive identity. As Moreton-Robinson (2003) writes, Indigenous people have an "ontological relationship" (p. 31) with Country in that it forms an inherent part of people. It is this inseparable relationship between people and land that is possibly the greatest, most profound difference between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous and therefore cannot be measured against the same standards (Moreton-Robinson, 2003). Indigenous identity, as understood within Indigenous knowledge systems, is constituted, organized, and created through a shared ontology with Country. The distinctions between identity formation within individualistic and collectivist cultures that have dominated social psychology over the past few decades (Becker et al., 2012; Hofstede, 2001; Smith, 2011; Tajfel, 1974) cannot be easily mapped onto Indigenous concepts of identity. Although Indigenous identity can be understood to be collectivist, the concept of Indigenous collectivity also encompasses an ontological, epistemological, and axiological relationship to a nonhuman collectivity—Country. As will be discussed more fully later in this chapter, the ecocentric relationality that forms Australian Indigenous cultural identity is shared by other Indigenous peoples (those from the countries now known as New Zealand, Canada, and the United States of America; McClintock et al., in press).

For all Indigenous peoples, the identity wounds inflicted by colonization have resulted in culturally unique psychosocial threats to well-being. Colonization involved the calculated and systemic destruction of the physical and psychosocial integrity of Australia's Indigenous People, a comprehensive process of land theft, mass violence, and cultural destruction called assimilation by the colonizers and genocide by the Indigenous Peoples (National Tribal Council, 1969). Indigenous People are aware that colonization and settler nationhood have historically sought the elimination of Indigenous Peoples and their identities. Indeed, the profoundly deleterious intergenerational psychosocial consequences of the attempted

destruction of Indigenous cultural identity are recognized across the literature (George et al., 2019).

Moreover, Indigenous leaders and their communities have long sought to resist the genocidal targeting of cultural identity. For example, William Cooper, a Yorta Yorta Elder and statesman, submitted a petition to the Victorian Board of Protection of Aborigines in 1935 protesting against the extinction of Indigenous Australians through assimilation policies that were directed at destroying cultural identity. In the 1969 Policy Manifesto of the National Tribal Council, assimilation was dubbed "cultural genocide" (National Tribal Council, 1969, p. 13). In 1970, the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League (VAAL) submitted a petition to the United Nations ("UN Petitions Allege Genocide in Australia,", 1970, p. 8) protesting the "systematic obliteration of our people[s]" (Mackay, 2015, p. 64).

As well as drawing attention to the ways in which enforced poverty, social marginalization, and exclusion from education contributed to the slow genocide of Indigenous People, the VAAL petition also identified the psychological dimension as "the most insidious of the weapons of genocide." This understanding was echoed in the following year by Indigenous activist Bobby Sykes. Writing for the historically important Indigenous magazine *Identity* (published between 1971 and 1982), Sykes (1996/1971) described genocide as "a very delicate process of demeaning and soul-destroying tactics" (p. 130) in which Indigenous peoples are ignored or their very existence denied. Indigenous psychiatrist Milroy (2006) also described this radical exclusion from humanity as a form of psychological genocide. Also writing for *Identity*, Aboriginal intellectual Kevin Gilbert (1971) describes an enforced sense of shame: the "interiorised racial-cultural image with which Aboriginal people[s] have been forcibly indoctrinated" (p. 23). He further notes that the problem chiefly involves the attrition of a valued identity (Gilbert, 1971).

It is remembered that Australia was declared *terra nullius* (unoccupied land) by the invading culture, with the human inhabitants categorized as flora and fauna and subjected to profound de-humanization. As the vast literature on ethnic and racial identity has shown us, psychological well-being is intimately tied to a secure sense of positive ingroup identity, a sociocognitive empowerment which acts as a buffer against external discrimination and negative stereotyping (Adams et al., 2016; Phinney, 1992). By forcing Indigenous Peoples off the lands they belonged to and subjecting them to racist assimilation policies that included the forced removal of children across generations, the invading culture broke deep and protective kinship bonds with Country, family, and community, while also subjecting them to a multitude of human rights abuses.

Gilbert's description of the impact of colonization on Indigenous identity is pertinent. He stated that as invasion occurred, Indigenous Australians began to sicken physically and psychologically:

> They were hit by the full blight of an alien way of thinking. They were hit by the intolerance and uncomprehending barbarism of a people intent only on progress in material terms, a people who never credited that there could be cathedrals of the spirit as well as stone. Their view of Aborigines as the most miserable people on earth was seared into Aboriginal thinking because they now controlled the provisions that allowed blacks to continue to exist at

> all. Independence from them was not possible. … It is my thesis that Aboriginal Australia underwent a rape of the soul so profound that the blight continues in the minds of most blacks today. It is this psychological blight, more than anything else, that causes the conditions that we see on the reserves and missions. And it is repeated down the generations. (Gilbert, 1977, pp. 2–3)

This "psychological blight" has been identified as "historical trauma" by Indigenous psychologists (Hartman et al., 2019). Historical trauma has four components: colonial injury, collective experience, cumulative effects, and cross-generational impacts (Gone, 2013; Hartman & Gone, 2014). Healing from historical trauma is a complex process requiring the reinstatement of Indigenous self-determination across the social determinants of everyday life—education, employment, housing, the health sector, and governance (Marmot, 2011)—and the strengthening of the cultural determinants of well-being, or social and emotional well-being (SEWB). As will be discussed later, SEWB encompasses the seven well-being domains of spirituality, culture, Country, family and kinship, community, mind and emotions, and body (Gee et al., 2014). Harmonious relations between these interconnected domains strengthen identity and build resilience (Salmon et al., 2018).

Indigenous health experts recognize that robust individual and collective identities are often the result of stronger ties to culture and country (Brown, 2013). Indeed, across the literature, the development of a strong cultural identity has been identified as protective (Chandler & Dunlop, 2018; Colquhoun & Dockery, 2012; Marmion et al., 2014; SNAICC, 2012; Usborne & Taylor, 2010). The relationship between strong cultural identity and well-being is not only supported by the scientific literature in the field, but is broadly recognized by Indigenous people across Australia. For example, a common belief of all participants in the National Empowerment Project (NEP), an Indigenous-designed and Indigenous-implemented suicide prevention program covering 11 communities across Australia, was that a positive cultural identity was a powerful advantage and that a connection to culture was important if their community, family, and individual lives were to improve (Dudgeon et al., 2014a). Qualitative evidence gathered by NEP also found that the restoration of SEWB is tied to a "secure sense of cultural identity and cultural values, and to participation in cultural practices that enable people to exercise and experience their cultural rights and responsibilities" (Dudgeon et al., 2014c, p. 14).

The importance of cultural identity is also repeatedly stressed as central to both SEWB and suicide prevention in the *The Elders' Report into Preventing Indigenous Self-harm and Youth Suicide* (People Culture Environment, 2014), which contains transcribed interviews with 31 Elders and community leaders from more than 17 communities across Australia. Reinforced therein, for example, are the assertions that Aboriginal identity originates in the land, and no matter one's material (Western) wealth or view thereof, a strong cultural identity is paramount to Aboriginal peoples' physical and spiritual well-being. *The Elders Report* shows that restoring and strengthening cultural identity is a vital part of many Indigenous healing programs across the country and is a foundational protective factor for SEWB. Qualitative evidence gathered from participants of six regional roundtables across Australia by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project

(ATSISPEP) also found that that a strong cultural identity was recognized to be essential to the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Milroy et al., 2017).

Building a strong cultural identity is connected to strengthening harmonious relationships between each of the domains of SEWB (Dudgeon et al., 2017; Dudgeon & Walker, 2015). The formation of strong cultural identity gives life meaning and reduces the risk of psychological distress (Milroy et al., 2017). Since the 1970s in particular, the Indigenous self-determination movement (of which Indigenous psychology is an integral part) has reclaimed cultural identity despite the continuation of colonial attitudes and behavior.

Reclaiming Cultural Identity

Dodson (1994) states that the recognition of people's fundamental right to self-determination must include the right to determine their identities—

> to inherit the collective identity of one's people, and to transform that identity creatively according to the self-defined aspirations of one's people and one's own generation. It must include the freedom to live outside the cage created by other people's images and projections. (p. 5)

Contemporary Indigenous Australians have contested dominant deficit narratives about Indigenous identity across a number of platforms and continue to challenge racist misrepresentations. Change is not characterized by clean leaps into other social spaces; colonial perceptions of Aboriginal identity are contested and are in the process of reconstruction. These complex contestations are sometimes evident in the perceptions of Aboriginal People. Langton (1993) notes that Aboriginality is continuously being recast through processes of dialogue, imagination, representation, and interpretation.

For Australian Indigenous People, cultural survival, reclamation, and identity have become a priority. This is a both a cultural renaissance and a process of decolonization. The term "cultural renaissance" has been used in many discussions of Indigenous cultural identity, for example, in Oxenham et al. (1999) and Sissons (2005). It refers to a period of time in the Indigenous political and social movement, commencing around the 1970s to 1980s, when concerns were not only about claiming equal rights, but also refers to reclaiming culture difference, and having that acknowledged and respected in mainstream society. Cultural identity itself became significant.

Distinguished anthropologists Ronald and Catherine Berndt, from their long and extensive study of and involvement with Indigenous People, also described the direction of rapid social and political change in Indigenous Australia as a renaissance:

> That renaissance is not necessarily to be found in a revival of traditional life, although it is sometimes. Rather, it is a renaissance that concerns the Aboriginal heritage, a broad heritage which is continuing to be responsive to change. Educational and economic imperatives

> alone can stimulate considerable changes in all aspects of social living and thinking. The hope is, the necessity is, to safeguard the quality and substance of that heritage. One thing that will serve to buttress surviving traditional views and values is pride in having an Aboriginal identity. That social identity is no longer simply an aspiration; it is now a reality (Berndt & Berndt, 1992, p. 531).

In exploring the historical constructions of Indigenous identity, it is apparent that over the last 50 years, a remarkable change has come about in public representations of Aboriginality. Geoffrey Stokes (1997) reviewed how Aboriginal people deployed political ideas and arguments in the face of state oppression. He conceptualized the history of Aboriginal identity from a political perspective and suggested that there are two broad ideas in the development of Indigenous identity. The first, predicated on the desire for equality, was a quest for citizenship and human rights by Aboriginal People that stressed the sameness of Aborigines to White people. This was evident in the earlier to mid-part of the twentieth century. The later conception retained the first notion and presented a different assertion: an identity based on cultural difference to White people.

The twenty-first century social reality for Indigenous People depicts a markedly different picture from their reality in the 1970s. Over the decades, the political focus has changed to an emphasis on cultural identity. In contemporary times, Aboriginal People describe the following as their identity: being descended from Aboriginal groups, becoming aware of being different to (White) others, being grounded in family connections, being part of the local Aboriginal community, and having cultural ways such as values, principles, morals, and spirituality (Oxenham et al., 1999).

Sissons (2005) observed from a global perspective that Indigenous cultures are not disappearing as predicted, nor have they been assimilated into a new international order. Their diversity has not reduced. Indigenous peoples have become stronger, are envisaging alternative futures, and have appropriated global resources for their own cultural specific ends. It could be said that Indigenous peoples are in the process of reclaiming their cultures, not as they were traditionally in a purist manner, but based on a renewal of those traditional ways. Cultural renaissance is about resurgence, reclaiming, and taking pride in previously denigrated and repressed subjectivities. This process is continuing and evolving. In Oxenham et al. (1999), Indigenous authors discuss how some Aboriginal groups drew upon the cultural practices from other geographical areas to reinstate some of their own local ceremonial practices and concluded that this was appropriate as part of the process of reclaiming culture.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there has been an unprecedented change in Aboriginal perceptions of Aboriginal identity. Now, for the first time, there is an element of pride in being an Indigenous Person despite the continued racist views held by society. Indeed, reclaiming cultural identity may have been essential for the survival of oppressed peoples, particularly those from minority groups in settler nations. However, the White gaze described by Kevin Gilbert (1977), which demanded fossilized, preserved, exotic images of Aboriginal culture, yet denied people's heritage if they caused political discomfort, still persists. With the renaissance or cultural reclamation of recent years, strengthening Indigenous

identity has become a priority for Indigenous People, and the cultural elements of identity have become increasingly important and enacted.

Cultural Identity as Relational

Indigenous cultural identity may be described as an identity formed through and expressing *relationality*; the idea of a dynamic interconnectivity is a concept foundational to many Indigenous worldviews that opposes the dominant Western philosophy of dualism. First Nations critical psychologist Ansloos (2017) emphasized the need to "acknowledge the complexity of identity in a relational worldview … Indigenous approaches extend relationality into complex and dynamic spheres that go beyond the confines of an enlightenment notion of identity or self-hood" (p. 11). This concept is gaining prominence within Indigenous scholarship across the disciplines as a way of describing the holistic complexity of Indigenous knowledge systems (Blaser et al., 2011; Kovach, 2009; Loppie, 2007; Mertens et al., 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2017; Romm, 2015). A primary purpose of such scholarship is the revitalization of relational life-affirming Indigenous knowledge systems, which are understood to be healing not only for individuals, families, and communities but also the environment.

In brief, Indigenous relationality can be understood to have ontological, axiological, and epistemological dimensions, or interconnected ways of being, doing, and knowing. Relational ontology describes a form of dynamic becoming that is based on a complex form of ethical reciprocity. Kinship is central in this context. Numerous Indigenous cultures have kinship systems that situate identity within elaborate ethical relations not only with family and community but to the wider community of animals, plants, sky, waters, and land. Axiological relationality is pivotal to such knowledge systems; indeed, the very purpose of such systems is a praxis that is guided by an ethical commitment toward the guarding and nurturing of all life forms. Significantly, cultural identity is based on axiological relationality, on cultural principles of reciprocity, obligation, and caring (Dudgeon et al., 2014a, p. 14). As such, Indigenous rationality can be understood as a form of lore or law, a system of being, doing, and knowing, guided by a drive toward ecocentric justice.

These axiological relational lores are often argued to be an expression of the earth—the land is "the logos of the law" (Black, 2016, p. 165)—as is the overriding principle of justice served by such lores (Cajete, 1994; Daigle, 2016; Oscar, 2017; Todd, 2016; Watson, 2016; Watts, a2013). The justice project of decolonization can be situated within this system of relationality. Harris and Wasilewski (2004), for example, argued for the revival of a Comanche relationality axiology, composed of the four principles of relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution, in order to challenge the destructive colonial fetishization of profit and power. The will toward a life-affirming harmony can be said to direct Indigenous axiological relationality: Strong cultural identity and well-being depend on the collective practice of an ethical connection with life, with the process of living.

Watts (2013) discussed how Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe relationality are centered in a custodial relationship with the earth: to lose a relational connection to the earth is to risk the destruction of Indigenous cultural identity and dishonor the sovereign agency of the earth. The Cree people's knowledge system of *Miyupimaatisiiun* (being alive well) is another Indigenous form of axiological relationality that serves a twofold purpose: organizing social life and establishing a sense of collective identity (Adelson, 2000; Kirmayer et al., 2000). For the Maori people, *Whakapapa* is a relational well-being lore that is based on the principles of continuity, unity, harmony, connection, and life meaning, which place cultural identity within a framework of holistic connections (Lawson-Te Aho & Liu, 2010; Te Rito, 2007). Indigenous Australians have resonant systems of relationality. Similar (but distinct) Indigenous knowledge systems exist across Australia (Lloyd et al., 2012; Rose et al., 2003; Watson, 2016; Yap & Yu, 2016). Within Australian Indigenous psychology, the multidimensional concept of SEWB has emerged as a description of relational well-being and cultural identity.

Cultural Identity and Social and Emotional Well-being

As Swan and Raphael (1995) state in the *Ways Forward* report—a report that is broadly recognized to be foundational to contemporary Australian Indigenous psychology—relational well-being is:

> holistic, encompassing mental health and physical, cultural and spiritual health. Land is central to well-being. This holistic concept does not merely refer to the "whole body" but in fact is steeped in the harmonised inter-relations which constitute cultural well-being. These inter-relating factors can be categorised as largely spiritual, environmental, ideological, political, social, economic, mental and physical. Crucially, it must be understood that when the harmony of these interrelations is disrupted, Aboriginal ill health will persist. (p. 19)

This definition of health also informs the first of the nine guiding principles for working with Aboriginal people developed by the landmark *National Aboriginal Health Strategy* (NAHSWP, 1989) and now used across a broad raft of policy frameworks. This complex concept of relational well-being, refined and practiced over many centuries prior to colonization, enabled Indigenous people to flourish in harmony with each other and the land (Queensland Mental Health Commission, 2016). Reclaiming and revitalizing relational well-being is central to self-determination and the decolonization of psychology.

Along with the 1995 *Ways Forward* report, the *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2004–2009* was pivotal in decolonizing Western psy-complex discourses about Indigenous mental health, which has frequently pathologized cultural identity and difference (Dudgeon et al., 2014b). Indeed, SEWB, represented by the diagram in Fig. 12.1, developed by Gee et al. (2014) on behalf of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association (AIPA), can be understood to be a

Fig. 12.1 Determinants of social and emotional well-being. (Gee et al., 2014 on behalf of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association)

decolonized model of Indigenous well-being and identity that acknowledges that a strengths-based approach to the determinants of SEWB is pivotal in overcoming the deleterious impact of colonization.

As this diagram makes clear, the Indigenous Australian "conception of self is grounded within a collectivist perspective that views the self as inseparable from, and embedded within, family and community" (Gee et al., 2014 p. 57). Furthermore, this concept of relational identity encompasses complex relationships with spirituality and Country; indeed, all seven domains of well-being are interrelated.

An important point here is that this model of SEWB and Indigenous cultural identity has been developed through extensive Aboriginal participatory action research with Aboriginal communities across Australia (Brockman & Dudgeon, 2020). It should be noted that SEWB can be understood to be a psychological discourse that has been facilitated by and for Indigenous people using Indigenous research methods. Moreover, while a psychological discourse of SEWB has emerged from Indigenous communities, the discourse of SEWB cannot be collapsed with dominant hierarchical distinctions within Western psychology between lay and

expert mental health knowledges (Jorm et al., 1997). SEWB can be understood as an expression of the continuation of an Indigenous relational psychology that existed prior to colonization and not a lay theory of well-being.

As the diagram illustrates, self or identity is composed of dynamic relationships to seven interconnected domains. Each of these domains has complex cultural meanings that are specific either to a place or the specific Indigenous culture to which someone belongs, and SEWB needs will vary across the life course (Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council, 2017). Harmonious relations between these interconnected domains strengthen cultural identity across the lifespan (Salmon et al., 2018). As stated in the *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2017–2023*,

> seven social and emotional well-being domains are optimal sources of well-being and connection that support a strong and positive Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity grounded within a collectivist perspective. Culture and cultural identity is critical to social and emotional well-being. Practising culture can involve a living relationship with ancestors, the spiritual dimension of existence, and connection to country and language, (Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council, 2017, p. 6)

It is clear, then, that a strong healthy cultural identity is tied to the seven domains of SEWB. Moreover, in terms of clinical practice, the domains of SEWB have distinct motivational qualities, which can be integrated "as goals, values or needs, across therapy models, and provide a relevant culturally appropriate content for psychological intervention" (Brockman & Dudgeon, 2020, p. 89). Significantly, "the seven domains of well-being can be viewed as fundamental needs or nutriments, more or less required to experience well-being, and are unique from, but analogous to, Western notions of core emotional needs" (Brockman & Dudgeon, 2020, p. 87). There is now substantial evidence that healthy connections to these domains strengthen cultural identity and SEWB. For example, strengthened cultural connections to Country (Berry et al., 2010; Biddle, 2011; Biddle & Swee, 2012; Burgess et al., 2008, 2009) and spirituality (Grieves, 2009; Yap & Yu, 2016; Ypinazar et al., 2007) have been found to increase SEWB.

These culturally unique fundamental needs have been impacted by the colonial social determinants of health that subjected Indigenous Peoples to profound forms of racist exclusion from employment, education, health, and housing, as well as forms of intergenerational trauma caused by the forced removal of children from families and communities, violence, systemic discrimination, and cultural dislocation. These sociopolitical and historical contexts can be understood as the SEWB determinants of health and well-being. Indeed, social and historical influences are core to our understanding of well-being (Brockman & Dudgeon, 2020).

Healing from the sociocognitive assault of colonization, as Indigenous health experts have made clear for many decades, requires the comprehensive restoration of self-determination. The relationship between self-determination, a strong and healthy cultural identity, and well-being has long been recognized by Aboriginal People. The 1989 National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party states that, to Aboriginal peoples, health entails being able to regulate all aspects of their lives,

including physical environment, dignity, community, self-esteem, and justice. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2013) suggests that Indigenous Australians may not be able to fully overcome the legacy of colonization and dispossession were it not for their right to self-determination.

The social or cultural determinants of health—namely, Indigenous self-determination or Indigenous control over the conditions of everyday life—enable what Chandler and Lalonde (1998) describe as cultural continuity, which fosters a strong sense of cultural self-continuity (Becker et al., 2012; Sedikides et al., 2015) or cultural identity. In short, research on resilient identities has found that strong affective connections between the past and the present provide the necessary stability required for creating a positive future. Research into First Nation bands in Canada discovered that self-governing communities which are engaged in cultural practices have few or no youth suicide rates (Chandler & Lalonde, 1998). Similar findings about self-determination in other Indigenous communities have also drawn attention to positive correlations between well-being and cultural identity (Newell et al., 2020).

Conclusion: Cultural Identity and Self-Determination

The colonizing White gaze, as so eloquently argued by Gilbert (1977), could not comprehend that there could be "cathedrals of the spirit as well as stone" (p. 2). Nor could they comprehend that within these cathedrals of the spirit, encompassing a Country twice the size of Europe, flourished a complex knowledge system that supported a harmonious democracy that saw no wars, and had intricate laws for resolving conflicts, bringing up children, and caring for each sex and the old. In addition, it had a loving and sustainable kinship with the earth and prioritized the holistic well-being of individuals, families, and communities over property and division. This complex knowledge system could be termed social and emotional well-being, so in profound ways, Indigenous relational identity is social and emotional well-being. Strengthening cultural identity strengthens social and emotional well-being.

Future research directions might entail a deeper analysis of the relationship between cultural identity and the domains of SEWB, how to strengthen protective factors, and how to overcome the barriers that communities face in strengthening cultural identity within all settings—remote, rural, and urban. Further research is required into the specific domains of SEWB from an Indigenous standpoint, using Indigenous-designed methodologies and measures. For practitioners and counselors, the protective role of strong cultural identity should be recognized as the foundation of well-being. If positive self-identity depends on a strengths-based narrative (Fogarty et al., 2018) about the past self, how might the SEWB domains of Indigenous cultural identity be approached—not only as domains necessary to well-being in the present but also as domains which express the potential to hold strengths-based cultural narratives of the past self? The ongoing process of reclaiming a positive cultural identity (which is occurring in the public sphere across many

sectors including the creative industries, politics, and academia) can be understood as a form of collective sociocognitive resilience building. Strengths-based narratives about the past, which emphasize resistance, survival, flourishing, and cultural dignity, enable a collective positive attachment to the past that can support cultural self-continuity and SEWB.

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Part III
Identity Perspectives Important for Non-Western Context

Chapter 13
Perspectives on Personal Identity Development in Western and Non-Western Contexts

Theo A. Klimstra and Byron G. Adams

Introduction

Systematic research on the development of personal identity started in the United States in the 1960s. Inspired by Erikson's (1950) writings, Marcia (1966) developed the Identity Status Interview to assess individuals' success in achieving this key task of psychosocial development. From a North American and Northwest European perspective, it seems that research on personal identity research initially spread across mainly only these Western countries, only to reach other parts of the world much later (Schwartz et al., 2012). In this chapter, we will examine whether this conclusion is accurate by including novel insights into the historical roots of identity formation research.

Building on previous overviews (e.g., a 2012 special issue in *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*; Schwartz et al., 2012), we will first describe different conceptualizations of personal identity as developed in the Western world and review the most prominent findings and ideas on identity development and its association with well-being and psychopathology as obtained in these countries. Next, we will evaluate identity studies in the Majority World (i.e., non-Western

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_13

countries) conducted both within and across different cultural contexts, considering both emic (culture-specific) and etic (cross-cultural) perspectives. It is important to note that broad categorizations such as the Western and non-Western world obscure the real diversity in cultures across the globe, as well as the diversity within cultures. This should be kept in mind when reading this chapter.

The main goal of the chapter is to review the extent to which Western perspectives on identity development hold in the Majority World and provide ideas on how to make the study of identity truly cosmopolitan. This chapter thus aims to inspire research that does more justice to the specific challenges individuals from various Majority World settings deal with, in light of well-established theoretical perspectives on identity development.

Conceptualizations of Personal Identity: Developmental Perspectives

Erikson (1950) inspired much of the current research on personal identity. He described identity formation as a search for a new sense of sameness and continuity after children no longer take the teachings provided by adult authority figures for granted. Based on clinical observations, Erikson emphasized the significance of a well-developed and integrated identity, linking identity issues to problems such as delinquency, extremism, and psychotic episodes. He further emphasized that, although more pronounced during adolescence, identity formation is a lifelong developmental task, with its roots in childhood and continuing significance throughout adulthood.

From Erikson's writings, three major functions of identity can be derived: *distinctiveness*, *coherence*, and *continuity* (Pasupathi, 2014). Distinctiveness generally refers to a sense of uniqueness relative to others. It can be derived from psychological and physical distance to others, as well as social position (e.g., status), but is most often derived from perceived differences in personal characteristics such as abilities, physical characteristics, and personality characteristics (van Doeselaar et al., 2019). Coherence refers to perceiving a sense of unity across roles and across one's behavior, cognitions, and emotions in different situations. Although coherence has been conceptualized differently across studies, not experiencing conflicts may be more important than merely experiencing differences between one's identity across roles and situations (van Doeselaar et al., 2018a). Continuity is often associated with stability in psychological research, and therefore, it could be mistaken for reflecting rank-order or mean-level stability in identity levels. However, continuity as a function of identity reflects the sense of feeling that one is largely the same person today that one was in the past and will be in the future (e.g., van Doeselaar et al., 2018a). Although there are many studies on distinctiveness and coherence (for a review, see van Doeselaar et al., 2018a), there is some ambiguity regarding their conceptualization. In addition, the lion's share of research on

identity development has focused on identity continuity. This chapter too, therefore, will focus on continuity.

Even within identity continuity, there are still several different approaches. Currently, the *narrative* approach is among the most prominent. Research on narrative identity was initiated in the 1970s and 1980s, when researchers started to (re-) appreciate the psychological value of stories. Narrative identity is an internalized and evolving story that gives individuals a sense of continuity and integrity (McAdams & McLean, 2013). This life story is often derived using interviews, but written or online narratives also elicit large amounts of identity-relevant information (Adler et al., 2016). The researcher starts out with qualitative data, but various constructs can be coded from such stories and thus quantified. These include meaning making (learning something about oneself or about life through an event) and redemption (something good taken from something bad that happened before). The approach provides rich information but is time intensive and therefore harder to implement in large samples.

Another, perhaps even more prominent, set of approaches to the empirical study of identity continuity date back to Marcia's (1966) work. Marcia provided a first empirical definition of identity continuity along two dimensions: *commitment* and *exploration*. Commitment refers to whether individuals have made choices in particular life domains and engage in concrete activities to implement these choices. Exploration indicates whether different potential choices are sought and compared before commitments are made. Based on these two dimensions, individuals are classified into one of four identity statuses. These are *diffusion* (weak commitments, little exploration), *moratorium* (extensive exploration, but no strong commitments yet), *foreclosure* (relatively strong commitments that were adopted from others without the individuals themselves engaging in exploration), and *achievement* (strong commitments after extensive exploration). Marcia used an interview to examine commitment, exploration, and individuals' resulting identity status. His model of identity formation inspired thousands of studies, some of which used a narrative approach to provide an in-depth view of what identity formation looks like (Carlsson et al., 2015). However, a larger number of studies later used questionnaire-based operationalizations of commitment and exploration (e.g., Adams et al., 1979).

Following critiques on the limited ability of identity status-like approaches to capture identity development (e.g., Bosma, 1985; Grotevant, 1987), Berzonsky (1989) developed an approach targeting individual differences in decision-making and problem-solving processes related to identity. In this identity styles approach, a distinction is made between information orientation (i.e., deciding after actively searching and evaluating information), normative orientation (i.e., trying to conform to norms held up by important others), and diffused orientation (i.e., procrastination, letting immediate situational demand dictate choices). The identity styles approach fits less well into the more functional perspective following from a distinctiveness–coherence–continuity framing of identity; the approach has been a source of inspiration of current questionnaire-based work. This current work, further inspired by the aforementioned critiques of Bosma (1985) and Grotevant (1987), extended Marcia's model by adding more dimensions to better capture the dynamics of the identity formation process.

Two such extensions of Marcia's (1966) model are currently particularly prominent. The first of these is a three-dimension model (Crocetti et al., 2008), in which *commitment* (confidence derived from made choices), *in-depth exploration* (reflection on the merits of one's current commitments without necessarily questioning these), and *reconsideration* (doubt about one's current commitments and considering alternatives) are distinguished. The second model distinguishes five dimensions (Luyckx et al., 2008a). Commitment is split into dimensions of *commitment making* (the extent to which commitments to life choices are made) and *identification with commitment* (the extent to which one derives a sense of self and certainty from these commitments), while three types of exploration are distinguished: *Exploration in depth* is the same as in-depth exploration (as described by Crocetti et al., 2008), whereas *exploration in breadth* refers to searching for new commitments without necessarily comparing these to existing commitments. *Ruminative exploration* entails mulling over what commitments to make without coming to a satisfying answer.

The dimensions of these models are thought to be intertwined in two developmental cycles of identity formation (Luyckx et al., 2006; Meeus, 2011). The first is the identity formation cycle, in which individuals work to (re-)establish stable commitments. Dimensions that fit in this cycle are reconsideration, exploration in breadth, and commitment making. Second, there is an identity evaluation or maintenance cycle, in which commitments are evaluated and optimized. In-depth exploration and identification of commitment fit this cycle. The commitment dimension of the three-dimension model (Crocetti et al., 2008) fits this cycle since, as Waterman (2015) points out, it is highly similar to the identification of commitment dimension described by Luyckx et al. (2008a). These authors add that individuals can get stuck in ruminative exploration in either of the cycles (Luyckx et al., 2008a). Generally, individuals are thought to move back and forth between these cycles, in line with Erikson's (1950) assertions that identity is a lifelong process.

More recently, Cieciuch and Topolewska (2017) proposed and tested a circumplex of identity-formation modes. This model integrates the aforementioned identity styles (Berzonsky, 1989), the three-dimension model (Crocetti et al., 2008), and the five-dimension model of identity formation (Luyckx et al., 2008a). However, in the circumplex model, eight "modes" (e.g., normativity and moratorivity) are distinguished. These modes are personality style-like constructs, much like Berzonsky's identity styles. Hence, the circumplex model fits less well into the distinctiveness–coherence–continuity framing of identity and, despite its potential, will, however, not be discussed further in this chapter.

Personal Identity Development in the Western World

Using the aforementioned conceptualizations, a large number of longitudinal studies on identity development have been conducted. Relatively few of these are on narrative identity. A recent review (McAdams & McLean, 2013) showed that narrative identities become more coherent from childhood into adolescence. Throughout

adolescence, narratives contain an increasing amount of meaning. Thus, by late adolescence, many individuals are able to construct meaningful and coherent life stories, which become an important part of their broader personality (McAdams & Pals, 2006). A longitudinal case study covering 35 years (Josselson, 2009) illustrated that narratives continue to evolve over the lifespan and that the same identity-relevant event can have a very different meaning at different ages. Thereby, research on narrative identity supports Erikson's (1950) observation that identity formation is a lifelong process.

Studies on identity development inspired by Marcia's (1966) approach can be divided into categorical studies on status transitions and dimensional approaches. Kroger et al. (2010) summarized much of the work on status transitions. Their meta-analysis showed that about half of the adolescents and young adults did not change their identity status over time. However, one third appeared to change progressively (i.e., to an identity status characterized by stronger commitments, such as achievement), and only about 10% changed regressively (i.e., to an identity status characterized by weaker commitments, such as moratorium). Although this meta-analysis included studies with methodological limitations (e.g., median-split techniques to classify individuals into statuses), a large-sample empirical study that used state-of-the-art statistical analyses to study transitions between identity statuses had similar results (Meeus et al., 2010). Interestingly, Meeus et al. (2010) also found that membership to high-commitment statuses (achievement and the foreclosure-like status of early closure) was more stable across time than membership to other statuses. Studies on adult identity development showed that progressive changes continued into middle adulthood (age 40–50) but that there was less developmental change in late adulthood compared to earlier stages in the lifespan (Cramer, 2004; Fadjukoff et al., 2010).

Studies using a dimensional approach confirmed these results but provided more details. For adolescence, these studies found mean-level stability (Klimstra et al., 2010) or modest increases (Luyckx et al., 2013a, 2014) for commitment. In young adulthood, mean levels of commitment first weakened in the transition to college (Luyckx et al., 2013b). In the later college years and when individuals neared the age of 30, commitments tended to become stronger again (Luyckx et al., 2013a, b). Mean levels of in-depth exploration only started to change in late adolescence, when they increased. Several studies also found evidence for increases in exploration in breadth and reconsideration in this period (Becht et al., 2016, 2017; Luyckx et al., 2013a, 2014), illustrating that late adolescents may be in a search for where they should go with their lives. In young adulthood, several studies suggest that this search process continues (Luyckx et al. 2008b, 2013b), but in the late 20s exploration in breadth does decrease (Luyckx et al., 2013a, b). Thus, the late 20s may be the time when the average individual starts to settle down.

Research on narrative and status approaches with a predominant focus on identity continuity suggests that, on average, individuals' identities become stronger and more complex with age. These patterns confirm theoretical predictions and therefore demonstrate that the current identity measures do at least have some construct validity (however, see Waterman, 2015, for an excellent critical review on the

three- and five-dimension models of identity formation). Still, several studies have demonstrated large individual differences in identity development, and these are informative on individual differences in psychological well-being and psychopathology symptoms.

Research on narrative identity underscores the importance of redemption, which is the ability to take something positive from experiences that started out as negative (Adler et al., 2016). Individuals who show the ability to redeem negative events tend to report higher levels of well-being. Deriving more meaning from one's key life experiences typically also predicts higher levels of well-being, but for early adolescent boys, it initially predicts lower levels of well-being (Chen et al., 2012; McLean et al., 2010). This suggests that the universality of findings on identity may be limited, even within cultures.

Research on identity formation within the identity status framework showed that individual differences in identity development are associated with psychological well-being and psychopathology symptoms (e.g., Becht et al., 2016; Lillevoll et al., 2013; Meeus, 2011; van Doeselaar et al., 2018b). The main message derived from such studies is clear: Stronger commitments, or statuses defined by stronger commitments, tend to be accompanied by fewer psychopathology symptoms and (thus) higher levels of well-being.

We have now sketched a seemingly coherent picture of identity development and its association with adjustment and psychopathology symptoms. However, the aforementioned studies were all conducted in Western (North American and Northwest European) or Westernized (Oceanian) countries. This is a major limitation, as identity formation as a concept may already be linked to Western values that emphasize the importance of individuality. Furthermore, research suggests that prevailing cultural master narratives strongly affect individuals' identities (e.g., Hammack, 2008). This suggests that identity development and identity processes may be very different across countries, cultures, and ethnic groups. For that reason, it is important to examine whether the conclusions derived from our review on identity development in the Western(ized) world generalize to Majority World countries. We aim to answer this question in the sections that follow.

Personal Identity in the Non-Western World

In non-Western countries, it is important to note that much work has examined personal identity during adolescence and emerging adulthood—both life stages considered crucial for identity considerations. However, to our knowledge, there are few studies examining the *development* of personal identity in non-Western contexts (see Hatano & Sugimura, 2017, for a longitudinal study). Much of the work focuses on (a) evaluating the value of established Western models on personality identity in non-Western contexts through the etic (cross-cultural) approach or (b) seeking to define personal identity as uniquely non-Western through the emic (culture-specific) approach. Below, we will discuss both etic and emic approaches to personal identity in the non-Western world.

Etic Approaches for Studying Personal Identity

Using the etic perspective, well-validated and established measures of personal identity continuity that have been developed in the Western world were applied in non-Western contexts. Typically, authors turned to established quantitative methodologies to examine models of continuity (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2008; Luyckx et al., 2008a; Marcia, 1966) for personal identity development. The main concern with these models is their comparability when transferring them non-Western contexts. This equivalence is examined through measurement invariance (see Milfont & Fischer, 2010). For example, B. G. Adams et al. (2020) found invariance of a personal identity with a measure tapping into a blend of coherence and continuity (identity subscale of Erikson's Psychosocial Inventory [EPSI]; Rosenthal et al., 1981). Similarly, studies by Crocetti et al. (2015) and Dimitrova et al. (2015) found invariance of the Utrecht-Management of Identity Commitments Scale (U-MICS), which captures identity continuity with the aforementioned three-dimension model (Crocetti et al., 2008). While these studies were able to establish invariance at the configural level, only partial metric invariance (see B. G. Adams et al., 2020; Crocetti et al., 2015) and partial scalar invariance (see Adams et al., 2020; Crocetti et al., 2015; Dimitrova et al., 2015) were established.

A closer look at the above studies suggests that processes of personality identity as conceptualized by commitment and aspects of exploration are distinguishable between, and comparable across, samples from various countries. However, it is important to take the following caveats into account: First, while personal identity seems to be conceptualized in the same way (configural invariance) across samples from different countries, the underlying measures of the construct (metric invariance) and comparability of scores across groups (metric invariance) seem questionable. Second, given that the countries included in these studies were all (partly) situated in Europe, East Asia, South America, and sub-Saharan Africa, evidence for the universal generalizability of Western models of identity formation is far from complete.

Several other studies also sought individual strategies to establish continuity using etic approaches. In their study of independent identity formation among Japanese youths, Mizokami et al. (2018) examined how the sample's self-formation activities related to their personal identity styles and their coherence and continuity, as measured by the EPSI. What is clear from their study is that 70% of the youth seemed to actively engage in defining themselves as independent; this, interestingly, seems to be more present in female youth. The way that Japanese youth who seemed to actively develop themselves as independent also achieved higher scores on the EPSI synthesis scale blend of coherence and continuity. This suggests at least partial similarity in identity formation across cultures.

Berman et al. (2011) came to a slightly different conclusion in a study of personal identity that compared Asian countries (China, Japan, and Taiwan) and the United States. However, their focus was on different constructs. Based on invariance tests, they argued that youth may be distressed about their identities in ways

that are consistent across the four included countries. However, lacking invariance for a commitment and an exploration scale suggests that the way that continuity is experienced (commitment) and achieved (exploration) is different across the four included countries. The authors argued that identity in a non-Western context may be conceptualized more from within the social contexts in which adolescents and youth find themselves and more targeted at gaining a sense of inclusion in a larger collective.

Ozer et al. (2019) showed that an important factor in determining whether identity constructs developed in the Western world may be endorsed in non-Western cultures is the cultural orientation of an individual. Students from, and studying in, the northern Indian region of Ladakh who endorsed a greater Western cultural orientation were also more likely to engage in exploration processes. Those who endorsed their local or Indian values more were more likely to be highly committed. Thus, cultural orientation may affect the way in which individuals try to establish a sense of continuity.

This brief overview of (predominantly) etic approaches does not suggest that a more internationally inclusive perspective necessarily requires giving up on approaches that were developed in the Western world. What it does show is that scores on these Western-world measures cannot always be compared across cultures and that further insight is to be gained of what constitutes personal identity in non-Western contexts. Furthermore, it is very important to emphasize that beyond cultural orientation, individual differences within cultures also seem to matter. Personal identity formation within the identity status framework is associated with well-being (e.g., Adams et al., 2020; Hatano & Sugimura, 2017; Morsunbul et al., 2016; Skhirtladze et al., 2016). However, as it is highly likely that the full picture of identity formation in specific cultures is not always captured, culture-specific (emic) assessment of identity should complement etic approaches.

Emic Approaches for Studying Personal Identity

The examination of personal identity in the non-Western context seems to be predominantly emic in nature. This may be the result of the elusive nature of examining identity (in general) in these contexts. The literature on personal identity in non-Western contexts is often exploratory, with the aim of defining the construct for the people from whom the sample is drawn. Below, we provide some illustrations—but by no means an exhaustive review—of approaches to identity formation that stay close to the concept of developing a sense of continuity. Researchers studying identity formation in the Western world should also take note of this research for its focus on non-privileged groups, the personal identity processes of whom are also understudied in the Western world.

Although identity formation in the Western world has also been described as a relational process with social context playing an important role (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001), group processes and opinions are less emphasized (see also Schwartz et al.,

2008). In a study on personal identity in China, personal identity continuity from a Chinese perspective is argued to be achieved more through group dynamics and opinions, rather than individual feats (Savickas, 2011). A study by Ouyang et al. (2016) argued that with respect to making vocational decisions, youth would account more for interpersonal consequences and benefits than for personal ones. The aforementioned studies were conducted in China but may be descriptive for other non-Western countries. That is, the greater role of social aspects, such as group processes, in achieving a sense of continuity has been described as a general feature distinguishing identity development in non-Western instead of Western contexts (see Erikson, 1950, 1968). We find that this makes sense because personal identity processes in these societies are generally fostered by group membership, with personal aspects of identity (i.e., values, goals, and aspirations) influenced by social aspects such as gender, ethnicity, and social class (Azmitia et al., 2008; Ouyang et al., 2016). While there has been a recent move in Western psychological science toward an integrative view of identity aspects, this seems to be present within non-Western contexts already.

In light of this, it seems clear that non-Western psychologists first seek to gain a cultural understanding of personal identity unique to their contexts using qualitative methodologies, before examining the impact that it may have for psychosocial functioning. Sigad and Nour's (2018) study, which we will describe next, provides a perfect example of how both group membership and context may inform personal identity development. Therefore, it can serve as an example for studying how personal identity formation unfolds in non-privileged groups, both within and outside of the Western world.

The researchers evaluated the identity development of Palestinian youth collaborators (i.e., Israeli informants inside Palestine in the Palestine–Israel conflict) in Israel in what they defined as an ambiguous identity situation. That is, these youth live on the fringes of both Palestinian and Israeli societies (Sigad & Nour, 2018). The findings of the study show that while participants understand the importance of community and belonging for their sense of identity and well-being, they clearly know that they do not belong and that they are excluded and often rejected not only by these two distinct societies but also by their families and extended families. These youth are therefore left to negotiate their identities on the margins of society. This study is also an example of how having a sense of continuity is not necessarily adaptive (Klimstra & Denissen, 2017). For Palestinian collaborators, it may reflect a continuous sense of rejection.

In our reading of the literature of personal identity development in non-Western contexts, it became clear that personal identity continuity presented in a different manner in at least some of these contexts. It was also evident that it is impossible to draw broad generalization across the non-Western world, as every cultural context has its own unique features. Note that this is also true within the Western world, with, for example, differences in the sense of continuity as indicated by commitment being present between countries such as Italy and the Netherlands (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2012). However, one generalization that can be made is that outside of Western contexts, continuity through a sense of personal identity can be achieved

in ways that would not directly stand out to a researcher looking through a Western lens. This makes emic approaches crucial, as is also demonstrated in other chapters within this book (see Crafford; Dudgeon & Bray; Jessop; all this volume).

While we seek to provide some structure for how the development of personal identity takes place in non-Western contexts, there are also studies that draw on *combined emic–etic perspectives* for studying personal identity. One such example considered the personal identity development of Black South African adolescents. Arndt and Naudé (2016) evaluated continuity through in-depth interviews. In a diverse South African context, there seems to be a struggle between African traditional values and Western individualistic values. In this study, Black South African adolescents clearly emphasized aspects of individuality and uniqueness. However, these were in conflict with a desire to belong and be accepted, the traditions in which they took pride, their culture, and Black history. The result of this was a sense of confusion. Hence, this study provides a clear illustration of how difficulty in integrating traditional and Western values may lead to a lacking sense of continuity.

Future Direction for Personal Identity in Non-Western Contexts

In light of the complexity associated with the examination of the literature on personal identity in a non-Western context, we have three main recommendations. First, it is clear that the diversity of cultural contexts, theoretical perspectives, and methodological approaches toward studying identity provide a clear drawback for understanding and defining personal identity. This field might benefit from an extensive and exhaustive set of reviews of the literature on personal identity across the globe. In every particular review within this broader set, it would be crucial to have a narrow focus (e.g., conceptualizations of identity in line with its function of providing continuity) to provide structure. Furthermore, there should be focus on particular age groups, perhaps starting with individuals in their late teens and early 20s, as this age group is the most frequently studied. Each of these reviews could then be further structured by categorizing studies by nation, then categorizing these nations by regions (e.g., East Asia, Northern Africa), and then categorizing regions by continent. Such a structured way of working may help to examine the extent to which generalizations can be made and integrative models of personal identity could be derived. In line with Murray and Kluckhohn's (1953) observation that each person is like every other person, each person is like only some other people, and each person is like no other person, it might also be possible to derive a taxonomy of personal identity-distinguishing aspects with varying degrees of universality. In this, a critical analysis of the similarities and differences that exist between established Western models and models from non-Western contexts is also crucial, as jingle-jangle fallacies (assuming that two scales with same name measure the same construct and naming identical constructs differently and therefore assuming that they are different, respectively; e.g., Van Petegem et al., 2013) are always looming.

Second, given the diversity of methodological approaches available to researchers, we would argue that Western models and measures of identity require more critical evaluation by those studying identity in non-Western contexts, not in the sense that these models should be considered invalid, but rather to evaluate whether these models truly capture what personal identity is for people within the particular context in which one's study is situated. It is evident that much of the research in non-Western contexts is predominantly qualitative due to its exploratory nature. We would recommend that researchers seek to standardize the qualitative methodological design. By that, we do not mean that similar measures should be used across cultures, but that the same broader method (e.g., focus group interviews) could be used as a starting point of bottom-up qualitative investigations across the globe. Even some of the lead-up questions (e.g., "How do people in your society find out about who they are and where they want to go in life?") in such open-ended procedures could be standardized. Similarly, narrative prompts (for an example, see Adler et al., 2017) could be adapted to elicit not only information about the meaning of an event to individuals themselves but also on the meaning of the event for their family and broader community. In adapting open-ended procedures to be sufficiently inclusive, researchers from a wide range of cultures should first agree that the method is indeed applicable to multiple cultures. To make such efforts truly collaborative and inclusive, modesty from those who are regarded as the experts in their field (typically White individuals residing in the Western world) is essential. The results of such efforts toward standardization may improve the replicability and comparability of qualitative studies and aid the development of non-Western theoretical models on personal identity. However, in any attempt at standardization, it remains essential to retain a research design that is flexible enough to detect identity processes that are specific and unique to a particular cultural context as identified by individuals residing in those contexts.

Third, more insight is required into the distinction made between personal identity and other identity aspects (i.e., relational and social identity; see Dudgeon & Bray; Javakhishvili; both this volume). It seems clear that personal identity seems indistinguishable from other identity aspects, both within and outside of the Western world. That is, personal identity is defined with the context of both the roles and relationships one possesses and the social context and group membership important for defining who one is. The social context also plays a large role in personal identity formation in the Western world, but the importance of the social context in some regions outside of the Western world may be even larger. For example, conforming to group processes and prevailing opinions may play somewhat more of a role in establishing a sense of continuity in countries such as China, compared to the Western world (Ouyang et al., 2016). At the very least, given their greater emphasis on the social context, studies in non-Western countries like the ones we have described may provide scholars with perspectives for understanding the role of continuity within the established social contexts in Western countries, too.

Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to understand the notion of personal identity from broadly Western and non-Western perspectives. From the current review, it is evident that Western perspectives have developed clear theoretical models from which personal identity is conceptualized (i.e., identity continuity). Given the established framework, methodological advances have evolved to provide deeper insight into the role of personal identity continuity, through narratives or the established dimensional models grounded in the Eriksonian–Marcian tradition for development and psychosocial functioning. While non-Western research has sought to transfer these measures to their respective contexts, it is clear that personal identity extends beyond the established models and may require more contextualized, nuanced examination. Such a contextualized view on identity would also benefit identity research within the Western world. Research in the non-Western world should thus retain its contextualized view of identity as this could inspire researchers in the Western world to adopt a more contextualized perspective in their studies, too. After all, identity formation and development in general can only be understood as an iterative process of coaction between individuals and their context.

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Chapter 14
From the Self to the Selfie

Jan Blommaert, Ying Lu, and Kunming Li

Introduction

The central thesis of this chapter is that since the beginning of the twenty-first century, we have lived in a social and cultural environment that has undergone fundamental and unprecedented changes resulting from the integration of online infrastructures in the patterns of everyday life conduct.[1] Since then, we have inhabited the online-offline nexus, and while both zones have characteristics of their own, they have deeply influenced each other and must, therefore, be seen as one sociocultural, economic, and political habitat. This habitat is still poorly theorized, since we continue to rely largely on social theories and methodologies, in particular, theories of the Self, which have been developed to account for patterns and structures characterizing offline conduct. Such theories now need to be complemented by theories of the "Selfie"—the online configurations and performances of identity observable as normal, default modes of collective identity work in the online-offline nexus.

[1] We offer this chapter in memory of our friend and colleague Fons van de Vijver, who, sadly, passed away during the production of this book. The issues discussed in this chapter were a consistent topic of conversation with Fons.

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_14

In what follows, we shall present a number of proposals for addressing the Selfie. These proposals will be grounded in an action-centered perspective on identity—to be explained at length in the next section—which, in our view, is necessitated by a fundamental feature of online social life. The absence of physical copresence in online interaction situations leads to a lack of the mutual monitoring work, which was so central in, for instance, Goffman's studies as a means to achieve *knowledge of the other* (e.g., Goffman, 1966). The other appears online, as we all know, as a technologically mediated avatar of which the "real" features cannot be established through the cues we so generously display in offline interactions. Consequently, in examining online social conduct, knowledge of who the interlocutor is cannot be a priori, but *an effect of concrete social action,* and while performing such actions, knowledge of the other is *presumptive* or even speculative. Such action—interaction, to be precise—needs to be central in any methodologically safe approach to online identity.

We shall illustrate these proposals by means of two analytical vignettes, both taken from research on online identity practices on the Chinese internet. China, it must be underscored, offers the student of digital culture perhaps the richest panorama of phenomena and processes available at present. This is due to the massive spread of online (and mobile) applications, the highly integrated and powerful nature of such applications, and the extraordinarily intense usage of these applications by a large population. Details on this will be offered below. There is another advantage to working on online data from China: the advanced surveillance culture that pervades the Chinese internet and which has often been critically commented upon by outside observers. While this surveillance culture is known and visible in the case of China, it is not exceptional at all. Surveillance culture is omnipresent in the online sphere wherever it occurs, to the extent that Zuboff (2019) speaks of "surveillance capitalism" as the system that we now inhabit.

This omnipresent surveillance culture has an important effect for what follows, since online identities—Selfies—always have two major dimensions: an "inside" one, referring to the collective and interactive identity work performed and inhabited by participants in online social action, and an "outside" one, performed and ascribed by algorithmically configured data fed into user profiles (Haider & Sundin, 2019; Zittrain, 2014). While we all perform intense identity work (i.e., to regulate others' perceptions of our identities; Cooley, 1902; Goffman, 1959; Watson, 2008) whenever we operate online, we are all simultaneously identified—through data aggregations—by surveillance operators active on a metalevel. There, we get an inversion: While the other is often unknown to everyday actors in everyday online interaction, the data-generated metaconstructions of profiles are all about *full knowledge* of the actor. While we shall be concerned mainly with the "inside" dimension in what follows, one should keep in mind that both dimensions of identity need to be addressed in order to get a comprehensive picture of the Selfie.

An Action-Centered Perspective

Let us reiterate the main reason why we opt for an action-centered perspective on online identity work, for it is of great significance methodologically. In online social environments, the "true" identity of actors involved in some form of social action is, by default, a matter of presumption. We assume that we are having a "discussion" with our "online friends," and we notice comments from online friends X, Y, and Z. These online friends may not be (and very often *are* not) people we encounter in the offline sphere; consequently, the only identity we can attribute to them is based on what they themselves show and display to us while we engage in interaction with them.

Such online interaction, as we know (Blommaert & Dong, 2020; Lu, 2020; Varis & Hou, 2020), is:

- Mostly *scripted-designed* and multimodal interaction.
- Performed by people we can identify only on the basis of what their *profile information* reveals; this information can be restricted by privacy settings and can be misleading or outright fake.
- *Curated* in the sense that the actor can modify, edit, reorganize, and even remove the messages deployed in the interaction.
- *Technologically mediated* through the algorithms of the application we are using, ensuring continuously adjusted "bubbles" of participants selected for involvement on data-analytical grounds. So even if we wish to direct our message to, say, all 2536 of our "friends," we can never be sure that all of them will see that message, and we ourselves (the "senders" of the message in traditional communication theory) cannot see who can see our message. Thus, while we are directly chatting with X, Y, and Z, a few hundred others—whom we do not (and cannot) know—may be witnessing the exchanges.
- *Archivable* in several ways: (a) as part of our own archive of stored interactions; (b) converted into user data gathered, ordered, kept, and transformed by app providers, network owners, hardware manufacturers, and security agencies; and (c) dispatched to a market of customers interested in what Zuboff (2019) calls "behavioral futures" (p. 8). It should be noted that this latter form of "recycling" is constant: All online actions are converted into behavioral-predictive data.

Online interaction, seen from that angle, is *nonlinear* and defies common models of communication dependent on the transparency of the communication and its resources, including the participants' identities (individual and collective), the nature of the interaction, and the message and their trajectories as consequential or inconsequential communicative events. Online interaction, we can see, is characterized by complexity, uncertainty, and low predictability, which makes it hard to squeeze into ideal-type theoretical models.

Online interaction, however, remains observable as *social action*. And while we can say very little with any degree of a priori certainty about the nature of the interactions, the resources deployed in them, and the individuals and collectives involved

in them, the actions themselves can be used as a lead into all of this, enabling post hoc statements on these aspects of action. Put simply, if we want to know online identities, we need to closely examine online actions.

This heuristic puts us firmly within a long lineage of interactionalist work—a tradition of social thought and methodology with roots in American Pragmatism and Phenomenology, mediated by George Herbert Mead (1934) and Alfred Schütz (1967) and developed by scholars such as Erving Goffman (e.g., 1966, 1974), Herbert Blumer (1969, 2004), Aaron Cicourel (1973), Anselm Strauss (1993), Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), Harold Garfinkel (1967, 2002), Goodwin (2018), and many others.[2]

A number of principles characterize this tradition:

1. The first and most important principle is that of *interactional co-construction of social facts*—the assumption that whatever we do in social life is done in collaboration, response, or conflict with others. In fact, the people mentioned above argue that one can only talk of social action when it is *inter*action (e.g., Strauss, 1993, p. 21) and, for Blumer (1969), "a society consists of individuals interacting with one another" (p. 7).
2. Interaction is, in turn, "making sense" of social order in concrete situations—this is the second principle. For the scholars mentioned, social order and social structure do not exist in an abstract sense, but are enacted constantly by people in contextualized, situated moments of interaction. In Garfinkel's famous words (1967), in each such moment we perform and co-construct social order "for another first time" (p. 9). In other words, the social is *concrete*, ongoing, and evolving.
3. The third principle is directly derived from Mead and can be summarized as follows: "We see ourselves through the way in which others see and define us" (Blumer, 1969, p. 13). Somewhat more precisely, "organisms in interaction are observing each other's ongoing activity, with each using portions of the developing action of the other as pivots for the redirection of his or her own action" (Blumer, 2004, p. 18). This is the essence of Mead's understanding of the Self: It is greatly influenced by anticipated responses from the others and adjusted accordingly. The Self can thus never be an essence, a fixed characteristic, an a priori attribute of people; it is a situationally co-constructed performance ratified by others. Of course, Goffman's work has greatly contributed to our understanding of this.
4. Fourth, we do this interactional monitoring and anticipating of the others' responses on the basis of an assumption of *recognizability*. This is when we

[2] The work of scholars listed here has become known under a variety of labels, from "grounded theory" (Strauss) and "social constructivism" (Berger & Luckmann) to "symbolic interactionism" (Blumer), "cognitive sociology" (Cicourel) and "ethnomethodology" (Garfinkel). To all of them, the label "ethnography" can equally be applied. By using the term "interactionist," we point to the fact that these disparate efforts are tied together by the shared basic theoretical principles to be discussed next. The work of Anne Warfield Rawls (e.g., 2002, 2004) is exceptionally insightful in sketching the bigger picture of action-centered epistemologies connecting such different schools.

experience something as meaningful, as something that "makes sense" to us, by recognizing it *as something specific* (cf. Garfinkel, 1967, p. 9), a token of a type of meaningful act that we can ratify as such. These types of acts can be called "genres" (Blommaert, 2018, p. 51); Garfinkel called them "formats" (2002, p. 245), and Goffman (1974) theorized them as "frames."

5. Fifth, all of the preceding have a major implication for how we see the Self, how we theorize it and address it in research. Rawls's (2002) comment on Garfinkel captures it well, and the point can be extended to almost all the work in the tradition addressed here. Individual subjectivity, she writes,

> which had originally been thought of as belonging to the actor, [was relocated] in the regularities of social practices. … [A] population is constituted not by a set of individuals with something in common but by a set of practices common to particular situations or events. (Rawls, 2002, p. 60)

This means that actions generate those who are involved in them, or to quote Rawls (2002) again, we see "situations that provide for the appearances of individuals" (p. 46) and not vice versa. Converted into the vocabulary of this book: *Identities, individual and collective, are effects of social actions* and not their ontological and methodological point of departure. They constitute, as it were, the "personnel" of social actions.[3]

Having sketched the main principles of the action-centered approach we shall use here, our task is now to link it to the specific characteristics of online interactions, as reviewed earlier. Two analytic vignettes will be employed to illustrate how specific forms of interaction will demand and afford specific forms of collective identity work and yield specific identities and thus how the specific nature of online interactions may compel us to focus on identities that are not often seen as essential, "thick," or enduring. But they are identities, to be sure—Selfies rather than Selves. This means that they are concrete, interactionally ratified (and thus *relational*) inhabited-and-ascribed roles in online social action, recognizable as such by others, and constituted from a number of specific identity dimensions.

Becoming an Expert User of Memes

The internet is a mammoth informal learning environment, and *learning* practices, broadly taken, are among the most frequently performed online social actions. Search engine commands are of course cases in point, but even when people engage in discussions, chats, or other forms of "ludic" activities, learning appears as one of the main dimensions of action. Since online environments are also sites of extremely

[3] To make this point very clear, observe that all of this evidently excludes methodological individualism from the theoretical repertoire of the interactionist tradition. See Blommaert (2018, pp. 36–37) for a discussion.

rapid innovation and change, continuous learning needs to be done in order to enter specific groups of users or remain a ratified member of such communities.

We enter the realm here of so-called "light" relationships, identities, and communities, carried along and given substance by means of "light," ludic practices of the kind so often described by Goffman (e.g., 1961, 1966)—practices not often attributed too much importance when seen from the outside, but often experienced as highly salient by participants, and worthy of very considerable efforts (Blommaert & Varis, 2015). Attention to such light phenomena is not a mainstream tactic in disciplines explicitly interested in identities, yet it connects with the interactionist tradition with which we choose to align our approach, in which there is an outspoken interest in the mundane and routine phenomena where social order can be observed and made palpable. We adopt from this tradition the view that the big things in society can be observed and understood in seemingly small and innocuous events.

Let us now turn to some data gathered from Sina Weibo, one of China's largest social media platforms (Lu, 2020). As mentioned earlier, China's online infrastructure offers a fertile terrain for the study of digital culture, unmatched perhaps by any other area in the contemporary world. The reasons for this are manifold and range from the sheer scale of the infrastructure (with nearly a billion people using online tools), the level of sophistication of social media platforms (in which functions elsewhere requiring dozens of separate apps are integrated into one platform), and the intensity of use of online infrastructures (notably of social media), to the specific features of Chinese language and culture played out in online activities (Du, 2016; Li, 2018; Lu, 2018; Nie, 2018; Wang, 2017). The latter is of special interest when we feed it back to one of the core features of online interactions: their scripted-designed multimodal nature. The specific characteristics of Chinese script constitute tremendous affordances for wordplay, neologisms, and graphic design based on scriptural elements (Nie, 2018).

Several such affordances are played out in what are known elsewhere as "memes" and as "*Biaoqingbao*" in online China (Lu, 2020).[4] *Biaoqingbao* are (like memes) compound signs consisting of an image and—usually—a caption. Images can be summary, like line drawings, but also intricate and manipulated, as when a celebrity's face is pasted upon a panda bear's head. In every instance, such doctored images convey interactionally recognizable and ratified emotive meanings—anger, surprise, laughter, aggression—but also more finely tuned emotive responses. Captions often use existing Chinese characters with a twist—playing into the homophony of characters to produce sarcastic or ironic wordplay, obscenities, or covert sociopolitical critique—and they sometimes acquire a long and fruitful life as constantly morphing, multifunctional signs (see Du, 2016; Nie, 2018). Memes can become extraordinarily popular, with millions of shares and instances of use, and *Biaoqingbao* designers can become minor online celebrities with a large cohort of

[4] What follows is based on LU Ying's online fieldwork, part of her doctoral research on *Biaoqingbao*, its modes of usage and community of users.

followers whose electronically transmitted cash donations turn *Biaoqingbao* design into a profitable business venture (Lu, 2018). One specific mode of usage of *Biaoqingbao* is in what is known as "*Biaoqingbao* fights," in which interactions are organized around the exchange of *Biaoqingbao*, each time trying to trump (or "defeat") the opponent (Lu, 2020).

We have, in this brief survey of *Biaoqingbao*, already identified identity effects. Highly talented *Biaoqingbao* designers can acquire celebrity status and function as the recognized leaders of a community of followers. In addition, such success can move them into a more prosperous socioeconomic position in Chinese society, outside of the formal economy and labor market. Manufacturing complex, witty, and appealing *Biaoqingbao* is, thus, (to use Bourdieu's, 1993, well-known terms here) an activity that can shift positions in a field, and such position shifts are, in effect, identity shifts as well.

But there is more. The relationship—interactionally ratified relational identities, to be precise—between *Biaoqingbao* makers and their followers, and among members of the user community as well, is characterized by *hierarchies* within a learning community. An example can make this clear.

In 2016, a complex and composite meme appeared on Weibo, displaying fragments of several classic paintings in a certain sequence (Fig. 14.1).[5]

The captions added to the painting fragments describe the emotional value attached to them, in phrases such as "Rembrandt style fright" and "Dutch mannerism onlooking," and in her post, the maker of the *Biaoqingbao* wrote, "Please help yourself to *Biaoqingbao*"—an explicit invitation to start using the memes in the ways she had described.

What followed was a stampede toward these "posh *Biaoqingbao*," with many thousands of people expressing an interest in them and inquiring about specific ways to use them. Such ways, the *Biaoqingbao* maker explained, would bespeak a cultured and sophisticated stance: Using them in online exchanges would suggest an advanced level of education, erudition, and taste. People quickly followed, reposting the original meme, designing and submitting some of their own making, and commenting extensively on the qualities and defects of all of them and offering informed suggestions as to their interpretation and potential of use in *Biaoqingbao* fights. In Garfinkel's (2002) terms, we were observing "instructed action," in which people tried, explored, and implemented each other's suggestions—and most prominently those of the *Biaoqingbao* maker—in discussions, negotiations, and trials.

Let us rephrase some of what we have encountered so far. We observe how, around the new *Biaoqingbao*, a *community of knowledge* is formed in which different levels of knowledge define the relationships between members. The *Biaoqingbao* maker is the instructor, so to speak, and within the community of followers, definite differences could be noted between more and less experienced commentators. Newcomers in the rapidly expanding community had to submit to processes of

[5] Retrieved from https://www.weibo.com/u/1989529421?refer_flag=1001030103_&is_all=1 on November 9, 2016.

Fig. 14.1 "Posh" Biaoqing

learning from scratch or acquire a place as a competent member by displaying relevant experience with similar signs and practices. *Rules were made, learned, deployed, and modified* throughout the process of community formation and consolidation. And an online practice that had no previous history of usage quickly became a normatively ordered, mutually ratified and regulated mode of interaction. In addition, this process of normative ordering and mutual ratification enabled the display of a sophisticated, cultured, and educated persona in online interactions. The hierarchical internal structure of the learning community thus enabled new forms of outward identity work in confrontation with nonmembers.

A very large amount of energy is used in this process of formation and consolidation of an online learning community, and the magnitude of the efforts can be measured by the monetary donations offered by grateful followers to *Biaoqingbao* makers. Therefore, even if what we observe here is easy to dismiss as mere entertainment and innocent, just-for-fun interaction, elementary processes of social

ordering, identity formation, and group construction are being shown in the process. This process, let us note and emphasize, is a process of *action construction*—the joint construction of a specific genre of online social action—and the way in which the process develops is through a wide and layered variety of learning practices, of which individual and collective identities are an outcome. It should be noted that such identities are exclusively *online* identities: Selfies—and their construction, elaboration, and development—require the specific infrastructures of online social spaces.

The Care of the Selfie

The same goes for the phenomenon to which we now turn. One of the features offered on Chinese social media platforms is a livestreaming app called Yizhibo, and this function has become widely used for the development of new, informal forms of online economy. Goods and services are traded via online streaming platforms, and mobile money transfer (another function of the platforms we consider here) enables swift and safe transactions.[6] Li (2018) reported more than 200 livestreaming platforms, with an audience estimated, in 2016, to have reached 325 million—half of the Chinese online population.

One particular commodity has become widely popular on Yizhibo: female beauty. Women open online chat rooms where they entertain a male audience; income is generated by "gifts" that can be purchased through the app and sent in real time to the chat room host. Chat room apps offer a range of such gifts in various price categories, from a relatively cheap "kiss" to an extremely expensive "Ferrari" or "diamond." Before we move to consider some aspects of identity construction in such chat rooms, a more general observation has to be made with respect to the characterization of online interaction we provided earlier.

In Goffman's terms, much of what we observe in the way of online interaction would be *disembodied* communication (1966, p. 14), and scripted messages or memes, such as the ones we surveyed in the previous section, would be typical instances of such disembodied communication. Obviously, interaction through livestreaming is *not* disembodied, and there is even a copresence enabling the kind of give-and-take of visual clues in real time that Goffman described in such detail. In livestreaming events, we can speak of real encounters in the sense of Goffman (1961). There is a twist, however, and the twist is significant. Firstly, while we obviously observe embodied interactions here, the communicating body is technologically mediated, and the same goes for the aspect of copresence. The women in the chat rooms appear on a screen—usually that of a handheld device—and they are

[6] What follows is largely based on Kunming Li's (2018) PhD research (see also Li & Blommaert, 2017). Additional information was obtained from Lin Jie through her fieldwork, and we gratefully acknowledge her input.

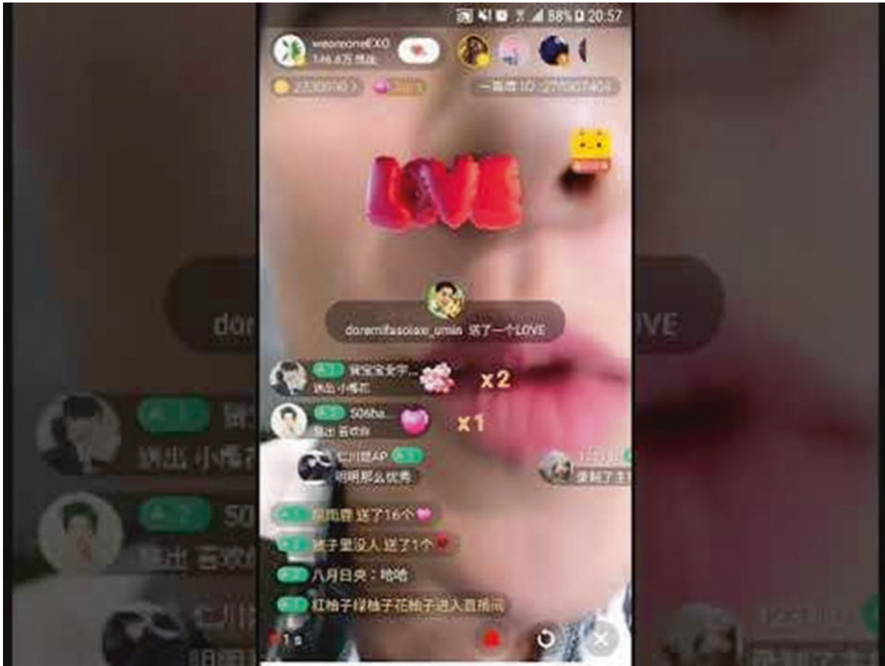

Fig. 14.2 Yizhibo Chat Room © YouTube 2017

usually visible only from the waist up. Their bodies are just a part of what is displayed on the screen, as we can see from Fig. 14.2. Next to the woman's face, icons and message balloons constantly appear, and they are crucial parts of the interaction.

The embodied interaction is thus scripted, edited, and curated, and it is multimodal and asymmetrical: While the woman can be heard by her audience members, they can only communicate with her by means of scripted messages, and while the woman is visible, her audience members remain invisible—their presence is attested through the messaging and the sending of gifts. The broad genre in these interactions can be described as flirting. The women show themselves; they move, talk, sing, and respond to messages and icons of their audience, expressing affection and gratitude. Thus, the woman in Fig. 14.2 kisses her webcam as a reward for a gift just received from one of her audience members. And it is here that we see a tremendous amount of interactionally organized collective identity work being performed.

The women do not come online unprepared. There are certain normative templates for expressing femininity, and Li (2018) elaborates on the template called *Baifumei*—a Chinese term composed of "White," "attractive," and "wealthy" and widely used to describe a particular ideal of feminine beauty. *Baifumei* are women with pale skin, an oval-shaped face, eyes somewhat bigger than average, and "Western" in looks and preferences. Such looks can be acquired by elaborate and detailed makeup schemes, using specific brands of creams, lipstick shades, eyeliner, and mascara and also by using electronic filters contained in the app for making the

eyes look somewhat bigger and for adjusting the outline of the woman's face. What audiences see in such chat rooms is clearly a Selfie—an electronically mediated and configured self-representation, necessitating great care whenever we refer to "embodiment" as a feature of these interactions.

Intricate behavioral scripts also need to be deployed and followed in interacting with the audiences. While a degree of vulgarity—expressed, for instance, in jokes, songs, or wordplay—is not discouraged, obscenity clearly is. Women can present themselves as erotic, but they should not, and do not, undress in front of the camera, and moves or utterances that are too overtly sexualized would also be discouraged. The point is to be *attractive* to the men with whom they interact, to show attention and affection to them, and to even express love to them—but all of this in ways that steer clear of associations with pornography and prostitution. The latter, of course, are criminal offences in China, and it is vital for the women to remain within the boundaries of what is politically, culturally, socially, and legally acceptable.

This is important for several reasons. One—the obvious one—is that no one searches for trouble with the law. But two other aspects are equally important. There is the economic aspect, enabling the women to earn considerable amounts of money (and to become financially independent that way), as long as their online performance satisfies the various normative expectations articulated and imposed by audiences, providers, and authorities. Then there is a social aspect to it as well: Women can be free to flirt with men online in ways that could be perceived as deviant or offensive in offline China and could have a range of undesired consequences. In other words, it is crucial that the women perform their flirtatious practices online *only*, as it keeps them safe and autonomous socially as well as economically. No wonder, then, that almost all the women operate under an "artist name"—what they do online has to be and remain exclusively online.[7]

Let us summarize what we have covered in this vignette. The self-presentation of women in Yizhibo chat rooms is governed by an elaborate "care of the Selfie" (a term obviously inspired by Foucault, 1986, 2003). This care of the Selfie consists of a very wide range of normatively ordered actions aimed at creating and performing an identity *exclusively designed for the online environment* in which it is played out. It is *proleptic* identity work, anticipating the criteria of one's audience and adjusting one's appearance accordingly prior to seeking the audience's uptake (Li, 2018). The actions consist of preparatory practices organizing the presentation of the body online, as well as of interactional practices aimed at successfully performing the identity for which men are ready to present gifts. All of them combined are very real forms of identity—critical identities that enable women to acquire an income and a degree of autonomy difficult to acquire elsewhere in society.

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[7] Kunming Li (2018) observes that many of the women who run such chat rooms hail from remote and socioeconomically marginal areas in China. They very often lack the qualifications for upward mobility in the formal labor market, and their online economic activities are one way of compensating for such disadvantages. Note that successful women in this business can make millions and acquire the status of celebrity in online China.

Conclusions

Our two vignettes showed how *specific online actions generate specific online identities*. These identities bear similarities, naturally, with other known forms of identity, especially when we compare them with the "light" but socially important identities described by Goffman, Garfinkel, and others. At the same time, when we look at the details of identity construction in the cases discussed, the influence of the online technological infrastructure is compelling. We are facing modes of identity work here that are partly recognizable in terms of older, established categories of identity, such as those defined by gender, profession, and so forth, but which are at the same time entirely new in their loci and conditions for production.

The scale of such phenomena and the pace of their production, circulation, and change are tremendous, and this was one reason why we chose to illustrate our general points with examples from online China. Both the routine and ritualized exchange of *Biaoqingbao* and the Yizhibo chat rooms, where female beauty is played out for male audiences, are widespread phenomena involving hundreds of millions of individuals. In other words, these are not marginal phenomena; they are *structural* ones.

Addressing them, however, demands an action-oriented approach in which the specific forms of online social action are examined in a search for their "personnel," for the identities they allow, invite, enable, and ratify. An approach in which we start from what is known about offline life risks bypassing the crucial effects of the online infrastructures on what is possible in the way of social action. Consequently it risks overlooking the most important insight to be gathered from cases such as these: the fact that people have integrated online environments into their everyday social worlds and that they have become fully competent members of a changed society that way, doing and being different things than before and attaching great value to those things.

The Selfie is the identity effect of the interaction in scripted and technologically mediated environments, the affordances and restrictions of which play a crucial yet easily taken-for-granted role in determining what identities are performable, acceptable, and allowed therein. The two vignettes call attention to the role of technological mediation and configuration in the construction of the Selfie and to the action-centered approach to the study of the Selfie. This contribution invites a reimagination of identity work and a rethinking of methodologies of sociocultural studies in the era of digitalization.

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Chapter 15
Variations in Sources of Self-Affirmation: What Can Be Learned from Non-Western Contexts

Lucy R. Tavitian-Elmadjian and Michael Bender

Introduction

Being judged, stereotyped, and/or mistreated because of the group to which one belongs is a common experience for many people, particularly those from minority groups, making social identity threat pervasive in everyday life. Individuals react differently to threat, depending on the type of threat and how much they identify with what is threatened. They may increase their identification with the group that is threatened, disidentify with what is threatened, react defensively, derogate an outgroup (Branscombe et al., 1999a, b), or disidentify with the group that has threatened them (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009). Self-affirmation is an adaptive mechanism of protecting the self from threats to social identity (Badea & Sherman, 2019; Sherman & Cohen, 2002; Steele, 1988). When faced with a threat (e.g., derogation of ethnic group), people who reflect upon a valued unthreatened domain of their identity (e.g., being a good parent) may buffer against the negative effect of such threats and affirm an overall sense of being competent and worthy (Cohen & Sherman, 2014; Sherman & Cohen, 2002). In other words, individuals can put the threat into perspective—and evade it. Some groups are more prone to experience social identity threat, for instance, because they are high identifiers (Steele et al., 2002), because their status is lower relative to an outgroup (O'Higgins, 2010), or because their social identity is salient (Turner et al., 1987).

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_15

Less is known about how self-affirmation interventions operate in a non-Western context in which specifics such as cultural value orientation (e.g., familial self-affirmation; Cai et al., 2013), acculturation status (e.g., Armenians in Lebanon), or lack of common ingroup identity (e.g., Lebanese youth; Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2019) may nuance responses to social identity threat and the efficacy of self-affirmation interventions. In the present chapter, we set out to clarify how different groups may be more prone to be subjected to identity threat (see, e.g., the rejection–identification model; Branscombe et al., 1999a, b). We describe the variety of self-affirmation techniques and the usefulness of inspecting underlying psychological mechanisms (e.g., self-esteem maintenance, increased self-concept clarity). We further highlight that previous research has focused on mainly Western (mainstream) participants and non-Western minority groups in the United States and Europe. This is relevant because it is not clear whether individuated affirmation procedures would be useful in non-Western contexts (see, e.g., Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005)—focusing on the self may not be a generally acceptable manner of problem solving (for the general argument, see Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Finally, we highlight that most of the affirmation literature evaluates threat within contexts with a clearly identified majority (usually the national mainstream) pitted against a minority group (usually with a recent migration background). In such contexts, the national group is at the top of the hierarchy (language, laws, norms), and the threatened minority group is lower in the hierarchy (see, e.g., Hagendoorn, 1995, on ethnic hierarchy). While hierarchies are arguably relevant everywhere, the dynamics may be different, for instance, when there is no clear and dominant majority and the context is multicultural (e.g., Lebanon, see Tavitian et al., 2019; or Indonesia, see Sari et al., 2018).

What Is Identity Threat in Intergroup Contexts?

Identity threat includes realistic (e.g., actual threats to an ingroup's power, overall well-being or resources) or symbolic threats (e.g., threats to an ingroup's values and identity) and has received much attention as a determinant of intergroup attitudes and behaviors (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Both social identity theory and social categorization theory have explained the nature and likelihood of experiencing social identity threat. According to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), social identities are built within a social system and reflect the classifications of people within societies on the basis of race, religion, nation, and gender, among others. Social identities are represented in terms of prototypes that reflect characteristics of a typical group member (Hogg & Reid, 2006). Classifying the self as part of a social group provides an individual with a basis for positive self-evaluation and ingroup belonging (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In addition to providing an evaluative component, social identities direct beliefs, emotions, and behaviors of group members, specifically when the identity is salient (Stets & Burke, 2000).

The salience of a social identity category is defined in terms of *fit* and *accessibility* (Turner et al., 1987). When people come into continuous contact with one

another, groups start to form on the basis of perceived similarity and dissimilarity among interacting members. In a multiracial context, for example, people may use their race as the point of similarity juxtaposed against a background of an outgroup that includes other races (comparative fit). Fit is determined through establishing differences between groups of people and through an understanding of the direction of these differences as adhering to the group's norms and stereotypic characteristics (normative fit; Oakes, 1987). The accessibility of a social identity category is the extent to which information in the environment will be readily perceived and interpreted in terms of the given social category (Bruner, 1957). A social identity's accessibility may vary based on contextual cues (temporary accessibility), or it may be chronically accessible if considered important to the self-concept and used frequently (Hogg & Terry, 2000), for example, sex and race (Mackie et al., 1996). Social identity threat may therefore be triggered by knowledge that certain social categories (e.g., females) are viewed unfavorably by members of the outgroup (e.g., males) or more subtly through social cues (e.g., an aptitude test administered to African American students) that point to the possibility of being devalued (Steele et al., 2002).

Social Identity Threat Types and Responses

Different types of threat can be experienced at the level of one's social identity with different implications in terms of response (Branscombe et al., 1999a, b). Along with types of threat, responses vary with the intensity of threat-activating cues (ranging from blatant, through moderately explicit, to implicit; Nguyen & Ryan, 2008). When an individual is stereotyped and treated accordingly, specifically when the categorization is illegitimate and irrelevant, self-esteem is threatened. People may then stress their unique attributes (away from stereotypes) to shift the perception of the other onto an interpersonal basis: They may stress that the ingroup is, in fact, heterogeneous, or they may disidentify with the ingroup. People are also threatened when their group distinctiveness is undermined or prevented. In such situations, the threatened individual may stress ingroup homogeneity, increase self-stereotyping (even on negative group characteristics), or engage in outgroup derogation. In terms of value threats, they can be outgroup based, involving either an explicit devaluation of the ingroup (e.g., systemic discrimination against the ingroup or explicit attacks on valued elements of the ingroup's identity) or a more subtle instance, suggesting the ingroup is devalued based on the ingroup's behavior itself (e.g., losing a sports match against an outgroup). Both can increase ingroup identification and outgroup derogation. Individuals can also be threatened if they are made to feel that they are not accepted by the ingroup and, as a result, may display outgroup derogation and alignment with characteristics of the group to gain acceptance. These responses have been consistently associated with strong identifiers as the threatened social identity is more central to their sense of self and hence esteem, when compared to low identifiers (Branscombe et al., 1999a, b). Threats also vary

in intensity: Blatant cues may yield the largest stereotype threat effects in the expected direction (e.g., academic underperformance; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Stone & McWhinnie, 2008), but they can also elicit reactance and consequently behaviors inconsistent with the stereotype (e.g., Hoyt et al., 2010). Moderately explicit cues—for instance, stating that there are gender differences in math performance without clarifying the direction—have been associated with stereotype-consistent outcomes, while subtle or implicit cues have been associated with the weakest stereotype threat effects (Nguyen & Ryan, 2008).

Who Experiences Threats to Their Identity?

Experiencing social identity threat is quite common, but not everyone experiences such threats with the same intensity, frequency, and implications. One source of differences is dispositional, as experiencing social identity threat may vary based on personal self-esteem and group identification. Steele et al. (2002) clarify that these differences are, however, not the basis for the experience of identity threat. It is rather the culturally shared knowledge of how certain groups of people are normatively regarded and how a society's hierarchies are organized (cf. Hagendoorn, 1995). Social identity threat may be triggered when an individual fears negative evaluation based on a commonly held stereotype of their group (stereotype threat; Nguyen & Ryan, 2008; Steele & Aronson, 1995), by differences in numbers of people from minority groups present (representativeness threat; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008), the extent to which the setting is organized based on certain social identities (glass ceiling effect; Baxter & Wright, 2000; Cook & Glass, 2014), the social identity ideology of the setting (e.g., assimilation to multiculturalism), and cues of intergroup sensitivity norms (Steele et al., 2002).

In short, the extent to which one experiences social identity threat can be determined by what group they belong to and the context within which that group is being evaluated. For example, a Caucasian male college student would not necessarily feel at risk of underperforming on a math test relative to a female African American student. For the latter, both her sex and her racial identity have been grounds for consistent discrimination and stereotyping by the outgroup, of which she would be conscious. However, we need to exercise particular caution when interpreting results on stereotype threat and math performance among females in Western contexts, as a recent replication study in a large-scale sample of Dutch students did not support such an effect (Flore et al., 2018). While a previous meta-analytic study found overall support for the effect, it also called attention to evidence for publication bias (Flore & Wicherts, 2015) bringing into question the long-standing purported effect. At least two interpretations are possible. First, these inconsistencies point toward a general problem surrounding studies of stereotype threat, particularly when considering publication bias. Second, we argue that this calls for renewed attention to the applicability of threat (and experienced threat levels) across groups and settings, as the pattern may point toward non-effects among samples that are (relatively) more privileged and thus less easily threatened,

whereas for other groups, threat may be a part of everyday life—and they may thus respond with more ecologically relevant responses to threat stimuli than samples for whom threat may not be a common experience. In other words, while the experience of adversity and threat may clearly be ubiquitous among many groups, some groups may more habitually engage in threat management.

Another reason for finding (and expecting) inconsistencies related to the applicability of threat may be circumstances in which threat is omnipresent and can hardly be avoided. In such cases, it may not be feasible to find and engage in activities that can minimize threat. An example of such intense social identity threat would be the Roma population in Southeast Europe (see Buzea, this volume), who find themselves under continuous threat (Dimitrova et al., 2017) and are considered one of the most vulnerable minorities in Europe (European Commission, 2011). This is a group that endures marked discrimination and intolerance on a daily basis, which has implications in terms of reduced educational attainment and employment wages (O'Higgins, 2010). Heightened experiences of identity threat can also be observed among immigrant populations who face challenges to their sense of identity in a majority context (Berry et al., 1987). This may include the experience of culture shock and identity loss as a new classification of immigrant or refugee is imposed by the majority (Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003). This sense of identity loss can be understood in terms of a symbolic threat (identity, values, and overall lifestyle) brought about by interactions with a mainstream community.

The type and intensity of a given threat can therefore vary, based on contextual cues, such that certain groups may experience elevated levels (intensity and frequency) of threat that render their social identities chronically salient and hence accessible (Hogg & Terry, 2000). For instance, a minority group ranking high on cultural distance—the perceived differences in physical and social characteristics between host and heritage cultures (distinctiveness; Bender & Sleegers, 2020)—relative to a majority, with a history of perceived stereotyping (categorization threat) from the outgroup, may become continually aware of their minority status and may therefore be hypervigilant of contextual cues that may signal threat. This is exacerbated if the group perceives its social identity's very existence as actually endangered. This is akin to the concept of continuity threat, which has been studied in the majority context with concerns at the national identity level in Western countries host to immigrant communities (see, e.g., Badea et al., 2019; Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2013). Therefore, it would be valuable to examine the process of social identity threat in different groups and across different contexts to gain a better understanding of how the threat is experienced and managed, for example, via self-affirmation interventions.

How Do People Self-Affirm in the Face of Social Identity Threat?

As a consequence of social identity threat and depending on the type of threat and level of identification with the social group, individuals may respond by increased identification or disidentification, defensive reactions, and outgroup derogation

(Branscombe et al., 1999a). Increased identification with the minority group has been elaborated by the rejection–identification model as a buffer against experiences of prejudice and discrimination from the majority (Branscombe et al., 1999b). This has been supported empirically with different groups, such as African Americans (Branscombe et al., 1999b), international students (Ramos et al., 2012), and multiracial people (Giamo et al., 2012). Ingroup identification does not seem to be the only outcome of perceived majority discrimination. Verkuyten and Yildiz (2007) found both increased ethnic and Muslim identification among Turkish Dutch, paired with decreased Dutch identification.

Self-Affirmation

Increased (dis)identification is a spontaneous means of identity management, but self-affirmation has been investigated primarily as an intervention in social evaluative environments where risks of negative, stereotypical evaluations due to group belonging are high (Cook et al., 2012). Self-affirmation theory (Steele, 1988) posits that individuals are in a constant state of striving to conserve and maintain their self-integrity and their positive, moral, and adaptive self-image. When our self-integrity is threatened (e.g., by being stereotyped), we can reestablish our self-worth by focusing on an unthreatened domain of the self (Sherman & Cohen, 2006). For instance, reflecting upon core and important values such as religion, family, or achievements is important avenues for self-affirmation (Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988). Focusing on them places a threatening message in a larger context and renders it less psychologically distressing (Burson et al., 2012; Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988). The efficacy of self-affirmation interventions has been well documented through value affirmation exercises in the educational context, in specifically targeting the achievement gap among Latino Americans and African Americans (Cohen & Garcia, 2008), purported to be a function of stereotypes pertaining to their intellectual ability and success (Cook et al., 2012; Guyll et al., 2010; Protzko & Aronson, 2016; Sherman et al., 2013). Similar gains of self-affirmation interventions also appear in counteracting the effects of gender stereotypes in relation to the performance of women in tasks related to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in both educational and professional settings (Bancroft et al., 2017; Derks et al., 2009; Miyake et al., 2010; Taillandier-Schmitt et al., 2012), but in light of evidence of publication bias, more research is needed to draw such a conclusion (Flore & Wicherts, 2015). Self-affirmation has also been used in the health setting (Sherman & Cohen, 2006) as an intervention that promotes positive response to health risk information. Self-affirmed individuals have been found to display greater message acceptance, stronger motivation for change, and healthier post-intervention behavior (Epton et al., 2015).

Self-Affirmation Interventions Experimental manipulations of self-affirmation vary but center upon a valued aspect of the self. In most studies, participants are

provided with a list of values (e.g., family, humor, etc.; see Cohen et al., 2000) and asked to rank them from most to least important and then elaborate on why the selected value is important to them. Similar interventions include asking participants to list a few positive aspects of the self and spend a few minutes reflecting upon them (e.g., Van Den Bos, 2001) or providing participants with a list of affirmations (e.g., good-hearted, kind, intelligent) and asking them to indicate whether and when they have felt as such (e.g., Dillard et al., 2005). Other studies apply a more open-ended approach in which participants are asked to write about a positive experience that made them feel proud (e.g., Klein et al., 2001) or an aspect of themselves of which they are proud (e.g., Blanton et al., 2001). The main impetus behind these affirmations is allowing the individual to process subsequent information (e.g., a threat) from a non-defensive angle.

The exact mechanism underlying the success of these interventions is not clear. Reduction of negative affect may be one of the mechanisms such that self-affirmation may lower negative emotions that arise as a function of threatening self-relevant information (Ferrer et al., 2012). This is in line with the self-evaluation maintenance model, in which the transference of positive affect is a main mechanism within attempts at restoring self-esteem (Tesser, 2000). However, if only affect were responsible, message strength (e.g., persuasive message following affirmation) should have no effect (Sherman & Cohen, 2006). Implicit mechanisms have also been proposed at the affective and cognitive levels, such that self-affirmation increases implicit positive affect (Koole et al., 1999) and accessibility of threat-related cognitions among participants (Van Koningsbruggen et al., 2009). State self-esteem has been found to mediate the effect of self-affirmation interventions (Sherman & Cohen, 2006), but the lack of distinction between state and trait self-esteem renders conclusions difficult. One more mechanism that has been proposed in driving the effects of self-affirmation interventions is increase in self-certainty and self-concept clarity (Sherman & Cohen, 2006). In one study (a dissertation), a small but significant effect of self-affirmation on self-concept clarity was noted (Cerully, 2011), and similar findings have been reported in a short report on consumer behavior, in which self-affirmation reduced fantasy shopping (i.e., the tendency to buy things that the individual knows they will not make use of) through an interaction with self-concept clarity (Noguti & Bokeyar, 2011). There is little other research at present, which means that the robustness of this mechanism needs to be examined.

Self-Affirmation Through Mastery Recall The recall of mastery events where one reports on a difficult personal experience and how they overcame it is another means of self-affirmation (Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020). To that effect, we used a stereotype threat targeting the US national identity and found that recalling a memory of having overcome a challenge enhanced the collective self-esteem of American participants when they were faced with an identity-related threat. We focused on the narrative content, which is in line with efforts aimed at examining the value narratives to identify the mechanism underlying the observed effects of value affirmations (Creswell et al., 2007; Shnabel et al., 2013). We (2020) argue that

memories, particularly directive memories, can play a self-affirmative role: They are recalled for the purpose of serving a current or future course of action (Bluck et al., 2005; Pillemer, 2003). When faced with difficulties, such memories provide reassurance that one has overcome similar obstacles before (e.g., drawing strength from prior instances of doing well in exam situations when facing an assessment situation). The recall of such a mastery event could instill a sense of competence and efficacy (Bandura, 1977), which is particularly relevant in the face of social identity threat.

Group Affirmation

Research has also looked into the efficacy of group affirmation in addressing social identity threat (as opposed to personal identity threat), whereby tapping into valued elements of the collective can reinstate a sense of group esteem (Gunn & Wilson, 2011) as group level identities (e.g., ethnic, gender, sectarian, sports clubs, etc.) are an important aspect of one's self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Given the link between personal and social identities (Smith & Henry, 1996), individuals are equally motivated to maintain group and self-worth, and while self-affirmation supports this mechanism, tapping into valued characteristics of the group to which one belongs can also buffer against threats to social identity, in line with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and the rejection–identification model (Branscombe et al., 1999b).

Research findings on the effects of group affirmation have not been uniform. Some studies point to its efficacy in enhancing group esteem and reducing defensiveness (e.g., Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2016; Derks et al., 2006; Gunn & Wilson, 2011), but others show increased ingroup favoritism (Ehrlich & Gramzow, 2015), or even no effect of group affirmation on acceptance of group-level transgressions against others (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011). Badea and Sherman (2019) explain these inconsistencies in terms of the normative context within which the affirmation intervention is applied. That is, the outcome depends on whether the object of prejudice is viewed positively or negatively within the sample context. For instance, the Roma population is severely discriminated against in Southeast Europe (O'Higgins, 2010), and affirming ethnic group values may carry adverse effects and further strengthen the negative treatment Roma experience. Yet another explanation for the inconsistent findings relates to differences in sociocultural orientation. Perhaps in a more collectivist context, group affirmation is a more appropriate source of affirmation than personal affirmation. Evidence comes from a French study finding that group affirmation was beneficial for those who scored high on collectivism and self-affirmation for those high on individualism (Badea et al., 2018). When applying affirmations within minority groups, the evaluation (positive or negative) of the group by the affirming individual may be an important element underlying the efficacy of the intervention. If a group affirmation intervention is applied to buffer against identity threat in a sample of participants who are low identifiers, then group affirmation may not be as effective as perhaps self-affirmation.

In the following section, we elaborate on self- and group affirmation in non-Western contexts and minority groups in Western contexts that lean toward collectivism. We also refer to contexts that do not have a clearly demarcated majority group (e.g., Lebanon) and discuss how this might influence the outcome of social identity threat interventions and subsequent affirmation attempts.

Self-Affirmation in Non-Western Contexts

The majority of work on self- and group affirmation comes from Western contexts, with significantly fewer studies examining their utility in non-Western contexts that are characterized less by individuated sources of self-worth. Given that self-affirmation theory is built upon the need for people to maintain a positive view of the self (self-esteem motive; Steele, 1988), the conceptualization of sources of self-esteem maintenance is important to consider. For example, the examination of the self-enhancement motive, which has been proposed to be more relevant in independent Western contexts (Heine et al. 2001), has also been found in contexts where self-construals are characterized as interdependent. The difference lies in the sources of self-enhancement that are beneficial. In contexts in which interdependent self-construals are prototypically endorsed, people may capitalize on values such as family orientation and community as sources of self-enhancement, whereas in contexts in which an independent self-construal is commonly endorsed, self-enhancement sources may shift to personal achievements, for instance (Sedikides et al., 2003, 2005). Similar patterns may also apply to self-affirmation; where the underlying construct and its utility may be universal, its expression is colored by the cultural context within which it is tested.

It would follow that the core values that are normatively emphasized in a cultural context are important to consider when considering which affirmation interventions might be most effective. In a prototypically more collectivistic context such as China (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), affirming an aspect of the self that is defined in terms of relationships with close others such as friends and family, termed *relational self* (Chen et al., 2006), has been shown to be beneficial across different outcomes, such as displaying openness to feedback following failure information, increased performance on a mental rotation task (Cai et al., 2013), rejection of unfair offers (Gu et al., 2016), and reduced engagement in post-decisional justifications (Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005). In a series of experiments, Cai et al. (2013) aimed to evaluate the efficacy of relational and specifically familial self-affirmation relative to close-other-affirmation and individual self-affirmation. These were evaluated against a low affirmation (stranger affirmation) and no affirmation conditions. Results showed that familial self-affirmation was the most effective in all three experiments across varied threat manipulations and outcomes (mortality salience threat and support of birth control policy, gender stereotype threat and spatial rotation performance, failure feedback, and openness to liability focused information). In another study in which familial self-affirmation was applied, affirmed Chinese

students were more likely to reject an unfair ultimatum game offer (Gu et al., 2016). In other words, in a context in which maintaining social harmony is valued, familial self-affirmation may reduce the likelihood of yielding to situations that one perceives as unfair.

In a series of experiments, Hoshino-Browne et al. (2005) demonstrated how self-construal could influence the potency of an independent versus interdependent self-affirmation intervention in a cross-cultural context. In general and relative to European Canadians, Asian Canadians benefited the most from engaging in an interdependent self-affirmation, as evidenced by a reduced tendency to engage in post-decisional justification following making a decision for a valued ingroup member. In a second experiment, the degree of identification with Canadian culture was taken into account. Results showed that bicultural Asian Canadians were able to draw from *both* independent and interdependent self-affirmations as a buffer against the threat of having made an incorrect decision on behalf of an ingroup member. More monocultural (Asian, in this case) Asian Canadian participants, however, benefited from affirming their interdependent self, which is more consistent with their cultural value of collectivism. This does not mean that self-affirmation cannot be successfully applied in non-Western contexts, per se. For example, in a cross-cultural study applying a survey design, self-affirmation was found to be a predictor of well-being for both South Korean and US American participants (Nelson et al., 2014). Given the wide application of self-affirmation interventions, inconsistent findings and variations are likely the outcome of the measures of interest (e.g., collective self-esteem, overall well-being, prejudice, and message acceptance), as well as the overall context in which the intervention is applied. To our knowledge, these are the only studies examining the efficacy of self-affirmation in non-Western contexts, and they mostly focus on Asian contexts. Given that context and group variations are a potential reason for the inconsistencies in prior findings, there is a clear need to expand research on self-affirmation to include more diverse non-Western contexts.

Toward Investigating More Diverse Populations: Lebanon

There is some work on self-affirmation interventions within the context of social identity threat from non-Western contexts, but again, it is typically on Asian samples. This can be a drawback, as it is not possible to draw generalizations on how all cultures that vary along the collectivism continuum would respond to self-, group, and familial affirmations, which resonate with results from work on bicultural participants (Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005).

We have focused on investigating identity threat in Lebanon, a context that differs in many regards from previously studied contexts but also shares some similarities. Lebanon is an Arab country in the Middle East with a GDP per capita of 7784 USD (World Bank, 2019) and an HDI of 0.73 (UNDP, 2019). With a population of 6.9 million (UNDP, 2019), it is characterized by sectarian and ethnic diversity, with

18 religious groups divided across four Muslim sects, 12 Christian sects, the Druze sect, and a Jewish group (Saseen, 1990). While there are other contexts with many ethnic groups (e.g., China is home to 56 ethnic minorities; Dincer & Wang, 2011), the difference lies in the absence of a clear dominant majority group (such as the Han in China)—similar to other historically multicultural contexts such as Indonesia (Sari et al., 2018). The absence of a dominant group has implications for national identity and how national identity threats are perceived and managed. While a strong national identity has been cultivated and is endorsed in China (Tang & Darr, 2012), a history of intergroup conflict and long-standing external interference in Lebanon render inhabitants' sectarian identity salient, simultaneously weakening a unified definition of the Lebanese national identity (see Tavitian et al., 2019).

Lebanon is not only different in its composition from Western settings but also in its dominant societal values, as it has been characterized as scoring high on collectivism (Hofstede, 1983). In Hofstede's classification, however, Lebanon was pooled with Egypt, Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, rendering this score unlikely to be an accurate classification. Lebanon has been subject to Western influence throughout its history, through, for instance, the introduction of new educational systems in the 1930s by French, American, Italian, and German missionaries; a rise in foreign language schools and universities marking standards for higher education; and the French Mandate, lasting from 1920 to 1943. This has exposed the Lebanese population, especially inhabitants of the Mount Lebanon and Beirut regions, to Western sociocultural values. These values have been maintained, long after the Lebanese gained independence in 1943, through governmental legislations regarding political reform, communications media, foreign consultants, and growth in business enterprises (Salem, 1973). Therefore, Lebanon seems to have been affected by Westernization more so than other Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt (Hallaq, 2001).

Although in general there is a dearth of research from the Middle Eastern region on self-construals and cultural value orientations, existing data seem to support a more nuanced understanding of individualism–collectivism in Lebanon. For instance, in a cross-cultural study assessing values of individualism and collectivism among managers across seven countries in the Greater Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Turkey, and the UAE), with the exception of Israel, Lebanon scored lowest on collectivism, as well as highest on individualism and universalism. These values may reflect the religiously diverse context and Westernization of Lebanon, quite unlike other Arab nations (Ralston et al., 2012). It could be argued that these values are specific to the occupational context and may emerge differently within the educational or familial spheres, but in another cross-cultural comparison of interdependence, self-reliance, and competitiveness in a sample of university students, Lebanon fell under a cluster of high self-reliance and competitiveness, which seem to go against what would be typically expected of a collectivist context (Green et al., 2005).

The religious and ethnic diversity found in Lebanon also contributes to within-country variations in cultural values of individualism and collectivism. For instance, in her study, Ayyash-Abdo (2001) noted that Lebanese university students who

responded to her study survey in Arabic also scored higher on collectivism. She also found that Muslim students scored significantly higher on collectivism compared to the Christian and Druze respondents, with no significant differences emerging between religious groups on individualism. In another cross-cultural study aimed at refining the conceptualizing of self-construals, university student samples from three Arab countries—namely Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria—and the United Kingdom were tested. One relevant finding was that the United Kingdom and Lebanon did not significantly differ on horizontal collectivism, while Syria and Jordan were significantly higher than Lebanon on this dimension (Harb & Smith, 2008). Two conclusions may be drawn from these studies: First, and specific to Lebanon, is the need for researchers to take sectarian diversity into account. Variations in findings of studies could be explained by the diversity in samples studied (e.g., Ayyash-Abdo, 2001; Ralston et al., 2012). This is specifically relevant when studying identity threat and its management. For instance, a stereotype that is perceived as threatening by one religious group may not be perceived similarly by another. Second, and more generally, it is important to consider samples outside of the typically evaluated non-Western contexts as specifics within each context may contribute to variations on the understanding of psychological processes and, specific to this chapter, identity threat management through self-affirmation. For instance, if Lebanon is considered collectivist, then group affirmation should be applied as evidenced from other collectivistic settings. However, given findings in which Lebanon is evaluated against other Arab countries and a Western context, such an assumption may be inaccurate.

Managing Threat in Lebanon

Given the sectarian and ethnic diversity and inconsistent findings on cultural values, Lebanon seems to be a good candidate to evaluate variations in self-affirmation as a function of context. Lebanon does not have a clear cohesive majority group due to sectarian division (similar to Indonesia; Sari et al., 2018). The most recent official population census dates back to 1932, when Christians were shown to outnumber Muslims by a small margin (Maktabi, 1999), which is a testament to the fragile coexistence of groups: The population distribution has since then changed in favor of Muslims (Ramadan, 2019), but no official reports exist to avoid potential sources of conflict, given that the census formed the basis for consociationalism in Lebanon post the civil war era (1975–1990; see Krayem, 1997) and, in turn, the division of power across different sects. Against this backdrop, the Lebanese national identity is rendered rather inconsequential and irrelevant as a target of identity threat in Lebanon (Bahout, 2016; Traboulsi, 2007). This does not apply, however, to the various Lebanese minorities, such as the sizeable naturalized Armenian ethnic minority. The conditions for such a minority group in Lebanon may be quite different from minorities in Western contexts, specifically in terms of the lack of a cohesive majority group, the history of intergroup conflict, and the consociational system of

governance as detailed above (for a detailed account, see Tavitian et al., 2019). In a study aimed at assessing how Lebanese and Lebanese Armenians responded to identity-relevant threats, we proposed that the Lebanese context deviates from typically studied Western (immigration) contexts due to its sectarian division and high intergroup conflict. We constructed vignettes featuring stereotypes targeting the Lebanese national identity (Study 1) and the Armenian ethnic identity (Study 2) to investigate identity threat management via individuals' recalling mastery experiences as a method of self-affirmation (see Tavitian et al., 2019). We found—as expected—that self-affirmation through mastery recall was not effective in managing identity threat among Lebanese. In fact, the threat itself was not applicable and thus successful in exerting an effect, which, along with timeliness and availability for change resources, is one of the central elements in rendering an affirmation intervention successful, as postulated by the trigger-and-channel framework (Ferrer & Cohen, 2019). In the Lebanese context, sectarian identity overrides a unified national identity (Gürcan, 2007), rendering a threat to the national identity ineffective. Accordingly, mastery recall was unnecessary for helping individuals bounce back from a negative depiction of a national group to which they do not feel particularly connected. This would be a highly untypical finding for nationals in Western contexts who are confronted with a threat directed at their national identity, irrespective of how many subgroups to which they may belong. Upon examining the narrative themes from the recall tasks, we found that Armenian participants made references to their collective identity spontaneously—not only in the threat condition but even in the neutral condition in which they were asked to recall their morning routine. The Armenian identity is clearly salient and accessible, as opposed to the irrelevant Lebanese identity. It is noteworthy that examining mastery and routine morning recalls from the mainstream Lebanese sample did not reveal a similar pattern. We then also reanalyzed the narrative themes of a previous study in which US Americans were exposed to a national identity threat (Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020), and a similar pattern did not emerge. The specific pattern revolving around the Armenian ethnic identity can be explained in terms of (a) the history of settlement of the group itself, in which continuity threat is quite high, and this may, in turn, prompt increased identification with the collective (see Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2013), and (b) the Lebanese context characterized by a lack of a clear majority and intergroup hostility, making integration into a host culture arguably next to impossible. It is highly problematic to envisage avenues for an ethnic minority group to integrate into a society that is divided by a history of civil war, the ensuing political, ideological conflicts, and even geographical separation such that different sects reside within their own areas with little sectarian diversity apart from certain areas in Beirut (Nucho, 2016). Some examples from the recall task responses of Armenian participants illustrate the salience of the Armenian ethnic identity. For instance, when asked to recall a personally difficult event, one participant stated, "The following is a problem, that I face very often. The concept of being treated in a different way, because of being very Armenian … By the way, [I am] proud to be Armenian." Of all the personally significant difficult moments, he made reference to the subjective experience of being treated differently because of his social

belonging. What is more, this salience was even present when we asked participants to recall a typical morning routine (which rarely prompts personally relevant themes): One participant stated that after waking up, he thought of Armenians in Lebanon and the diaspora in the hope that they would all have a good day. This also emerged in the no-threat condition:

> "I'm an Armenian person and am attached to the heritage; however, I'm the type who's open to other cultures as well. I do not treat Armenians better than others, but I cannot reject the fact that being surrounded by Armenians gives me some sort of comfort; it feels like home most of the time. Being open to people different from us is essential" (25-year-old male in Tavitian et al., 2019).

We explain these in terms of salience such that the Armenian identity is pervasive in everyday interactions, thus readily accessible. We also found a sense of pride in the collective expressed in such narratives. It is as though ethnic Armenians in Lebanon are constantly affirming their collective by referring to their collective identities.

Conclusion and Perspective

The need to maintain positive self-worth is a basic need that drives individuals (Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988). When encountering information that may threaten the view of oneself as good and worthy, self-affirmation can help maintain self-worth without resorting to maladaptive means of self-esteem maintenance such as denial, disidentification, and dismissal of the threatening message (Sherman & Cohen, 2002, 2006). Self-affirmation has been shown to be effective in triggering behavioral change when a relevant psychological threat is administered: The affirmation is exacted in a timely manner (that is in close proximity to the threat) and resources for change are readily available (Ferrer & Cohen, 2019). The threat should not be overwhelming as that may result in reactance (Nguyen & Ryan, 2008), even when resources aimed at attenuating the threat are present. This is in line with our finding that even subtle hints at one's identity being devalued invite threat-related (collective) responses (Tavitian et al., 2019). Therefore, in addition to the three conditions by Ferrer and Cohen (2019), we propose taking into account the context within which the threat is administered. The exact vessel for self-affirmation may vary based on variations of the samples studied and be specifically nuanced as a function of the cultural context of the interventions applied. To that effect, research has examined the utility of self- (e.g., Cohen et al., 2007; Sherman et al., 2013; Shnabel et al., 2013), group (e.g., Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2016), familial (interdependent; e.g., Cai et al., 2013), and mastery recall affirmations (e.g., Tavitian et al., 2019). Evidence from the utility of affirmation interventions are predominantly from the West, with the bulk of non-Western studies coming from Asian contexts (e.g., Gu et al., 2016; Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005). In the present chapter, we highlight the need to take into account contextual variations when interpreting findings on identity affirmation. We also stress the need to move beyond the typically evaluated Western contexts and their juxtaposition with the non-Western Asian contexts

that are typically studied. Even if certain countries score similarly on cultural value constructs such as individualism and collectivism, it does not necessarily mean that the way these constructs manifest themselves in each context are qualitatively similar. For instance, the use of mastery recall as a self-affirmation tool, while successful in addressing national identity threat in a US American sample (Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020), was not effective in establishing group worth when used in a Lebanese sample for which the national Lebanese identity was threatened. In this sample, a threat to the national identity was irrelevant, given that one's sect is a better source of esteem than one's national group. Similarly, self-affirmation was not successful when applied to Lebanese Armenians, who appeared to be in a constant mode of self-affirmation by referencing their collective identity (Tavitian, et al., 2019). This resonates with the need to adopt more rigorous approaches to studying cultural phenomena (Bender & Adams, 2021), such as the consilience approach (van de Vijver & Leung, 2008). In cross-cultural research, the experimental can inadvertently become quasi-experimental. Consequently, conclusions drawn on cross-cultural differences are particularly affected by threats to internal validity (e.g., selection bias, cross-cultural differences in response styles), construct validity (e.g., nonequivalence at the level of operational definition), and statistical conclusion validity (e.g., inadequate testing for equivalence at the structural and scalar levels; Leung & van de Vijver, 2008; see Bender & Adams, 2021, for an overview). Most of the threat and self-affirmation literature draws heavily on experimental findings, as of yet with little insight available to assess the cross-cultural appropriateness of the applied procedures and the conclusions drawn. Consistent with our recommendation of studying multiple contexts prior to drawing conclusions on variations, adopting a consilience framework also notes the need to address confounds, for methodological diversity and for a grounding in theory in posing precise and complex predictions that could be tested (Leung & van de Vijver, 2008). Fischer and Poortinga (2018) note that much of cross-cultural research has been exploratory and should move into the realm of verification if it is to yield a more solid understanding of psychological phenomena and how they unfold across contexts as a function of those contexts.

Last, there are some lessons to be extracted from studying contexts in which diversity cannot be equated with multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has been used in two ways: It represents an ideological attitude promoting the recognition and acceptance of group differences as a precursor to equality and the creation of a just society; it also describes the demographic composition of a society (Tiryakian, 2003). Ideologically then, multiculturalism is something that one can choose to endorse or not, but some suggest that multiculturalism is a fact of life in lieu of globalization in the modern world and should be conceptualized as a process that also takes into account how diversity is managed at the level of social and political policies endorsed in a given context (Nye, 2007; see also Morris et al., 2015). For instance, researchers from Lebanon note that variation in their study outcomes, such as cultural value orientations, may be a function of the social diversity within Lebanon (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001; Ralston et al., 2012). The term "diversity," however, does not depict the fragmented fabric of the Lebanese society, where sectarian

identity trumps a unified national identity. The sectarian division in Lebanon is clearly reflected in its consociational system of governance, which is also mirrored in the division of residential areas in Lebanon, where each sect/ethnic group has claimed an area, albeit unofficially, as their own (Nucho, 2016). So, while Lebanon is multicultural in terms of its demographic distribution, this does not automatically suggest that people hold positive attitudes toward this diverse societal composition (i.e., whether it is seen as an opportunity or a problem). Therefore, studying a context in which diversity does not necessarily imply plurality and in which there may not be a clear dominant group may provide a window into demographic and cultural changes in typical Western immigration contexts that are changing. The United States, for instance, is projected to have a non-White majority by 2060 (United States Census Bureau, 2015). What are implications of a multicultural demographic composition for an ideology of multiculturalism? And would an ideology of multiculturalism be beneficial in promoting intergroup relations and a sense of unity? Lebanon may not present itself as a context to examine this question, given the history of conflicts, yet its failed consociationalism in particular may provide critical insights. The initial aim of Lebanon's system was to preserve the right of each sect to just participation in governance. However, it appears that this compartmentalization may have weakened the superordinate, national identification of group members. Consociationalism is not the only or even most important factor in explaining the current state of the Lebanese national identity; it is worth considering how a policy aimed at accommodating all minorities to engage in their heritage culture, with little work on cultivating a superordinate identity, may backfire.

In short, demographic diversity does not equal positive attitudes toward diversity or a well-functioning, inclusive societal composition. How a society negotiates its diverse makeup is relevant. In a recent study, Verkuyten et al. (2020) discuss interculturalism, an ideology that proposes intergroup dialogue, identity flexibility, and sense of belonging as precursors to a just, plural society. This conceptualization is distinct from multiculturalism in its emphasis on similarities across groups, as opposed to differences (thus reducing distinctiveness threat), and its wider definition of identities beyond the duality of minorities and majorities, which they argue may weaken national identification. Across two Western contexts (the Netherlands and the United States), they point to positive associations between both interculturalism and multiculturalism, on the one hand, and intergroup attitudes, on the other, but only interculturalism was associated with the endorsement of civic nationhood and equality. Multiculturalism has been associated with positive outcomes among minority groups, particularly when a strong, multiculturally inclusive superordinate identity is present—for instance, in Canada, where ethnocultural groups exhibit strong ethnic and national identification (Berry, 2013). Taking into account the mixed finding in intergroup relations (Verkuyten & Yogeeswaran, 2020) in how societies organize intergroup contact points to the need to reevaluate policies aimed at promoting it, including a shift toward focusing on fostering unity and finding similarities in differences, we propose that this can only be successful when taking into account the larger cultural context in which individuals deal with threat and form their identities.

Recommendations for Future Research

To better understand how identity threat and affirmation procedures aimed at addressing it operate across cultures, the specific cultural context in which the threat is applied needs to be taken explicitly into account. It is particularly relevant to develop a thorough understanding of the psychological experience of threat of the target groups (e.g., intergroup conflict, country level integration policies) for two reasons. First, this directly informs threat relevance (Ferrer & Cohen, 2019), ensuring in studies that an appropriate threat pertinent to the target group is applied. Second, this will also inform how to tailor the threat level (implicit to moderately implicit to blatant) to ensure efficacy while avoiding reactance, which is specifically relevant when the targeted identity is chronically accessible and perceived as endangered (see Tavitian, et al., 2019). Assessing the interplay between threat content, level, and context will also inform which affirmation procedures are most beneficial when selecting self or group affirmation (See Badea & Sherman, 2019), or more specific forms of affirmation, such as mastery recall (See Tavitian-Elmadjian et al., 2020) in order to buffer the effects of threat. In line with recommendations by Fischer and Poortinga (2018) as well as Leung and van de Vijver (2008), we propose a methodological focus on (a) replication studies of experiments on identity threat and self-, group, and mastery recall affirmation to draw more robust conclusions as to whether these phenomena are stable and relevant in non-Western contexts and (b) to explore at the same time how threat management may occur from a non-Western perspective (e.g., for more group-related coping strategies, see Badea et al., 2018).

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Chapter 16
Conceptualizing Work Identity in Non-Western Contexts

Anne Crafford

Introduction

While identity aims to answer the question "Who am I?" (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003), work identity considers the response to the question "Who am I at work?" From a Western perspective, work identity is defined as a work-based self-concept comprising identification with multiple aspects of the working environment including organizational and occupational identities, as well as work-related activities and tasks that ensure productive performance (Kirpal, 2004; Walsh & Gordon, 2008). Miscenko and Day (2016) highlight the importance of the meanings attached to the self in the work domain, introducing potential instability to the aforementioned definition, due to the variability of meaning arising from context and culture. Ibarra (2003, p. 18) suggests that work identity consists of three key elements: "what we do" (the professional activities in which we engage), "the company we keep" (referring to working relationships), and "who we are and want to be" (the formative events in our lives and plans for the future). In addition to these elements, Du Gay (1996) highlights the importance of understanding the role of power in conceptualizing work identity, suggesting that the latter is constituted through a person's position within power relations at work. The material reviewed for this chapter suggests that power relations beyond the working environment have important implications for work identity as well.

The aim of this chapter is to review studies of work identity in non-Western contexts. I will begin by introducing the concept of work identity and providing an overview of the limited number of studies that have been found, of which almost all are in the South African context. Thereafter, I will review these, highlighting the insights they hold for our understanding of work identity in other non-Western

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© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021
B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*,
Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0_16

contexts. Finally, I will consider some critical questions and thoughts regarding the study of work and identity in non-Western contexts.

Work Identity

The importance of work identity as a topic stems from the pivotal role that work plays—or is said to play—in our lives (Gini, 1998). For many people, work is an inescapable life domain and thus frames self-definition (Watson, 2009). At the same time, identity in the context of work is viewed as central to issues of meaning, motivation, commitment, loyalty, logics of action and decision-making, stability and change, leadership, group and intergroup relations, and organizational collaborations (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1163). The study of work identity in the West has a long history, primarily within sociology. Du Gay (1996) identifies three approaches: Marxist, neo-Weberian, and symbolic interactionist. The former two consider primarily the structures within which work and identity are formed, constituting a primarily objective, deterministic approach to work-based identity. Within these approaches, societal structures are viewed as fairly rigid, and little room is given for contextual differences; for example, Marx suggested that all workers were alienated from the outcome of their labor, and work for this reason was always experienced as meaningless.

Symbolic interactionist approaches, on the other hand, focus on the subjective and the meaning work has for the social actor as work-based identities are fluidly constructed through language more or less consistently. Actors are conceived to have considerable scope in generating meaning, even in work that may be repetitive and boring. We see this demonstrated in various studies of dirty work, for example, Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) and Kreiner, Ashforth, and Sluss (2006a). This, unlike the structural approaches, affords actors considerable agency in the construction of identity, both social and work-related, but in so doing may downplay the working of power dynamics, inequality, and ideology (Du Gay, 1996). Both structure and agency are captured in the work of Simone Kirpal, Alan Brown, and their colleagues as part of a research project *Vocational Identity, Flexibility and Mobility in the European Labour Market* (Brown et al., 2001; Brown, 2004; Kirpal, 2004). The project was guided by a focus on both the structural conditions influencing work (given the different national contexts represented), as well as individual orientation and resources (personal agency) on the other. It is this perspective that has influenced much of the work identity-related research done in the South African context, which, based on the literature surveyed, forms (by default) the focus of this chapter. A systematic overview of the work identity literature in non-Western contexts seems to support the contention of Adams et al. (2016) that work identity outside of the West remains understudied, with the exception of South Africa.

Overview of Studies

The discussion of work identity is based on a systematic literature review of work identity studies in non-Western contexts.[1] The overview presented here remains situated and contextual (Knights & Clarke, 2017) and one of many possible interpretations of the non-Western work identity literature. This is in part due to the fact that producing a conclusive systematic literature review is impossible, given the vast literatures available on any subject (Du Gay & Evans, 2000). The 15 articles, books, and theses that were retained are listed and described in Appendix A of this chapter.

An overview of these findings suggests that work identity studies outside of the West originate primarily in South Africa. The reason for this is attributed to the interest generated by a project sponsored by South Africa Netherlands research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD) to explore work identity in the context of multicultural South Africa (Jansen & Roodt, 2015). The data were gathered at the manufacturing plant of an international company founded in South Africa and included participants from a wide range of job titles and management levels. Some of these studies (Adams & Crafford, 2012; Bester, 2012; De Braine & Roodt, 2011; Lloyd et al., 2011; Saayman & Crafford, 2011) are also described in *Work Identity: Conceptualising and Measuring Work Identity* (Jansen & Roodt, 2015). The aim is not to simply repeat these findings here but rather explore the similarities and differences between the findings in these and later studies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of work identity.

What Do We Know About Work Identity in Non-Western Contexts?

Work identity has been studied from both interpretivist (using predominantly qualitative methodologies) and functionalist (using predominantly quantitative methodologies) perspectives, with no critical voices (e.g., as represented by critical

[1] The following databases were searched using a protocol-driven methodology (Boland, Cherry, & Dickson, 2013): Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, SAepublications, SAGE Research Methods, SAGE Journals, Science Direct, Scopus, Web of Science core. The terms "work identity," "identity work," "occupational identity," and "social identity" were combined with each of the areas viewed as "non-Western": Africa, Asia, Japan, China, India, South America, Middle East, and an additional term, "developing nations." An initial number of 197 articles were identified, of which 130 were excluded based on the title, 56 based on the abstract, and one based on its methodology. This left a total of ten, to which five were added by means of a hand search and reviewer references. Although professional, occupational, and social identity were originally included as search terms, articles retrieved by these terms were subsequently excluded. Articles regarding social identity were eliminated as these were unrelated to the work environment. Professional and occupational identity articles were excluded as they contribute to an understanding of a collective rather than the individual focus of work identity.

management studies) problematizing some of the fundamental assumptions surrounding both work and identity as conceptualized in the West (Alvesson et al., 2008). I will return to this point toward the end of this chapter. The conceptualization of work identity is similar to the Western-based definitions included in the introduction and is viewed as a multifaceted concept that includes personal, relational, and social identities with personal professional values and aspirations, employee and managerial roles, as well as departmental and organizational membership as aspects of the aforementioned (Adams et al., 2016; Lloyd et al., 2011; Saayman & Crafford, 2011).

The *interpretivist studies* tell us more about the "how" of work identity, the construction and negotiation thereof, the challenges and tensions in these processes, as well as how employees respond agentically to these challenges (Adams & Crafford, 2012). Furthermore, they take into account the structural aspects influencing work identity, such as value systems and cultural origins, organizational culture and practices, industry-related constraints as well as sociopolitical challenges such as safety, legislation, and historical discrimination.

Oosthuisen (2013) provides the most comprehensive model of work identity, which he describes as the outcome of a complex process of negotiation between social identities (as conceptualized by Watson, 2008), personal identity, the job, and a range of social structures and practices. Building on the work of Saayman and Crafford (2011), he explored a range of factors influencing work identity and added to those already identified through his multiple case study of engineers. Drawing on the idea of identity as situated at the intersection of structure and agency (Giddens, 1991), work identity is conceived as being influenced by organizational-, industry-related, and national structures and practices but at the same time negotiated on individual terms. As indicated in Fig. 16.1, work identity is viewed at the center of the tension between belonging and uniqueness (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006b), belonging as a result of multiple social identities and the demands these entail, and uniqueness because of a particular combination of personal characteristics and responses to the demands of the social identities. Examples of social identities include professional, managerial, and organizational identities. Work identity is also situated at the intersection of job characteristics and the social structures and practices within which particular types of work take place. These include elements such as organizational-, industry-based, and national structures, organizational and industry culture, as well as the management and leadership framework of the organization. Work identity is thus formed at the intersection of multiple factors, allowing for an understanding of many types of work in very different contexts.

As indicated, the aforementioned interpretivist studies shed light on the "how" of work identity—how it is formed, constructed, negotiated, and maintained—and are primarily descriptive in nature. However, in addition to these descriptive studies, there are several *functionalist-orientated studies,* the aims of which are to establish the "how much" of work identity—its antecedents and outcomes, as well as its relationship with associated concepts. Here, the aim is to determine the degree to which individuals identify with various elements of their working environment, and for this purpose, the conceptualization of work identity is quite different. These studies

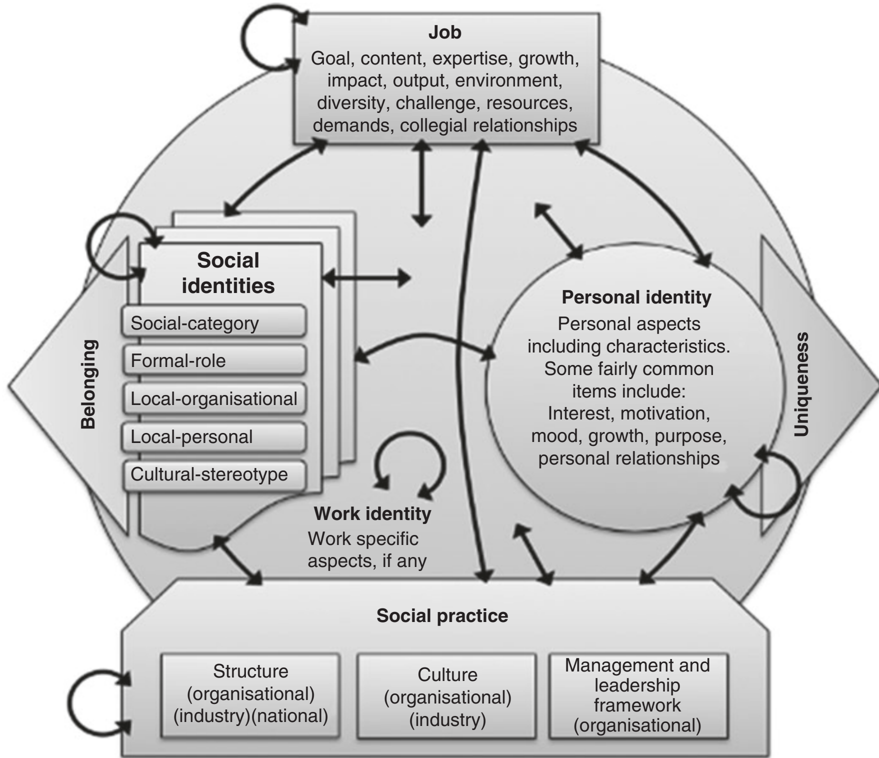

Fig. 16.1 A comprehensive model of work identity (Oosthuisen, 2013, p. 110)

focus on the degree of identification and fit between people and the organizations they work for, and there have been different conceptualizations of work identity in this regard. I will discuss these briefly.

In a South African sample, De Braine and Roodt (2011) found evidence for a single work-based identity factor comprised of elements relating to workaholism, organizational-related involvement, work-related alienation, job involvement, the functions of identity, organizational identification, and person–organization fit. However, Bester's (2012) study, conducted in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with a multicultural group, found a three-factor structure to the work identity concept, namely, work centrality, person–organizational fit, and value congruence. These factors correlate closely with the Western-based definition of work identity highlighted in the introduction, as a "work-related self-concept," and include identification with both the organization and the work setting. This, however, should come as no surprise, as the scales from which the original instrument was drawn were developed in the West and thus exemplify the assumptions underlying Western notions of work and identity.

Adams et al. (2016) provide a slightly different conception of work identity, as measured by the Tilburg Work Identity Scale of Commitment and Reconsideration

of Commitment (TWIS-CRC), focusing on work identity commitment, as well as the reconsideration of that commitment. The first element relates to how important work is and the extent to which a person is committed and feels they belong. Identity commitment is conceptualized in terms of personal identity (i.e., work-related personal goals and values), relational identity (i.e., importance of relationships and roles at work), and social identity (i.e., the membership toward the organization as social system). The second element refers to the degree to which people reevaluate their commitment and are open to other work-related possibilities. The two-factor structure held for four contexts: Romania, England, the Netherlands, and South Africa.

There are some key similarities and differences between the conceptualization of work identity used in the studies mentioned above. Firstly, with regard to the dimensions of identity, all three conceptualize work identity as influenced by an individual or personal and a social element. Each of these studies contains a third consideration: De Braine and Roodt (2011) and Bester (2012) focus on structural elements influencing work identity, whereas Adams et al. (2016) highlight the relational dimension as their third factor. Furthermore, Adams et al. (2016), through their dimension of work identity reconsideration of commitment, allow for a measure of dynamism in considering work identity, something not present in the other perspectives.

Concerning the antecedents of work identity, both De Braine and Roodt (2011) and Bester (2012) found that the job demands–resources model (JD-R) was predictive of work identity. However, Bester found that not all job resources were equal in their explanation of variance, with need for organizational identification (NOID) and task resources being most important. In addition, there was variation in the degree to which job resources predicted the three facets of work identity, which was moderated by nationality. This suggests that nationality plays a role in accounting for an understanding of work identity dynamics.

With regard to the consequences of work identity in a South African sample, Bothma and Roodt (2012) found a negative relationship between work identity and work engagement and turnover intentions. They also found a weak positive relationship between work identity, work engagement, and task performance. In a sample from the UAE, Bester (2012) found that work engagement was a consequence of work identity and work identity significantly reduced turnover intentions. However, of interest in the context of studying work identity cross-culturally, Bester found that nationality, as an indicator of cultural differences, was found to be a moderator affecting the relationship between variables. This means that despite being employed by the same organization, respondents of different nationalities reacted uniquely to both the antecedents and consequences of work identity. Thus, while the facets of work identity may be transferable to other contexts, the way they work in conjunction with other variables may be context specific.

The combined functionalist and interpretive perspectives have taught us the following about work identity in non-Western contexts:

- Work identity is influenced by the **personal history of a person**—their nationality (Bester, 2012) and culture (Saayman & Crafford, 2011), as well as values and beliefs (Adams & Crafford, 2012). These studies suggest that work identity is not an abstract concept but locally derived and influenced by meanings in the context in which it is forged. This provides support for a postcolonial perspective in studying work identity, which I will elaborate upon in the last section.
- Work identity is forged at the **intersection of other identity aspects** such as class, ethnicity, nationality, and gender. Gossayn's (2018) study of working women highlights the demands on women as they attempt to balance working and family roles. Central to their ability to balance these demands was the role played by domestic labor, made possible by their class (income) and the widely available source of labor due to historical political structures in the country. While it is accepted that women generally bear greater responsibility for home and child-rearing responsibilities, the specific context allows these women valuable forms of support, which translate into tangible benefits when balancing these demands.
- Work identity and the power relationships within which these are formed remain structured and governed by the dynamics of South Africa's **political history**. While most of the studies have been conducted in South Africa, which has a unique political history, the country shares features with many other non-Western contexts with regard to colonization and the political and societal effects thereof. These colonized contexts are characterized by aspects such as discourses of othering, an obsession with race as a dimension of difference, and exclusion from economic and political power. For example, Magerman's (2015) study highlights ethnic differences in work identity in South Africa, which was found to be highest among White participants, with Colored[2] participants demonstrating moderate levels of the concept. Black participants demonstrated the lowest levels of work identity.[3] Having highlighted the importance of personal history, as well as the intersection of identity categories, it is vital to consider that these can only be understood in relation to the geographical and historical realities within which work identity is situated. For example, the differences in Magerman's (2015) study can arguably be attributed to the material inequalities that characterize the historical context of South Africa and the exclusion of certain ethnicities from meaningful work opportunities. A person's body is the place from which their identity is developed, and ethnicity has important consequences for power relations influencing work identity, especially in professional and organizational contexts, which are structured around Western norms and values, as well as a particular ethnic profile (Clegg and McNulty 2002).
- Despite structural constraints in the working environment, **personal agency** remains important in understanding work identity. All the studies discussed

[2] In South Africa the term Colored refers to people of mixed descent, not to be confused with its meaning in other parts of the world where it refers to all people of color.

[3] A similar study by van Niekerk (2016) found no significant differences between Black and White groups, though White participants displayed higher levels of work identity.

above assume a measure of personal agency—the ability to react with some level of influence in response to structural challenges—which is characteristic of current approaches to identity. However, in line with the discussion of structural aspects such as political history, it is clear that agency is in part dependent on the nature of the context. Most of the studies in the current review included samples drawn from white-collar workers and did not include blue-collar workers nor other vulnerable groups of workers for whom power relationships in the working environment remain challenging and may constrain the exercise of agency. The question of agency is particularly important when viewing work identity from a critical perspective—a topic to which I turn in the next section.

In summary, these studies demonstrate the importance of the personal as well as the broader societal context in forming and structuring work identity, and these would have relevance for researchers studying work identity in other non-Western contexts. Aspects of embodiment are crucial and have typically been ignored in Western (usually White and masculine) conceptions of work identity. The importance of the sociopolitical context highlighted by these studies also has implications for understanding work identity in other non-Western contexts, as these have a bearing on power relations governing work. While these studies do highlight important contextual factors to consider in studying work identity, they have been influenced by premises underlying Western notions of work, and little has been done to problematize these assumptions. In the next section, I would like to consider work identity from a more critical perspective.

Future Directions: Considering a Critical and Postcolonial Appraisal of Work Identity

Our notions of work are contingent, and work centrality as a component of work identity is strongly correlated with a Protestant work ethic that has its origins in the Christian faith, which is closely associated with Western thought and culture (Hirschfeld & Felid, 2000). Geren (2011) suggests that while work ethic as a concept exists across cultures, the specific values and attributes associated with the Protestant work ethic may not. Nevertheless, these form the foundation upon which our understanding of work identity is premised. Yet, as scholars of work identity, it is important that we also approach our studies from a critical perspective, which has as its aim the critical appraisal of "established social practices and institutional arrangements," which aims to challenge relations of domination, be these patriarchal, neo-imperialist, or capitalist (Alvesson et al., 2009, p. 1). In so doing, we attempt to problematize concepts such as "identity" and "work," as well as addressing issues of power in the construction and negotiation of a coherent work identity. This means asking questions such as:

- In what type of system or structure does something like "work identity" make sense? Who benefits from work identity as it is currently conceptualized?
- In what ways do work identity and related concepts reproduce and reinforce neo-imperialist and capitalist arrangements? For example, whose interests does work centrality serve and who stands to lose in issues regarding person–organization fit? How could these concepts produce and reproduce structures and practices that stand to benefit some groups at the expense of others?
- What types of practices and structures are reproduced in measuring value congruence as a facet of work identity?

The findings of Smith et al. (2015) regarding the importance of meaning in working draws our attention to work that may not be inherently meaningful, such as routine and repetitive work (e.g., in the case of laborers), or where work is associated with oppression and the struggle to survive (Moorhouse & Cunningham, 2010; Zhang, 2014). While some in the West have explored "dirty" or stigmatized work (e.g., garbage collectors and prison warders; Kreiner, Ashforth, & Sluss, 2006a), few studies focus on working conditions for those for whom work is dangerous and exploitative yet have no choice but to continue to do in order to make a living. This is likely to be particularly enlightening, as Bhabha (1994) suggests, "it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history – subjugation, domination, diaspora, displacement – that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking" (p. 172).

Accounts of work identity in non-Western contexts should also consider the intersection of class and rural–urban identities as a factor, as most of the current studies focus on white-collar work. Class determines (to a large extent) the opportunities available for education, the nature of work-related opportunities, and the choices people have in choosing (or not choosing) work that may be fulfilling and challenging. Similarly, urban–rural identities are also implicated in the choice of meaningful work opportunities. Zhang (2014), for example, explores the impact of rural–urban identities in China and how these continue to be structured and reproduced in pursuit of production and profit. Migrant workers in particular may face specific challenges with regard to maintaining a coherent and positive sense of work identity. Faced with limited work-related opportunities, negative stereotypes, and a sense of liminality, work becomes a means of survival rather than a source of meaning.[4] Although some migrant workers are well educated and highly skilled, they may be unable to get work in their chosen occupation and are forced to deskill in their new context to provide for themselves and their families (Bloch, 2008). This is often the case for migrant workers from non-Western contexts working in the West (Adams & van de Vijver, 2015). The identifications with work and the associated relationships in these settings are often tenuous, precarious, and fraught with power imbalances (Bresnihan, 2014; Zhang, 2014). Conceptualizing work as something

[4] I am not suggesting that this is true for all migrant workers as, at times, work can be a significant source of recognition and a means of acceptance into a new community. See, for example, Menon's (2009) study of Samoan migrant women in New Zealand.

that should be central to their lives serves to reinforce relations of domination already in place.

In addition, given the domination of Western thought in studies of work identity and the salience of political history highlighted in the section above, it is clear that the field would also benefit from a postcolonial lens, one particular focus of critical management studies. A postcolonial perspective refers to a "range of social, cultural, political ethical and philosophical questions that recognize the salience of the colonial experience and its persisting aftermath" (Jack et al., 2011, p. 277). A postcolonial perspective of work identity could begin by asking questions such as:

- What are the meanings associated with work, and how do these differ from context to context, culture to culture, as the latter acts as an epistemology (Bhabha, 1994)?
- From what other systems of thought could work be conceptualized? What modes of thinking would underpin these alternative systems, and what structures and practices would support these?[5]
- In what ways are Western-orientated research paradigms and methods implicated in the ways work identity is studied (Jack & Westwood, 2006)? What other paradigms and research methodologies, more suited to the study of Indigenous people, can be used in postcolonial work identity research (Wilson, 2001, 2003)?

For example, in ethnographic studies of Australia's[6] Aboriginal groups, Gibson (2010) describes the very different meanings and priority given to the notion of work, emphasizing how Western cultures tend to "conflate a person's social value and worth with their occupation" (p. 144). Gibson suggests that from an Aboriginal[7] perspective, ontology is inherently relational, and a person is defined primarily in relation to kin relationships and social networks. This is in stark contrast to Western models of identity, in which the self is expressed through work and denoted by terms such as work centrality. She suggests that from an Aboriginal perspective, being employed may inhibit one's maintaining and attending to the responsibilities associated with kinship related relationships and commitments:

> It is not work in Western definitions to "look after country", "go huntin' an' get the old people some wild meat", to take Nana shopping, to nurse children, look after sick family or stay with family or friends who have come to visit rather than attend work (p. 157).

While arguably, people all over the world struggle to balance identity tensions (e.g., between work and family), this example highlights the lack of importance attributed

[5] Even as I write this, I am struck by how, in conceptualizing these alternative modes of thinking, my own is trapped within the modes and requirements of Western thought, even though I have only ever lived in a non-Western context.

[6] While Australia itself is considered a Western context, its Indigenous Population, due to systematic, structured oppression, constitutes a group of people who have more in common with people from non-Western contexts.

[7] Here, I use this term to designate Australian Indigenous People. I highlight this to avoid confusion as some authors, for example, Wilson (2003), refer to the Indigenous Populations of Canada as Aboriginal, as well.

to work as a source of identity and draws our attention to an alternative conception of what it means to work.

Much of Western work identity literature is premised on capitalist assumptions that rest on the motives of production and profit. Organizational culture and management structures, including human resource management (HRM) and its associated practices such as performance management, are designed to uphold these motives and do not always sit well with the values of non-Western cultures. Webb (2008) draws attention to the "voices of tradition"—authors such as Muhammad Iqbal, Rabindranath Tagore, and Liang Shuming, who articulated critiques of Western culture. While these authors differ on minor points, they each identified a distinction between "practical rationality" and "ethical rationality" (Liang's terms)—forcing a person to choose between economic, material, and practical matters (dominant in Western systems) on one hand and emotive, intuitive, and ethical matters (dominant within the voices of tradition) on the other. At stake in this divide is human agency as people are faced with a choice between ethical and economic obligations. One of the participants in Modisha's (2008) study makes reference to a very similar difference in culture, highlighting the values of ubuntu—"the spirit of working together or togetherness" (p. 131)—that underlie the African cultures in South Africa. He suggests that Black managers may struggle to be successful in a Western business context as they are trying to be "capitalists with a soul" (Modisha, 2008, p. 131), highlighting a clash between traditional African values and capitalism-based organizational practices and values. This lack of value congruence has implications for constructs such as person–organization fit and organizational identification, all of which influence work identity.

These considerations will hopefully lead to a more critical, postcolonial perspective of work identity, though producing such a multivocal account will not be easy, and there are several cautions to heed in doing so. First, we need to avoid unwittingly reproducing the "ideological coding of Western conceptions" (Nkomo, 2011, p. 366) of work, identity, and work identity. Alatas (2003) in particular warns against academic dependency in which intellectuals and scholars in colonial contexts are dependent on the perspectives, methodologies, and motives of Western scholarship, and it is here that developing indigenous research paradigms and methodologies can be of benefit (Wilson, 2001, 2003). However, when doing so, we should be aware of the history of colonialism and imperialism, which means that none of these contexts can be studied as producing a "pure" version in the sense that they are unaffected by colonial perspectives and values (Bhabha, 1994). In addition, globalization implies a mutual influence between cultures and contexts meaning that is not always possible to distinguish clearly between Western and non-Western "spaces" (Bhabha, 1994).

Second, work identity studies should consider a broader range of work types (e.g., blue-collar work and migrant workers) and the influence of other factors such as class, education, and rural–urban differences, which may influence choices regarding work availability, the nature of work, the meaning derived from work, and thus how important a concept such as "work" identity may (or may not) be. Thus, as work identity scholars, we need to understand and account for the incredible

diversity and intersectionality derived from understanding identity associated with work. Work identity studies should reflect the plurality of voices that span various work-based settings in a multitude of non-Western contexts such as the various countries of Africa, South America, and Asia.

Research of this nature could include exploring the nature and meanings around work and working in multiple contexts, both Western and non-Western, considering aspects such as the embodiment of people, class location, educational privilege, and geographical space, which have typically been ignored in Western (usually White and masculine) conceptualizations of the concept. Furthermore, it would be helpful to revisit notions of identity that rely primarily on the individual person, in which people's own choices and agency are central, and consider alternative, collective perspectives in which other considerations are more important. Finally, research needs to be sensitive to the power dynamics involved in the study of work and identity and understand whose underlying interests we serve when using concepts such as work centrality and person–organization fit as these may serve to reproduce structures that continue to exclude those already in precarious and less powerful positions.

Conclusion

The studies presented in this chapter have been heavily influenced by Western theorizing of work and have not problematized some of the issues surrounding the meaning of work and the power dynamics involved in work in non-Western contexts and groups. As indicated, most of the work identity literature in non-Western contexts is limited to South Africa, with the exception of studies conducted in the UAE and Romania (both studies led by South Africans). I have provided an overview of these studies, highlighting salient learning points for working with people from these non-Western contexts. Aspects to bear in mind include the individual's personal history and the dynamics of the specific sociopolitical and cultural context. In the final section, I have suggested the possibility of a critical management approach, and especially a postcolonial lens, to explore alternative notions of work that may differ from a Western perspective informed by a Protestant work ethic and organized around the production and profit motive of capitalism.

Acknowledgments My thanks to Nolwazi Dube and Lechán Wheeler who completed the systematic review under my guidance as part of their honors project: A systematic review of the formation of work identity in non-Western countries.

"***Bedankt***" to the editor, Byron Adams, for his insightful comments and thought-provoking suggestions.

Appendix A: Outcome of Systematic Review Process

Name, author, and research setting	Brief description of the study	Research setting
1. Permanently 'in process': The intersection of migration, work identity and the reality of human resource development in the South African context (Moorhouse & Cunningham, 2010) [Article]	Explores the impact of migration on the work prospects of Zimbabwean migrants who are often well educated and highly skilled but due to various factors are forced to take on employment that does not utilize their skills. Constraining factors include lacking the appropriate documentation and social capital	South Africa but based on a sample of Zimbabwean migrants
2. Negotiating work identity (Saayman & Crafford, 2011) [Article]	Conducted from an interpretive perspective, the aim of the study was to explore identity tensions and demands that trigger identity work in the working environment. A model, in which five dimensions that influence work identity are identified, was developed. These dimensions are personal identity, individual agency, social identity, social practices, and the job	A multiethnic sample from South Africa, including Asian, Black, Colored, and White participants
3. Critical elements in defining work-based identity in a post-apartheid South Africa (Lloyd et al., 2011) [Article]	Conducted from an interpretive perspective, the aim was to determine which life spheres, life role elements, and work-based identity facets were central to the formation of work-based identity. The authors developed a model of work identity that includes the self-concept as central, with work facets, life roles, and life spheres all influencing work identity	A multiethnic sample from South Africa, including Asian, Black, Colored, and White participants
4. The job-demands-resources model as predictor of work identity and engagement: A comparative analysis (De Braine & Roodt, 2011) [Article]	Conducted from a functionalist perspective, the study explored possible differences in the job demands–resources model (JD-R) as a predictor of overall work engagement, dedication, and work-based identity. From a work identity perspective, the authors found that job resources were the strongest predictor of work-based identity	A South African sample of mostly White participants
5. Identity at work: Exploring strategies for identity work (Adams & Crafford, 2012) [Article]	Conducted from an interpretive perspective, the aim of the study was to explore identity work strategies employees used in the negotiation of work identity. Nine strategies were identified and categorized into broad themes, namely, personal philosophies, relationships, career management, and negotiating balance	A multiethnic sample from South Africa, including Asian, Black, Colored, and White participants

Name, author, and research setting	Brief description of the study	Research setting
6. Work-based identity and work engagement as potential antecedents of task performance and turnover intention: Unravelling a complex relationship (Bothma & Roodt, 2012) [Article]	Conducted from a functionalist perspective, the main purpose of the study was to investigate whether work-based identity and work engagement (in combination with personal alienation, helping behavior, and burnout) are potential antecedents of task performance and turnover intention. The findings indicate that work identity along with work engagement can be considered as predictors of turnover intention, and, to a lesser degree, task performance	A multiethnic sample from South Africa including Asian, Black, Colored, and White participants
7. A model of work identity in multicultural work settings (Bester, 2012) [Doctoral thesis]	Conducted from a functionalist perspective, the aim of the study was to present a process model of the causes and consequences of work identity. Antecedents included job resources and job demands, and consequences included work engagement and turnover intentions. The author found support for a three-factor structure for work identity, namely, work centrality, person–organization fit, and value congruence	Conducted in the United Arab Emirates on a multicultural sample. Four groupings of people from: The UAE, other Middle Eastern countries, Asian/Indian, and the West
8. Work identity of engineers (Oosthuisen, 2013) [Master's thesis]	Conducted from an interpretivist perspective using a multi-case study methodology, the study explored the work identity of engineers in a knowledge-intensive firm. The study was based on an adaption of the model developed by Saayman and Crafford (2011) and validated the facets of the latter, adding some insights particularly in relation to the relationships between various facets of work identity	Multiethnic sample from South Africa including Black and White participants
9. Conceptualising and measuring work identity: South-African perspectives and findings (Jansen & Roodt, Eds., 2015) [Book]	This book considers the concept of work identity in South Africa, a society in which the political, economic, and legal systems constructed a system of social class along ethnic lines. Central to the enforcement of the system was the structuring of work around ethnic lines. The chapters in the book explore various elements of work identity in this context	A variety of South African based samples

Name, author, and research setting	Brief description of the study	Research setting
10. Reflections on shifts in the work identity of research team members (Smith et al., 2015) [Article]	Conducted from an interpretivist approach, the aim of the study was to reflect on shifts in work identity of researchers studying work identity. The findings reinforce the value of having meaning and purpose in one's work and highlight various contextual realities that play a role in this. The study also confirmed the value of Ibarra's concept of "possible selves" in the process of constructing work identity	Multiethnic sample from South Africa including Colored and White participants
11. Identity and well-being at work: A comparison of the Colored group with other ethno-cultural groups in South Africa (Magerman, 2015) [Master's thesis]	Conducted from a functionalist perspective, the aim was to explore the association between various dimensions of identity, including work identity and psychological well-being among various ethnic groups in South Africa. Work identity was found to be highest among White participants, with Colored and Black groups demonstrating moderate and low levels of the concept	Multiethnic sample from South Africa including Black, Coloured, and White participants
12. Measurement invariance of the Tilburg Work Identity Scale for Commitment and Reconsideration of Commitment (TWIS-CRC) in Romania, England, the Netherlands and South Africa (Adams et al., 2016) [Article]	Explores work identity as conceptualized by the TWIS-CRC across multiple European contexts and one non-European context, South Africa. The two-factor structure, as conceptualized by the TWIS-CRC, was found to be consistent across the various groups, suggesting similarity between the groups. The TWIS-CRC focuses on work identity commitment, as well as the reconsideration of that commitment	Romania, England, the Netherlands, and South Africa. The South African sample consisted of Black and White participants
13. Authenticity, identity and psychological well-being at work in multicultural contexts (Van Niekerk, 2016) [Master's thesis]	Explores the various identity dimensions, including personal, work, ethnic, and religious identity, in relation to authenticity and well-being across a South African and Dutch sample. In contrast to the Magerman (2015) study mentioned above, no significant differences were found between Black and White groups with regard to general work identity	Multiethnic groups from South Africa and the Netherlands. The South African sample consisted of Black and White participants
14. The role of workplace learning in transforming (work) identities of human resources practitioners (Arotiba, 2018) [Master's thesis]	Explores the role of workplace learning in transforming work identity. It was found that workplace learning aids in shaping work identity "by enabling a blend amongst team, relational, social, personal and professional identities" (p. 8)	Sample of two human resource practitioners, one Black and one Asian

Name, author, and research setting	Brief description of the study	Research setting
15. Exploring the work identity of working mothers (Gossayn, 2018) [Master's thesis]	Explores the tensions and demands facing working mothers as they endeavor to negotiate a positive work identity. While passionate about their various forms of work and the meaning derived from these, their identity as mother was equally important. Significant time and energy were spent structuring their working lives to accommodate their mothering role	Sample of three working mothers, two White and one Asian

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B. G. Adams, F. J. R. van de Vijver (eds.), *Non-Western Identity*, Identity in a Changing World, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77242-0

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