Chapter 18
Social Identities and Conflict in Chile: The Role of Historical and Political Processes

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Historical and political processes have shaped the construction of the most relevant social identities in Chile. In this chapter, we will discuss how these processes have been related to the development of meaningful social identities in the Chilean society and how their structure, experiences of threats and the nature of their intergroup relations can be seen as relevant factors associated to the development of conflict between the groups involved. Specifically, drawing on social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & turner, 1986), we will analyse five social identities across different contexts: ethnic identities, national identity in the context of immigration, political identities, gender identities, and social class identities. For each of these, we describe the historical background that gave rise to status and power differences, the nature of their intergroup relations, the social conflicts that emerge among the groups involved, threats to social identity, as well as out-group derogation.

We seek to contribute to the integration of historical and contextual perspectives with socio-psychological theories to better understand the development of social identities and conflicts. Psychology has focused on psychological factors (e.g. the way we perceive the social world and the way we think and feel about others and ourselves) to explain human behaviour. However, the social identities and related conflicts we analyse in the Chilean context have been heavily influenced by historical and political contextual factors (social conflict, ideologies and social change forces) that are often disregarded in social psychology. Indeed, we argue that sociopolitical contexts normally shape the psychological functioning of human beings (e.g. social identities). This influence in turn, motivates several psychological processes that contribute to maintaining the status quo, group differences and power relations that

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characterise the relationship between in-group and out-group members. Thus, a dynamic process of influence between psychological and historical–contextual factors might shed light on the relationship between social identities and conflict.

In the first section, we discuss ethnic identities in Chile. As has been well documented, the process of colonisation that began in the fifteenth century gave rise to an important differentiation between those who descend from White (mostly European) colonisers and those who have indigenous ancestors (see Eller, Cakal & Siropu, this volume, for a further discussion of these issues). Since then, the relationship between ethnic groups has been hierarchically organised: White people enjoy a disproportionate share of social goods in comparison to mestizo and indigenous groups. We reason that this historical–situational factor has shaped the way in which indigenous and non-indigenous group members relate to each other in the present, and more importantly, how perceptions (stereotypes and prejudice) and behaviours (discrimination) exhibited particularly by member of the majority non-indigenous group have fostered the development of conflicts for more than 300 years.

In the second section, we focus our attention on national identities in the context of the migration process that has occurred in Chile during the last century and discuss how it has influenced the development of negative attitudes toward immigrants and enhanced a sense of national identity. Chile's economic success and political stability have made it a very attractive country for Latin American migrants. The migration process has accentuated differences between nationals and immigrants bringing about negative as well as positive outcomes (González, Sirlopú, & Kessler, 2010). As such, this particular social context offers an opportunity to analyse some relevant social-psychological factors that explain attitudes and behaviour toward immigrants in general and Peruvian immigrants in particular (the biggest immigrant group in Chile).

In the third section, we turn our attention to the Chilean political context and offer antecedents that contribute to explaining how political identities have been developed. Political polarisation in the twentieth century (including the occurrence of a dictatorship) created severe conflicts between left-wing and right-wing political factions in Chile. As a result of the polarisation of political conflicts, and the extreme violence used by some political forces, political ideologies remain as sources of social identities and drive negative attitudes (and in some cases, violence). Particularly relevant for the present discussion is the process of reconciliation and forgiveness associated with past wrongdoing of groups involved in the political conflicts prior, during and after the Chilean dictatorship.

In the fourth section, we address the social phenomenon that involves gender identities and conflict: Machismo. It represents a patriarchal ideology of domination that has characterised gender relationships in Chile since colonial times. Until these days, gender-based violence, gender inequality and gender discrimination are widespread practices in Chile. We discuss the stereotype of being "macho" and how this conception is related to conflict and violence toward women and gay people and how in the last decades, women have achieved important advances in the social and political arenas.

Finally, this analysis would not be complete if we do not address one of the most noticeable social phenomena in Chile, namely social class. Differences among social classes tend to go hand in hand with some of different social identities we discuss in this chapter. White people disproportionately compose the upper class, while indigenous people, immigrants and single mothers tend to be in high risk of poverty. Today, Chile remains as one of the most unequal countries both in the region and in the world (Torche, 2006; World Bank, 2013). However, strong movements opposing wealth disparities and income inequality, organised by left-wing political parties or charismatic leaders, have started to dominate the public agenda and foster the discussion of social class and inequalities in the country. This realistic source of tension and conflict is also related to the psychological sphere where negative stereotypes and different forms of classism have been developed in the Chilean society as a whole.

Ethnic Identities in Chile

The process of conquest and colonisation of Chile by Spanish forces began in the fifteenth century and had significant consequences for the indigenous people who lived in the area (Bengoa, 2000). Crucially for this chapter, this process gave rise to an important differentiation between those who descend from white colonisers and those who have indigenous ancestors. Since the foundation of Santiago de Nueva Extremadura (today, Santiago de Chile) by Pedro de Valdivia in 1541, Spanish forces began the conquest of the indigenous lands across what currently is Chilean territory. While the indigenous groups living in the northern part of the country were easily subdued, the Mapuche people—the largest ethnic indigenous group in Chile-resisted for more than three centuries in the southern part of the country. By the end of the nineteenth century, finally the Chilean State invaded and occupied ancestral lands of Mapuche people. The area was divided into reservation lands and distributed to non-indigenous buyers. From this time onwards, the Mapuche people have claimed for their right to ancestral lands and for the recognition of rights and autonomy of their people. Part of the land was restored to indigenous owners during the land reform of the 1960s and 1970s. However, during Pinochet's dictatorship, hydroelectric and forestry companies received land concessions exacerbating the conflict. Between 1884 and 1980, Mapuche people had their land ownership reduced from 6.1 to 0.8 hectares per person (Agostini, Brown, & Roman, 2010), which has translated into a consequent impoverishment of the community.

When Chile recovered democracy in 1990, a number of measures were taken to guarantee the rights of indigenous groups: an indigenous development institution was created at the government level, public policy aimed at repairing the past damage and recognising their cultural tradition were implemented (Programa Origenes, Ministry of Social Planning) and an indigenous law was passed. Yet, these actions have been argued to be insufficient by many, and particularly so, by some leaders of indigenous communities. As a result, the demands of indigenous groups (the return of ancestral land, economic benefits, cultural recognition and the creation of an independent territory) have been growing significantly during the last few years. Alongside peaceful strategies to claim for land rights (e.g. collective actions, public calls and meeting with authorities), some radical Mapuche activists have turned to the use of violence against industrial and forestry companies and private landowners (Bengoa, 2000; Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009; Mella Seguel, 2007). Meanwhile, the police have responded in more and more violent ways and Mapuche territories have become increasingly militarised (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009; Mella Seguel, 2007). The criminal justice system, on the other hand, has applied anti-terrorist and internal security laws (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009), hereby limiting the rights of Mapuche defendants. As a result of this conflict and of a severe lack of social cohesion, the region suffers an under-production of public goods and, thus, persistent underdevelopment (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2013).

Today, indigenous people in Chile clearly belong to a minority low-status group in opposition to high-status non-indigenous Chileans (Terwindt, 2009): they enjoy a disproportionately lower share of social goods compared to the non-indigenous majority. This situation is particularly clear regarding Mapuche communities (for which there is more information available): Mapuche people have lower education levels (Cantero & Williamson, 2009), are poorer (Agostini et al., 2010), have poorer health, lower levels of income and show lower rates of upward mobility (Cantero & Williamson, 2009).

Identification with ethnic minorities or with non-indigenous Chileans, however, is not clear-cut (Terwindt, 2009). First of all, even though 44 % of the genetic contribution in Chile is indigenous (Fuentes et al., 2014), only 8 % of people self-identify as indigenous (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2013). To blur the distinction even further, a great proportion of Mapuche people live in cities and have assimilated into the majority's culture, while many non-indigenous Chileans support the Mapuche struggle (González et al., 2015; Terwindt, 2009; Zagefka, Brown, & González, 2009). It is thus not surprising to find a number of people in Chile identifying with indigenous minority groups as well as with the non-indigenous majority group. Indeed, identifying with both groups could bring about positive outcomes in terms of intergroup attitudes. For instance, Pehrson, González, and Brown (2011) demonstrated that the more non-indigenous people perceived themselves as having Mapuche roots as part of their Chilean identity, the higher the willingness to support policy aimed at repairing the damage toward indigenous groups. González et al. (2015), on the other hand, examined how the normative support for, and quality of, social interaction between Mapuche and non-indigenous Chilean children in school contexts affected identity development and acculturation preferences over time. The study revealed that the more indigenous and non-indigenous children perceived their family, peers and friends to support intergroup friendship, the stronger their identification with the Mapuche identity. In turn, greater Mapuche identification predicted greater support for the maintenance of Mapuche culture. On the other hand, quality of contact was particularly effective for non-indigenous children: better quality of contact with Mapuche students predicted greater Mapuche identification, which in turn predicted greater support for Mapuche cultural maintenance and

Chilean cultural adoption. Altogether, this evidence supports the idea that fostering norms for promoting cross group friendship as well as increasing the quality of cross group friendship between indigenous and Chilean non-indigenous groups would seem to be a positive means for building peaceful intergroup relations while recognising the value of group identities.

Above and beyond this overlap in indigenous and non-indigenous identities, intergroup relationships are still characterised by conflict stemming from both realistic and symbolic threat. First, the main issue of (peaceful and violent) contention is land ownership. Access to land not only affects economic opportunities for indigenous groups and hydroelectric/forestry companies and owners. Working the land is also at the heart of what constitutes the Mapuche identity. Second, cultural distance between indigenous and non-indigenous people in Chile is also relevant. Mapuche people—mainly those living in rural areas—have kept their own culture alive, still speak their own language (Mapudungun) and maintain their own health system and religion (Zagefka et al., 2009). Intergroup relations are also affected by this ongoing conflict. Zagefka et al. (2009) showed that Mapuche people are frequently stereotyped as brave warriors (Saiz, 1986), but also as being conflictive, rude, violent and lazy (Saiz, Rapimán, & Mladinic, 2008).

When we observe the attitudes of the members of the minority groups, things are not clear-cut. Minority group members overtly express an evaluative preference for their in-group but, at the same time, devalue it in a covert manner. It has long been stated that minority groups sometimes internalise a sense of inferiority (Allport, 1954), particularly under low-status conditions (Jost & Banaji, 1994). Indeed, Haye et al. (2010) found that non-indigenous Chileans expressed an evaluation of the Mapuche group equally positive to their in-group evaluation at the explicit level. However, they expressed a clear preference for their in-group at the implicit level. Mapuche participants, on the other hand, showed in-group favouritism at the explicit level and out-group favouritism at the implicit level. According to Haye et al. (2010), the latter situation provides evidence of system-justification tendencies among Mapuche respondents. Importantly, Mellor, Merino, Saiz, and Quilaqueo (2009) showed that Mapuche people report negative feelings, shame and powerlessness as a result of perceived discrimination.

Mapuche people have adopted different strategies to work around this situation of disadvantage. Some have adopted an individual strategy of assimilation, actively trying to conceal their indigenous background (e.g. avoiding talking in Mapudungun, their aboriginal language or changing their names); assimilating into the majority's culture and even discriminating against other Mapuche people (Terwindt, 2009). However, the majority of Mapuche people have opted for integration, that is, they value both maintaining their group identity and keeping contact with non-indigenous members. Others have adopted strategies of social change by actively resisting conforming to the national culture, emphasising their ethnic background, mobilising around a collective identity and demanding official recognition (Zagefka et al., 2009). Among different possible strategies for social change, violent means have been chosen by some radical Mapuche groups as a result of the perceived cultural distance and discrimination inherent in the Chilean legal system, as well as due to a high ethnic identification (Gerber, Carvacho, & González, 2015). Finally, Terwindt (2009) discusses the adoption of social creativity strategies, whereby some Mapuche people have based their identities in the image of the "true" Mapuche and in opposition to the negative dominant image. "True" Mapuches live in harmony with nature, use medical plants, have a traditional language and resist being exploited, among other things.

National Identity in the Context of Immigration in Chile

International migration to Chile began in colonial times. By the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, immigration from Europe was promoted to colonise southern territories (for a review, see Stefoni, 2011). During the same period, Asian and Latin American immigrants arrived to work in nitrate fields in northern Chile. Since the latter unwanted migration began to outnumber the planned migration of colonists, by 1947 policies were adopted to allow migration only in specific situations. A decree promulgated in 1953 explicitly stated that migration should contribute to improving racial biological conditions in Chile and avoid the entry of undesirable individuals for whom adaptation would be difficult. In 1975 (during Pinochet's dictatorship), a migration law was passed to limit the access of migrants to the national territory. According to Stefoni (2011), this law presented migrants as a threat to the nation (migrants are since then officially called "foreigners") and established a number of highly bureaucratic procedures to obtain temporary and definitive resident visa.

After democracy was regained in 1990, migration to Chile experienced important transformations (Martinez, 2004; Stefoni, 2011). Chile became an attractive place for Latin American migrants due to its comparatively high quality of life and work opportunities (Mora, 2008). Since then immigration waves have increased by 200 % and are expected to continue increasing. According to the estimations of the Ministry of Interior (2009), 352,344 migrants live in Chile (2.08 % of the total population). Among these, the largest immigrant groups come from Perú (37.1 %), Argentina (17.2 %) and Bolivia (6.8 %). According to this report, the majority of Peruvian immigrants have indigenous origins and belong to low socio-economic groups, and include a disproportionally high proportion of women between 15 and 44 years of age.

Intergroup attitudes between Peruvian immigrants and Chileans can be argued to stem from both realistic and symbolic threats. The arrival of immigrants to any given country can impact on feelings of realistic and symbolic threat on both sides (immigrant and native-born), as they have contact with each other. Stephan and Stephan (2000) argue that realistic threat derives from perceptions that the in-group's material well-being, as well as economic and political power, which may deteriorate because of the presence of immigrant groups. In the Chilean case, realistic threat can be observed in the competition between Peruvian immigrants and lower-class Chileans for low-skilled jobs (see González et al., 2010). While women often find jobs in domestic service and housekeeping, men tend to be employed in unskilled labour such as construction (Sabogal & Núñez, 2010). Participation in low-skilled jobs hinders the possibility of obtaining a residents visa because visa applicants need to present a work contract for two consecutive years and employers are reticent to hire immigrants. At the same time, not having a visa generates a range of social and economic vulnerabilities: undocumented migrants are not allowed access to social services such as health, housing and social subsidies (Stefoni, 2011). Stefoni argues that there is currently a lack of laws that specifically attend to migration issues, which has redirected the migration problem to a social problem of poverty, exclusion, violence and marginalisation.

On the other hand, at the symbolic level, while Peruvians and Chileans share relevant cultural characteristics (such as language and religion), there are noticeable differences when it comes to ethnic origins: while Chileans have a stronger White-European descent, Peruvian immigrants have a stronger Andean indigenous origin (see González et al., 2010). In part because of their indigenous roots, Peruvian immigrants are perceived as being low in status by Chileans (González, 2005).

Sirlopú and Van Oudenhoven (2013) measured negative affect toward Peruvian immigrants, perceived threat and acculturation preferences among a random sample of Chileans. They found that it was those with low SES who felt more threatened, exhibited stronger negative affect and showed less support for multiculturalism. On the other hand, González et al. (2010) found that Chilean's intergroup contact (number of friends) reduced prejudice toward Peruvians because it reduced feelings of realistic threat and intergroup anxiety. Interestingly enough, this process operates in the same way for the Peruvian immigrants regarding their experiences of contact and prejudice toward Chileans. Thus, the more they reported to have Chilean friends, the less they experienced feelings of threat and anxiety, and through that mechanism they reduced their prejudice toward Chileans. Thus, fostering the development of cross-group friendship among Peruvian immigrants and Chileans could be a fundamental way of promoting social cohesion and developing peaceful intergroup relations among people who have experienced conflict in the past.

Second, negative stereotypes of Peruvian immigrants also seem to serve the function of strengthening the Chilean identity. According to Sirlopú and Van Oudenhoven (2013), negative attitudes toward Peruvian immigrants are based on the common assumption among Chileans that the country is homogenously White and shares a European background (see also Staab & Maher, 2006). Chileans have a preference for white-skinned people and distrust people with indigenous ethnic origins (see Meeus et al., 2015; Uhlmann, Dasgupta, Elgueta, Greenwald, & Swanson, 2002). Staab and Maher (2006) conducted interviews among Chilean middle-class employers of Peruvian domestic workers and found that they perceived Peruvian domestic workers as being more obedient and hard-working than Chilean workers. However, they also tended to stereotype Peruvian domestic workers as uncivilised, with little education and dirty. The authors reasoned that this double discourse thought to, on the one hand, justify hiring migrants under poor working conditions (bad jobs are better than no jobs) while, on the other hand, constructing a positive Chilean identity as white and modern in opposition to indigenous and backward Peruvians. The authors also found a tendency among middle-class employers of Peruvian domestic workers to switch back and forth from an identity based on class (to distinguish between them and low-class Chileans) and an identity based on nationality (to distinguish between all Chileans and Peruvians). Differences with other Chileans seemed to be rather irrelevant when employers talked about their opposition to Peruvians.

Political Ideology and Political Identities

The most salient conflict in Chile during the last hundred years has been between political groups (Carvacho, Manzi, Haye, González, & Cornejo, 2013). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Marxist political parties—socialist and communist—were formed to represent the interests of the working class, which had not been represented by political institutions. These parties gained relevance when, with a centre-left coalition, they won three consecutive general elections in the first half of the twentieth century. However, this coalition ended when in 1948 the elected president—Gabriel González Videla, a member of the largest party in the coalition—outlawed the Communist Party and persecuted its members. By that time, the Marxist parties were already a strong electoral force (Navia & Osorio, 2015). The most important victory for the Marxist parties was the election of Salvador Allende, member of the Socialist Party, as Chilean president in 1970. Its presidency got enormous international attention. Since his election, international agencies, such as the CIA, and Chilean right-wing groups conspired against Allende and finally overthrew him in a military coup d'état on September 11th, 1973. The Chilean dictatorship led by Augusto Pinochet lasted 17 years and repressed, persecuted, tortured and killed thousands of Chileans, mainly because of their political identities. Political participation was banned and a society that, until then, was largely organised by political institutions became severely depressed and demobilised (Remmer, 1980).

In 1990, democracy was re-established in Chile. As a result of the polarisation of the political conflict, and the extreme violence that was used by the dictatorship, Chileans faced the challenge of not only rebuilding democracy but of healing deep differences rooted in the political identities and the history of conflict (Cornejo, Rojas, & Mendoza, 2009; González, Manzi, & Noor, 2013; Manzi & González, 2007).

Nowadays, differences between Chileans based on their political identities seem to have lost relevance, for instance, party affiliation and even self-identification with the left-right continuum have decreased (Angell, 2003; González et al., 2005). However, research has also shown that, although people might not be as explicit as before the dictatorship about their political identities, these identities define the way people perceive the past (Carvacho et al., 2013; Manzi et al., 2004), their positions regarding reparation toward the victims of the dictatorship (Carvacho, Zick, et al., 2013), their willingness to forgive and reconcile (González et al., 2013; Noor, Brown, González, Manzi, & Lewis, 2008) and have an impact on the organisation of the party system and voting behaviour (Colomer & Escatel, 2005). Though Chile recovered its democracy more than 25 years ago, there still persists a significant level of tension and conflict between new generations of Chileans who identify with the left and those with right wing political orientations (González et al., 2008; Manzi et al., 2004). These tensions and conflicts are mainly related to the recognition of the wrongdoing committed by members of the out-groups (killing, disappearing, torture) in the past, the process for achieving reparation and forgiveness, as well as legal processes that are still open and waiting to be concluded (González et al., 2013, Manzi et al., 2004), but are rooted in deep ideological differences (Carvacho, Zick, et al., 2013).

The construction of new and stable party coalitions has restructured the political system and the identification with the coalition derives in positive attitudes toward members of other parties within the coalition and negative attitudes toward members of the opposing-coalition parties (González et al., 2008). Therefore, nowadays, political identification still remains a relevant dimension to understand intergroup dynamics in Chile.

Gender

Machismo is a patriarchal ideology of domination that has characterised gender relationships in Latin America since colonial times (Gissi, 1974). From Gissi's (1974) perspective, Spaniards imported gender roles and gender ideologies rooted in Catholicism together with modern institutions and technologies. *Marianismo* or the idea that Mary, mother of Jesus, was at that time the example of virtue and a role model for all women was deeply entrenched in the Latin American culture. Consistent with the latter, obedience and maternity were defined as the core values of women's roles in society. In opposition to this, the stereotypical view of men was based on the idea of the Spanish conquistador, a brave and tough warrior, or on the image of the also brave and tough Mapuche warrior. Men were educated to fight while women were educated only to care and look after the family and children. With the process of colonisation, previous gender identities that had more dynamic definitions among the Mapuche culture, where replaced by Machismo and Marianismo (see Barrientos & Cárdenas, 2013; Diekman, Eagly, Mladinic, & Ferreira, 2005; Gissi, 1974).

Huge gender disparities have been maintained until deep into the twentieth century. However, profound changes have happened in the last decades. During the dictatorship, women's political participation played a crucial role in both the opposition to the oppressive regime and in political activism (Chuchryk, 1994). Women led the public expression of the opposition to the Pinochet regime and the fight against human right violations through associations of families of victims of political violence. The formal political participation of women drastically changed as well. Women obtained full voting rights in the 1940s while in 1999 two women ran for president for the first time in Chilean history (although without real chances to win). In 1990, with the first democratic government after Pinochet's dictatorship, no woman was appointed as minister. By 2006 Chile elected Michelle Bachellet, who was the first female president in South America (which has been now also replicated in Brazil and Argentina). She established a gender parity system in her first government in which women occupied half of the minister positions and an important percentage of all seats dependent on presidential nomination.

There have also been important changes in gender roles in contemporary Chile: First, there has been an increase in women's participation in the formal labour force (Diekman et al., 2005). Second, there have been important changes in perspectives toward traditional gender roles among younger generations, who have adopted critical views about the traditional gender division of labour and male participation in child rearing (Alcalay, González, Reinoso, & Lizana, 1994).

However, despite the deep transformation in gender equality, women's rights, and gender roles, gender inequalities in the Chilean society still remain. For instance, the participation of women in the formal labour market still remains among the lowest in Latin America, despite the fact that Chilean women are highly educated (second only to Cuba) and that there has been stable economic growth during the last three decades. This phenomenon, known as the Chilean Exception, can be explained as a function of the beliefs concerning the roles women have in parenting and housekeeping (Contreras, Hurtado, & Sara, 2012). Moreover, gender ideologies have also had a negative impact on the quality of life for males who do not conform to stereotypical gender roles, such as gay men (Barrientos & Cárdenas, 2013). In particular, forms of prejudice rooted on gender ideologies (such as sexism and homophobia) have not yet been removed from the Chilean culture. However, the creation of the Woman and Gender Equality Ministry alongside a new antidiscrimination law is a clear signal that the Chilean society is addressing gender inequality and violence toward women in a more systematic way.

Social Class

Chile has been and remains a highly stratified society. During colonial times, a clear distinction was established among Spanish colonisers, indigenous groups and mestizos (mixed race). During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Basque and non-Spanish European immigrants joined the Spanish descendants to form Chile's socio-economic elite (see Nuñez and Gutiérrez, 2004). These groups gained control over land and developed industries and were able to concentrate a significant proportion of economic and political power. The working class, on the other hand, was formed by agricultural workers, miners, and railway and port workers, among others. The working class began as early as the end of the nineteenth century to form labour organisations to protest against bad working and living conditions, giving rise to a strong labour movement and to violent repressions (Roddick, 1981). At the end of the nineteenth century, the Chilean State experienced an important financial growth due to the expansion of the sodium nitrate mining. The latter translated into an important change from an economy based on agriculture to one based on industry. The State increased significantly the number of public servants giving rise to a new middle class (Barozet, 2006). By 1973, 14 % of the labour force worked in the public sector (Torche, 2006). Even though the Chilean middle class has been characterised by increasingly high levels of education (even compared to the upper classes), they still rely on wages which puts them in a situation of vulnerability similar to that of the lower classes (Barozet, 2006).

During the military dictatorship (1973–1989), the Chilean economy experienced yet another important change toward neoliberal policies and the reduction of financial support for lower social classes (Koch, 1999). According to Koch (1999), these changes transformed the social structure. At first, important negative social consequences were observed: unemployment rates rose, the informal sector grew and wage levels were reduced. However, by the end of the 1990s, and supported by several new public policies, the economy strongly recovered, unemployment declined and wages rose significantly over the years, raising Chile up to its current high status position within the Latin American region. Nevertheless, wage differences between occupational categories steadily increased. For example while in 1972 managers earned 6 times more than workers in the lower classes, in 1994 managers earned 11 times more. At the same time, after the dictatorship collective organisation declined and jobs became more flexible and deregulated. By the year 2000 almost one-third of the labour force in Chile belonged to the informal sector (this is, workers without a formal contract and access to social security). Another important change was the decline in the percentage of public workers (who generally experienced better working conditions than workers in the private sector) from 14 % in 1973 to 8 % in 1985 (see Torche, 2006). Thus, Koch (1999) concludes that the neoliberal transformation brought about a "flexible and pluralist class society" (p. 17).

Today, Chile is one of the most unequal countries in the world (see Torche, 2006; World Bank, 2013). Specifically, Chile is extremely unequal when it comes to the difference between the incomes of the first decile and the rest. Differences between medium and low socio-economic classes are comparatively smaller (Torche, 2006). Even though there are high levels of income mobility, the latter tends to occur within the lower income deciles, while the probability of upward mobility is low (see Núñez & Risco, 2005). The same is true for mobility across occupational positions: most processes of mobility occur between positions of similarly lower social status (Torche, 2005).

Important differences among members of different social classes can be observed when considering both structural differences in access to education and work, as well as ideological attitudes. Income inequality has a strong effect on access to education: the chances of attending higher education for people in the richest quintile are five times the chances of people in the poorest quintile (see for a discussion Barozet, 2006). All in all, the strongest predictor of people's achievements in Chile is the education and status of their parents (Puga & Solís, 2010). Class discrimination also seems to play an important role in the labour market: Nuñez and Gutierrez (2004) found significantly higher income levels among professionals with higher socio-economic backgrounds than those who have lower socio-economic backgrounds, even after controlling for a number of relevant factors such as academic performance and language proficiency.

Finally, studies have consistently shown differences among social classes in Chile in relation to ideological attitudes, such as authoritarianism and pro-democratic attitudes (e.g. Carvacho & Haye, 2011; Carvacho, Zick, et al., 2013; Haye, Carvacho, González, Manzi, & Segovia, 2009). Particularly, people from lower social classes tend to express more authoritarian and conservative attitudes. For example, Carvacho, Zick, et al., 2013 drew on a longitudinal survey of Chilean respondents to analyse the effects of social class (operationalised as education and income) on prejudice and whether these effects were mediated by ideological attitudes (right-wing authoritarianism, RWA; and social dominance orientation, SDO). The authors found negative associations between levels of education and prejudice toward immigrants, as well as between education and SDO. Furthermore, SDO mediated the effect of education on prejudice. Consistent with system justification theory, these findings suggest that in Chile members of the working class legitimise the system to a greater extent than members of higher social classes.

Societies, therefore, need to set up ambitious goals with regard to increasing the level and quality of education of their population as a whole. This is a key element that should provide equal opportunities for people to succeed at the individual and group level, promoting both social mobility and social change. Education is expected to foster the value of recognising social diversity and the importance of group identities, rendering authoritarianism as a less attractive ideology. On the other hand, education seems to be a fundamental driver for stimulating pro-democratic attitudes and values, key elements for building peace among social groups.

Conclusions

We have analysed how historical and political processes have shaped the construction of the most relevant social identities in Chile, namely ethnic identities, national identity in the context of immigration, political identities, gender identities and social class identities. For each of these, we have described the historical background that gave rise to status and power differences, the nature of their intergroup relations, the social conflicts that emerge among the groups involved, threats to social identity, as well as out-group derogation.

The Chilean society has been experiencing significant changes over the last few decades at the economic, political, cultural and socio-psychological levels. However, huge disparities and inequalities in levels of income remain between the rich and the poor. The political stability and the democratic system have been a fundamental corner stone and building on this strength Chilean society has started to develop policies aimed at building trust among conflicting political perspectives and groups. Culturally, Chilean society became much more liberal and less conservative and certainly more diverse since increasing number of immigrants arrived to settle in the country. Many of these changes have impacted the way social identity functions in Chilean society. Thus, there is an undeniable link between social change and psychological change. We will now discuss some issues regarding the social identities that we considered in this chapter and the challenges we face in order to promote social cohesion, tolerance and diversity; the three major values that the Chilean society advocates as part of its new identity.

First, it is clear that the indigenous ethnic groups in Chile, particularly the Mapuche people, are at present fighting with different strategies to be culturally recognised and socially and symbolically reparated for the wrongdoing committed by the Chilean State in the past. The salience of the current conflict requires that indigenous groups and authorities develop national initiatives aimed at reaching those goals. In order to build harmonious intergroup relations indigenous and non-indigenous groups need to recognise the values that both groups bring into Chilean society to identify pathways of reconciliation and establish a clear way in which both groups can develop a sense of common belonging or identity while simultaneously recognising and valuing the existence of several identities (e.g. complex identities and dual identities, Roccas & Brewer, 2002; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2011; González & Brown 2003, 2006). This complex representation would allow group members not to feel threatened by the social context and more importantly to mutually recognise the cultural differences that will certainly enrich the Chilean society (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). This is particularly relevant in a context in which dominant groups display high assimilation drives and exhibit prejudice and discrimination toward minority group members such as indigenous or immigrant people.

Second, there is also evidence demonstrating how important it is to develop a common identity that preserves group distinctiveness to deal with identity threat feelings in rather different contexts. Indeed, we have witnessed in the Chilean political context, how groups with different political identities and ideologies have joined forces in order to pursue common goals. The creation of coalitions naturally brings about tensions between the groups that belong to it driven by political differences. However, the sense of being a member of the same coalition and especially the positive affect that members feel concerning the coalition with which they identify helps them cope with group differences that normally bring them apart. This common identity helps preserve political distinctiveness and reduces feelings of threat from other political groups (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2011; González & Brown, 2003, 2006; González et al., 2008). These findings could be understood within the social identity framework, especially in terms of optimal distinctiveness and dual identity models. Optimal distinctiveness theory assumes that the need for assimilation or the need to belong and feel included in groups competes with the need for differentiation or the need to feel distinctive from others (Brewer, 1991). These competing needs are at the heart of intracoalition, interparty attitudes. On the one hand, there is some benefit to maintaining or promoting both political distinctiveness and coalition identities simultaneously. As political members become included in an increasingly large, expansive in-group—the coalition—they satisfy their need for assimilation. In addition, as long as they preserve their political identity at the party level, members will have the opportunity to meet their differentiation needs, reaching a balance or an optimal distinctiveness level. This rationale is also consistent with the dual identity hypothesis

(Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; González & Brown, 2003, 2006) which suggests that simultaneously maintaining both the in-group–out-group distinction (party) and a superordinate identity (coalition) could be useful for the promotion of positive intergroup attitudes.

Third, integration into Chilean society is a major challenge for immigrants (Brown & Zagefka, 2011). Following Berry's (1997) ideas, a preference for integration exists only if immigrants wish both to maintain their original cultural identity (identity or group distinctiveness) and to have contact with majority members. Integration brings less stress among minorities, reduces in-group bias (Zagefka & Brown, 2002) and promotes more favourable intergroup attitudes (González et al., 2010: Zagefka, Brown, Broquard, & Martin, 2007). But members of the majority group also have preferences about how they would like immigrants to live (e.g. Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzalek, 2000; Zagefka et al., 2009). Therefore, in order to understand and introduce policies aimed at fostering positive intergroup relations and preserving social identities, we need to consider the perspective of both immigrants and members of the host society in such a way that the needs to belong and distinctiveness desired by both groups are psychologically well satisfied (Brewer, 1991, Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Brown & Zagefka, 2011). Creating such a policy will require Chileans thinking of themselves as a multicultural society that has changed over the last decades rather than a homogenous one.

Finally, drawing on social identity complexity theory (Roccas & Brewer, 2002) we advance that the different social identity distinctions analysed in this chapter have not necessarily translated into social identity complexity yet (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). As an example, social groups tend to converge: Mapuche people and Peruvian immigrants most often comprise lower social classes. People from lower classes tend to have an indigenous background while people from upper social classes tend to have to a greater extent a European background. That is, distinctions are not crosscutting and individuals who are out-group members in one dimension tend to be out-group members in other dimension, too. Thus, even if the society is multicultural, this overlap has reduced the experience of complex social relationships. Based on Roccas and Brewer (2002), we speculate that other antecedents that inhibit social identity complexity (e.g. low tolerance for ambiguity, the predominance of conservative values as opposed to openness to change) are at play in the Chilean society. The latter might increase the sense of identity threat and bring stress, tension and conflict between the groups involved.

Thus in order for a modern society to tackle the challenges imposed by multiculturalism and social diversity, the historical and political processes that have shaped the construction of the relevant social identities need to be taken into account, in addition to the needs of belonging and distinctiveness as well as the factors that might threaten social identities. Moreover, it is crucial to provide a variety of opportunities to experience positive intergroup encounters in which groups can learn from each other and more importantly can live in peace without feeling threatened by the presence of other groups. Only by following these paths people from other countries facing similar conflictive situations will be able to live in more cohesive and integrated societies that value diversity and recognise the existence of different identities.

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