Chapter 4
Identity and Acculturation Processes in Multicultural Societies

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Widespread anti-immigration attitudes in Western societies, as well as destructive terrorist acts such as 9/11 in New York, and the more recent 11/15 attacks in Paris, highlight the urgency to study and discuss identity integration and multiculturalism. The above events have raised social, political, and academic debates on how to live peacefully in multicultural societies, avoiding conflict among different cultural groups. At a social level, there are intense discussions regarding the successful integration of migrants in receiving societies. Countries such as Canada, the United States, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and the UK are generally considered *multicultural* since they experience cultural and social changes, as well as transformation of their population demographics as a consequence of globalisation and large migration waves (see Lalonde, Cila, & Yampolsky, 2016 for a discussion of migration and multiculturalism in Canada; and Law & Mackenzie, 2016 for a discussion of these issues in Australia).

Migration takes place due to different reasons that vary across countries and times. Primarily, migration is the outcome of economic reasons. For example, Southern Europeans moved within Europe as a consequence of the economic crisis of 2008. In addition, migration can be prompted by asylum seeking due to war or persecuted political and social ideology. In recent times, many countries have received large numbers of refugees from Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Egypt. At a political level, some European leaders already adopted a clear position with respect to the resulting multiculturalism. In 2011 David Cameron[1] declared the failure of multiculturalism in the UK and the lack of a strong British collective identity; similarly,

[1] As published by BBC news on the 5th of February 2011, during his first speech as prime minister, when talking about radicalisation and the causes of terrorism, David Cameron said "We have failed to provide a vision of the society to which they want to belong. We have even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values" (BBC News, 2011).

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Angela Merkel[2] criticised multiculturalism and Nicolas Sarkozy[3] pointed to its failure. Before condemning or praising multiculturalism, however, from a social psychological perspective it is important to clarify what multiculturalism is, which processes it implies, and which factors can determine its success or failure. To this end, in this chapter we will discuss multiculturalism with a focus on *acculturation*, a fundamental process that is very closely associated with multiculturalism; and on *social identity*, a key motivational factor that underlies acculturation processes.

The term multiculturalism was originally adopted in Canada as a policy goal, in order to recognise the migrants' need to maintain their ethnic culture and to simultaneously adopt the Canadian one. In fact, politically, multiculturalism corresponds to "the recognition of group differences within the public sphere of laws, policies, democratic discourses and the terms of a shared citizenship and national identity" (Modood, 2013, pp. 2). Living in a multicultural society with a positive multicultural ideology, indeed, implies the integration of distinct cultural groups in addition to the preservation of each group's ethnic and cultural identity (Van der Veer, 2003). Within social psychology, multiculturalism entails the examination of core topics, such as social identity, intergroup relations, and attitudes towards ethnic out-groups (Verkuyten & Brug, 2004).

Multiculturalism embraces political norms, laws, principles, and beliefs typical of a contemporary liberal democracy, but at the same time it represents a social and political challenge (Modood, 2013). Multiculturalism is a complex and demanding process both for societies and for individuals. In multicultural contexts, people with different languages, cultural norms, religions, values, and gender roles strive to manage, negotiate, and integrate their identities. The process of integrating people's distinct identities (ethnic, national, cultural, religious) can be challenging and can sometimes lead to intergroup conflict (Phinney, 1991). This conflict can escalate to hate crime, terrorism, and even genocide (Bourhis, Montaruli, El-Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, 2010). To a large extent, the outcome of the negotiation between (often conflicting) identities determines the success of the acculturation process.

Taking into consideration the interplay between identity and acculturation in multicultural contexts, this chapter will discuss the role of social identity in the acculturation process with the aim of understanding the dynamics that can minimise conflict between groups and facilitate positive and peaceful intergroup relations. Indeed, Berry (2004), considered acculturation as one of the fundamental domains relevant to the analysis of intergroup relations and the resulting intergroup harmony or conflict. This chapter will discuss the main theories on acculturation, and draw links with social categorisation approaches. Finally, the chapter will discuss how individuals with mul-

[2] On the 17th of October 2010, the BBC news quoted Angela Merkel's speech where the German Chancellor said that "the approach to build a multicultural society and to live side-by-side and to enjoy each other…has failed, utterly failed" (BBC News, 2010).

[3] As reported by the Daily Mail on 11th of February 2011, the French President Nicolas Sarkozy condemned multiculturalism saying: "We have been too concerned about the identity of the person who was arriving and not enough about the identity of the country that was receiving it" (Daily Mail Reporter, 2011).

tiple cultural identities manage these along a continuum of identity integration (see also Maitner & Stewart-Ingersoll, 2016 for a description of how identity and culture interact to predict behaviour of multicultural individuals in the UAE).

The Acculturation Process: Definitions and Theoretical Perspectives

Sociology, cross-cultural psychology, and social psychology argue that acculturation is relevant to societies that are culturally plural (Berry, 1997, 2003) and that it corresponds to a dynamic process of reciprocal influences between different groups. Already at the beginning of the twentieth century, acculturation was described as inclusive of *"those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture pattern of either or both groups"* (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 149, quoted in Berry, 1997). More recently, Gibson (2001) underlined that acculturation relates to the changes deriving from contact with dissimilar groups. Therefore, identity principles are of paramount importance when attempting to understand the process of acculturation.

The literature on acculturation has looked into the process mostly from the perspective of minority groups, i.e. the groups that enter a new social/cultural setting (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). Cheng, Benet-Martìnez, and Harris Bond (2008) differentiated between *immigration-based acculturation*, when people move to a new country and need to manage or negotiate the balance between different cultures, shaping new identities through the acquisition of languages, norms, and traditions of the new country; and *globalisation-based* acculturation, when people develop a multicultural identity and a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture through contact with different ethnic groups that are present in a country. Usually, the immigration-based acculturation refers to minority groups while the globalisation-based to majority groups. Based on the above, when analysing the process of acculturation it is important to consider the characteristics of specific minority groups (e.g. ethnically visible or non-visible immigrants, the reasons of migration, political, demographic and social conditions; Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997) as well as the characteristics of receiving societies (i.e. individualistic versus collectivistic, orientation towards pluralism and multiculturalism; Berry, 2005). The interaction between minorities and receiving societies can lead to different acculturation outcomes (Bhatia & Ram, 2001) that can eventually determine agreeable or conflicting relations between respective groups.

It is also important to clarify that the acculturation process can occur both at a group and at an individual level (psychological acculturation; Graves, 1967). As a collective phenomenon, acculturation implies changes in the culture of the entire group, whereas as a psychological process acculturation signals to a transformation in the mindset and in the identity of single members of a group that is experiencing acculturation. Sabatier and Berry (1996) note that psychological acculturation

implies personal changes in people's identities, attitudes, and values and, as a result, group changes regarding social, institutional, and cultural topics also occur. Zane and Mak (2003) argue that acculturation can take place in different domains, such as people's identities, but also languages, beliefs, and cultural knowledge. We will return to the issue of psychological acculturation when discussing bicultural identity integration. Prior to this, the main theories regarding acculturation will be briefly examined, and then the link between identity and acculturation will be analysed.

Berry's Strategy Model (1990)

The main theoretical approaches on acculturation are Berry's Strategy Model (1990), the Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al., 1997), and the Concordance Model of Acculturation (Piontkowski, Rohmann, & Florack, 2002). For the purpose of this chapter, Berry's model is reviewed and the main differences with the subsequent models are identified.

Berry's strategy model (1990) is a fundamental paradigm on acculturation; it is a bi-dimensional model with particular emphasis on identity. The model describes the acculturation process as a result of the interaction between two components: the extent to which people want to identify with the original ethnic culture (i.e. *cultural maintenance*) and the extent to which they are willing to identify with the mainstream/receiving one, as well as participate and interact with the majority culture (i.e. *contact participation*). Further research on these dimensions led to the use of the term *cultural adoption* as a more informed way of referring to contact participation (see Bourhis et al., 1997), so this is the term that we will use here.

Based on the combination of high-/low-level cultural maintenance and cultural adoption, Berry (1980) theorised four different acculturation strategies. The four strategies correspond to attitudes and behaviours of majority and minority groups, with identification playing a core role underlying their development (Berry, 2011). The strategies are labelled differently according to which perspective (majority or minority) is taken. From the perspective of minorities, the acculturation strategies are: *integration*, when members of the minority groups highly identify with both the ethnic and the mainstream culture, *assimilation*, when they do not identify with their ethnic culture, but want to interact and get assimilated in the mainstream culture, *separation*, when minority members highly identify with their ethnic culture and do not want to interact with that of the majority and *marginalisation*, when they identify low with both cultures, or in other words when they do not feel connected to either of the two. In the case of the majority group, instead, there is *mutual accommodation* when the majority group supports the minority's wish to maintain its ethnic culture as well as adopt aspects of the majority's, *melting pot* (or *pressure cooker* when forced) when the majority supports assimilation, *segregation*, when the majority group keeps ethnic minorities separated and *marginalisation* (that has been relabelled as *exclusionism*) when the majority expects the minority not to be in contact with the majority and, at the same time, renounce its ethnic origin.

Marginalisation is the acculturation strategy that could potentially cause more conflict and negative outcomes for societies and individuals (Berry, 2005). In contrast, integration is the most positive and balanced strategy, requiring the majority group to be open and inclusive and the minority to have a strong desire for contact (Berry, 1991). This way both majorities and minorities recognise the importance of identifying with (sometimes very) different cultures and, at the same time being part of a common culture, too (Berry, 1997). However, integration, although optimal, is not a strategy that can be adopted effortlessly by group members. The reasons behind the strenuousness in adopting integration strategies can be due to both societal and individual factors. Berry and Kalin (1995) argue that integration can be achieved only in multicultural societies that have specific preconditions such as multicultural ideology, low levels of prejudice, and positive intergroup attitudes towards the out-groups. An additional precondition, particularly relevant to this chapter, relates to the degree of identification with the society where the acculturation process takes place, as experienced both by majority and minority group members. Specifically, identification with a receiving society can sometimes be very limited in the case of minority group members (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006).

The Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM; Bourhis et al., 1997)

Despite its contribution to the acculturation literature, Berry's strategy model does not take into account personal and structural characteristics of the groups (Rudmin, 2003; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010), for example, individuals' social and educational backgrounds (Cornelius, 2002; Steiner, 2009), age at the time of migration (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), and socioeconomic status and resources in the context where acculturation takes place (Rohmann, Piontkowski, & van Randenborgh, 2008; Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta, 2014). With the aim of complementing Berry's model, the Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM; Bourhis et al., 1997) retheorised acculturation (see also Bourhis, Barrette, El-Geledi, & Schmidt, 2009) by focusing on the interactive nature of intergroup relations in the acculturation process. Thus, three elements play a key role here: the acculturation strategies chosen by the majority group, the ones adopted by the minorities, and the interpersonal and intergroup outcomes deriving from the combination of the acculturation strategies. In the case of minority groups, the acculturation strategies proposed by the IAM are: *individualism*, which considers people as single individuals instead of members of cultural groups, *integrationism*, *assimilationism*, *separatism*, and *marginalisationism*. In the case of majority groups, the new suggested strategies are *individualism*, when members of the majority groups consider themselves as individuals with no sense of belonging to groups, *integrationism*, *assimilationism*, *segregationism*, and *exclusionism*, which is associated with the belief that minority groups can never be part of the mainstream society (Bourhis et al., 2009).

A further premise of the IAM, which is linked to the political and practical aspects of multicultural societies, relates to the role played by policies implemented (or not) in the countries where the acculturation process takes place. It is important to note

that the policies are related to the identities of the relevant groups. According to the IAM, there are *state immigration policies* and *state integration policies*: the former relate to the kind of ethnic groups accepted in the country based on their number, status, and origins, while the latter relate to the policies adopted by the government in order to facilitate integration. State immigration policies create categories of minority groups such as temporary workers, refugees, illegal immigrants, shaping this way people's identities, and potentially impacting on the choice of acculturation orientation. State integration policies, instead, indicate the institutional conditions adopted by the government that aim at integrating majority and minority groups. Combinations of state immigration policies and state integration policies could create the conditions for either successful integration, or indeed, negative and conflicting relations within the society where the acculturation process occurs.

Concordance Model of Acculturation (CMA)

Piontkowski et al. (2002) theorised on groups' power disparity and the extent to which they can control the acculturation process in the Concordance Model of Acculturation (CMA). The authors underlined the fact that usually majority groups have more power than minorities since they are represented more in authorities and institutions; and consequently, they have more power over public policies. CMA points to examining the fit between the acculturation strategies that minority groups want to adopt and the strategies that the majority group wants minorities to adopt. With this model, more dissonance between majority and minority preferences relates to higher levels of (perceived) threatening contact, and reduced success in acculturation. In sum, CMA suggests that in the acculturation process it is necessary to consider the fit between the preferences of both majority and minority groups, to use a dynamic approach to understand the effects of one group's acculturation choice on the other group, as well as to investigate the consequences of the acculturation process on intergroup relations (Brown & Zagefka, 2011).

In the first part of this chapter, the main theories on acculturation have been examined, pointing to the complexity of the subject. As emerged from this brief review, majority and minority identity plays a key role in determining whether acculturation will be a harmonious or conflicting process. In order to further analyse acculturation through the lens of social identity, this chapter will now briefly discuss the main theories on social identification. More specifically, the focus will be on the link between identity and acculturation, with the purpose of understanding the framework that underlies the integration of different identities (Haritatos & Benet-Martinez, 2002).

Social Identification During Acculturation

Various social psychological approaches can be combined to allow a thorough understanding of the interaction between majority and minority groups' acculturation process (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). For example, the Contact

Hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1997), Similarity-Attraction Hypothesis (Byrne, 1971), Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), Integrated Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000), Instrumental Model of Group Conflict (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001), and Common In-group Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) can all provide a framework of understanding majority and minority relations in the context of acculturation. In addition, negative stereotypes (Maisonneuve & Testé, 2007), the perception of the out-group as threatening (Tip et al., 2012; Ward & Masgoret, 2006), and social ideological variables such as social dominance orientation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006) can affect how peacefully the process of acculturation will occur. Importantly, theories on categorisation and identity offer a particularly relevant perspective of understanding the acculturation of majority and minority groups in multicultural contexts. A close examination of the role of identity and its changes in the acculturation process is essential in order to understand the factors that can enhance intergroup relations and reduce intergroup conflicts.

In Schwartz, Montgomery, and Briones (2006) review of identity and acculturation, the concept of identity is represented as an "anchor" during the transitional and adaptive period of the acculturation process. The salience of identity is stronger among adolescents and young adults (Arnett, 2000), since at this period people creatively form new identities by mixing different aspects of their ethnic and mainstream heritage (Schwartz, 2001). Schwartz et al. (2006) argue in favour of an *adaptive* identity that is composed of a coherent personal identity (Schwartz, 2001) and a coherent social identity (Brown, 2000). With an adaptive identity, people can face the challenges that derive from the acculturation process and at the same time, maintain positive feelings toward the groups with which they identify.

From an intergroup perspective, according to Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), identity derives from the awareness of being part of a social group. Tajfel and Turner (1979) identified social categorisation and group comparison as the key components of SIT. SIT suggests that people strive to obtain and maintain a positive image of themselves through constant comparisons between their in-group and relevant out-groups. Through comparisons, people are able to create or maintain a sense of positive distinctiveness for their in-group, which reinforces their own positive identity. In this search for positive intergroup distinctiveness, the self-concept is described in terms of "we" rather than "I" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The tendency to reinforce the in-group's positive distinctiveness is stronger for those who identify highly with their group and who perceive themselves as prototypical members of the group. However, a strong in-group identity can lead to ethnocentrism and can manifest in the form of in-group favouritism or out-group derogation (Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Jewish Canadians, for example, who identify strongly with their religion held more conservative political attitudes and were less open to interfaith relationships compared to those who identified less strongly with their religion (Haji, Lalonde, Durbin, & Naveh-Benjamin, 2011). This can be particularly problematic in a context where ethnic majorities and minorities coexist and thus distinct identities become salient.

A prominent model that makes use of categorisation processes with the aim of *reducing* intergroup conflict is the Common In-group Identity Model (CIIM; Gaertner

& Dovidio, 2000). CIIM suggests that by recategorising social identity from separate groups into a common group at a superordinate level, people can develop more positive attitudes towards former out-group members (who are now in-group members in a more inclusive group). This process of recategorisation can be facilitated by emphasising Allport's (1954) conditions for optimal contact, for example equal status and common goals (Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman, & Anastasio, 1994). CIIM can be helpful when considering the facilitation of acculturation, and more precisely, of integration. Following the principles of the model, a superordinate national identity (such as being British, for example) can include all the ethnic subgroups (such as Black British, British Asian, and White British). Promoting an inclusive superordinate identity can indirectly facilitate a successful acculturation process as it can create the conditions for the integration of different cultural identities (Bastian, 2012).

Unfortunately, however, a superordinate identity may pose a threat to people who identify highly with their ethnic culture, since the culture's distinctiveness may be threatened. Indeed, group identification is a significant moderator of intergroup distinctiveness threats (for meta-analysis, see Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 2001). High identifiers are likely to attempt to restore in-group's distinctiveness after perceived threats, by differentiating from relevant out-groups. In other words, following strategies that aim at promoting a common identity, people who identify highly with their ethnic group may feel threatened by the loss of in-group distinctiveness; and react with more bias towards the out-group (Crisp, Stone, & Hall, 2006). On the other hand, perceptions of increased similarity (e.g. via a common identity) can lead to less bias for low identifiers (Jetten, Spears, & Manstead, 1996). This suggests that promoting a common, inclusive identity as a way of enhancing integration, may in fact trigger reactive responses from individuals who identify highly with their in-group. Importantly, and pertinent to acculturation dynamics, Dovidio, Gaertner, Niemann, and Snider (2001) showed that minorities and majorities prefer different types of recategorisation strategies, dual identity, and one group, respectively.

The *dual identity approach* (Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996) came to address criticisms of CIIM that argued that group members may resist the blurring of boundaries between the groups because of fear of losing their distinctiveness (Brewer & Miller, 1988) or where the two groups differ in size, power, or status (Brewer & Gaertner, 2001). Gaertner et al. (1996) suggested that group members do not have to renounce their original identities entirely but rather sustain both their superordinate and subgroup identities salient. This strategy represents the incorporation of Hewstone and Brown (1986); Brown and Hewstone, (2005) mutual intergroup differentiation model in the recategorisation approach. It is argued that keeping subgroups salient and simultaneously promoting a superordinate identity can enhance the generalisation of positive intergroup attitudes. From the perspective of acculturation strategies, the dual identity approach can allow groups to sustain the distinctiveness of their cultural and ethnic identity and at the same time be part of an inclusive (national or state) identity.

When individuals identify with two or more social groups (national and/or ethnic) at the same time, integration is facilitated (Berry, 1997). Multiple social categorisation suggests that different identities are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but can

occur simultaneously (Phinney & Alipuria, 2006). A basic difficulty with multiple social categorisation is "*integrating or otherwise managing an internal complexity involving two potentially conflicting, often enriching, parts of one's ethnic, racial, or cultural self*" (Phinney & Alipuria, 2006, p. 211). According to multiple social categorisation principles, group members can follow different approaches: (a) they can identify with only one of the cultural groups they belong to, (b) they can create a new category they identify with, (c) they can identify with all the groups they belong to and then switch between them, and (d) they can simply think about themselves as individuals instead of group members. It is worth highlighting that the above four identification approaches are in line with principles of the Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al., 1997) and its acculturation strategies.

At the individual level, the degree to which multiple identities are integrated within the self-concept is described by the concept of *bicultural identity integration* (BII; Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002). BII refers to the extent that bicultural people perceive their multiple identities to be compatible or in opposition to each other (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005) based on a continuum where the two opposite poles are represented by compatibility and incompatibility (Cheng, Lee, & Benet-Martínez, 2006). The changes in people's identity during acculturation can be affected by factors such as the internal flexibility of cultural identity (Arnett, 2003), the degree of similarity between the ethnic and the majority culture (Rudmin, 2003), possible experiences of discrimination (Brown, 2000), societal support to maintain the ethnic culture (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), as well as in-group's norms and religious identification (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2012). With such a large number of individual and societal variables involved, successful identity integration is not always feasible. Indeed, people vary on their level of BII: high levels of BII indicate that people highly identify with both cultures and perceive them as compatible, whereas low levels indicate that the different cultures are kept separate, perceived as incompatible, and often cause internal conflict (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002).

The concept and measurement of BII have two different components (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005): *cultural distance*—"the degree of dissociation or compartmentalization versus overlap perceived between the two cultural orientations" and *cultural conflict*—"the degree of tension or clash versus harmony perceived between the two cultures"—(Nguyen & Benet-Martìnez, 2007, p. 108). These two components are in line with other important concepts of acculturation (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005): cultural distance can be theoretically linked to cultural identity alternation versus fusion (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993) and cultural conflict can be seen as similar to role conflict (Goode, 1960) and identity confusion (Baumeister, 1986). As such, the literature has placed significant emphasis on whether identities are (or are perceived to be) compatible or incompatible; when they are compatible, integration is facilitated. When they are incompatible, conflict can arise.

In addition to factors such as age, gender, immigration policies, and years of living in the receiving society, BII is also predicted by factors such as personality traits, socioeconomic disadvantages (Phillips & Pittman, 2003), differences in cultural orientation between majority and minority groups (Côté, 1993), degree of similarity between the two cultures (Rudmin, 2003), lack of social and institutional support

(Côté, 2000), and support for the maintenance of the heritage culture in the new society (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Moreover, it has been suggested that low bicultural identity integration is caused by the perception of being culturally isolated (Berry, 1990), difficulties in intercultural relations (Tzeng & Jackson, 1994), and cultural and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices (Crocker & Major, 1989); all variables that are also linked with conflicting intergroup relations. Higher levels of BII, or successful integration of the different identities, is associated with higher levels of social solidarity (Berry, 2011), adjustment (Ward, & Kennedy, 1994), well-being (Berry, 1998), self-esteem, life satisfaction, cognitive complexity (Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006), psychological satisfaction (Liebkind, 2001), and creativity (Cheng, Sanchez-Burks, & Lee, 2008). Lower levels of BII are, in contrast, associated with isolation (Rudmin, 2003) and communicative misunderstandings (Padilla, 2006).

Conclusion

Multicultural societies facilitate contact among sometimes very distinct groups. As such, identity issues become salient and newcomers or even more established migrants often experience internal conflict among their (cultural, religious, and national) identities. From an intergroup perspective, conflict often arises when people perceive symbolic or realistic threats targeting their identity in a multicultural context (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Given that acculturation is taking place when there is an interplay between minorities and majorities (Berry, 1990), it is crucial to understand how identities, for individuals and groups, can be integrated successfully with minimal or no conflict. The literature on acculturation suggests that this process always involves a transformation of identity in order to adapt to a receiving society, in the case of minority groups; or to live in a multicultural context, in the case of majority groups. These identity changes can be challenging.

Let us briefly take the case of migrant women: they have to define their identity beyond (hypothetical) dichotomies such as western–eastern, local–foreign, and modern–traditional, and beyond the accompanying stereotypes. Migrant women, as suggested by Weinreich (1983), face the challenge of resolving incompatible identities, particularly when the values and the ideologies between original and new cultures are very different, or indeed conflicting. Women may attempt to resolve the conflict by adopting multiple identities and identifying with more inclusive ones (Mirza, Meetoo, & Litster, 2011).

Another example is that of British Muslims. In the case of British Muslims, religion does not only relate to beliefs, but to an important identity in its own right, with religious identity being often more salient than ethnic identity (Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2010). Thus, British Muslims have to manage religious, cultural, national, and ethnic identities, a process that can be quite demanding. A possible way to resolve the identity conflict that may occur in the case of Muslims who live in Western countries could be found in promoting identification with a superordinate culture, especially if this includes a multicultural ideology, as well as sustaining identification with the religious group; that is, adopting a dual identity approach.

Stronger identification with a multicultural and inclusive culture can predict personal openness to interfaith relationships, or in other words, it can promote positive intergroup contact (Cila & Lalonde, 2014).

This chapter demonstrates how identity processes are closely associated with acculturation in multicultural societies. Understanding the identity dynamics involved in the acculturation process could facilitate the positive outcomes of acculturation and help toward establishing peaceful intergroup relations. Consistently, historical and present-day events have pointed to how unsuccessful acculturation processes can result in or precipitate catastrophic actions. This is applicable both for majority groups, which may, for example promote discriminative policies and the marginalisation of entire minority communities; and minority groups, which may support intergroup distrust, isolation, and even violence. These are issues that cannot be easily addressed by modern societies. Simply denouncing multiculturalism, like many political leaders have done, cannot bring about positive change in contexts that are undergoing, unavoidably, acculturation processes. In such contexts, it is important to understand how identity can motivate and determine acculturation, and how it can be used to maximise the potential of integration. Future research should examine different multicultural contexts and aim to create interventions that combine theories on identity and acculturation, public policies and educational programmes that collectively support integration. Political leaders, policy makers, educators, and importantly, social scientists need to work together in an effort to promote tolerance and respect among groups.

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