Identity and Participation in Culturally Diverse Societies: a Multi-disciplinary Perspective

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Identity and social action have been afforded much scholarly attention in the social sciences but what has been lacking from the existing literature is synthesis between the various disciplinary and theoretical approaches. This volume promises to offer a multidisciplinary perspective to identity and participation in culturally diverse societies through the presentation of seventeen empirical and theoretical contributions from social psychologists, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists and historians. Moreover, contributors employ 'state-of-the-art theory' coupled with the 'latest research findings' in order to address issues pertinent to the interface of identity and participation. In many respects, the volume is successful in achieving these aims, although there are some important issues which remain unaddressed and thus might be explored in future research, building upon the volume. The present review provides an overview of the contents of the book and concludes by drawing attention to some of these issues.

One of the volume's major credentials lies in its substantive breadth. It is divided into four sections entitled 'Development, (Re)Construction and Expression of Collective identities'; 'Collective Identity and Political Participation'; 'Radicalization' and finally 'Integration'. Each section features both theoretical chapters outlining key constructs pertinent to the theme and empirical chapters which operationalise and test these constructs to some degree.

The first section provides insight into issues surrounding the development and construction of collective identities from both socio-psychological and historical perspectives. Papadopoulos provides a historical analysis of how nationalism, ethnicity and class have shaped Greek American identity, elucidating the role of historical factors in informing the future. More specifically, the author demonstrates how Greek Americans, despite being considered a 'well-integrated' ethnic group in the US today, were once regarded as 'backward' and self-segregating. This evidences the vicissitudes of group attitudes and their dependence upon social and temporal context. In the next chapter, Verkuyten employs aspects of social identity theory to explain and theorise socio-political participation among Muslims in Western Europe. Drawing upon tenets of the psychology of religion, which emphasises the distinction between individualised and communal understandings and expressions of religious identity, he highlights the importance of firstly exploring what it means to be a Muslims in order to make sense of political participation. This is an important observation given the counter-productive essentialisation of Muslim identity

pervasive in some quantitative psychological research. In their respective chapters, Wiley and Deaux, and Chryssochoou and Lyons provide theoretical accounts of biculturalism and identity (in)compatibility, respectively, although they do draw upon ongoing empirical research. These chapters explore key identity configurations (e.g. religious-national; national-ethnic-class) pertinent to the volume's focus upon culturally diverse societies. However, it is noteworthy that recent socio-psychological research into culturally diverse societies has highlighted the potential importance of the interface of religious/ ethnic and sexual identities (e.g. Jaspal, 2010). Thus, some allusion to these increasingly important, though under-explored, identity configurations might have made a more multi-faceted, deeper contribution to identity compatibility in culturally diverse societies. Moreover, the section might also have reflected upon recent debates regarding the impact of identity (in)compatibility for the other acknowledged identity 'needs' (e.g. continuity; self-esteem) which have been identified by social psychologists working in this area (Breakwell, 1986; Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2010; Vignoles, Chryssochoou & Breakwell, 2002).

The second section synthesises social psychology and political science in four chapters addressing collective identity and political participation. Koopmans and Statham show the apparent imbalance between political elites (e.g. heads of state and government) and civil society actors in the Europeanisation of public spheres, highlighting the privileged position of the political elite. This has important implications for the issue of migrant integration in Europe, which is discussed in the next chapter by Ireland. Like the preceding chapter, it addresses meso-level influences upon public participation in, and public understanding of, political issues such as European integration and migrant integration. One of the strengths of Ireland's chapter concerns the analysis at both national and local levels, which is important given the diversity of ideological factors and acculturative orientations prevalent in distinct local and national contexts in Europe (Bourhis et al., 1997). A principal point in the chapter is that the term integration is dynamic and multi-faceted and, thus, that integration 'success' depends primarily upon how it is defined at the institutional macro-level. In short, the institutions have much clout in shaping political participation and integration. Moreover, there cannot be one 'means' of encouraging integration in all of Europe but rather methods must be sensitive to distinct local and national contexts.

The second half of section two provides socio-psychological perspectives to collective identity and political participation in a chapter by Simon, which addresses collective identity and engagement with the political sphere, and one by Reicher and Drury, which focuses upon political participation and the 'making of the social self'. Simon synthesises social identity approaches with social movement research, connecting the sociologically oriented macro level with the psychologically oriented micro level of analysis. Drawing upon some of his recent empirical research, Simon shows how politicised collective identities have developed among migrants in Germany and that these forms of collective identification can possess a 'unique mobilizing power' in political terms. Simon's chapter makes a particularly valuable contribution, given its attention to the primary concern of social psychologists concerning the relationship between the macro and the micro, the social and the psychological (Breakwell, 1986). Moreover, it provides researchers with the necessary theoretical tools for conducting research into the interface of the political and the psychological. In the final chapter of the section, Reicher and Drury provide a theoretical account of the inter-relations

between collective action and politicised identities. They offer valuable insights into the psychology of crowd behaviour, which clearly constitutes one dimension of identity and participation in culturally diverse societies. Accordingly, they provide substantive examples from both their own and others' research in this area. Moreover, the chapter employs tenets of the social identity approach, which is clearly presented in accordance with the focus of the chapter. This is commendable, given that social identity theory, being the meta-theory that it is, can be difficult to 'pin down', particularly when used in more novel empirical areas. This updated statement of crowd behaviour research facilitates future engagement with this tradition in the particular area of participation in culturally diverse societies. However, it would have been advantageous for the authors to link their ideas specifically to the domain of political participation in a more explicit manner, possibly by focusing upon a concrete example in a contemporary real-world as exemplified by other chapters which deal with Muslim minority groups, for instance.

The third section features four chapters concerning radicalisation. Stekelenburg and Klandermans begin with a theoretical piece on the macro-level processes which shape routes to radicalisation. It integrates influences from the supranational, the national and the mobilising context. The explanatory model provided in the chapter seems to focus solely upon the macro-level processes with little acknowledgement of the role of the individual. While this would be satisfactory in a volume concerned solely with sociological factors, the present multi-disciplinary volume would be best served by a theoretical account of various levels of human interdependence. The subsequent chapter by Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking explores citizenship regimes and identity strategies among European Muslims, while that of de Koning and Meijer provides insight into the Hofstad Network in the Netherlands. Although the final chapter discusses both Dutch Muslim and ethnic Dutch radicalisation, the section does seem to focus heavily upon radicalisation among Muslims in Europe. On the one hand, this focus seems understandable given the topical relevance of radicalisation among young Muslims. On the other hand, a volume promising insight into identity and participation in culturally diverse societies ought perhaps to engage with radicalisation in distinct cultural and national contexts, which may plausibly be guided by somewhat distinct social and psychological processes. This would provide a more holistic account of radicalisation. The volume does broaden the discussion somewhat by focusing upon ideologies and action in US organised racism in Blee's insightful chapter, but there seems to be disproportionate attention to European Muslims. For instance, the radicalisation of young Iranians, Lebanese and Palestinian youths against the State of Israel is of growing concern in the Middle East (Jaspal, research in progress), and a scholarly account of this phenomenon would have complemented the section on radicalisation.

The fourth and final section of the volume presents a critical appraisal of the concept of integration, acknowledging its complexity and the over-simplicity with which the notion of integration has all too often been treated. The first chapter by Berry provides an updated statement of acculturation research with clear research examples. Empirical evidence for the various acculturation orientations described in Berry's model is derived from a recent comparative study of immigrant young people in 24 countries. This chapter seems to address the interface of the social and the psychological, given the explicitly acknowledged role of institution-level acculturation orientations (e.g. assimilationism; multiculturalism) in shaping

individual adaptation. Jacobs and Tillie make a sociological contribution to the integration debate in their discussion of ethnic social capital as a factor in political participation and immigration integration. A central argument of the chapter is that participation in ethnic networks can have positive outcomes for integration in larger society, which is interesting given the observed negative correlation between ethnic and national identities in previous research (Worchel & Coutant, 1997). Diehl and Blohm present an insightful sociological account of integration at the individual and structural levels through the provision of aggregate level statistical data and individual level microcensus data. In the final chapter of the volume, Branscombe and Cronin explore the important issue of intergroup forgiveness and, more generally, how confronting the past can engender a positive future for social groups in a single political entity. They exemplify some of the theoretical issues discussed through reference to the South African Truth Reconciliation Commission, which was established to promote unity and reconciliation between the various racial and ethnic groups in post-Apartheid South Africa. The chapter clearly presents the theoretical tools for examining intergroup forgiveness in culturally diverse settings, which, as observable in many geo-political contexts, can be characterised by intergroup conflict. The focus of this socio-psychological account is upon how integration among various groups, between various kinds of social groups, may be achieved and the assumption is that forgiveness is an important precursor to such integration.

In conclusion, although the chapters explore a number of theoretical issues at various levels of analysis (i.e. psychological, group-level, political), there is little linkage between these levels of analysis in the individual chapters themselves; understandably so, perhaps as this is no easy task. However, there are theories which seem to lend themselves more readily to examining the inter-relations between the individual, the interpersonal and the intergroup, such as identity process theory (Breakwell, 1986). Despite the theory's relevance to identity, social representation and social action in culturally diverse contexts (e.g. Chryssochoou, 2004) and it growing importance in British social psychology, it is not mentioned in the present volume. Moreover, a further shortcoming of the volume lies in its focus upon quantitative methods in the empirical and theoretical chapters, despite the multidisciplinary perspective it promises to offer. British social psychology at least has opened its doors to a wide range of qualitative methods, such as interpretative phenomenological analysis, grounded theory and discourse analysis. Moreover, qualitative research has long formed part of the methodological repertoire in sociology. Thus, the volume ought to have emphasised the importance of multi-methodological research in exploring the complex social issues pertinent to identity and cultural participation in culturally diverse societies. Surely, eclectic methodological approaches are required to achieve a multi-faceted analysis. Future research building upon this edited volume might further explore the inter-relations between the various levels of analysis and the methodological approaches best suited to such integrative research.

The volume thus explores a multitude of substantive issues in diverse geopolitical contexts, covering a wide range of theoretical and disciplinary approaches to identity and participant in society. Azzi, Chryssochoou, Klandermans and Simon have produced a topical, interesting and highly commendable edited volume concerned with identity and participation in culturally diverse societies, which will serve both established researchers and newcomers to the field.

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