



***Social integration
of torture survivors***

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Revisiting the myth of the phoenix:

- Integration stemming from personal transformation?

The resilience hypothesis

- Integration associated with family settlement?
- Integration reflecting favourable environmental conditions?

... and when is non integration – refusal – a survival strategy?

Torture and social integration

- Horror ruptures the social link (Vinar-Freud)
- torture shatters basic trust,
- beyond the destruction of the victim, its aim is to disrupt solidarities (within the family and the society),
- imposes a hegemonic order – produces consent for a violent « integration »? (De Certeau)

Historically:
in wars, colonization, slavery

- Apparent consent to « integration », submission to the oppressor law is the rule,
- subversion is manifested through the appropriation of the dominant identity,
- the example from Guatemala: Baile de Toro and Maximom

*In the XXI century:
Globalization and « integration »*

■ **Habermas:**

- Globalization as a pathology of communication with reduction of dialogue spaces

■ **Baudrillard:**

- Homogeneity imposed through globalization compared to an « unilateral gift » which provokes humiliation.

This presentation will propose:

- A family perspective on social integration,
- an ecological perspective highlighting the role of host country power relations and ambivalence in integration,
- illustration of “good enough” practices.

The literature highlights:

- The importance of post migratory environment (Beiser, Porter, Carlsson),
- the frequent gap between symptoms and social adjustment (Mollica, Kinzie, Rousseau),
- key factors documented are: family reunification, migratory status, work availability, education perspectives for children,
- most intervention studies focus on treatment of symptoms – although some models of social integration exist – there are no evaluation.

Social aspects of healing

(Mollica, 2006)

- The restorative impact of social activities on traumatized persons:
 - Altruism
 - Work
 - Spirituality

Three paths to mitigate helplessness and cultivate agency

ADAPT Model - five adaptive systems:

Silove (2007)

System	Adaptive Response	Assistance
Security	Security seeking	Promoting personnel and social security
Bonds, family, networks	Restoring families and networks	Mourning and reuniting
Justice and human rights	Promoting and demanding	Social justice in interventions
Roles and identity	Recreation of new or hybrid roles	Empowerment: work, study
Meaning	Rediscovery of culture/religion present of courses	Respect of values-tradition history

Social integration: the role of families in the reestablishment of continuity

- When survivors are alone in the host country
 - Struggling for those who stayed back give a meaning to daily life.
“I am here to help them” (African women who experienced rape and torture)
 - Internalized mission is protective even if also a burden (unaccompanied minors)

Social integration: families as a protection and a burden

Spearman Rank Correlations between SCL-90R Global Severity Index and Trauma Scores According to Family Reunification Status

Family Reunification Status	Latin Americans	Africans
Personal trauma		
Reunited with all or part of family	-.31 <i>p</i> = .038 ^a	-.16 <i>p</i> = .375
Separated from entire family	.37 <i>p</i> = .177	.21 <i>p</i> = .382
Family trauma		
Reunited with all or part of family	-.00 <i>p</i> = .988	.51 <i>p</i> = .002
Separated from entire family	.24 <i>p</i> = .397	-.28 <i>p</i> = .239

Social integration of children: families as a protection and a burden

- Cambodian refugee youth:
 - Family trauma associated with academic performance.
 - Girls puberty associated with reactivation of unspoken trauma.
- Family cohesion associated with:
 - Positive attitude toward school
 - Less perception of racism(Caribbean and Filipino migrants)
- Transgenerational transmission of trauma associated with:
 - More tolerance of social differences
 - Strong national ideology (Sigal)

Social integration a family perspective:

- All domain of integration are tightly intertwined with family dynamic,
- Systemic rather than individually centered interventions and programs should be the rule,
- Implications for inter sectorial work:
example: school programs and parents – school relations; employment for women/ men and family dynamics

Social integration: the host country environment

- From the mythical benevolence:
“violence tolerance zero”
- To the multiple faces of “clean” violence:
 - Refugee determination process
 - Limited entitlement to health and education
 - Limited access to work (deskilling)

Social integration: the host country environment

Shattering representations of the host country

“It’s not your turn!... (...)” (Judge)

“No” (Judge)

“Without having allowed me to say anything, she asked me if I had something to say, and I had not been able to say anything and I had these proofs there that two days before the hearing, newspapers, proof, death certificate, that they had assassinated my brother (silence) they looked at me “no, no, no, this we do not believe”. (Colombian man, refused claim)

the host country environment...

« You should listen to what we have to say. Because Canada is a place, as we have heard and seen on TV, that even tigers are taken care of, cleaned and so on. Where dogs and cats have their hair cleaned. In our country this doesn't happen (...). But one man is telling you, one person is telling you that their lives are threatened and you won't listen to that. This is perhaps the first time this is happening. I haven't heard this. I was told Canada is a peaceful country, that people are treated well. That people are safe here. I will just say this, that you should hear our appeal” (Pakistani woman, refused claim)

the host country environment...

A Colombian refugee explained that he felt calm and secure before the hearing, and that he felt strong because of his personal spirituality and his beliefs in human rights. However,

« She (the board member) attacked me verbally (...) she became red, hot, she shouted, and I thought was is this? I don't know her, I didn't... I don't know if I told her something or she has a problem, she didn't eat dinner? Because this happened after dinner... something, but I don't understand. However I tried to understand her (...)»

This claimant described how he felt destroyed after his hearing and thought of dying.

Re-establishing the social link: trust issues

- The centrality of interactions around daily life – Housing, food, paper work – the support of community organizations.
- The complex links among agency, legitimacy and legality

Example:

- the “zigzag” economy in Parc Extension
- The “don’t ask don’t tell” policy in Toronto

Host societies in transformation: the present international context

The Upsurge in Discrimination after 9/11

- In the U.S. 9 months after 9-11:
 - 700 anti-Muslim violent incidents after 9-11
 - More than 800 reported discrimination events
(Ibish, 2003)
- In Canada, in the same period:
 - 56% of Arab respondents have experienced anti-Muslim incidents
 - 33% verbal abuse
 - 18% racial profiling
 - 16% discrimination in the workplace
(Caircan, 2002)
- In Europe:
 - Different studies show identical phenomena (Saroglou and Galand, 2004)

Impact of 9/11 on survivors of torture and organized violence

- Reactivation of traumas
(Kinzie – Boston clinic for refugees)
- But also occasion for empathy
“we know how it is like” (Guatemalan refugee)
“now they may understand” (Lebanese refugee)

An Epidemiological Survey

Pre-post 9/11

- **The 1997-98 survey of “Enquête Santé Québec”**
 - 4 migrants communities: Chinese (n=543), Maghreb - Middle Eastern (Arab; n=405) , Haitian (n=379), Latino American (n=544)
 - Newly arrived (less than 10 years in Canada)

- **The 2007 Survey:**
 - 2 migrants communities: Arab (n=212), Haitian (n=220)
 - Arrived since 1988

Evolution of the perception of racism among Arabs and Haitians

VICTIM OF DISCRIMINATION SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL IN QUEBEC

	ARABS		HAITIANS	
	1998	2007	1998	2007
YES	22,7% ^a	38,2%	28,8% ^b	53,2%
NON	77,3%	61,8%	71,2%	46,8%

a: chi-deux=16,319; ddl=1;sig=0,0005

b: chi-deux=33,506; ddl=1;sig=0,0005

Relation between mental health and perception of racism by Muslim and Non-Muslim Arabs

ARABS								
1998								
MUSLIM					NON-MUSLIM			
	DISC	CI	NON DISC	CI	DISC	CI	NON DISC	CI
SCL-25	1,55	1,48;1,63	1,46	1,41;1,50	1,50	1,43;1,57	1,41	1,37;1,44
SATISFACTION WITH LIFE	3,12	2,95;3,30	3,37	3,29;3,44	3,28	3,14;3,41	3,22	3,15;3,29
2007								
MUSLIM					NON-MUSLIM			
	DISC	CI	NON DISC	CI	DISC	CI	NON DISC	CI
SCL-25	1,43 ^a	1,37;1,48	1,31	1,28;1,34	1,37	1,29;1,45	1,33	1,27;1,38
SATISFACTION WITH LIFE	3,75	3,63;3,87	3,78	3,68;3,87	4,13	4,00;4,25	4,18	4,09;4,27

a: t=2,111; dl=139;sig=0,037

Emotional reaction to discrimination

DID ANY OF THESE DISCRIMINATION SITUATIONS UPSET OR BOTHER YOU ?

2007

	ARABS		HAITIANS	
	YES	I feel this way even now	YES	I feel this way even now
Feeling scared or terrified ?	15,5%	2,9%	28,4%	3,4%
Feeling weak or confused ?	18,9%	2,4%	28,9%	2,5%
Feeling sad or depressed ?	29,6%	3,9%	36,3%	3,9%
Feeling helpless, discouraged, or frustraed ?	33,5%	5,3%	42,2%	5,9%
Feeling angry ?	41,7%	7,3%	47,1%	5,9%
Feeling ashamed ?	8,7%	1,0%	20,1%	2,5%
Feeling strong or empowered ?	72,2%	64,9%	71,1%	52,9%

From absurdity and powerlessness to avoidance and splitting

Bengali mother:

“Immigrant children, nothing. I never heard this kind of problem with Quebecois kids”.

“In my country I was rich, here I am poor, (...) I am suffering like an animal”.

“Sometime we feel so bad, but there is nothing to do (...) we are powerless”.

“People tell, Muslim, Muslim, Muslim. I am Muslim but I am not a Taliban and not a terrorist (...) they are talking about the Taliban and they created the Taliban”.

School: “they can’t do nothing. It’s a big problem what can the children do, it’s a political issue, not education”.

Her 9 year old son:

Int.: *Do you hear anything about religion at home or at school?*

Child: *Yes*

Int.: *What do you hear?*

Child: *War*

From absurdity and powerlessness to avoidance and splitting

Bengali mother:

«They are not interested to know about these things. I don't have interest to talk to them about terrorism. What is terrorism? It is very difficult to explain to them, then they bother me again. It is very difficult for me, It is better not to talk”.

“It is very difficult to explain them something about culture or religion”.

“When she grows up, I don't know what I am going to tell her (...) If somebody says to you something bad, you try to avoid... Try to avoid”.

8 year old daughter

Int: What do you think about religion?

Girl: I do not think... I think, why isn't religion the same for everybody.

Int: Do you practice your religion?

Girl: No, but only at home when there is no school.

(later) int: Do you hear anything which worries you about religion?

Girl: Yes, It is the war which worries me.

Int: Do you think that there is a relation between religion and the war?

Girl: I do not know but it is the war that worries me.

Int: Do you think there may be a relation?

Girl: This is what worries me.

In search of agency

Bengali mother:

« I say to God: Save everybody, that's it. I didn't talk to anybody about this thing, but I say to God "Allah, help people".

“Teachers are like second mothers to the children. Because they are in school most of the time with the teachers, not with the mother. I give my son but other things it's with the teachers because she's like second mother. If she says something to my son, the children they're doing better”.

Son 8 years old:

- . Like school, would like to learn more about Bangladesh in school, to learn Bengali writing.
- . Upset about Israeli-Palestinian conflict but not scared.

War on terrorism...

Does it have an impact on integration?

- If it hurts, it is meaningful.
- Protection is systemic, but fragile (linked to economic health).
- Employment integration is key.
- More attention needs to be paid to the coping strengths.
- Agency may be key in social resiliency.
- Implications for schools, the media and others?

Good enough practices in social integration

Some of the key questions:

1. Structured or unstructured intervention

- Structured intervention provides support and guidance
 - Examples: legal counselling and work integration center
- Maybe also be experienced as a constraint or imposition
 - Example: Parenting classes
- Unstructured
 - Allow more agency – different negotiations of voices and power relations
 - Example: House of friendship – drops in
 - May provoke confusion and uncertainty

Good enough practices – key questions:

2. Targeted vs general interventions:

- Major coverage (and stigma?) of targeted interventions for survivors
- The tip of the iceberg: the exposure to organised violence in newcomers exceeds the identified survivors (Montreal: 40% witness, 28% persecution)

Good enough practices – key questions:

3. Special programs and/or transformation of institutions
 - Training of school, health, city professionals
 - Cost and sustainability of special programs
 - The need to prove efficacy and establish relations with decision makers

Key questions

Integration and treatment:

the temporal dimension

Shiva's story:

- At three exposed to father tortured body.
- Witness of mother torture, burned and hit.
- Escape to Canada, caring for mother in intensive care.
- Daycare: a terrified baby and a “crazy mother”.

Shiva's story...

- Establishment of alliance over a 4 year period.
- Shifting day care perceptions.
- Providing support for survival.
- Protecting from traumatic medicalization.
- Addressing family issues “the status of widows”
- Shiva at 7, in school, doing well.
- Mother accepting to begin therapy.

From a research perspective...

- Evaluating pilot projects of psychosocial intervention
- Multiplying longitudinal follow up studies documenting psychosocial interactions
- Adopting a systemic perspective in order to take in account
 - Family dynamic
 - Host country context

Conclusion

- Pushing integration maybe a source of violence
- Resisting integration maybe a sign of strength
- Host societies are presently also feeling hurt and threatened
- Integration should focus on taking care of the fear, the hurt, the exclusion on all sides