THE ASSIMILATION PROCESS:
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITALIAN CHILDREN IN THE HAMILTON SCHOOL SYSTEM

By

PATRICK VINCENT, B.Sc. (Econ.)

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AUTHOR: Patrick Vincent, B.Sc. (Econ.) (London University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Robert Blumstock

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS:

This is a descriptive study of the assimilation of Italian immigrant children in Hamilton. The first part of the thesis examines previous research which the author feels is relevant to the area of assimilation and adjustment on the part of immigrants. Also in the first part the main concepts are evolved which are used in the latter part of the thesis in reference to Italian School children in Hamilton. Linking these two parts is a discussion first of the Italian Family, second of Hamilton and its ethnic structure and third of the Canadian education system in particular as it is reflected in the Hamilton public and separate school systems.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
INTRODUCTION:		1
	The Socialization of the Immigrant Child in the School System	3
	Research Techniques	20
	The Unstructured Observation Technique	22
	Questionnaires: Discussion of,	23
CHAPTER I:	FACTORS AFFECTING IMMIGRANT ASSIMILATION	29
	Language as an Index of Assimilation	32
	Primary and Secondary Groups	34
	The Distinction Between Behavioural and Structural Assimilation.	35
	Personalities as an Index of Adaptation	37
	Irrational and Socially Maladaptive Behaviour	42
	Status Crystallization	44
	The Social Group and the Classroom	53
	Reference Groups	55
	Assimilation and Social Role	58
	Role Theory	60
	Social Roles and Social Groups	61
	The Action System and the Concept of Role	62
	Mead and Symbolic Interactionism	69
	Culture and Assimilation	73
	Interaction and Socialization	75
	Normative Convergence Through Interaction	76
	The Changing Culture of the Ghetto	78
	Group Values and Cultural Pluralism	79
	'The Charter' and Group Values	81
	Central Value Systems	83
	The Canadian Charter	85
	The Dominant Position of the British Charter Group	88
	Canadian Identity	92
	The Monopolization of the Values by Members of the Receiving Society.	93
	Achievement and Value Patterns	94
	Family and Cultural Values	96
	A Word of Caution	102

Table of Contents:

		Page
CHAPTER 2:	THE ITALIAN FAMILY	112
	The Italian Family in Hamilton	114
CHAPTER 3:	HAMILTON THE CITY	127
	The Distribution of Immigrant Population in Hamilton: Ethnic Origin	128
	Ethnic Groups and Census Tracts in Hamilton	129
	Predominantly English Tracts	129
	Non-English Ethnic Tracts.	130
	Occupation and Income in Non-English Census Tracts	131
	Ethnicity and Kinship: Involvement . . .	132
CHAPTER 4:	THE CANADIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM	135
	Hamilton Education: The Public System. .	137
	Hamilton Unit Plan	137
	Hamilton: The Separate School System . .	138
	General Discussion of the Elementary School Systems in Hamilton.	139
	Italian Parents and Children and the Separate and Public School Systems	140
CHAPTER 5:	THE CHILDREN IN THE HAMILTON SCHOOL SYSTEM	144
	Introduction	144
	Conflict Between School and Home	145
	Assimilation, Communication and Interaction	150
	Communication in the School	150
	The School, Int raction and Role Learning	152
	Normative Convergence	153
	Responses to Questionnaires	154
	Teachers' Opinions and Experience on the Immigrant Child's Assimilation . . .	156
	The Teacher's Influence on Assimilation	157
	A Discussion and Observation	160
	Adaptation to Social Change	163
	Culture Shock	165
	Ego Involvement and the Immigrant Child	168

Introduction.

There are a number of points that must be clarified in any research program before actual study is undertaken. We must first delineate what is to be studied.[1] In our case, the initial problem was to study the assimilation of immigrant school children in Canada. This took place within a certain framework. We feel that it is important that we first discuss some of the problems of immigrant assimilation in general for it is felt that much of what has been written in the area of immigrant assimilation is applicable to immigrant children. Initially, we will concern ourselves with social mechanisms and categories that are significant for assimilation. This includes concepts derived from group, role, reference group theory, and symbolic interactionism. We will then proceed to discuss how these concepts affect immigrant assimilation within the framework of the cultures and social structures that the immigrant is moving between in the course of assimilation. The final aim is to explain the forces that affect the integration of Italian, and other children, into the Canadian's social and cultural system using the cultural concepts already detailed. Particular concern will be given to the assimilation of the Italian school child both in the Canadian school system and in Canadian society through the medium of the schools. By

Italian school children, we mean children of Italian heritage born in Canada and those who have recently arrived from Italy.

In speaking of assimilation in the Canadian school system, we wish to first convey the successful integration of Italian children into the formal organization and goal structure of the school. However, even more important for our purpose is the assimilation of the immigrant child into the informal group structure among children in the school. It is the latter that, in particular, aids the assimilation of the immigrant child. It is hypothesized that participation in these informal group structures and friendship patterns with Canadian children leads to integration and normative convergence between the children involved.[2] Thus, in this paper we will concern ourselves with social and value change among Canadian children as well as among Italian children as a result of mixed interaction. Assimilation, in the first case, at the formal level of school organization will often occur only on the instrumental level,[3] and the over-all effect in being more distant from the person's inner life will be less significant.

From an external point of view, assimilation at an instrumental level will appear significant. If it continues, it will probably lead to success in the Canadian social structure. The individual, taking on an important goal of the school system, will become upwardly mobile. He may do

this while remaining, in many respects, marginal and unassimilated as Mol[4] points out. Assimilation at the informal and primary group level may lead to success in the Canadian status system but, more important, it will affect a movement in values and social patterns towards the Canadian model and participation with Canadians at a more intimate level than that permitted by purely instrumental contacts. The person or child who has become assimilated at the instrumental level may adopt a guise of appearing to be everything Canadian to gain his instrumental goals but yet may remain largely unaffected by the part he plays. This lack of deep involvement is impossible for those who participate fully in primary group relationships.

The Socialization of the Immigrant Child in the School System

The situation of the child of the first and second immigrant generation has importance in the socialization of immigrant groups as a whole. It has been said that the integration of immigrant groups would never have proceeded as rapidly as it often has without the effects of the educational system.[5] It is the educational system that transmits the norms, values, and ways of behavior of the wider society.[1] The school is the agency through which individual personalities are trained to be motivationally and technically adequate to the performance of adult roles. "The socialization function may be summed up as a develop-

ment in individuals of commitments and capacities which are the essential prerequisite of their future role performance."[6] Parson's breaks down commitments into two components: values, and commitments to the performance of a specific type of role within the structure of society. Capacities are broken down into competence to perform roles and the capacity to live up to other people's expectations of interpersonal behavior appropriate to these roles. Through interaction in the primary group of the school class, the individual learns and is motivated to fulfill the goals of the social structure. As has been mentioned before, this is essentially the problem of the immigrant. Some psychologists emphasize conditioning and early habit formation in the socialization process which leads to the view that our emotional responses and attitudes have been established at a non-voluntary level early in our lives.[7] It would be generally admitted that the child of first generation immigrant parents prior to school attendance will have been largely socialized in the culture of the immigrant group at a non-voluntary level. Subsequently, this will greatly affect his interaction in the school system. The task will partly be that of resocialization, but predominantly at a voluntary level. It is true that this will be much easier for a child than for an adult because the child's attitudes and habits are not firmly organized. The life organization is still elastic; the socialization in the family is not complete. However, it

would be wrong to think the school takes over completely at the age of five as a socializing agent. The family still remains dominant in affecting the nature of the child's total socialization, on what he accepts in the school and what he retains.

The attitude of the parents to the patterns the child is being socialized into by the school may be indicated as a variable affecting the child's ultimate integration. Another is the attitude of the school teachers and fellow pupils to the immigrant child. Both variables affect the child's learning.

The school helps to socialize children into the various roles that are functional in maintaining the social system. For the immigrant from a different culture, socialization frequently takes place in roles that assumed less importance in his country of emigration. The Italian peasant has to learn roles and values that support him which are functional to an industrial society. Socialization in the American, Canadian, or Australian school is aimed at emphasizing achievement and success in an urban environment which is dominated by money. Much of the socialization is directed to fostering motivation towards such goals. Motivation in the school is partly generated by achievement training that teaches a child to do things well, and partly by independent training that teaches him to do things on his own. Some children are more prepared for such demands than

others. Rosen[8] points out that various ethnic groups place different emphases on such goals. Achievement motivation is more characteristic of Greeks than of Italians, for example. Greeks are more likely to come from an urban environment, Italian, from an agrarian society where the social structure seriously curtails opportunities for achievement, and where habits of resignation and fatalism often prevail.

The socialization of the immigrant child that takes place in the school system is usually not a complete process. The school does not completely socialize the child, rather, it creates a direction of movement viewed from the prospective of the immigrant family. Often then, the process is not completed. Completion would require full integration into the informal groups of the whole society. The school class can be considered a primary group, but all to frequently the immigrant child is not effectively integrated into it. Even in the class itself, because of the stresses of their situation, immigrant children form cliques. Such cliques cut down the volume and quality of interaction with the native members of the class and the teacher. [All too often this is just shrugged off as a hard but unavoidable fact of the situation.] But full interaction between immigrant and native is essential for effective socialization and integration.

One of the causes of this situation is that the teacher and the school system put too much emphasis on the concept of assimilation and not enough on that of integration,

which implies adjustments made by both sides and assumes that the immigrant child has something valuable to offer from his own culture. Teachers often reflect the attitude that whatever is foreign is inferior.[9] They attempt to Americanize or Canadianize the child as rapidly as possible. Frequently they pressure the child to turn away from everything resembling the culture of his parents. Influences by this attitude, the children begin to despise the customs and culture of their ancestors. At the same time, they are still being rejected by their classmates for their foreignness. The danger is that they will lose their cultural heritage without the corresponding gain of the new culture.[10] The result may be the production of marginal men.[11]

Landes[12] stresses that teachers must be aware of the cultural background of the children they are dealing with to appreciate that successful performance from them cannot be achieved merely through the routine channels which are based on the assumption that they are all middle-class Americans. Teachers must be aware of the nature of the blocks that children of certain backgrounds have to the expectations of the American or Canadian school. A great deal of learning depends upon what Freud called transference[13] and what others have called suggestibility. A child must be able to identify in some way with a teacher and with other children.

To gain an understanding of the processes of assimilation and the variables which may affect it, we will

study, in addition to the school, the family background and culture of Italian children in Hamilton. We must study the varieties of social relations and normative boundaries which obtain in both school and family and the consequences of divergence between them. In addition, it is important that we study peer group relationships between children both in ethnic cliques and in groups shared with Canadian children on the basis of the separate social and normative systems of each, and the possibilities and consequences of conflict.

It is apparent from the research undertaken into immigrant school children in this study that when immigrant children are in the process of adjusting to the Canadian social system, particularly to its goals of personal achievement, the sustaining activities for interaction with their peers in the neighborhood, who are not adjusted to the school goals come into conflict with sustaining activities that make for successful interaction in the school, particularly with other school-oriented children and teachers. On the one hand, such sustaining activities would be identified with corner-boy[14] activities and on the other with school work and participation in the activities of the school-oriented children. The sustaining activities of a social relationship particularly role behavior and its norms should be studied in any research project not only to discover the sustaining activities in general but the preconditions of the particular social relationship. The necessity of any

particular social system depends upon whether the social relations which it sustains are necessary. In terms of social change in reference to immigrants, it is plain that with adjustment and assimilation certain kinds of social relationships become unnecessary, or are less necessary than new ones which are in the process of surplanting them. Sustaining activities are necessary when the interaction system which produce them is, itself, still necessary. The sustaining activities may become disruptive in terms of new social situations. "In a social system those activities which sustain one sort of interaction situation may well disrupt other social situations."[15]

One of the most important areas of sustaining activities is that of culture and language. Communication through a common system of symbols is a precondition for reciprocity and complimentary expectations in interaction. The symbol system which becomes embedded in a common culture has normative significance for those who interact. Once in existence, observance of its conditions are a necessary part of interaction.[16] Moreover, the common normative patterns themselves spring from interaction and role playing. Through role playing in social groups, norms are learned and the roles of each actor become smoothly articulated.

In the analysis of certain dominant features of culture and social organization of immigrant groups, it is advisable to proceed on the basis of ideal types.[17] It is

hoped that this procedure will aid explanation. The ideal type must be distinguished from the average type.[18] The ideal type of approach will apply to much of the analysis of cultural patterns of the Italian ethnic group which forms the center of our study. When we discuss, for instance, the family life of Italians in Hamilton or in Italy, we will deal with certain prominent features rather than with the average case.

Milton Gordon stresses the use of groups as a framework for studying assimilation. "The study of immigrant groups is best carried out by treating them as one phase of the general study of groups."[19] The questions to be answered are, what conditions promote group cohesiveness and how do these groups shape perception, motivation, and behavior. In this area both reference group and role theory are closely linked. In chapter two we will develop the group frame of reference, along with role and reference group concepts in some detail.

Perhaps the best focus for the study of immigrant groups and groups generally, is on the interactive processes which occur within them in a system of roles. This focus has the merit of uniting sociological and social psychological concepts. Many of the concepts listed in the literature of immigration have psychological reference. The central concept of assimilation that we use in this paper has such implications. Our aim is for a sociological perspective on

the assimilation of the Italian child in the Canadian school, but at some points it will be necessary to discuss psychological processes. This will be true particularly in the area of socialization, a process which leads to assimilation. Both in the area of socialization and of assimilation the values held by those involved are of great importance. In addition, this calls for the study of cultural reference. Rex has stated that one of the important problems for sociology is "to find an appropriate place for values in the conceptualization of interaction and social systems."[20]

The most important concepts used in studies of immigrants are adjustment, assimilation, acculturation, integration, and absorption-adaptation. The referents of these concepts are on three levels: individual, social, and cultural. All three levels are very important to any study in this area.

The immigrant child, or the child of immigrants is involved in two areas of socialization, that of the ethnic group including his family, and that of the receiving society, including the school. Socialization may be referred to as the internalization of the values, beliefs and norms of a group or society by interaction with the members. The individual's awareness of his personal as well as his social identity emerges from this social experience. In terms of assimilation, as it relates to the area of socialization, convergence in values and behavior with the receiving society

develops by interaction with its culture through the medium of its bearers. The child adapts through interaction with Canadian teachers and peers in school, but is at the same time developing in the context of the influences of his family and peers of his own ethnic group. Chinoy has said that the "socialization process is one of transforming the raw human material into a person capable of participation in the life of society."[21] The question we must ask in the light of these possibly conflicting areas of participation is whether or not the child will be able to successfully participate in the social life of two contradictory groups. Investigating the modes of adaptation to such a situation is the control point of our study. Eisenstadt points to one possible adaptation. He states that the situation of the immigrant, and we may take this as referring to child or adult, will involve "a shrinkage and transformation of his whole status image and set of values."[22] There will, initially, be a narrowing of the field of social participation. The immigrant under such circumstances is faced with the need to transform into a person "capable of participation in the life of the (new) society." In Mead's terms this would call for a modification or reformulation of the individual's "generalized other."[23] To bring the inner world of meaning into conformity with the outer world of meaning represented by the structure and values of the receiving society.

All this, however, presupposes that the child or adult immigrant is plunged into the receiving society with no rational alternative but to adapt and assimilate. This one common form of adaptation results in a return, or a refusal to leave, the social world of the ethnic ghetto. Even in the case of school children, compelled to attend a Canadian school (separate or public) the possibilities for retreat are significant especially if there is a large percentage of children of their own ethnic group in the school. One of our prime tasks is to study the factors which affect the cohesiveness of ethnic groups, in other words, the variables which affect their persistence or dissolution.[24]

Child[25] has detailed some of the responses which are common among Italians to the pressures of the social situation of a minority ethnic group. There is the possibility of a single response, adoption of the goals and social participation in the receiving society or in the Italian group, each being exclusive. Another is a double reaction which is split between different occasions, adopting the goals of both groups at different times. Others just aim to escape from the conflict situation which often may be represented when different ethnic groups come together.

In the situation of conflict some may compromise, usually leaving the conflict unsolved and with no goals effectively attained. This situation is distinguished by Child from the double reaction. The most irrational and

ineffective response or adaptation is that of blocking or a sheer failure to respond. This is similar to Merton's category of retreatism.[26] Parallels may be drawn with Merton's forms of adaptation to some of the other responses we have detailed here.

A rebel reaction is to be noted in the individual who turns against his ethnic group goals and institutionalized means in looking for success and acceptance in the receiving society. Conformity is to be noted in the "in-group reaction",[27] where the conflict of the Italian immigrant groups position is resolved by energetically pursuing the goal of affiliation with the Italian group in the community. At the same time in the light of the forces of acculturation the "in-group reaction" must involve some disposition to the contrary tendencies. Goals of affiliation with Canadian groups and values must be adjusted to in some way that is consistent with membership in the Italian group and not too painful to the individual. This approaches for some an adaptation of innovation.

Many of the cultural values and goals are retained but innovation in institutionalized means occurs to make success in Canadian, as well as Italian society, more likely. The blocking or apathetic reaction frequently indicated by escapism, as we have previously noted, is parallel to Merton's concept of retreatism. The aim of the individual who resorts to this is to diminish the strength and distinctiveness of

the contrary tendencies that are in conflict. Another irrational adaptation, noted particularly with New Canadian children in a state of culture shock, was a ritualistic, stereotyped recital of their repetoire of cultural patterns in the classroom.

Much of the literature on the effects of primary group involvement and role playing, emphasizes that it is this area that the individual gains and secures a sense of social meaning and reality.[28] One of our central hypothesis is that assimilation can effectively develop only through interaction and role playing in primary groups shared with members of the receiving society. The successful integration of the Italian child into the Canadian school in large part depends on interaction across ethnic barriers within the school. In chapter two we will investigate further the functions of role playing in primary groups for social assimilation and integration. In chapter five we will study the factors influencing the possibility of primary group interaction spaning ethnic differences and the effects of such interaction when it occurs on Italian children. The effects of this kind of cross-ethnic interaction will also be determined in the case of Canadian children, the assumption being that both sides will assimilate or converge in these circumstances.

However, such hypotheses or assumptions only become real when it is remembered that the interaction between

Canadian and Italian school children occurs, initially, within a framework formed by the meeting of two cultures through the medium of their respective interacting representatives. In theory interaction will lead to the development of common expectations and a convergence in norms,[29] but the degree of such convergence will be influenced by the pre-existing cultural values of each group. The extent of convergence over all kinds of social relationships will also depend on the degree to which the relationship of convergence is kept specific or other than diffuse. Thus, the Italian child may adjust his patterns of behavior in the area of a peer group relationship with Canadian children, but returns to his old pattern in non-Canadian company. The Italian child's values and behavior may only "bend" in certain areas while remaining essentially the same. It might be suggested that this is broadly an adaptation of accommodation rather than assimilation. However, we will be at pains to explain why we feel this is not, in fact, true.

In chapters two and four particularly, we will examine the effect of socio-cultural patterns and organizations on the possibility of assimilation. It is hypothesized that both Italian and Canadian socio-cultural patterns permit assimilation but only up to a point, which is, that assimilation occurs within a context of a pluralistic structure. This does not imply that assimilation is not genuine. Particularly within the schoolroom and play yard the assimil-

ation which follows from close interaction with Canadian peers and with teachers is significant. Children in such relationships often change permanently in the direction of Canadian norms. But just as frequently they manage to maintain many of the values of their parents.

The concept of accommodation does not at all describe the situation accurately. We feel that the adaptation of accommodation is more common with respect to the Italian child who is either rejected or held aloof from close contact with Canadian children, but who pursues Canadian values and goals on an instrumental level. Accommodation would also refer accurately to the cliques of Italian children who just bend to the school system, to teachers, and to the other children in situations where the latter have greater power. Accommodation implies changes which reduce a situation of conflict or estrangement. Often the implication is that it is a compromise, or giving in, to make for greater social harmony. Thus it does not imply close or intimate interaction or any of the normal integrative products of such interaction.

It will be our task to show how the factors and categories that we have hypothetically decided are significant affect social behavior. In Durkheim's terms,[30] we must show how certain social facts which we consider relevant affect social interaction. Of course, the assertion that these are indeed social facts will only be proved by undertaking such

a procedure. Until then, it is only a hypothesis that these are, indeed, social facts which in turn exercise "a power of coertion by reason of which they control."[31] We will choose to regard culture in this light, in so far as it defines appropriate behavior and relationships between people in the course of interaction. For example, the dominant form of family structure and organization in a particular culture will be regarded as a social fact having cohesive power. It is plain, however, that in the area of immigrant assimilation it is not the only relevant social fact. The dominant family pattern in systems of relationships of the host culture will also become a social fact in the course of interaction in the new society. Thus, for some individuals, the determination of what is a social fact will be a very complicated process. However, if any sense is to be made out of the study of assimilation it must be determined. Simply, the immigrant's problem may be phrased in terms of conflicting, constraining, and external forces or social facts. However, for social and psychological stability, he must, in some way, resolve this conflict period. In some sense, he will be concerned with the crystallization of social facts from continued interaction in primary groups with members of the whole society. "Indeed, certain of these social manners of acting and thinking acquire by reason of their repetition, a kind of rigidity which on its own account crystallizes them, so to speak, and isolates them from particular events which

reflect them."[32] They, thus, acquire a body, a tangible form, and constitute a reality in their own right quite distinct from the individual facts which produce them.

Our concern is with social interaction and role playing in primary groups which for the individual in it produces such social reality. The reverse is surely true in that alienation from primary group association leads to a lack of a sense of reality. In this respect, another important concept of Durkheim's has relevance for this study, that of the social milieu from which social facts crystallize. The primary group creates a particular social milieu. This will be greatly influenced by the size, organization, and composition of the group. "The first origins of all social processes of any importance should be sought in the internal constitution of the social group."[33]

Durkheim's approach in the respects mentioned above to social facts seems reasonable and useful for the writer's purpose in this paper. However, there are certain shortcomings. These occur with his statement on the need to treat social facts as things external to the individual. For the purpose of analysis much can be learned from taking this as so. But in this particular study, further illumination of certain sociological and social-psychological aspects of immigrant assimilation which are internal is necessary. This is the case in reference to certain aspects and stages

of socialization in which the process itself, as well as what affects it, is important. We must separate analytically the points at which Durkheim's concept is useful from areas where it might only obscure. Some of the areas of social process and interaction deal with the period in which crystallization of social facts is developing. The social world "consists of social relations whose means might well be further analyzed in terms of the goals, aspirations, expectations, understandings, and ideals of related persons, and the real problem is whether a world of this kind can be thought of as consisting of discrete things."[34]

Research Techniques

In this study we have gathered data both from books and articles, and from observations and questioning in the school and in the families of school children. Questionnaires largely of the open-ended type have been administered and a sociometric survey has been undertaken. Statistical analysis has been omitted principally because the data and the information on which it was based was not available in sufficient quantity or quality. We will explain this latter point at greater length in a moment.

It emerged that our problem was to observe and study to the best effect the factors which related to assimilation in Canada, in particular, to that of Italian children in the Canadian school system. The observation centered on several

schools in the Hamilton area, with concentration on two elementary schools in particular, one in the public system and the other in the separate system. It is in the school system that the most significant problems of the immigrant! child's assimilation center. Once one has gained entrance to a school, a problem in itself, the real problem of what to study and how to study it, emerges. This was particularly true in regard to the techniques of observation which were central to our methodology. These questions had to be asked and answered: What should be observed, how should observation be recorded, what procedures should be used to try to assure the accuracy of observation, what relationship should exist between the observer and the observed, and how, in fact, should such a relationship be established?[35]

We will proceed to discuss each of these points in relation to the present study and its main aims and concerns which will give substance to these questions. However, one general question which assumes priority is that concerning correctness and accuracy of observation which can be only answered in terms of the subject under study. We chose the most accurate methods consistent with the subject under study. The practical limitations of the methods open to us and the need for elucidation of an area which concerns many subjective aspects of human behavior makes purely objective statistical study in the area of assimilation, though valuable, not, sufficiently elucidating the important factors and variables.

It is, however, our intention to make an essentially sociological study rather than one on an individual psychological level as is the tendency of some writers who use the term assimilation.[36]

The problem, as in any study, is that one cannot observe everything or indeed use every type of research technique. It is essential that we construct a system of priorities to judge what is relevant for observation within our framework. We have already outlined our area of concern and what remains is to arrive at decisions as to the best way to study the significant factors and decide upon the measures of the variables we have outlined.

The Unstructured Observation Technique

We have employed unstructured observation techniques in part in this study. They rest upon a foundation of careful and serious consideration and some research of what aspects of the situation will probably prove most relevant. However, the interviews and conversations which comprise the material for this unstructured observation take, in part, the place of exploratory research aimed at hammering out more accurately the requirements of an effective area of study. This stage, once the main directions of investigation were decided, was carried out with a very open mind for material which might modify the initial hypothesis and maybe add new ones where they seem to be called for. The aim was to refine

concepts and hypotheses and further develop relevant theoretical structures and orientations through unstructured observation. It is hoped in this way that dead wood would be eliminated and potentially healthy growth fostered.

My unstructured observation fortunately provided me with a check on validity and pointers to significance resulting mainly from the variety of techniques of observation. This largely sprang from the fact that through chance I was able to observe while playing more than one role. I undertook observation not only as a sociologist making open observations but also covertly as a teacher in a sense as a participant observer whose role was not confused in the eyes of the observed with that of the sociologist. In New York I also had the opportunity in the performance of my duties as a supervisor of student teachers to observe classes with substantial numbers of Puerto Rican children taught by students and regular teachers. The interplay of these roles and the observations they gave rise to, lead to a more definite check on my original hypotheses. My observational study of Puerto Rican children in New York was not in any way made part of my basic study, it merely provided a check for it.

Questionnaires

The frequent problem with questionnaires and interviews is basically whether they succeed in measuring what

what they set out to measure. In the case of formally structured questionnaires the problem is that the wording may have many meanings for the different people answering and may be incomprehensible to some. This is particularly true in the case of immigrant children. At the elementary school level, those in the lower grades may be poor readers and this is compounded in the case of new Canadians whose English is not very well developed. It was also found, in a preliminary administration of the sample structured questionnaires to teachers, that there was a wide variation in what they understood by the questions even after an attempt had been made to improve them.

Finally, I decided to administer a short questionnaire to teachers and to children each with a different content. But I relied primarily on asking standardized open-ended questions in interviews. This cuts down the number of respondents particularly in the latter case but also in the first case since instead of being mailed they were given out and completed in the presence of the researcher. This was done because it was felt that many of the mailed questions might either be completed incorrectly or not at all and secondly, so that the respondent could receive fuller instructions and would also have the opportunity to clarify certain misunderstandings.

In regard to observations of an unstructured nature, the problem of when the observer should make notes and how

often they should be kept arises. "Constant note taking may interfere with the quality of observation; the observer easily loses relevant aspects of the situation between observing and writing."[37] In addition, note taking may disturb those people or persons being observed. Where possible, we tried to keep notes though we would have preferred a tape recorder to keep a record. If note keeping seemed to stand in the way of effective observation we wrote up our impressions in notes after the period of observation.

Before going into the situation to observe we always had some idea of what we were looking for, often selecting particular observations to watch for a limited number of things or, in the classroom to observe particular children closely. However, as Jahoda and Deutch point out, the "observer must always be prepared to take his cues from unanticipated events."[38]

FOOTNOTES

[1]M. Jahoda and M. Deutch, Research Methods in Social Relations, New York: Dryden Press, 1951.

[2]R. Taft, "Shared Frame of Reference Concept Applied to Assimilation of Immigrants," X (1957), 2, 141-150.

[3]S. N. Eisenstadt, The Absorption of Immigrants, London: Routledge, 1954.

[4]Mol. J. "The Functions of Marginality," International Migration, I, (1963), 175-177.

[5]Op. cit. Eisenstadt, 1954.

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CHAPTER I

FACTORS AFFECTING IMMIGRANT ASSIMILATION

It is essential that we study the variables in the assimilation of ethnic groups to a receiving social system. We must examine the conditions under which ethnic groups persist as distinct entities within the structure of society and the conditions associated with their dissolution. Warner[1] suggests a number of variable factors, one of which is the extent of cultural and racial difference between the immigrant and receiving culture. When great differences exist in both, the incoming group is likely to be subordinated greatly and assimilation will be very slow. Other factors affecting assimilation are the ratio of the incoming group to the resident population, the rapidity of the influx, and the degree of concentration. If all of these are high, assimilation is likely to be slow and difficult. Education and occupational level are other important factors. More rapid assimilation is aided if these are high. If there is a rapid influx in large numbers of immigrants with a low educational level from a markedly different culture, the reaction to them is likely to be unfavourable. The receiving society finds the new arrivals indigestible. Lines may be drawn to keep them out of the societies' activities and

concerns. If the immigrants are of low social status, they will not only find opposition from the middle and upper classes, but often, and more frequently, from the working classes of the receiving society. The initial stages of the building up and outward spread of a ghetto or ethnic enclave will probably affect the long-term working class residents of such areas. As more immigrants flow in, the lower class will see streets gradually taken over by immigrants in their search for accommodation near their fellows. Another factor frequently enters in, in the form of economic competition. The middle class is often given to exhorting the working class, in such situations, to be liberal in their attitudes to immigrants. And they can well afford to until immigrants who have risen in the social scale come to live next door. We must then add two other factors affecting assimilation. The predisposition of the receiving culture to allow for differences and the degree of economic competition which may be present between immigrants and natives.

The factors which make it less likely that the receiving society will be favourably disposed to assimilation are factors which contribute to ethnic ghettos. "A large group population, by facilitating the institutional retention of ethnic patterns, similarly impedes a group's immersion within the larger society."[2] In a situation where immigrants of a particular culture are rapidly arriving in large numbers, it is not long before they become

concentrated in particular areas of the cities they first move into. These people concentrate together because of common interests and common status. Many of them can speak little or none of the language of the receiving society and do not know the required and expected social patterns. As Zubryzcki says, "It is the most natural thing in the world for the immigrant to settle in the compact colony of his fellow countrymen where he may be sure of companionship and encouragement. Indeed, it is not unusual for domiciled foreigners to double up and sublet part of their homes to the new arrivals thus easing the struggle for existence for the more recent immigrants and providing a monetary return for their benefactors."[3]

The language of the receiving society is much less essential in the city ghetto than in the country because the presence of others who speak the same tongue renders it possible for the immigrant to make a living without knowing much of the language. In the cities the immigrant, as a result of concentration, frequently has his own institutions, churches, clubs and places of amusement clustered around him. The stores sell the food he is used to in a language he is used to. There emerges from this another variable, the predisposition of the immigrant group to change.[4] This is often affected by the extent of ghetto development and the internal and external forces that pressure toward a ghetto situation.

Language as an Index of Assimilation

Common language is the most durable feature of a national group. This is emphasized in a Welsh national song, "If the enemy has ravished the land of Wales the language of Wales is living as ever." The old people of an immigrant group often maintain their identification with their country of birth through language and may try to impose it on their children and grandchildren. The common language functions as a symbol of nationality as well as a carrier of it. In ghettos there is a marked tendency for language groups to congregate together into pockets. The common language is a symbol of their group identity and stability. It is, for them, a comforting and unifying factor and it gives status in their own minds. It brings them into relation with the long-standing and familiar social cultural bulwarks. It is a means whereby they express their hopes and fears in their social isolation and strangeness. It is their means of communication and communion with others "in the same boat" and especially a means of making their helplessness and their lack of adjustment seem less threatening.

Language is the most crucial and universally used feature of a given cultural heritage. It is directly significant as a factor of assimilation. The real assimilation of foreign elements cannot be secured simply by inducing them into a new political and social order. They need to become part of the whole social process which rests basically

on free and adequate communication, upon the ability and the incentive to communicate over a wide range of subjects. The common dominant or indigenous language is the basic communication equipment which greatly assists assimilation but does not, however, guarantee it. "With the acquisition of a common language, its lexicon, syntax, idioms, the conception of reality, and the "Weltanschauung", encompassed by its peculiar structure, there comes the learning of the subtler aspects of the surrounding social and cultural world."[5]

The underlying values and attitudes, the elements of spirit and style behind the ways of the larger new social life and the unlearning of the old forms are a link to language. Assimilation becomes easier and more rapid the greater the similarity and compatibility of the mental and social equipment of persons in both the dominant and foreign groups.[6] Much of this is linked to common language. It is often a key expediting agency. In general, acculturation is only possible as people learn to speak and understand the language of the new cultural community.

Often it is thought, however, that the adoption of the language of the new society indicates that the person is assimilated. Unfortunately this is usually not the case. Adoption of the indigenous language proves that some assimilation has taken place, often in social rituals and values, but it proves neither that the newcomers have relinquished all their former distinctive traits, nor that

they have been fully accepted by the larger population.

Primary and Secondary Groups

The hypothesis in this paper is that assimilation is greatly aided, if not caused, by a growing pattern of interaction in the social groups of the receiving society. In the case of secondary groups this process will only occur up to a point but where there is a possibility of involvement in primary groups this process will, in time, proceed in the direction of full assimilation.

Simply living in a society which has a different culture and language will in itself have some effect, especially if the immigrant has to depend on that society for a job and other basic essentials. The rewards obtained on this purely instrumental level will cause him to become involved with the society. He will in all probability start to learn the new language and some of the expected behaviour of his new country, if only to make life easier. However, this is involvement at a rather impersonal level. He can if he wishes put himself at a distance from it and shut his door upon it when he comes home. The world of the market place and of economic and social relationships of an institutional level is not, in essence, a close and intimate world. It is a world of secondary groups.

The Distinction Between Behavioural and Structural Assimilation

As we have pointed out, learning a new language may be a significant step toward assimilation but does not insure it. Milton Gordon[7] makes a relevant analytical distinction between behavioural and structural assimilation. These two concepts serve to distinguish different stages and kinds of assimilation. The first concerns knowledge and use of the patterns of behaviour of the receiving society and includes language. Structural assimilation refers to the entrance of immigrants and their descendants into the social cliques, organizations, and institutional activities and general civic life of the receiving society. Gordon points out that the ultimate in this kind of assimilation is evidenced of a high degree of frequency of intermarriage. Most importantly, this entails admittance and acceptance into the primary groups and informal relationships of the receiving society.

The second generation, in particular, may have difficulty in the area of structural assimilation. They frequently are assimilated on a behavioural level using English fluently and without accent and are imbued with the goals and values of the receiving society. This they feel will ensure their assimilation on a structural level. But the situation is not so simple. They will on many occasions experience rebuff when they try to enter the primary group organizations and associations of their adopted country. This will occur not only when they leave school but much

sooner. They may feel that they are Canadians but there will still be some people who see them as Italians or Poles. A surname, complexion, or anything the observer feels might be indicative of foreignness will be used as the basis of rejection. Visibility is a very important variable in assimilation.

"Many believe that they heard the call of welcome to social cliques, clubs and institutions of white Protestant America. It is simply a matter of learning the ways. The invitation, however, was not really there in the first place. So the rebuffed individuals return to the homelier but dependable comforts of the communal institutions of their ancestral group. All could now join in building social institutions and organizations within the ethnic enclave."[8] In Canada there is reason to believe the process is not quite so extreme, but it is a common process. While behavioural assimilation has taken place structural assimilation, with some important exceptions, has not been extensive. One also has to distinguish between the activities of the community, earning a living, and exercising one's rights as a citizen from personal patterns and frequent home visiting. Thus, one must distinguish secondary and primary group relationships when talking about assimilation. The first is relatively impersonal and segmented; the latter warm, intimate and personal.

Personalities as an Index of Adaptation

Eisenstadt[9] emphasizes the importance of primary group ties for assimilation. A person may interact in secondary groups and only adapt on a limited and superficial level. Primary group ties involve the whole person and are the basis of their rewards and also of their demands. If a person holds back a significant proportion of himself, particularly that part which influences his most important opinions and values, he either will never become very accepted in any primary group or if accepted he will be quickly estranged. However, a primary group in which an immigrant participates with members of the whole society will not just influence the immigrant. In order for the group to be rewarding to all members and for interaction to occur, members of the whole society in the group must also adapt. People do not participate in any meaningful sense unless they receive rewards from the association. However, it is true that the perception of rewards may vary. A strong desire for acceptance on the part of the immigrant on any terms may result in participation with little adaptation on the part of the members of the host society who contribute to its composition. Such a person will probably not contribute much to the primary group under such conditions. Outward adaptation for acceptance may take place. But is the marginal person who tags along and will do anything to remain a member, really a member in anything beyond a physical and statistical sense? Real accept-

ance is unlikely in such situations.[10] Probably few people would accept such minimal rewards of primary group life. This would be particularly true if there was the opportunity to participate in primary groups in the immigrants own culture. But some people remain completely marginal, rejecting and rejected by their primary group of nativity and not really accepted by other primary groups.

In the course of my research I came across one child who continually followed Canadian children and tried to participate in anything they were doing. He was not completely rejected in the sense that his presence was tolerated. In fact, he had a role in one particular group - that of clown and butt of every situation. His pattern of adaptation to social interaction was such that he could not escape from this role. In almost any situation he related to everyone on this basis. This included teachers and classmates of his own nationality. Only in his home with his parents did a different character and form of adaptation to social interaction emerge.

Primary groups form to give intimate and close social contact. By giving ourselves in such relationships we can, in association with others as intimately involved as we, see ourselves as they see us. There also emerges a common view of group interests through interaction in the primary group. As Cooley says, "The result of intimate association is a certain fusion of individualities in a

common whole so that the self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group. It involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which "we" is the natural expression."[11] Cooley's definition of the primary group implies three conditions: physical proximity of the members, smallness of the group and the enduring character of the relationship. Interactions are more likely to be informal and affective than they would be in the case of larger organizations. In larger organizations our relationships are segmented. Interactions are likely to involve little other than the functions associated with our specific roles in them. The important factor with primary groups is the high degree of member involvement in a non-segmented sense which occurs in them.

This involvement is maintained by a variety of forces. In the case of many primary groups the traditions of the institutions of which they are a part may be very important. The primary groups in school often have their own traditions. These are often passed down from the older to the younger children, each classroom group having its own traditions, some of which have been inherited from children who were in the class the year before. The classroom tradition, in many important respects, is a part of and a reflection of the traditions among the children in the school as a whole. Certain privileges and obligations attach to certain grades. As they grow older, children

succeed to the power and symbols which the upper grades hold. Strict codes of morality exist and punishment may be dealt out by older children. Telling tales and hitting some children who are weak may be taboo. Often the teacher comes into substantial trouble when trying to stop what the children regard as a just punishment for a wrong or when flouting informally established practice or tradition.

The primary group, because of its cohesiveness and intimate structure, is able to exert a substantial degree of social control upon its members. This is used to enforce the norms of the group. These norms are sets of behaviours which are expected by the group to be observed by the members. The most extreme penalty for failure to abide by the norms is expulsion from the group and its activities. It is usually supposed that these activities, often represented by the social contacts within the group, give substantial rewards to the members. Thus, expulsion is a very strong sanction.[12]

It must be remembered that in the case of a primary group a cutting off or slowing down in the frequency of rewarding social contacts within that group affects the most important area of a person's life. He has become a part of that group and it is part of him. A significant proportion of his life's concerns may be bound up with that group. Expulsion from the most intimate of primary groups, such as the family in some cultures, may cause a kind of social

death. This is not to be risked lightly.

It is plain to see why few turn their backs on the rewards of life offered by the immigrant cultural enclave. Some, however, in the first generation move out with the chance that they will pay the price of social isolation. The second generation more frequently makes the move, a step toward the rejection of what the first generation stands for. The risk and dangers of marginality are incurred in such a move. The third generation sometimes is even more disrupted and disoriented than the preceding generation in the opinion of Handlin.[13]

What we wish to explore now is the effect of dis-association from primary groups. We must examine the re-action to marginality and the modes of response and adapta-tion both unrealistic and realistic to such a situation. Homans would suggest they are often unrealistic in a situa-tion where an individual is isolated from primary group contact.

> Membership in a primary group sustains a man, enables him to maintain his equilibrium under the ordinary shocks of life and helps him to bring up children who will in turn be happy and resilient. If the group is shattered around him; if he leaves a group in which he is a valued member and if above all he finds no new group to which he can relate himself he will under stress develop disorders of thought and feeling and behaviour. His think-ing will be obsessive, and elaborated without sufficient reference to reality. He will be anxious or angry, distructive of himself or to others. His behaviour will be compulsive, not

> controlled, and if the process of education that makes a man easily able to relate himself to others is itself social he will, as a lonely man, bring up children who will have a lowered social capacity. The circle is vicious. Lack of group membership in one generation may make men less capable of a group membership in the next. The civilization that by its very process of growth shatters small group life will leave men and women lonely and unhappy.[14]

The individual's experience of social reality is mediated in large part through primary groups. If he is cut off from the primary group contact, his grip on social reality becomes increasingly tenuous as Homans in his quotation has pointed out. The primary group mediates much of the symbolic life which Mead holds to be so important for human rationality. The symbols which are often mediated by primary group life help create meaning in social relations.

Irrational and Socially Maladaptive Behaviour

One of Mead's concerns was the irrationality which appears when the environment does not respond to the individual's inner life.[15] This is illuminating when developed with respect to the immigrant in the process of socialization in a new society. This is true both in respect to the environment represented by the immigrant group and its culture and attitude, and in respect to the environment represented by the new society. In this limbo world neither environment responds nor corresponds to his inner life at that moment. In very simple language the immigrant doesn't

understand what is happening to him or what has happened. Or in Mead's more formal language, the immigrant does not understand the covert aspects of his own act. It is in his understanding of these aspects that Mead sees the foundation of rationality or, as he often calls it, reflective thought in man. The consequences of access to these acts make for man's effective relationship to his environment. It is very important that the immigrant in process of socialization accurately perceives what has and what is happening to him. One might almost say that it is part of the immigrant's tragedy that he does not always perceive accurately. It is important for us now to investigate the dynamics of why this might be the case. The immigrant in this instance is in a position where he has difficulty in understanding his former culture and its social patterns in relation to the new one. The two are contradictory. This does not even have to involve a very apparent contradiction to the outsider. Differences in shade where a thing seems the same pattern or similar but is not so because of minute variations can also be very disturbing. Something which initially seems very familiar, a relationship with a school teacher for example, may, because of slight differences in behaviour and demands create ripples which may fan out to disturb the whole pattern of the relationship. It is possible that the individual might be as disconcerted as if he had gone into the relationship expecting it to be different and finds it so.

The situation of the immigrant is often one in which the individual's symbolic life no longer conforms to reality, in this case the reality of a new society. Small talk is different. People depend on this small detail so much in social relations, reflecting in it feelings and emotions that encapsulate a common experience. The common symbolic life it represents is denied to the outsider who does not know the right small talk. It is in such situations that a phenomenon known as culture shock may occur. In such situations it becomes difficult to think and to act rationally, in other words to adapt to the circumstances efficiently. The tendency is to follow ritualistically old simple patterns which one understands. Such behaviour will appear inappropriate to the insider and will remain so while the outsider is in a state of culture shock.

Status Crystallization

Lenski[16] in his references to status crystallization says much which can be applied to primary groups. This is particularly true when it is remembered that the individual gives reality to his status through interaction with others in his primary group. They may accept or reject a status he has been awarded outside that group. They also create status, the position accorded in his own group. One's status is always dependent upon the others in the group of community, and is partly a matter of how others directly perceive the individual. Thus, the relevance to

primary group involvement is apparent, it is the primary group which often crystallizes status.

If the individual has a very low level of social participation, particularly in primary groups, he enters a vicious circle for it becomes less likely that others will accept him in the course of interaction. The point which is significant in regard to primary groups is not so much that everyone likes each other as Homan's asserts[17] but that they can participate freely in social action without embarrassment, that they are capable of giving themselves in a social relationship. The person with low status crystallization gets and gives few rewards in social interaction on this level; frequently he causes embarrassment and unease to himself and to his fellows. The individual makes the relationship more rewarding by submitting to the social controls and norms of the group. However, the important thing is that they feel accepted, that they have a place and purpose even if they do something wrong. In other words, they do not have to watch everything that they do or say. The established member of the primary group just simply behaves without thinking about it. Just as with swimming or cycling you do it. If you thought too much about riding a bicycle or about how to behave in a group you would probably become a cropper. Socially gauche behaviour is often apparent in those who fear rejection and continually attempt to please. "Persons with a low degree of status crystallization are

more likely to be subjected to disturbing experiences in the interaction process and to have greater difficulties in establishing rewarding patterns of social interaction with others."[18] Lenski asserts that the individual who has poor status crystallization will obtain few rewards from social interaction and will withdraw from social intercourse. This is true of the completely marginal man but not of the immigrant who still has many of his old social contacts and is trying to engage in new social relationships with members of the receiving society. Crystallization on the basis of his old status will increase; crystallization on the basis of his new status will decline if he is rejected. Complete lack of status crystallization in any sphere typifies only the completely marginal immigrant. "Total withdrawal from the realm of voluntary relationships will easily occur only when all alternative responses have been exhausted. It is a pattern of behaviour to be expected only in a limited number of cases, even in a category of persons whose social position may lead ultimately to this type of response."[19] In the majority of cases of immigrants in the process of assimilation, the situation is of partial withdrawal from the unrewarding relationships, both among their fellow immigrants and among the individuals of the whole society, all of whom are likely to be suspicious of this particular individual. Social interaction with both groups occurs, but not at the highest level of participation and efficiency in social terms.

In this situation what often occurs, noticed by Lenski and several other writers, is that the reasons for participation in groups becomes object oriented. Many such people participate in social groups mainly to attain instrumental ends, the work group being one of the most important examples. The individual just desires to maximize economic and status advantage.

There is a minimal kind of interaction which is purely instrumental and is engaged in to get specific things done; it is sustained only for these purposes. In reference to face to face interaction, Goffman[20] suggests that there is a kind of interaction midway between minimal, purely instrumental interaction, and the complete social involvement of a primary group: this equals the encounter. It is a step away from the social group in which the individual members perceive themselves as part of a distinct collective unit to which they belong and identify with.

Goffman states that "Social groups, whether big or little, possess some general organizational properties including regulations of entry and departure, capacity for collective action and division of labor, including leadership roles."[21] Some of these factors may be present in focused interaction in encounters, but without the sustained inclusiveness present in social groups. An encounter may be represented by a group of strangers in conversation on a train who have come together for specific social rewards,

but only for the duration of the journey. Encounters exist only for the period that the participants are together taking part in such focused interaction. This is unlike the social group which exists apart from the occasions when the members are physically together. A coming together can be merely a phase of group life. "A falling away, on the other hand, is the end of a particular encounter even when the same pattern of interaction and the same participants appear at a future meeting."[22] The participant in the encounter tries to ensure a continuance, but in a manner different from that in which social groups are maintained. In the encounter, the concern is to keep the interaction focused; to have ground rules for maintaining communication once it has begun. Attention in an encounter is threatened by distraction of various kinds and the participants, as Goffman puts it, manage the situation through tactful acts.

In this paper, one of our hypotheses is that the assimilation of the immigrant child is greatly facilitated by participation in primary groups with Canadian children. We will now add another hypothesis: that focused face to face interaction in encounters with Canadian children also facilitates assimilation, though at a lower level. It is probable that only by interacting in an encounter can the immigrant child eventually come to interact as a member in primary groups. Indeed, encounters can easily transform in time into social groups with much the same personnel.

The child begins to interact in the school yard, for example, by joining in other children's games and in time is accepted as a member of the group of particular children. It is when an individual is a member of a primary group that identification takes place; such identification is not a characteristic of encounters. The view taken here is that encounters smooth the way for the immigrant child to participate with Canadian children and thus move toward assimilation.

For our purposes the importance of social groups lies, in large measure, in the identification which takes place in them and the rewards of such identification. Such identification is frequently articulated by role playing in the group. Merton defines a social group as "a number of people who interact with one another in accord with established patterns."[23] A second characteristic is that "the interacting persons define themselves as members, i.e., they have patterned expectations of forms of interaction which are morally binding on them and on other members, but not on those regarded as outside the group."[24] Another characteristic is that outsiders will tend to define the person in interaction as belonging to a distinct group. The definition of a social group would be incomplete without mentioning the rewards of identification in more detail. "A group is a collection of organisms in which the existence of all their given relations is necessary for the satisfaction certain individuals need."[25] In the last analysis this

is the variable which immediately effects a group's continued existence: If the group fulfills no need, gives no reward, or does so less often than other available groups with similar functions, the group will become extinct.[26] "Organizations persist only if the individuals who compose them depend on their presence."[27]

The situation of the immigrant moving toward assimilation with the social group of the receiving society is often one in which there is a parallel decline in social contact with social groups of his own ethnicity. If such assimilation takes place on a large enough scale, such changes will result in a modification in the structure of the immigrant group as a whole. Though the end result of individuals moving out of the ethnic group will be a decline in social contact with them, the process itself will effect those who remain. In the period while the break is still incomplete, remaining individuals will be carriers of external and disruptive influences. This is very apparent in the case of school children who are still embedded in the family and its ethnic background, but who are strongly effected by the outlook and values of their school. The adult who has adopted new values and has become partially assimilated is likely to move out of the ethnic community. The child with similar adaptations will remain as a carrier of the culture of the receiving society during his school years at least.

For the individual who is becoming assimilated, new social groups will be created to fulfill new needs if the old ones do not change. However, where such new groups are created they often represent a reordering to cope with the forces from within and without the ethnic community on a new basis. What occurs is a convergence of old and new forces which is the most efficient and rational adaptation to the situation. Later the individual may, after consolidating his position at such a midway point, move on to complete identification in all areas of his social life with the values of the receiving society. For many, however, the midpoint is the most common form of adaptation. The ethnic group represented in all the many small group relations which make it up is concerned with maintaining cohesion and will be prepared to make some changes and concessions to do so. The same goes for the many individuals who want contact and acceptance from members of the receiving society. They will moderate this desire in the presence of members of their own ethnic group. Individuals always wish to maintain contact with as wide a number of groups which give social rewards as possible. They will try to this end to play down factors which would cause friction in each group. It became apparent in this study that school children frequently compartmentalize the social world of home and school, attempting to please in both often under contradictory circumstances. In the case of immigrant children, one must

remember that identification and cohesion on the basis of the family is of a peculiar kind and strength.

Research findings and theoretical analysis point towards a number of variables related, in general, to the cohesiveness of groups. The members may be attracted to each other as individual personalities, by cultural elements which they have in common, by activities supported by the group, or all of these. The social variables, when they reside in different patterns of variables, and behaviours, produce different patterns of communication and interpersonal interaction. In addition, the kind of cohesiveness which is a function of the intrinsic needs of the members results in different group processes than a cohesiveness based on social forces exerted by external authorities. An example would be the differences between the classroom and informally organized gang relationships. However, cohesiveness in both is added to by an element of external threat to the group's existence and by effective cooperation within the group. It is diminished by interpersonal conflicts and frustrations within the group. "The cohesiveness of a group, thus, is a resultant of all the forces acting on all the members to remain in the group."[28]

The pressures of the group help it to accomplish its purposes and help maintain its existence. Pressure within the group comes from clear organization and strong identification of the members. This includes the group structure,

the patterning of social relations within it, and the social bonds between members.

THE SOCIAL GROUP AND THE CLASSROOM

The classroom comprises a group with face to face interaction directed toward the goal of educational development. It is organized to this end on the basis of rules of behaviour, task completion, and entry and exit. The latter is usually formed on the basis of age and educational attainment in a graded system. Formally it has a leader in the teacher and often lieutenants in the form of monitors to which power is delegated. In the minds of the participants and in the eyes of others, the classroom group has existence even when it is not in session. In some cases this feeling of belonging may continue even after the student has graduated to another grade.

The classroom group has rules and norms of behaviour. The class as a body may ostracize certain individuals and become hostile toward them. Sometimes the class has its own initiation ceremonies for newcomers in mid-term. Apart from the formal organization, with the teacher as leader, more informal organizations within the classroom may be formed on the basis of opposition to the teacher, in which certain leaders figure most prominently. This kind of structure is the complete reverse of the formal system. Leaders chosen by the teachers, i.e., monitors, will often immediately

qualify for exclusion from this informal opposition group.

Frequently, crystallization into a group structure comprising the whole class does not take place. The pattern more usually consists of several points of crystallization which would be revealed in a sociometric study. The personnel of each would, in some cases, not be exclusive in that one could participate in many groups simultaneously.

Thus, the boundaries of the primary group of children are not usually coterminous with the social group formally represented by the class. Yet, certain permanent patterns of relationship appear in this formal organization. The classroom as a unit, as a social group, may have significant effect on the immigrant child, but probably not to the same extent as an intimate friendship group would. The more formal training of the classroom led by the teacher, however nicely adapted and efficient, can never take the place of the friendship group. As Waller states, "American-ization studies have shown that assimilation of the immigrant proceeds most rapidly when he is received into the group life of the American-born, for he then absorbs the defini-tions of situations indigenous to the American culture and works out his personal problems by adopting a set of social roles and attitudes not incongruous with the current defini-tions of the situations."[29]

However, it is not only acceptance of children into the group life of Canadian children which effects assimilation,

there is also the circumstance in which a child would identify with such a group, norms and values without being a member. This introduces the concept of reference groups. Indeed, in the case of the immigrant child's membership in a group in which Canadian children are also members, the important element with respect to assimilation is not just membership, but identification with that group. In other words, the membership group is also a reference group.

REFERENCE GROUPS

Our study would be limited in scope if we only concerned ourselves with groups to which people belong. "That men act in a social framework of reference yielded by the group of which they are a part is a notion undoubtedly current and probably sound. However, the further fact is that men frequently orient themselves to groups other than their own in shaping their behaviour and evaluations. It is the problems centred about this fact of orientation to non-membership groups that constitutes the distinctive concern of reference group theory."[30]

In the process of social change reference groups are of great importance. A group once taken as a reference will lead to anticipatory socialization which may, even at this stage, change the relations of a person to the group to which he is already a member. It is not only interaction and role playing which can change or modify behaviour, but

the expectancy of future involvement. The individual comes to see himself as a member of the group which is his reference. Even at a distance he begins to identify with it and its expectations, goals, and purposes. This is often the process by which an individual becomes weaned away from his old primary group allegiances. It is a transitional stage. But, as Gordon points out,[31] a behavioural approximation to the group's expectation of its members may not necessarily result in structural assimilation into that group. An individual's reference group does not always become his membership group. The socialization is not completed without full participation and interaction within the group as a member. The individual may assimilate the values of the group and try to behave as they do, but may be rejected.

Merton makes a distinction between reference groups which set and maintain standards for the individual and comparison reference groups which provide a frame of comparison relative to which the individual evaluateshimself and others.[32] The latter may have purely instrumental concerns. Thus, an immigrant may make a comparison with the cars and household devices owned by members of the receiving society. Often cases are met among immigrants where it is thought that the ownership of a late model car and colored television is a kind of open seseme to the groups of the receiving society. It may be asserted that the Canadian

culture is materialistic, but not in these simple terms. Conspicuous consumption is not enough.

Merton asks the question, "If multiple groups or statuses with their possible divergent or even contradictory norms and standards are taken as a frame of reference by the individual, how are these discrepancies resolved?"[33] He suggests that this is only partly clarified by referring to role conflicts. "For as we have seen, frames of references are yielded not only by one's membership group, or one's own status, but by non-membership groups and other statuses as well."[34]

The difference between the terms reference group and role as far as Merton is concerned may be typified by saying that role refers to playing a part, as in a play, while maintaining an important distinction between role and the individual playing it. Reference behaviour refers to identification with the character. But since the role effects the person playing it, the line between the two concepts becomes difficult to draw. Role concepts, we feel, deal better with the mechanisms which explain identification and cohesion in groups. They have the merit of referring directly to the social structure while giving the bonus of providing articulation between personal, social, and cultural levels. The concept of reference groups is, for our purposes, very useful but on a more descriptive level.

To understand the meaning of a particular role we

must understand the social organization of which it is a part. We must then concern ourselves with the specific facts of social organization and structure as they apply to particular social situations. This way the term 'role' will have meaning and it will be possible to study the social change of immigrant groups by studying a changing social situation and the particular social organizations which cause the existence of that situation. It is essential to study the role complexes of social groups to understand a particular individual's role. This is one of the prime factors that will make this study, we hope, consistently sociological.

Assimilation and Social Role

In Eisenstadt's[35] formulation of the process of immigrant assimilation, his dependent variable, absorption and adaptation, is measured by the individual's level of success in social participation and role incumbencies in social organizations of the receiving community. As we have already stated role playing in social groups, particularly intimate social groups, is the stuff of which a person's perception of social reality is made. It is the vantage point from which he sees and interprets the world. With role incumbency in the groups of the receiving society, the individual comes to see the world as they do, to apply the same standards and select the same goals as significant.

But in turn, the receiving society's goals and standards may adjust too, particularly in situations where members of immigrant groups are entering the social groups of the receiving society in large numbers. It is then, not just a situation of isolated individual immigrants molded by the pressures of the social organizations of the receiving society. Ideally, it is a situation in which new groups are formed which include both immigrants and members of the receiving society interacting on equal terms. Conditions of entry and exit, norms and goals, and leaders become not just the result of a preconstituted charter but of the immediate situation in which the interaction itself has led to group formation. Convergence has taken place, and it is no longer meaningful to speak of immigrants as an out-group, some of whose number have been graciously received into a group already in operation.

This is seen to take place in school and in the world of work. It takes place where people come together in situations in which they are strangers, but no longer feel the need to form into cliques on the basis of over-riding ethnic allegiancies. That is, in order to interact effectively they do not select ethnicity as the common denominator. This last situation would reveal a convergence had occurred and assimilation had taken place to a substantial degree.

ROLE THEORY

Role theory may be said to deal with the patterns of behaviour and the variety of cognitions held toward these patterns by the social participants. Basically, the propositions of role theory are concerned with the effects of one upon the other. The concepts of role theory center around a description of the patterns and cognitions relating to particular roles. It is hoped that role theory will enable us to gather and interpret a significant part of our data. It will also permit us to draw for illumination on certain points; on the disciplines of psychology and 'culturology,'[36] in addition to sociology for role concepts have reference in both of these areas.

To date, much role theory has been stated in such a way as it applies to both individuals and groups, to values and to reality evaluation. The area of application is wide; the research and its ramifications is voluminous.[37] It is surprising that with all the work that has been done in role theory there is very little integration in the field. The integration we attempt is for the specific purpose of studying assimilation and normative convergence amongst immigrants.[38] The concept has to be dynamic[39] and allow for the study of role change. This will entail an effective scheme for dealing with the dynamics of role conflict.

SOCIAL ROLES AND SOCIAL GROUPS

In a primary group the differentiation of roles is not too complicated but is sometimes very subtle. Nonetheless in order to participate effectively the newcomer must learn his role, he must in fact become it. Briefly a role could be termed the function played by an individual in a group and his contribution to the group in that form. Attached to a role is behaviour that is characteristic and expected of the occupant. Behaviour must be appropriate to the role and to the group which forms a complex of constituent roles. In primary groups, among children and between particular friends, there are certain social rituals. Particular words or foods or ways of doing things may be important symbols of the relationship and its unique features. This represents a mighty force of opinion in children's play groups. However, different groups have different norms and a child may be a member of several of such groups or at least interact with them. What is humiliation in one group is honour in another. The child becomes used to changing his behaviour according to the group he is in. The pattern of playing the part required by each group is learned by all children who participate in various play and friendship groups. In many respects we should not expect the immigrant child to be any less capable of such changes in role playing than any other child. The

versatility of children is often surprising given encouragement and acceptance when they do conform to the patterns of various groups. The well adjusted immigrant child often becomes even more adept at varying his behaviour to conform with numerous groups than the average Canadian child.

Social roles only have significance in the system of interaction of which they form a vital part. Roles articulate both social and cultural systems in the society. At the individual, cultural and social levels the important thing is that the behaviour exhibited conforms to the expectations which constitute the norm in that social setting.

THE ACTION SYSTEM AND CONCEPT OF ROLE

In Parson's system the important factors relating to the framework of action are that it is goal oriented, normatively regulated, and involves the expenditure of energy, effort or motivation. This all takes place in a social situation. The frame of reference involves actors, situations of actors, and the orientation of the actor to the situation. In the action system, role is a very important concept, "They are internal to and inseparable from the action."[40] Rules cannot exist apart from the action system; they are structural features of a concrete system of action. An action system can be defined as the entire set of interacting personnel and social structures involved in accomplishing certain goals. The system must refer to the individual

actor or collectivity of actors for explanation of social events. This often entails reference to roles. In turn, roles must refer to the system.

Parsons alludes to the need for normative convergence in a system of interaction when he states that, "Interaction is always doubly contingent; that is to say that the interaction is not completely determined by the motivation of one of the parties but by all involved in it. It depends upon the action of alter fitting in with the expectations of ego."[41] Parsons says that the problem of order and thus of the integration of stable systems of social interaction "focuses on the integration of the motivation of actions with the normative cultural standards which integrate the action system.[42] This integration will depend on what Parsons calls a two-fold process of binding in of the expectations of the situation. In a word, normative convergence. The force which binds in is that of the mutual need for a rewarding social relationship of the parties participating. What Parsons is discussing is the institutionalization of a set of role expectations and their corresponding sanctions, the creation of common norms and expectations in a social system.

"The orientation of one actor to the contingent action of another inherently involves evaluative orientation because the element of contingency implies the relevance of system of alternatives. Stability of interaction, in turn,

depends on the condition that the particular act of evaluation on both sides should be oriented toward common standards since only in terms of such standards is order in either the communication or the motivational context possible."[43]

The individual must have a set of role expectations which will facilitate his interaction with others. "Out of the concensus of role expectation arise group norms."[44] Behaviour not conforming to such norms will be unacceptable. This requires, in turn, a general familiarity with the system of roles within a society. "In order for a person validly to enact a role, he must know what role to enact or in other words he must locate himself in the role system. Such locating or positioning occurs as a result of an assessment by the others in the situation in relation to oneself."[45]

Expectations are a key point in social relations, thus stereotypes of certain groups of people which are unflattering may prevent the inceptions of social relations. The same result is likely, if, once a social relationship is in existence the other person or persons do not act as expected. This requires certain norms in regard to how a person in a given situation is expected to act.

"The term social relationship will be used to denote the behaviour of a plurality of actors insofar as in its meaningful content the action of each takes account of that of the others and is oriented in these terms. The relation-

ship thus consists entirely and exclusively in the existence of the probability that there will be in some meaningful sense a course of social action."[46] It is apparent that people do not engage in social relations where the probability of a course of social action is low, i.e., where social interaction is difficult because of language or different expectations. Exceptions to this will occur in cases where there is some over-riding reason for reward for social interaction under such difficult circumstances. Thus, immigrants and members of the host society often only interact on an instrumental leval to achieve concrete goals rather than for pleasure of interaction itself. These two groups of people can engage in social relations where the rules of behaviour are clear and this is often more likely to occur in structured, formal secondary group relationships than in informal primary group relationships. Once in existence, however, a social relationship will, if it continues, lead to a common frame of reference for evaluation which will diminish misunderstanding. As has already been pointed out in reference to social groups generally, the relationship must have rewards for the participants. In this sense social relationships are purposeful; common interests throw people together or the lack of them blocks possible social interaction. When interests converge in a social framework and a common system of expectations, common norms will be valid, or in other words, social roles will emerge.

The immigrant has experienced a withering away of his old role and must, as Eisenstadt puts it,[47] now learn new ones to become assimilated.

A role comprises sets of shared meaning. The study of particular roles and the variations in their meaning in different societies will give us a useful tool for the study of immigrant adjustment. We will have to study the mechanisms or symbols which support particular meanings of which mechanisms, values are an important part. The set of shared meanings comprising particular roles in certain cultures are the basis for social communication and interaction. "A role from this point of view is a constellation of shared learned meanings through which an individual is able to enter into persistent and consistent recognized forms of interactions with others."[48] However, it is important to recognize another fact: that these shared meanings are created through the medium of interaction in the course of role playing in social groups. For the immigrant learning the meaning, learning the role expectation requires interaction with others who already interact on the basis of such shared common meaning. "A role is thus a complex coding activity controlling the creation and organization of specific meanings and the conditions for their transmission and reception."[49]

Role learning and subsequent role playing is at the heart of socialization which treats of the development of

personality in relation to social systems. In many conceptions of role theory, particularly that of Mead and other symbolic interactionists,[50] it is postulated that roles have a tendency to create and modify conceptions of self. Thus, they are more than just orienting processes in interactive behaviour. This is particularly true of role learning in the social groups of the receiving society by an immigrant child.

MEAD AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

"Meaning" is a very important word for Mead, and in this paper we will be concerned with it also in the sense that the way an immigrant understands what is happening to him will give a particular meaning to the reality of his social situation. Sociologically, this is important because the way individuals and groups interpret the meaning of social reality affects what they will do, how they will behave in situations of social interaction. If enough people believe in a thing and act on it, that thing will have social reality because it is effective, the effects are real in action. It is in this sense that we believe symbolic interactionism is important to this study. Symbols, when believed in, affect actions. "Man lives in a symbolic environment as well as a physical environment and can be stimulated to act by symbols as well as by physical stimuli. A symbol is defined as a stimulus that has a learned meaning

and value for people"[51]

For Mead, symbols do not only stand for something else; they give meaning to events and objects; they give existence and reality to them. Most important is that man learn symbols and language through interaction and communication with others. It emerges that the existence of things and ideas in that reality depends upon shared symbols or shared meanings and values. This is a statement to the effect that social life creates social reality. The meanings which spring from such reality are like money, they are only acceptable if they are generally agreed upon. We, at the moment, are concerned with the effects of the shared meanings which comprise particular roles upon the social reality as perceived by the immigrant.

In the area of immigrant study one of the most important examples of symbols and their power is that of language. Mead saw in the standardized symbols of language a medium for the relationship between the individual and his environment, social and physical. Language at the level of small talk, as we have already pointed out, is often very important, indicating whether or not social experience and interaction are shared between the people engaging in that interaction.

Members of the receiving society and of the immigrant group have certain symbols which enhance or dog

them in social life. For the immigrant to become socialized into the new culture, he must learn the symbols and their meanings and follow their dictates in interaction with others. "Through communication of symbols man can learn huge numbers of meanings and values and hence ways of acting from other men, thus sharing a symbolic life that makes interaction predictable and reassuring."[52] People know what to expect. The clusters of meanings and values center upon roles which have to be learned. The individual assumes sets of attitudes through interaction with others and by role playing. In Mead's terms the "I" responds to the attitudes of others and a generalized other encompassing these influences and the responses to them is built up.[53] However, man is not completely a prey to influences from outside; not all of them are responded to and not all the responses are positive. New meanings cannot just be tacked on to existing ones. Integration of newly acquired meanings and values for the existing ones is necessary. There is a continual restructuring and modification.[54] In this integrated sense, man's behaviour is a product of his life history and of all his experience, both social and individual. The individual cannot unlearn, only drastically modify and relearn. For Mead and other symbolic interactionists self is a vital concept in coming to understand man's behaviour. "A conception of self, once learned, affects the individual's behaviour throughout his life."[55]

Mead does not say much about social organization specifically, but he does have a great deal to say about the impact of social organization on individuals. Social organization structures the life experience. The individual finds his meaning as part of the social system by role playing within it. In this paper we are concerned with how immigrants, particularly immigrant children, discover a new meaning through participation in a new social structure. This will involve a restructuring of roles to fit into the social structure of the whole society. Mead, like other psychologists, was deeply concerned with the malleability of human behaviour, why one course is taken rather than another. Here our concern is with how social organizations pressure or compel individuals in certain directions without too close a study of individual psychological mechanisms which affect the perception of such pressure. But we are concerned with the part social roles play in the reception of these influences.

Crucial to the understanding of the meaning which the participant gains as part of the social system is an understanding of the system of value orientations which define the appropriate behaviour in a particular social system. This is particularly true in reference to the role structure of such systems. The individual finds meaning in the symbols which arise during the life of the group of which he is a member; common meaning for the group members

is found in such symbols. Values form a variety of such symbols which are particularly potent in regulating social interaction of the group which holds them, and their interpretation or meaning, in common.

The patterns of values which affect interaction and orientation to it are very important to our study. They bring into the situation the factors of personality. "The value orientation patterns are so crucial because they are in fact the principle common denominator between personality as a system and the role structure of the social system."[56] To understand role structure fully, we must understand the basic value orientations of the actors. These may have purely personal aspects but we are more interested in the general aspects they receive through the influence of patterns of values which are imbedded in particular cultures and social organizations. It is possible that these will give rise to certain modal personalities. "The basic personality orientation patterns are indeed a function of the social systems in which the individuals are socialized."[57] The shared meanings which are so important for interaction and role playing have their source in these value orientations and the cultural systems which maintain them.

CULTURE AND ASSIMILATION

One feature of culture we are particularly interested in is its selective aspects. "By culture we mean

those historically created selective processes that channel men's reactions both to internal and external stimuli."[58] The proposition of many 'culturologists' is that there are fairly definite limits within which cultural variation is constrained. "Culture contains at a basic level channelled or selected forms and values in the stream of related ideas and expressive patterns."[59] These forms have a dynamic power of their own.

Through interactions culture becomes transmissible from one action system to another, from personality to personality."[60] In fact culture is constituted by ways of orienting and acting, it is created in interaction as well as passed on by it. Cultural objects, however, are not like roles, internal to the action system; they can be abstracted from the interaction system preserving, in fact, these ways of acting and the norms defining them. For our purposes they only gain sociological meaning in the interaction system, though we will discuss in this paper such abstracts before relating them to concrete interaction. In this sense we will consider the ethos of a particular ethnic groups' culture. We will outline their set of beliefs about man's relation to time, other human beings and the empirical world in general. Thus, in Italian culture it is often more important what a man is rather than what he does. This area has been formulated by Parsons in terms of his pattern variables.[61]

INTERACTION AND SOCIALIZATION

An important feature of social interaction is that it socializes. Through interaction and role incumbency in a system of interaction the individual learns to behave in ways which obtain social satisfaction through the convergence of the expectations of the actors involved. Interaction is then possible on a prolonged or permanent basis, in other words interaction in social groups is possible. "Socialization is a product of spontaneous human interaction and occurs without deliberate intent to train."[62] Interaction is particularly significant for socialization in a situation like the primary group which permits free play of emotions. In this category the most important group is that formed by the family itself. Entrance into the family and other intimate primary groups of both immigrants and members of the receiving society will greatly further socialization and lead to a convergence of values and goals. Entrance into such mixed groups implies that the individual is psychologically accessible, ready for the different influences which will play on him. Just as the child at a particular developmental stage is ready for certain influences which enable him to proceed to the next stage, the same is true of the immigrant in the course of assimilation. Reference group theory which treats of anticipatory socialization is particularly useful in this area, as we have already pointed out. When a new membership group

is a reference group the individual's attitudes shift so that they are consistent with action demanded by other group members. Such consistency and the self-involvement it entails result particularly in public settings where the individual is continually under the eye of his fellow members.[63] The acting out of new roles and their accompanying behaviours may well affect attitude change.

NORMATIVE CONVERGENCE THROUGH INTERACTION

One of the central hypotheses of this paper is that assimilation is a process in which differing frames of reference approach convergence through interaction. The term convergence stresses that this is not just a one-sided process on the part of the immigrant. "When people with differing cultural systems come into contact cultural change is likely to follow."[64] This change will occur in both participating groups. Elements from each culture will diffuse from one group to another, the cultural contact is, thus, more commonly reciprocal. Cultural traits are likely to be borrowed and mixed. Acculturation is not merely a culture receiving process, it is in addition a culture producing process. "Acculturation may contribute to a creative synthesis between new and old elements and to the evolution of new cultural traits and configurations. Culture is an organic whole and thus the process of taking

over cultural traits frequently involves the redefinition and remoulding of a vast array of patterns in terms of a total social system."[65] This will involve the creation of the common expectations and frames of reference we have already discussed. This view of assimilation or acculturation is not necessarily a common one in the wider society. "Only when the individuals of ethnic groups are emotionally dead to all their varied past and are all responsible solely to the conditions of the present are they assimilated people."[66] This view of assimilation is one officially denied by the Canadian Government and educational authorities, but among some officials and teachers it is plainly a common view.

In respect to Canada, however, there is some cause to argue that the emotional impact of ethnic cultures can be effectively neutralized by freedom and lack of direct pressure to abandon the cultural heritage instead of opposition. In this way it may wither into meaningless ritual, quaint ways, and colourful externalities. This consummation is perhaps less readily achieved by frontal attack and the demands for conformity and Canadianization. Fratricide, in Gorer's terms,[67] may not be committed against the old culture, as in the U.S.A. Instead it might die a natural death with its power gone and only its memory lingering on with annual visits to the grave. Perhaps a tarantella at a football game, adolescents marching in a Ukranian boys' brigade with drums and bugles, and such

representations of the heritage mean something to the younger generation, but probably not the same thing it meant to their parents. Cultural convergence will give a different meaning to the representations of the old culture and its formalities.

THE CHANGING CULTURE OF THE GHETTO

Even without structural assimilation into the receiving society the culture which exists in the ghetto is not strictly pure. This may occur even in the situation where severe conflict between the ethnic group and the receiving society has caused complete isolation. More normally, however, the situation is of accommodation, a point standing between conflict and a state of integration which is represented by assimilation. Widespread prejudice in the situation of accommodation may still exist and barriers may still be in place; however, a substantial amount of contact is still likely to take place; contact which changes both the ethnic group and receiving society.

What is likely to merge is a new culture or sub-culture which is a result of the effects of contact upon the old culture. It is a culture which is, in many ways, different both to that of ethnic traditions and the traditions of the receiving society. Something new has been created. Zubryzcki[68] comments of a great number of Polish agencies and societies in America that:

> "a striking characteristic of these associations is that they have been acting since the beginning of mass immigration from Poland and have resulted in a new Polish-American society. It is continually acquiring more American attitudes, but this assimilation is not an individual but a group phenomenon and the striking feature is the formation of a group that in structure and prevalent attitudes is neither Polish nor American, but constitutes a new product whose elements have partly drawn from Polish traditions, partly from the new conditions in which the immigrants live and partly from American social values."69

It must be remembered that if a thirty to forty-year period is taken, both the immigrant group and the country of origin will have changed and probably in divergent directions. The outcome may be that though time has led to some convergence with the culture of the receiving society time may also have preserved some of the archaic forms of the old culture. In many senses immigrant communities in Canada may bear the relation to their original culture of a backwater, untouched by momentous changes in their native countries.

GROUP VALUES AND CULTURAL PLURALISM

A culture or ethnic group may be said to have specific group values.

> "A group value is distinctive of some plurality of individuals whether this be a family clique, association, tribe or nation or civilization. Group values can exist in socially sanctioned ends and socially approved modes and means. They are values which define the common elements in the situation in which the actors repeatedly find themselves and they must

> make some kind of functional sense in terms of a groups special history, present social structure and environmental situations. The term group value is selected rather than cultural value for two reasons. First, the group may at most have only a subculture or be distinguished from a larger entity by only a few cultural properties. Second, universal values are also cultural values in the sense that they are socially learned and transmitted."[70]

This pinpoints some of the basic problems which must be taken into account in making generalizations about the social organization and culture of the immigrant groups. As Porter[71] points out, immigrants of any one country of origin vary a great deal in the host society; sub-groups occur where variations in basic cultural themes are apparent. The sub-group or group will vary in culture or group values. This will depend in large degree on the social structure of which they are a part and also on their general environmental situation.

In part, the situation is the result of the clustering of certain changing personal values which are personal forms of group or universal values. The case with some immigrant individuals is of divergence from group values represented by the core value of the old culture. However, this isolation or alienation is usually the abnormal case. At the same time as divergence from the old values is occurring convergence on new group values, represented by the members of the host society, will be taking place. Even more important, however, is that the individual will find social reward by association

with those in similar situations; there is a likelihood that group values will emerge among peers in such a stage of transition. This does not imply that in all cases the individual will in time go beyond this stage. It might represent a satisfactory compromise or adaptation to the environmental situation for a person originally socialized in another culture. It is plainly possible to remain identified in many areas in social life as an Italian, or a Ukranian, for example, and still make a very successful adaptation to life in a new country on all significant levels. It is in this light that the concept of cultural pluralism can most truthfully be conceived. In this situation the two cultures interact and through such interaction move closer together, but at the same time remain distinct.

THE CHARTER AND GROUP VALUES

In the context of group values it is useful to take Malinowski's[72] concept of charter, which is also used by Porter.[73] The concept also has many similarities to Lipset's ideas of a central value system. Malinowski defines charter "as the system of values for the pursuit of which human beings organize or enter organizations already existing."[74] He also links the concept charter closely to that of drive; the charter sets up an apparatus of values which has instrumental affect upon social organization. Thus, drive is determined by culture, the charter has an inner dynamic

of its own once set in motion. However, the conditions and events which contributed to the original molding of the charter can change or be modified. The affects of the original charter are, in fact, continually modified by new events. The dynamics of the drive, however, will provide a special framework for the reception of the subsequent events, thus their affects on the charter will be a peculiar combination of the original charter and the events themselves. The most significant variables in such situations will probably be the power of a particular event and its likeness or compatability with the original charter structure. This is very like Lipset's concept of a dynamic equilibrium[75] in the central value structure of the nation.

The charter is the reason for original organization and enshrines the basic values; it also often expresses cultural myths as to the characteristics of the people and the occasion of their coming together. These myths often are, in part true, but they are a selection and embellishment of the facts. However, in no way should the term 'myths' imply that the effects of these beliefs are not real.

The personnel of an institution are organized on the basis of definite principles of authority and division of labor and privilege. These principles refer back to the charter; "It is clear already perhaps that both the organization of the personnel and the nature of the rules followed are definitely related to the charter. In a way both the

personnel and the rules are derived and are contingent upon the charter."[76] The principles concern the rules, norms, ethical command and values "which are accepted by the members of the institution and imposed upon them."[77]

CENTRAL VALUE SYSTEMS

Lipset, in The First New Nation[78] is concerned with how the nature of the original charter of the United States and its implications has determined a great deal of American history and social relationships. It might be useful to briefly analyze Lipset in terms of Malinowski.

The conditions of colonial America and the needs of the situation molded the charter, the charter itself then carried in its structure and dynamic certain drives which have influenced the unfolding of American history and culture. The same may be argued for Canada or any other nation, but perhaps with greater clarity in respect to new nations. The idea is that a nation's key values stem from its origin, in the case of America its revolutionary origins, in the case of Canada its non-revolutionary origins. These origins are, in large measure, the source of some of the most important values which underpin the social structure and culture of each nation. Thus, we can agree with Parsons, "that the systems of value orientations held in common by the members of the social system can serve as the main point of reference for analyzing social structure and process in the social

system itself, and may be regarded as a major tenant of modern sociological theory."[79] The charter and central value system of the receiving culture is of particular importance when discussing problems of immigrant assimilation. Values are important in that they shape people's actions and responses in social situations. Thus we can hypothesize that if the variable of immigration is injected into a social system, the society's response to this and the resulting place of this new factor in the situation will be greatly affected by the dominant value system of that society. The values act like Weber's switch men of history,[80] affecting the course of social change and indeed whether social change will or will not take place.

In this study we concentrate principally on the integration and assimilation of Italians in Canadian society. In terms of what we have just said, it is important to analyze the culture and social structure of the two groups to gather some understanding of the direction of change in both systems. We say both systems because such integration will have effects on Canadian society as well as upon the immigrant group. An idea of the predisposition must be gleaned from the central value system and social structure of these groups. On the basis of this we can hypothesize certain directions or avenues of change. It is likely that where possible, change will remain consistent with the original value system. Though elements in the central value

system of each will make some kinds of change more likely than others, channels for directing the pressures of interaction between the two groups must exist. If they do not exist the likelihood is that they will be forced. Thus resulting in more general cultural change, moving the system out of equilibrium.

Our data, however, suggest that in our area of study such severe disequilibrium and far-reaching results are not common. The case with Italians and other ethnic groups within Canadian society is one of gradual change and change which is often consistent, in many respects, with the original structure of values and social relations. In the areas of marked inconsistency change takes place by slow erosion rather than by flood. In respect to the pressures of the school system for change in Italian children, the common pattern, as we have pointed out already, is of compartmentalization of experience. Where the home is inconsistent with the school the two are kept apart. In the elementary school there is often a change toward adopting the values of the receiving society but in high school, pressure often lessens before the division between home and school can be breached, and adolescents are inclined to swing back to the values of their fathers.

THE CANADIAN CHARTER

In many respects, Canada's culture and social system

must be viewed in the light of the ethnic groups that have peopled the country. "British political wisdom, Jewish cosmopolitanism and realism, French lucidity of mind and expression, German emotional depth and capacity for work, Slavonic spontaneity and verve - all these are in the riches of Canadian life and each set of qualities can be learned and assimilated by all."[81] Porter says that whether any Canadian fits this model of perfection is difficult to say, "but it does represent the often-expressed value of the Canadian mosaic."[82] The concept put forward by many Canadians to describe their social system which is peopled by large numbers of immigrants of diverse origin is that of the salad bowl, or ethnic mosaic rather than that of the melting pot. "This difference in ideas is one of the principle distinguishing features of the United States and Canadian society at the level of social psychology as well as that of social structure."[83] The theme in American life of what Geoffrey Gorer[84] has called "Europe and the rejected father" or patricide, the rejection of the immigrant's former homeland, typifies the difference between melting pot and salad bowl. This theme has no counterpart in Canadian society, although the word 'Canadianization' was used in earlier immigration periods. In Canada, ethnic segregation and intense ethnic loyalties have their origin in French, Scottish and Irish separateness from the English. In time they became the

pattern for all cultural groups.

This ethnic mosaic does not result necessarily in integration and assimilation. A tendency toward separateness appears to be part of the original charter and a part of the central value system. Within such a structure it is more likely that the elements of social experience will be compartmentalized; work and school experience in Canadian society will often be cut off from the home life and personal relations of the ethnic group. Change will be more likely to be consistent with the original value system. What emerges are groups of Canadian Italians, Canadian Poles, or Canadian Germans who are Canadians but retain substantial elements of the national cultures. Porter quotes an interesting exchange in the Canadian Senate. Mr. Victor Pederovsky, former Polish minister in Canada stated The Canadian Poles have two loyalties which I think can easily be reconciled. Canadian Poles have a natural affection for their country of origin or of the origin of their forefathers, they also have full loyalty and affection for the country of their adoption. I think the Canadian Poles have a dual loyalty to Poland and to Canada and the two can be merged in a happy combination.[85] Other speakers who followed pointed out that this was equally true of the British and, by implication, of any other cultural group in Canada. As has been pointed out the separation of ethnic groups is partly founded on the separateness of the two original charter groups of Canada. Particularly in the

case of the English the separateness was enforced to maintain assumed and actual superiority. Canada was founded on the division between the French and the English,and, soon after, on English aristocratic repugnance for the American Revolution which radically broke down old forms of stratification and privilege. Canada never had a revolution, indeed, the only way it can at that time be associated with the word is through counter-revolution. The preservation of a traditional conservative Canadian way of life in the face of the American Revolution was maintained.

THE DOMINANT POSITION OF THE BRITISH CHARTER GROUP

The English Canadian group still has a substantial amount of power and control. Certainly it still predominates in high and influential positions. One can hypothesize that the English Canadian elite charter members feel very secure. Untroubled by diversity and variety at the lower levels they stand in contrast to the United States where the greater emphasis on democracy and mobility makes the upper classes feel more threatened by diversity. This idea conforms to one expressed by Brotz[86] which suggests that secure elitism leads to a toleration of differences. He, in this case, was comparing Britain and the United States. Lipset[87] includes a table in The First New Nation which measures Britain, France, the United States, Canada and Australia on Parson's pattern variables. Canada came out high on elitism compared to the United States, Australia and New Zealand, other

important countries of immigration.

Clark makes the point that "strong attachment to Britain on the part of those of British origin and to their former national cultures on the part of those of European origin were essential if Canada were to remain separate from the United States."[88] "The melting pot with the radical breakdown of national ties and old forms of stratification would endanger the conservative tradition of Canadian life."[89] This would particularly threaten the British who received ideological support from tradition.

The possibility emerges that it may have been in the interest of the British charter group to devide and rule, an approach common for an elite nationality governing other peoples. Thus, it would be in their interest to emphasize differences in part to keep new immigrant groups for as long as possible in the status of new entrants to the club. The British themselves very strongly emphasized their cultural origins, while simultaneously not thinking themselves as in any way foreign. That was reserved for fellow immigrants who were, for example, either German or Italian in origin. The Canadian born of several generations emphasize ties with Britain, unless they happen to be French. The implication was that they were the true Canadians, members of the original charter group. The charter group is in principle, and usually in practice, an elite group to which new immigrants from other cultures cannot aspire to belong.

Porter points out that the mosaic structure or multiculturalism leads to the concept of segregation in social structure. "The mosaic idea is an important aspect and support of the social control exercised by the charter group."[90] It has taken a long time for members of immigrant groups not of the charter group to rise high in positions of government. Not until Mr. Diefenbaker's administration was the first treaty Indian appointed to the Senate, the first person of Ukranian origin appointed to the Cabinet and the first of Italian origin made a parliamentary secretary. "Speculatively it might be said that the idea of an ethnic mosaic as opposed to a melting pot impedes the process of social mobility."[91] Continued ethnic pluralism is incompatable with structural assimilation. There is, in Canada, a strong association between ethnic affiliation and social class and this may have to break down before an equalitarian democratic society can really be created in the image that is common to most Canadians, that of a society without distinctions.

In particular, "Ethnic differences have been important in building up the bottom layer of the stratification system, in both agricultural and industrial settings. Depending on the immigration period, some groups have assumed a definite entrance status."[92] This is particularly true of the Italians. "Where cultural groups tend to be occupationally specific with successive generations taking on the same occupations as earlier generations, we can say that ethnic

affiliation is at least a correlative factor in the assignment of occupational roles and, thus, in social class."[93] Yet, one of the most persistent images Canadians have of their society is that of one with no classes. Generally it is believed that all are equal in possessions and in the amounts that they can earn and the opportunities that they have for their children to get on in the world. Porter mentions that the Canadian image insists that there is a common equalitarian anti-aristocratic value pattern both in Canada and in the United States. "Canada, it is thought, . shares not only a continent with the United States but also a democratic ideology which rejects the historical class and power structures of Europe."[94] This, in part, can be explained by the mass media and popular culture which, in truth, Canada does share with the United States. However, it does not seem to conform with Canadian traditions and social structure.

As in the United States, the ideology which insists that there are no barriers to opportunity states that social success is merely a measure of personal ambition. It is stated that education is free and that even at the university level it is available to all, only requiring some work and thrift. It is widely felt that university graduates have worked their way through college and that anyone can do the same.

CANADIAN IDENTITY

Canada is a country which is insecure in its national identity "a country of a mosaic of ethnic groups and disruptive divisions between French and English Canadians.[95] Canada has been called a demographic railway station. Immigrants coming to Canada often pass into the United States. All this has implications for Canadian social solidarity. Durkheim[96] argued that some kind of collective consciousness kept a sense of solidarity and identity alive in a society. The collective conscience he argued, was embodied in the values of the society and in its collective sentiments. In turn, this was effected by population density and mobility. Porter[97] points out that Reissman puts forward a similar idea in linking national character to the process of population growth. Canada's development has been marked by periods of population stagnation and rapid growth, but relative to its physical size Canada's population has remained small. Most significant is that Canada's small population is overshadowed by the giant of the United States and all its success and prominence. This has taken away some of the most promising of Canada's people.

Canada has had a brief history and the traditions and loyalties of Canadians are ill-defined. This lack of clarity does not help encourage cohesion or the resistance to the pull of the United States. Porter comments that "the ebb and flow of migrations make a kind of flotsam of

those collective sentiments which should accumulatively produce a consensus about what Canada is."[98] Canadian history has no meaning for the European immigrant. The same is not nearly so true of the immigrant to the United States in reference to American history and traditions.

THE MONOPOLIZATION OF THE VALUES BY MEMBERS OF THE RECEIVING SOCIETY

One of Eisenstadt's[99] independent variables is the socio-cultural features of the receiving society in distinction to that of an incoming immigrant group. An important factor here is the "degree of monopolization of the values by the old inhabitants."[100] If the original charter group maintains the charter and the social structure with its peculiar normative organization in the face of an influx of immigrants with different patterns and has power to do so, convergence is not likely to be complete. Malanowski defines the charter as "the traditionally established values, programs, and principles of organized behaviour."[101] The charter group will demand that the incoming group only be accepted on its own terms by adopting its values and goals. However, in practice the very constitution of such charters is that they protect the advantages for the charter group and thus they entail the barring of people who were not concerned in the original formulation of the charter even if they have absorbed those values and behaviours. Full admittance will

be a gracious favour or the result of the superior power of a particular individual or group outside the charter. Members of immigrant groups may find slight consolation in the fact that the working class of the receiving society is not included in the charter either. A similar culture to that of the charter group will, however, greatly aid assimilation. It is then less likely that the unfavourable stereotypes will be formed which will give a whole group low social standing impeding social mobility.

Social mobility is essential for significant numbers of an ethnic immigrant group before they become fully assimilated. Otherwise if they arrived at the bottom and stay there, they will always be associated with unfavourable characteristics as a group in societies which put high value on achievement and mobility.

ACHIEVEMENT AND VALUE PATTERNS

Some groups are more oriented to achievement than others. In them, the desire for social mobility is a primary value over other things. Others while not uninterested in achievement put it lower in their scales of values, often emphasizing the importance of being accepted and liked by "your own people." Rosen[102] has shown that achievement motivation is more characteristic of Jewish and Greek immigrants than of Italians. The former are more likely to come from an urban environment where opportunities are

fostered rather than stifled as often happens in an agrarian society as is common for many Italians. Thus, the Italians who are low on achievement motivation will have more problems in fitting successfully into a society which emphasizes achievement as an important value. Fatalism is often expressed by people from agrarian societies. Subjects in a study by Banfield in an Italian village using Thematic Apperception Tests showed, in responses, that success came not as a result of thrift or enterprise but as a gift of fortune. A woman when asked how success occurred and why some people are rich and others poor said, "Who knows about things which have to do with the creation of the world."[103] Other respondents in Banfield's study, however, implied that wealth and success was a result of ancestors who had cheated and stolen to achieve their position.

In the culture of the Italian immigrant group and also in the working class of the receiving society, it is important what a man is in a general relational sense rather than what kind of job he holds. North Americans tend to think that a man is what he does. However, members of many cultures of a traditionalistic pattern which is particularistically diffuse need not do anything in particular in their life and may still enjoy the respect of their neighbours. They will in fact demand that respect. The cultural hero in this pattern is someone who is manly and engages in heroic exploits rather than that of the figure such as the scientist

who represents the power of man over nature. The latter is the common valued image of man in the North American universalistic specific culture pattern.

North Americans tend to be optimistic, feeling that man is basically good and that he can triumph over nature and shape his ends himself. They feel, accordingly, that activities are important, that one's goodness is measured by one's achievement and that the future will be superior to the present and, therefore, more important. As a result of the importance of individual achievement, the American sees himself as an individual first and foremost and does not wish to become encumbered and tied down with a large number of kinship responsibilities which might limit his future achievements.[104] "All cultures have their categorical values, their musts and must nots, violations of which are attended by severe sanctions but there is also the important variable area of preferential values. Achievement is a preferential value (though a strong one) in American culture. Those who achieve are rewarded materially and in terms of prestige."[105]

FAMILY AND CULTURAL VALUES

It is plain that it is essential to study the social and cultural backgrounds of the ethnic groups involved in assimilation and normative convergence. The family is one of the central points in understanding culture and socialization. This is particularly true of ethnic groups from

agrarian backgrounds where the family assumes much greater importance than in an industrialized society. The family and its expression of cultural forces and environmental pressures is central to any study of the assimilation of immigrant groups. It is the family that perpetuates its culture or responds to the changes in the new environment with modifications in its cultural and social organization. We will now study in some detail the traditional family organization of Italians, particularly that which obtains in southern Italy. This will, it is hoped, form a basis for understanding the problems of changing to Canadian family patterns. It will also trace how the family affects socio-cultural life and outlook.

It is in the family that individuals gain the common values and orientations which we spoke of earlier. In the close relationships of the family the individual first develops understanding of social reality and the meaning of the symbol systems of which language is a part. The family is an important source of man's understanding of his relationship to the world and to others. "We assume here that a sociological definition of ethnicity like a sociological definition of social status should stress the element of kinship. Thus, we can say that the ethnicity of a group refers to descent from ancestors who shared a common culture based on national origin, language, religion or race, or a combination of these. Ethnicity will be considered here as

an ascribed attribute like sex or age defining status and role in certain situations."[106]

Some of the immigrant groups in Canada, namely the Poles, Ukranians, Hungarians and Italians, have roots in agrarian culture and social organization which is primarily reflected in the family structure. The family traditionally, in many instances even in the Canadian setting, is still closely knit and patriarchal. The families are adult centered rather than child centered. This is also true in general of the German family but less so, particularly, in the German urban family. It is our belief that a family organization which tends to be traditionalistic and agrarian in its roots experiences particular difficulties in assimilation in a modern industrial society. In Canadian society the family is perceived in a quite different light; relationships between its members are more democratic. Co-operation rather than strict role definition is evident. Indeed the roles of the members are not strictly defined. Some assert that the modern family of highly industrialized nations and their urban centres is child centered.

In a modern society there are many relationships outside the family which often conflict with its interests and claims. Identification with the family is less strong precisely because it is only one among many influences. This is in no way to say that family life in modern industrial societies is insignificant. But it remains significant only

in a wider system of concerns to which, in some ways, it has to adapt or shut itself off from the mainstream of social life. For many agrarian families the wider social life had no significance; it was just not available in many cases. The social organizations which concern people from agrarian backgrounds were small and were modelled on the family structure and forms of relationships. Wider identification only occurred with people who were in a similar social and economic position; on this basis a 'we' feeling was formed resting on fellowship in a similar life situation. Such a basis of cohesion is not uncommon in any society, but this 'we' feeling is particularly strong in peasant societies. It is primarily an emotion rather than an organization as in the structure of identification in the middle class through societies and clubs which lie outside the family.

Oscar Lewis insists that much of what we have described is common to what he calls a culture of poverty. Such cultures are common to members of the lower class or lower-lower class in any society. Lewis claims that the culture of poverty cuts across rural, urban and even national boundaries, "that family structure, the nature of kinship ties and the quality of husband and wife and parent/child relations, values systems and sense of community,"[107] is the same.

Banfield's study of the southern Italian town of Montenegro reveals a culture in which villages are unable to act together for their common good or indeed for any end

transcending the immediate material interest of the nuclear family. He distinguishes the capacity for organization as a crucial variable in modern industrial society. "We are apt to take it for granted that economic and political associations will quickly arise wherever technical conditions and natural resources permit. If the state of technical arts is such that large gains are possible by concerting the activity of many people capital and organizing skill will appear from somewhere and organizations will spring up and grow."[108] Banfield disputes this comfortable assumption. He insists that this capacity for organization only exists in varying degrees in different cultures. In many cultures there must be a change in ethos to make corporate organization possible and efficient. "Most people in the world live and die without ever achieving membership in a community larger than the family or the tribe; lack of such association is a very important limiting factor in the way of economic development in most of the world."[109] "The most democratic country on the face of the earth is that in which men in our time have carried to the highest perfection the art of pursuing in common the object of their common desires and have applied this new science to the greatest number of purposes."[110]

The term amoral familism is applied by Banfield to societies with a low degree of public spiritedness and involvement. Some societies even lack a degree of enlightened self-interest. He contrasts the public spirit

in a Utah town with the lack of such in an Italian town he studied in terms of the participation in voluntary organizations in each. Italian officials in the region's administrative centre are distant, and would regard villagers' suggestions as to how things should be done as intrusions into the administration's business, or would if they were made in the first place. In this context the attitudes of many Italians to the school, institutions of the community and to welfare can be seen. In Hamilton they have clubs but these are purely social for the most part, they do not get things done or changed. But indeed that they have such clubs is a contrast to the southern Italian town Banfield discusses. For many Italians in Canada their new country is the first experience of any bonds which are above the level of the family. It is in this sense, for some, a movement towards the Canadian pattern.

Returning to Lewis'[111] point about the culture of poverty, the point must be made that in modern urban societies the very poor are few in number compared with agrarian societies. Even among the urban poor, much of the ethic of achievement and upward mobility is apparent when one uses poor agrarian communities as a unit of comparison. In the case of Canadian lower class poor in Hamilton there are some distinct similarities in social structure and outlook to that of Italians from peasant backgrounds. But it is not so to the extent that Lewis would assert. Family

structure is in many respects different even though there is a greater tendency to male dominance in the lower class than in Canadian society as a whole.

A WORD OF CAUTION

A word of caution, however, must be added; we have to be very careful with generalizations in regard to a given country and culture. In the case of Italians it can be argued that there are dominant themes in their culture but the effects of these may vary, most importantly between the agrarian southern and industrial and industrializing north of the country. Generalizations about an agrarian society do not apply to all of Italy or to all Italians. Moreover, even when the majority of immigrants may come from southern Italy or peasant stock the significant minorities from urban areas, skilled workers, and middle class must not be left out of the equation.

Our approach in this paper will often be to make generalizations about national groups and cultures holding certain dominant features constant, isolating them from the outside world. But after this procedure has performed its function in giving clear analysis of certain salient points, we will descend into the complicated world of social reality where we will attempt to apply the preceding analysis to the multiplicity of social variations and contradictions. It is hoped that then we will be able to demonstrate the relevance

of the preceding analysis in the context of these variations. Finally, we hope to account for and explain the variation.

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CHAPTER 2.

THE ITALIAN FAMILY

The Italian has significant difficulty assimilating in the U.S.A., Canada, and Australia, and thus has been the subject of a number of studies. This difficulty is most apparent in the case of southern Italians. Insofar as the difficulty of adjustment to American life is concerned, the southern Italian contadino, or peasant class, who contributes the greatest share of immigrants has the greatest problem.

The peasant from southern Italy, has just local and particularly family loyalities; the idea of "Italy", a country whose economic and social norms are that of a modern society, is not an object of his identification. With a cultural background that deviates sharply from the norms applicable to Italy as a whole, the southern Italian peasant was neither adjusted to his own country nor, therefore, likely to be equipped for adjustment in a foreign land. The family was the central focus of social relations in a society where wider loyalties were poorly developed.

In little Italies in Canada, Australia, and the U.S.A., the old world milieu was recreated. It was inescapable that the family became the central institution around which all community life was built. The retention of this cultural base is the essential source of the Italians retarded adjustment. For Italians, more than for other ethnic groups,

assimilation to Canadian society involves modification and reorganization in their family structure. These are changes which do not come quickly or easily.

The traditional structure of the Italian family is of a closely knit organization dominated by the father. This is common to all parts of Italy. The father is regarded as the source of authority even though the mother may often be the actual agent of authority. In this structure, the father's authority over the child is traditionally regarded as absolute until he or she marries, but even afterwards it may be maintained to a high degree. The family is a closely bound economic unit, particularly in southern Italy where a peasant economy predominates. "Most children are required to turn over their wages to the parent and in return children expect not only an allowance and all the comforts of home but maintenance when out of a job. In most cases, extreme parental domination and supervision are regarded by both parents and child as practical and for the child's good."[1]

It is essential however to distinguish between the Italian family of the north and south and between the middle and lower class. The lower class families of southern Italy, which provide a substantial proportion of Italian immigration to Canada, are still cast in the traditional pattern. In the North, and especially in the middle class, there is more change and flexibility. The family in all areas is still strong and the relationships between the members are similar

in kind, if not in degree, to the traditional pattern.

THE ITALIAN FAMILY IN HAMILTON

The Italian family in Hamilton is, in many ways, very similar to the Italian families studied by Gans[2] in "Boston's West End." It is not generally an economic unit as it often is in southern Italy; however, it does retain many significant aspects of the extended family. Married daughters often retain strong links with their mothers, relations are taken in, and those who live in the area maintain contact.[3] This was indicated in our earlier discussion on kinship involvement.

The facts of Italian assimilation must refer to their cultural background and in significant measure this is represented by the family. The culture resides in the family group. The Italian milieu, springing from the family, produces a specific influence on habits, attitudes, and behaviour of Canadian born Italian children. This influence is in evidence when the child approaches other groups, or when he comes into contact with the broad milieu of Canada, defined in its people, way of life, and institutions. The Italio-Canadian family leaves a strong imprint on the child's social orientation. It also provides him with a definite set of social and moral values that will, to a great extent, govern the child's future life.

Usually the Italian family in Hamilton, and in Italy

is as Child describes the typical Italian family is "a strongly cohesive group of individuals who recognize tight bonds of mutual responsibility among the members."[4] Any strain such a tight organization is likely to cause is prevented from expression by very severe taboos on the expression of anger and hostility except in permitted situations, such as when parents need to punish their children. However, such punishment may often be accompanied by tears on the parents' part; love still remains predominant even in the enactment of strong punishment.[5] The family plainly offers its members a great deal of social satisfaction. This was immediately apparent in many of my interviews, and those of my assistant, with Italians in Hamilton. This was so even among members of the second generation. As we will show later, the rewards of the traditional family cause many ambivalent feelings among Canadian-born Italians moving toward assimilation.

The aspirations of many Italians' parents in the areas of great Italian population in Hamilton are often limited. They are more concerned with the fear of downward mobility than with the hope of upward mobility.[6] They want their sons to be good workers who bring home a regular wage, and their daughters to be successful in the home and eventually good wives and mothers. Their outlook is generally that of Kahls[7] common man, their sons are frequently common man boys', and a credit to their parents. "Westenders do

recognize that education is needed to obtain employment and urge the children to get as much schooling as required for a secure skilled blue collar or white collar job. On the other hand, parents are suspicious that education will estrange the children from them or from the peer society as well."[8]

The Italian family in Hamilton is centered on adults. Children are expected to please adults. At an early age, in many cases at seven or eight, children are expected to act like little adults in the home, particularly the girls who assist the mother in all her household tasks. It often happens that the home and its requirements are more important than the school. In such situations of conflict, the home usually takes precedence. This often leads to harrassment from teachers and school officials particularly in the case of truancy or absenteeism, as it is perhaps more accurately defined in this case. The frequent attitude on the part of parents is that these are my children and I will do what I want with them and what I see as best for them. Parents may fear education which might take their children beyond success in terms of their world, beyond manual jobs, and lead to their alienation from their parents.[9]

Another reason for the immigrant's aversion to prolonged school education is the fear of family dissolution and disorganization which would follow school attendance. School it is felt will lead to the absorption by children of modern ideas, incompatible with the desire to preserve the

good old family traditions. Such attitudes inevitably find themselves in conflict with those of the Canadian school. School education in Canada, has for some Italians not only no appeal to them but may be viewed as an institution demoralizing youth and disorganizing their traditional patterns of family life. It is also viewed as disrupting economic life, in taking away children who were formerly economic assets in Italy., "In our family (in Italy) every member of the family worked for the family. Even the children did their share." "We really worked. There was no playing." In Canada it is all play and I see young men who should be contributing to their families, still going to school and playing ball in the streets -- And the shameful thing is they expect their parents to support them."

The Canadian system takes away children as an economic asset. There are sometimes bitter reactions from fathers on the subject of the economic uselessness of their sons:

"I was disgusted with the situation. Joe was of no use to me. And I did not want him to go to school. The only consolation I had was that he could not be kept in school after 16."

"Joe liked the idea of being supported by me, if at times he earned some money, he spent it on himself and never contributed to the burden."

Teachers and principals remark that the complaint that

school is a waste, particularly for older children, is often made by parents. As one principal said, "In almost every interview that we have had with Italian parents when they are called in to discuss either the school work, school attendance, or the behaviour of their children, there is a recurring theme which crops up: that the father when he was nine, ten, or eleven years old was practically doing a man's work and assuming adult responsibility." The parent, in interviews, often expressed ambivalent feelings about the school and then came down to their real concern. Women often proceed their comments with the comment that if is nice to have a learned man in our family, but he should be helping his father, too.

"It is felt that the school does not support the values of family life and its requirements; it is, in fact, viewed as working against the family. School mores and attendance requirements were often regarded as "La legge é falta contra la famiglia." The law is made against the family." The school took our children" is an often repeated phrase. It is not merely an economic matter, for the family lives well in Canada compared to the lower class in Italy, even without its sons in their early teens working. The important point is that the old economic functions were such an integral part of the whole family organization, its rules and responsibilities. Order and responsibility go with the economic structure, together with the values they supported.

'Most Italian families, however, do not return home because of their fears about what Canada is doing to their family structure. They are aware of the economic benefits and pay the price of it grudgingly. '

In staying in Canada, thereby open to the forces of change, the Italian family, nonetheless, puts up a hard fight.' Despite their complaints that Canada and its economic and social influences has turned their world upside down, and estranged their children, real evidence that this is the case is difficult to find. The Italians give up to the letter of the law and new order in fact, but not in spirit. He frequently merely accommodates but does not undergo change in the sense of assimilation. All his attitudes towards education in Canada are nurtured by the very same familial mores which governed his educational concepts in Italy.

The Italian peasants' view of school and education is that it should make the child obedient and give him the basic three "R's". This is seen as sufficient., This was expressed in a teacher's comment, about one of his pupils, "The father does not approve of reading in general, saying that too much reading causes confusion in one's head." There are plenty of wise men among the relatives of the family who can advise better than any books or newspaper," the father told me. ' It is thought that the school can never compete for usefulness with learning a trade or manual skill;

anything beyond the elements of education in the school is a waste of time. One of my respondents, a high school student, said that his uncle had just offered him a job, "He bet that within six months I would know more about sign painting than the school could teach me in six years."

It is thought by some parents that their children just play in school. This view is particularly true of the public school where there is a freer atmosphere than in separate school, and where sport and physical education are important. Parents and older people in the Italian community are continually grumbling that all the children want to do is play ball, they never think of working; by this they do not mean school work, but earning money or helping in the home. "Nick no wants work. He is a man, fourteen and wanta play ball all day. The father work hard. Have heart trouble. Nick ought to help. His father work hard when he was only eleven years old." A ball game is felt to be incongruous with the duties and responsibilities of a young man of fourteen or for a girl of the same age. In the eyes of some it is almost criminal that adolescents are kept in school, it is felt to reflect on a boy's manhood, and to take a girl away from her 'proper' functions.

As a consequence of language difficulties. Italian children are kept back in lower grades and this only aggravates the whole problem. One child, Leo, was reported to be very obnoxious in his class, refusing to obey the teacher,

and being openly hostile and rebellious. His mother, who came to the school to speak about him, said, "I am against Leo being tortured. The teachers have no sympathy for him; they don't realize that it is hard for Leo to sit in a class with babies around him -- Leo is coming of age, he is almost fifteen, the teachers should know that. If it pleases the school, I shall tell my husband to beat Leo up. I think he is a very dutiful son, very considerate to us."

Truancy is usually high among Italian children. One teacher said "The average Italian parent knows perfectly well about the boy's truancy and is extremely indifferent to whether he goes to school or not." The parent will often send notes excusing the child's absence, principally because the child is wanted to help in the home and to help his father. The possibility of justifying absence from school by taking recourse to the parental tradition is probably the main source of Italian truancy.

This reaction in respect of girls is even stronger. To send girls to school right into their teens seemed absurd to parents. The separation of the girl from her customary functions within the home was, from the Italian peasants point of view, disasterous economically. It broke down the old family equilibrium into which the adolescent girl fitted, both usefully and well,. Often this occurred in a context where the mother had to take up work outside the home which was regarded as a shameful necessity. Girls are often kept

from school to mind the house, particularly if their mothers are at work. One teacher reported that "the girl had not reported to school this term because she was being kept at home to keep house." The separate school gets little respite or exception from the problems we have discussed. It must be kept in mind that the separate school is a Canadian institution and that from the Italian point of view, it is merely a concession of the Catholic Church to Canadian patterns. It is a sort of accommodation which is remote from the customary affiliations of the Italian peasant with his church. A consequence of this kind of view is a lack of a sense of guilt among Italian school children and their parents whenever they deviate from behavioral norms established for, and expected of, the Canadian school child. This attitude and others we have discussed along with it constitute one of the crucial problems in dealing with Italian school children.

For parents, the school personnel represents a high social class of powerful authorities. Parents often have many fears about visiting the school; invitations to visit the school may be a source of embarrassment or discomfort to parents. They either expect that the teacher is going to complain about their child, or think they haven't the right clothes for the occasion, or are ashamed of their poor English. Under pressure some parents say they will come to the school and then do not turn up. This does not necessarily mean that the parents are uninterested in their children.

Parents from a lower class background generally, and from immigrant background of the lower class in particular, often regard the school as a completely foreign world in which they have no place. Certainly many teachers, ill adapted in interaction with lower class people, foster this impression. Teachers often know little of home conditions of many of their new Canadian charges and what they do know is often the bizarre and strange; they know little of the real quality of family life. Even what they see on home visits or through discussion at school with parents is a matter of externals which they fit into a highly colored framework of shocking stories and garbled rumors.

Teachers have been known to enter homes and then proceed to tell parents how they should manage the affairs of their family. This can only insult a parent who may immediately react and turn the Canadian out of the house. Often the teacher pauses on the door step after the door has been slammed trying to puzzle out why these strange people have no concern for their families. The point is that they have a great concern, hence the angry reaction.

It is unfortunate, but teachers commonly find it difficult to interact with other people in a manner other than that of a pedagogue. The role and its demands influences perception and interaction a great deal. They consider themselves to be experts in the area of children generally, and in a child's education, in particular. In many obvious ways

this is true but it does not give them a right to ride rough shod over others who also have a stake and expertise in this area. My experience is that teachers find it very difficult not to be patronizing to parents and children.[1]

What has been said would suggest that the cultural pattern of Italian families is anti-school. This is not the case. The school and the teachers in Italy are revered and looked up to (not that this is necessarily the way things should be). The word of the teacher on matters concerning the school performance of a child are often held as very important by parents. However, the school has its business to do and the family its business; the two do not traditionally interfere with each other. The parent does not expect the school to tell him how to run his family, similarly, he does not expect that the school will want him to participate in the functioning of the school or to come to the school unless there is something really seriously amiss with his children, such as gross indiscipline. If a child is not learning it is because he is not being taught well or because the discipline is not strong enough. Frequently teachers are afraid to send notes to the parents asking them to come to the school to talk about the child's progress or to express displeasure at indiscipline, because the parent's reaction is often that the child has done something gravely wrong and must be severely punished to prevent him becoming "bad," and disgracing his family. The concept of "Bad" behaviour is

very strong. Fears that one's child will become bad, or will mix with "bad" company are often expressed. The fear is of eventual trouble with the police. The best solution to such dangers is a strapping and other form of physical punishment done for the good of the child.

"I beat the hell out of him. I had to do it for his own good, he was going around with 'bad' kids."

FOOTNOTES

[1] I. Child, Italian or American (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943).

[2] H. Gans, Urban Villagers (New York: Free Press, 1962).

[3] P. Pineo, "The Extended Family in a Working-class area", in Blishen et al., Canadian Society (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963).

[4] Op. cit., Child, Italian or American (1943).

[5] Op. cit., Gans, Urban Villagers, p. 59. "As one mother explained to her child 'we hit you because we love you'".

[6] Ibid., p. 129.

[7] J. Kahl, "Educational and occupational aspirations of 'common man boys'", Harvard Educational Review, XXIII (1953), 186-203.

[8] Op. cit., Gans, Urban Villagers (1962), p. 60.

[9] D. McClelland and J. Atkinson et al., The Achievement Motive (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1953).

CHAPTER 3

HAMILTON - THE CITY

Hamilton has claimed the title of the ambitious city; its development and growth since it became a city in 1846 belies the name. It stands in a strategic position on Lake Ontario which has aided its great industrial growth, which in turn has attracted a quickly expanding population. It is a population swelled by immigrants from overseas, who were and are attracted by the jobs its industry can provide. This is particularly true of steel, the city's most important industry which attracts large numbers of newly arrived immigrants. A look at the company role of one of the big steel companies confirms this. The names are largely Italian, German, and Russian (Ukrainian), with Italian names gaining ground. On the labour gangs of the steelworks where many of the new workers are placed, the names are principally Italian.

Hamilton's past is clearly marked by successive waves of immigration, beginning with the Loyalists after the American Revolution. Overseas immigrants, mostly English, Irish, and Scotch followed in the early nineteenth century. The English became Hamilton's largest single national group and the Anglican church is still the city's largest Protestant denomination. The great waves of European

immigration, Germans, Italians, Poles, and the Ukrainians did not hit Hamilton in large numbers until after 1850. Hamilton's Germania Club, one of Hamilton's older institutions predates the founding of the German National State[1].

Most of the newcomers supplied unskilled manpower for the city's constantly expanding industry. After the First World War, British, Irish, and Europeans kept coming even during the depression years. After the Second World War, came the displaced persons, mostly from eastern Europe, made refugees by the Germans and then by the communist states.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF IMMIGRANT POPULATION IN HAMILTON: ETHNIC ORIGIN

The largest ethnic group in the Hamilton metropolitan area, is that from the British Isles, numbering 245,504 out of 395,560 in the 1961 census. This is followed by Italians and Germans with 25,560 (6 1/2%), and 21,594 (5 1/2%) of the total respectively. Other important ethnic groups are the Dutch, Polish, and Ukrainians. However, it must be made clear that this in no significant way bears on the numbers of New Canadians. Of the total population in the metropolitan area, 110, 511 out of the total of 395,560 were born outside Canada; 61,585 immigrated to Canada in the years 1946-1961; 5,919 according to the 1961 census spoke neither English nor French.[2]

The figures of ethnic group distribution give a good idea of the framework and composition of the city New Canadians are moving into. This is a composition which weighs heavily in favor of the English Canadian with his traditions and social expectations. Hamilton is a city of the founding English charter group of Canada's past. This past influences to an important extent, what the growing numbers of other ethnic groups will face in the process of assimilation.

ETHNIC GROUPS AND CENSUS TRACTS IN HAMILTON

On the basis of its census tracts Hamilton can be described and analyzed to give an understanding of its variations in wealth and education, factors which are closely linked to ethnicity, which is also revealed by the census statistics.

PREDOMINENTLY ENGLISH TRACTS

Genrally the richer more highly educated population is located on the mountain area in the southern part of the city (see table), tracts 60,59, 56, 40, 47, 41, and 61, and in the Westdale (west) area in tracts 1 and 2. These are generally high in populations of English ethnic origin generally in the 65% range according to census data.

NON ENGLISH ETHNIC TRACTS

Those tracts with populations described as non-English are located in the north central area of Hamilton. The area with one exception is all north of Cannon and York streets and west of Ottawa street (see city map). It is an area of industry and old and generally run-down housing. Some of it comprises the North End area which is currently being re-developed. The largest companies in Hamilton have their factories in this area, which in some cases adds to the run-down appearance. It is here that the two huge steel plants, Stelco and Dofasco, are situated. These two together with International Harvester, Hoover, and Proctor and Gamble provide the main employment in the area. The steel works particularly provide heavy industry calling for large amounts of manual labour, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled.

The tracts with the highest non-English population are tracts 6, 15, 16, 23, 28, and 29. Tracts 28 and 29 have a 75% non-English population. These lie north and south of the C.N.R. tracks in the area contained by Ottawa and Sherman streets. In tract 23, 67% of the population is non-English with the Italian group predominating as is the case in 28 and 29. Tracts 15, 16, and in the run-down portion of the downtown commercial area there is a high density of Italians extending into tract 6 in the York Street area. In sum it may be said that the non-English area of Hamilton, as

determined by Chandler,[3] is predominately Italian in terms of concentration with some smaller Polish concentrations in the eastern areas (tracts 28 and 29). Chandler argues that if the Italian groups were removed from the analysis of this north central area of the city this area would be indistinguishable from the rest of the city in terms of ethnicity. "In short the area is an Italian area rather than a non-English area."

We have reproduced one of Chandler's tables to demonstrate this effect,[4] but it only appears really significant in tract 6. Nonetheless Chandler concludes that it is legitimate to discuss these tracts as Italian.

OCCUPATION AND INCOME IN NON-ENGLISH CENSUS TRACTS

Chandler did a very interesting analysis of occupation and income for the non-English ethnic tracts.[7] This shows that Italians are grouped heavily in areas of low income and manual occupations. Germans, however, tended to live in areas with English Canadians.

Chandler indicates in the analysis of the data in his study, that the extraction of Italians from the population of these non-English tracts does reduce considerably the population classified as non-English, to the extent that it can no longer be called a non-English area. However, he points out that only in tract 6 does the reduction of 19% support the argument that the tracts would be

completely indistinguishable from his hypothetical normal tract which has 33% non-English population of average or above average occupational status. Germans and Italians are arriving in Hamilton from their native countries in large numbers. These facts might suggest something about the education and skills of each group and the rate of assimilation. These factors are very probably linked closely.

In general the residentially concentrated Italians are bunched into occupationally low positions. In other words, there is occupational and residential segregation of Italians. It must also be added that in the eight tracts of high non-English populations previously mentioned, the Italians had a lower occupational mean than the English in the same area. A similar though not so extreme pattern is noted from census material, for areas of Polish and Ukrainian concentration. These groups and the Italians share tracts with English of lower than average occupational status tracts but they are occupationally lower than the English in the tract. The Ukrainians tend to be more concentrated in the area than the Polish and have a lower level of occupation but apart from this their patterns are very similar.

KINSHIP INVOLVEMENT

ETHNICITY INVOLVEMENT WITH VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION

Chandler represents data to show that 50% of

each ethnic group; French Canadian, Italian and "other", do not attend any associations or clubs even once a week, therefore they have no affiliations with voluntary groups. In the below $4,000 income category the Italian group has the highest non-affiliation-percentage, with 93.3% which seems to support some of our earlier points about Italian culture and social organization. The group from the British Isles has the lowest non-affiliated percentage at 64%. In the above $4,000 category, the Italians still have the highest non-affiliation percentage with 78.6%, a drop of 15%. In this category the Canadians have the lowest with 49.1%, the British Isles group 63.9%. Thus in both categories the Canadians and British have the most diversified affiliations with other groups. The Italians have few such connections. Where group affiliations do exist for Italians they are spread mainly between church and ethnic associations.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Hamilton Spectator, Tuesday June 27th, 1967.

[2] 1961 Canada Census Report for Hamilton.

[3] D. Chandler, The Residential Location of Occupational and Ethnic Groups in Hamilton, M.A. Thesis, McMaster University, 1965.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Source Hamilton Social Planning Board.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Op. cit., Chandler, The Residential Location of Occupational and Ethnic Groups in Hamilton, 1965.

CHAPTER IV

The Canadian Educational System

Canadian educational development has been influenced by the systems of other nations to a significant degree. The influences of American, British, and German education are the most prominent. The grade pattern of organization and subject divisions owes much to American education. The changes in America in this pattern have also strongly influenced Canada. The German influence mediated by the Canadian educator Ryerson is most evident in the words of one author in: "the still widely existing lock step grade pattern and the carefully detailed subject matter divisions, together with the lesson learning and reciting methodology is typical of the German educational system." It can be argued that such a situation does not really assist the assimilation of immigrant school children, even German immigrant school children. The first area of influence came from Britain, particularly through the medium of teachers which were and still are recruited directly or indirectly in the British Isles.

Change has come into the Canadian system mainly from American example, through the influence of Dewey and other American educators and their Canadian admirers. But much remains of the old approach. "The old bookwork subjects

continue as staple materials of instruction and classrooms are built for lecturing and listening. The invariably fixed desks are typical of the system. They presuppose passive pupils busy absorbing what the teacher has prepared for them. There is little chance to learn by doing because it is difficult for children at desks to do anything but listen."[2]

This remains the case, more at the high school level and in the upper grades of elementary school rather than in the early grades, where many changes have occurred making for greater flexibility. Canadian schools like the average American school have not adopted progressiveism with a capital "P", but have filtered certain aspects of it into the existing structure. The success of such compromises however is open to debate.

In Ontario a number of steps have been made to make education more progressive. At the elementary level the graded system has lost some of the rigidity through modification. An important feature of the Ontario system at elementary level is the split of the schools into public and separate school systems. The latter is denominational, usually being Catholic. Both systems are run side by side with public support. In each city or town there is a public or separate school administrative board. At the high school level the separate school boards in Catholic public high schools administer grades nine through ten.

THE HAMILTON EDUCATION PUBLIC SYSTEM

The number of public elementary schools in Hamilton is 76 with an enrollment of 36,000 pupils, providing education from kindergarten through grade eight. Promotion is based on the Hamilton unit system rather than grades which permits each pupil to proceed continuously at his own rate of achievement without repeating or missing a grade.

There are, in addition, 11 secondary schools with an enrollment of approximately 16,000 (1966). These provide a wide range of academic and vocational education covering grades nine through thirteen, under one roof in the Hamilton "composite" high schools. Options are offered which permit graduation at grade ten in occupations with a Certificate of Training, or at grade twelve with a secondary school diploma.[3]

HAMILTON UNIT PLAN:

The Hamilton Unit Plan enables the quicker, more mature children to be chosen to cover four years' work in three years. Slow learners will enter grade one to do the work of two grades in three years. The Hamilton plan is based on the division of school work into three units. The average child completes three a year. The bright child can complete three units and the first unit of the next grade in a year. The slow child only completes two units in a year. This movement when maintained for three years may thus separate the bright child from the slow child in units

covered by two years work or six units.

The structure has built-in guards to protect the child from strain. The child is assessed for I.Q. (120 is the minimum for acceleration) and physical and mental health. The parents are also involved in the assessment of advisability of entrance into the accelerated program, and once the child is put in it, his progress is maintained through assistance from the home. A parallel series of readers are used in the home, and free reading is encouraged.

THE SEPARATE SCHOOL SYSTEM

At present there are 28 schools, providing education from kindergarten to grade eight, under the direction of the Hamilton Separate School Board, with three in course of construction. Also administered by the Separate Board are grades nine and ten of the city's Catholic High Schools. There are more than 640 teachers in the system and 17,344 children (in elementary school, 1,284 in grades nine and ten of the Catholic high schools).

Many of the newly arrived immigrant children attend these schools. This becomes significant when it is realized that the largest group of immigrants arriving in Canada now are Italians. A sizeable number of the teachers in the system are also immigrants, particularly from the British Isles and other parts of the Commonwealth. One of the schools studied for this paper was contacted through teachers quite

recently arrived from Europe.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN HAMILTON

In Hamilton elementary schools there is considerable variation from school to school and from classroom to classroom. Much of the variation depends upon the outlook and educational philosophy of the personnel involved. In general however, the most significant variation is between the public and separate school systems. The separate schools generally tend to follow more traditional educational philosophies and practices. The atmosphere is plainly more strict with less room for experimentation. In the public system traditional and progressive ideas and practice are often mixed.

Schools are very much influenced by their physical plant. The older schools with immovable desks and teachers platform reflected certain approach to education, in which the teacher was a somewhat fearsome authority and the children were there to listen and remain immobile in their unmovable desks. Education proceeded by drill and rote. Though generally these days are gone the arrangement of the classroom which was a part of them remains in many Hamilton schools and still has an effect on the relationship between teacher and student.

In newer schools and some of the old ones the teacher's platform is eliminated; students and teachers learn together

on the same level. School furniture is movable so group and committee work is possible, instead of being pressured by the physical circumstances to lecture the children.[4] To an increasing extent the schools of Hamilton are being filled by young freshly trained teachers, many with new and striking ideas. Many are products of the teachers college and university of the area. This is especially true at the elementary school level. The investigator was particularly impressed by the work of many of the young teachers observed during the course of this study. A premium was put on contact and interaction with the children which bore fruit often in the special case of New Canadian children.

Older children often performed very well with the invaluable combination of experience and fresh ideas, but it must be admitted that many of them struck the investigator as inflexible particularly in relation to the problems of new Canadians. However, it is true to say that some of the younger teachers who gave initial impressions of flexibility and responsiveness to the problems of New Canadians in discussion later, in observed lessons, proved less successful.

ITALIAN PARENTS AND CHILDREN AND THE SEPARATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS

In Hamilton as in the Italian area studied by Herbert Gans in Boston, Italian parents often preferred the parochical

school which was seen by them to be more concerned with discipline and good behaviour. Gans calls this "person oriented education, (it) teaches children rules of behaviour appropriate to the adult and peer group society, and stresses discipline."[5]

In the separate system the children may often be unruly, particularly in the case of boys but this, while expected, is never permitted in the presence of an adult. The common pattern is that all hell breaks loose when the teacher is not there to exercise his authority. It is interesting to watch children from the separate school leaving and going into the streets of Hamilton or New York letting off steam after being kept under strict control in the school. In the public system they often seem to be wilder inside than outside the school.

In either system however, a weak teacher without authority is quickly taken advantage of by Italian children in particular. They are not intrinsically more vindicative than other children, but a situation in which an adult displays obvious uncertainty and lack of confidence is so foreign to the concept of the adult world which they get at home that such a person is no longer an adult. He has failed to live up to what an adult is supposed to be and thus becomes fair game. The problem for such teachers is that they claim the respect due to an adult without being worthy of such respect. Children in such a situation become confused over

role definitions and act-out trying to discover the limits they are used to. Italian children put great importance on power and its evidence; what people say is of less importance than what they do. "The child's pragmatic outlook impresses him with the need to obey authority that can implement power and to ignore that which cannot."[6]

FOOTNOTES

[1] J. Katz, Elementary Education in Canada (Toronto: McGraw Hill Co., 1961).

[2] C. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto: W. J. Gage & Co., 1957), p. 432.

[3] Source, Hamilton Public Board of Education.

[4] Op. cit., Katz, Elementary Education in Canada (1961).

[5] H. Gans, Urban Villagers (New York: Free Press, 1958).

[6] Ibid., p. 159.

CHAPTER 5.

THE CHILDREN IN THE HAMILTON SCHOOL SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to study the nature of the existing social relations to discover the factors which affect the status and role of individuals in various groups and to begin to differentiate between factors originating in personality and those created by the group climate of atmosphere. It is the latter which is our main concern. The former is important only insofar as we have to first disentangle personal from social factors.

The nature of the controls within a group and the characteristic values which dominate these controls determine whether the group atmosphere encourages intolerance or permissiveness of differences. We will examine what factors determine the status of individuals in the groups with which we will be concerned and how these factors are related to personality, intelligence, sex, group climate, social economic status, and, most important, to ethnic background. If culture varies between one ethnic group and another, so will the characteristics essential to achieving status in them vary. There are marked differences in the status-giving characteristics even within ethnic groups.

If persons are desirous of achieving status within a

group, they are open to its molding influences. In this respect, a peer group among children and adolescents is particularly pertinent. We are interested to see how such groups extend a child's experience beyond the limited and ethnocentric influences of the family. The response to human relations situations are shaped by the internalization of values, goals, and behavioural roles from the environment in the process of social learning. In the process, the experience in the primary group, such as the family, plays a dominant role. They set the direction and content of social learning including the shaping of attitudes towards differences. We hope to demonstrate how participation in primary groups of the school effects the development of social learning in the context of the pressures and influences from the family.

The effect of the family on the assimilation of the Italian child in the Canadian school system will be studied. The process of movement away from the family and its values and the consequences of this movement will be detailed. Conclusions will be made as to how, and in what ways, this movement may occur, and what significance for assimilation in balance it may have at the end of the child's school career.

CONFLICT BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

The fact of having been born in Canada or coming to it at an early age, makes it difficult for the child to adopt

the adaptation of his parents and to retreat completely into the Italian community as some do when threatened. Their indoctrination at school with the inferiority of the parental culture, their lesser loyality to the old Italian customs and traditions, their greater contact with things Canadian, all make it more difficult for them to repeat their parents' adaptation.

At school, at play, on the street, in the films, or through reading newspapers, comics, and magazines, the immigrant child is forced to witness and experience a way of life which is different from that of their parents. Oscilating between the parental demands for loyalty to the old world traditions and his own desire to enter more fully into the associations and practices of the larger Canadian community, the child of Italian parents and, particularly, the elementary school child is without doubt adversely affected in his cultural orientation, in his social development and, therefore, in his personality. (One of the outstanding traits of the Italian-Canadian child is the feeling of inferiority which he often experiences in his dealings and contacts which the Canadian world have caused. The school may not be the source of the inception of these feelings, but it does stimulate their growth. "I remember my embarrassment at the need to admit that I was Italian. All non-Italian boys appeared to me as superior creatures. And, though I was born here and speak fluent English, I was

greatly thrilled when a non-Italian boy would invite me to play."

The conflict in which the Italian child finds himself demands an adjustment, an accommodation which, because of the subordinate social position of the school child within the parental home, must be essentially a vicarious process; that is, to live in a make-believe world. Sensing the low prestige identification with his group, the Italian child will suppress all overt manifestations of his identification with the Italian community, the cultural background of his parents and friends of Italian origin. He professes not to understand Italian although he speaks it at home. In his play groups he conceals all the disciplinary patterns of his home. He may conceal his name, his home address, and almost anything that may be associated with his Italian origin. In one particular case, a child practised "avoiding taking Italian sandwiches to school, throwing them away because he couldn't tell his parents." The inability of the parents to keep the child within the traditions of the home may lead to a decline of parental control.

In general, however, the rebellious attitudes of the children do not seem to be observable. The inclusive nature of the family permits little opportunity for actual conflicts to become known to outsiders. But my information is that there is not, in fact, a significant amount of conflict within the family anyway. The rejection of the parental

culture becomes operative wherever the child's identification with his group causes him discomfort and stigmatizes his assemblance of prestige within the Canadian milieu. This occurs primarily within the school since this is the child's main area of contact with the Canadian world. This rejection of the traditional culture is carried to the threshold of the home. "We want our own life," said one adolescent.

Although a greater degree of rejection is followed by a greater probability of conflict within the home, it does not follow that this conflict impairs the child's attitudes towards the school. Rather the contrary, for the school appeals to him as an escape medium from the conflict at home. For example, the school has great appeal because of its recreational opportunities. Such "foolishness" is not often permitted at home. Release is given from the strict atmosphere of the Italian parental home. Also, the school provides the girl with her only chance to indulge in play to run about and jump and exercise herself physically in a way which is denied in her home.

Though the appeal of the school does not necessarily imply the child's liking for schooling, it makes it possible for him to undergo a greater degree of acculturation than would be the case with the child whose environment and school milieu induce little rejection of the parental background. The effect of the former situation on the child is that he has opportunity to observe how non-Canadian adults and children

talk and act, whereas he may not have had the opportunity except at a distance if he remained in firm contact with his home. The effect of the school is to "induce him to take part in many social situations where the reward and punishment are administered by persons who are American in background and whose behaviour frequently is determined by a deliberate policy of encouraging him to be American."[1]

But as the child grows older and truancy grows, the school recedes. The Italian adolescent is characterized by a strong concept of actualizing his social values which is more extreme than is general among the working class of any national origin. Basically, he wants a job. But, also, he is likely to see through to the reality of life. "I saw I was not born to be President." He gains a fairly accurate idea of his chances of surmounting social barriers to gain social mobility. His outlook is that of Kahl's[2] Common Man Boy. Znaniecki sums this all up by saying, "Do not let the Americans disillusion themselves that because the second or third generation of Polish or German immigrants talk American slang and know how to vote that they are assimilated psychologically and have acquired the American ways of feeling and thinking. More is needed to attain such a result than most people are inclined to imagine."[3]

ASSIMILATION, COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

Assimilation will be studied as it occurs in interaction in the classroom, the schoolyard, and play and friendship groups in and out of the school. We will study such interaction from the point of view what social learning or socialization occurs in it. The roles which emerge in interaction and greatly affect such learning, in the course of playing roles in conformity with expectations of other actors, are of great concern to us. In discussing interaction, it is important to study the practices and patterns of communication which are the medium of interaction and make it possible.[4]

COMMUNICATION IN THE SCHOOL

Studies show that the patterns of behaviour that develop in class groups are affected by communication practices. These studies reveal that the nature of the informal structures that characterize a class group is determined, to a large degree, by the groups communication processes. Newcomb[5] suggests that interaction is a form of communication and possesses many of the phenomena of social behaviour that have been assembled under the label of interaction, and might more accurately be studied as communicative acts. We do not go as far as this but, certainly as Parsons[6] implies, communication based on understanding of the situation is essential for interaction. Indeed, through communication the actors gain an understanding of each other and of the

situation.

Failure of communication may create all types of problems for interaction. This is most often a result of poor understanding of the situation by the teacher and confusion on the part of the children as to what is demanded of them. Frequently in the classroom it is apparent that the expectations of alter and ego do not match.[7] This is not, however, a simple matter of the teacher wishing to teach and the children not wishing to learn. It is, rather, that in particular classroom situations the social conditions for teaching and learning and communication just do not exist. The social situation of common expectations and normative orientations are not in existence. This is, of course, particularly true when there are large numbers of new Canadian children and children of immigrant parents in the classroom.

In the classroom, failure of communication may cause tension and frustration while good communication may relieve it. The interaction pattern in which the communication pattern is in evidence not only determines the frequency, duration, and direction of membership communications but, in many instances, may restrict the content. What is said, how it is said, and to whom it is said are determined by the patterns of interaction. Often we can reduce the term patterns of interaction to the groups and cliques which form the structure of the pattern.

THE SCHOOL, INTERACTION, AND ROLE LEARNING

The behaviour of a group is determined to a significant extent by the patterns of interaction that develop and by the nature of the structure that forms as a result of interaction.[8] We will study how communication in an interactive system leads to normative convergence between different cultural groups. In this case, it is between Italian and Canadian. As Taft says, "A genuine attempt to assimilate a minority must open up channels of communication between the majority and the minority groups in which the majority and minority cultures influence each other."[9] Assimilation is the process by means of which persons originally possessing heterogeneous frames of reference, converge toward a common frame as a result of interaction.[10] By interaction, the children from diverse backgrounds come to share a common social experience. But, in addition, as much as it is a "process of interpenitration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire memories, sentiments, and attitudes about the persons or groups."[11] it results in the incorporation of experience and history into a common cultural life. Our study is concerned with the degree to which this takes place, how it varies in particular schools and classrooms, and the processes which effect its emergence. Assimilation or normative convergence is a final and perfect end of interaction.

We must also study the social climate of the school or classroom to bring to light how it stimulates or blocks

learning. An understanding of the development of the child's social learning will occur by studying first the social learning he carries to the classroom from his home environment,[12] and, secondly, the climate of interpersonal relations in the school or classroom, and how it inhibits or encourages certain channels of development. It comes down to a question of whether the particular combination of home, school, and peer relationships encourage normative convergence and assimilation between Canadian children and those of other ethnic groups, in particular, the Italian group.

NORMATIVE CONVERGENCE

In our examination of normative convergence, it became imperative to distinguish types of interaction, for any identifiable incident of class group behaviour involves interaction. The behavioural incidents are examples of interactive behaviour. This is opposed to Parsons[13] who has stated that interaction is doubly contingent. It depends on the expectations of both alter and ego meshing. What is more, alter and ego in interacting affect each other with continued interaction as we have already hypothesized in Chapter 2. Normative convergence takes place; they come to have a common expectation of the situation in which they interact. However, we must not omit the important case in which interaction takes place in a situation of conflict where the interaction often occurs precisely because there

is a divergence of norms. It must be remembered that in a school situation such conflict interaction is not always verbal but may be physical. An example would be of a quarrel between two factions in which fighting resulted. In time, it might come about that expectations of situations in which both groups were placed together would be that of conflict and both would have to live up to such norms to prevent loss of face. Here, Homans[14] conceptual distinction between external and internal systems is important. He proposes that interaction is a group's behaviour that arises from its internal system. We will still call the conflict situation interaction but not interaction which leads to normative convergence in an internally structured sense.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRES

In the area of responses which dealt with a number of good friends in the classroom as against those outside the school, the response of the immigrant children varied in distribution between the school and outside with the number of immigrants in particular school classrooms. However, the general conclusion can be made that there was a tendency for great numbers of responses referring to neighborhood than to classroom. This was especially so in the case of Italian children. In another question, the children were asked names of the children who were their best friends in the classroom. In this way we were able, together with our

knowledge of classrooms and school records, to determine whether the friends were Canadian or New Canadian and, in the New Canadian section, of what ethnic group they were. In other questions concerning fathers' and mothers' nationality, we were able to discover what proportion of the children chosen as friends who were of a particular ethnic group. A general tendency toward clique formation among the children of ethnic groups was particularly prevalent among New Canadians but was less significant among children who were born in Canada of foreign parents. However, there was a substantial variation which extended to New Canadians on the basis of the proportion of the class which was composed of a particular ethnic group. Even distribution and small numbers of non-English Canadians seem to work against group formation on the basis of ethnicity.

Taking one classroom as an example, it was easily perceived that there was a split into groups and cliques mainly on the basis of ethnicity. The children interviewed made it plain that they primarily had dealings with those of their own ethnic group. The main ethnic groups were Canadian, Italian, and German. There was a certain amount of mixing, but this was mainly between the Germans and the Canadian group. What mixing occurred, with one exception,was between children of German and Italian stock who had been born in Canada, and Canadians. The New Canadians in the classroom kept to their own ethnic groups with the exception of

Frederick, who had arrived from Germany a year before, but who was accepted by the Canadian group. There was a sizeable group of Canadians and a sub-group formed by three Canadians. The latter were very aloof from everybody.

TEACHERS OPINIONS AND EXPERIENCE ON THE IMMIGRANT CHILD'S ASSIMILATION

When questioned on variations in ability and achievement between ethnic groups, many principals and teachers ranked Italians then Poles on a scale. Germans, Scandinavians and Dutch were placed highest next to those from the British Isles. The results of reading and math scores, and general grade scores seem to bear this out. It was also a quite widespread opinion that Italians tend to learn English at a slower rate than other groups. It is probable that general achievement and success in a new language is often linked to an experience of success, and its stimulation in one area will affect another.

Certainly, many Italian children seemed to experience difficulty in learning English, and a small but significant number of them still had poor English after three or more years in the Canadian school system. One child I came across had poor and stumbling English even after six years in the Canadian school system. The consensus among teachers is that it takes, on an average, two years for a New Canadian child to learn English to a standard where he is generally

on a level with Canadian children.

It is difficult to tell how far I.Q., is a factor in the cases where the children are very poor in English because the I.Q. tests in the schools are generally so closely linked to verbal ability. Some children had taken non-verbal block manipulation I.Q. tests but these tests were rarely given. This is rather disturbing as many teachers put poor performance in the school, in general, and in English, in particular, down to low I.Q. Such teachers think that if the child has the brains then he will learn.

THE TEACHERS INFLUENCE ON ASSIMILATION

It is important to study how the influence of the teacher bears on the formation of classroom groups, which may lead to interaction between ethnic groups and progress towards normative convergence. Teachers may have a substantial influence in this respect; an influence they are often unaware of.

Some teachers took the view that a variation in ethnic groups in the classroom added to the richness of the material which a teacher could use in his teaching. They emphasized communication at all levels, verbal and non-verbal between ethnic groups in the classroom. In part, they structured their lessons around what each group had to offer. This was particularly true in the case of a number of geography lessons I observed. One teacher, in particular, structured his lessons

to promote the maximum amount of interaction between Canadian children and those of other ethnic groups without, however, forcing the issue too much so that his aim became obvious.

It was apparent that communication between the particular ethnic groups in a classroom was fostered by arranging a lesson structure which increased communication in the first place rather than using a rigid lecture method. It was plain that experienced teachers could so structure things that the children just had to cooperate and interact to get the learning the teacher initiated, completed. This is particularly true of the "committee work"[1] method of teaching, a method, that is not easy to operate successfully. In classrooms where less interaction occurs, normative convergence is less likely. In such cases, and perhaps in the others, to a lesser extent, interaction in the school yard is more important for normative convergence. "Many of them pick up English very fast, but they are helped most with English in the school yard, playing with other children who speak it fluently or well." We will examine the interaction of the school yard in a later section.

The teachers who were most successful in dealing with the problems of New Canadians emphasized that they expected the children to succeed and gave them every encouragement to do so, building up their confidence. Some recognized that they had to work strenuously to communicate in any kind of meaningful way with non-English speaking children, using

pictures and sign language, not only to indicate instructions but to communicate the meaning of English words. One child commented on how his teacher had helped during his first months in a Canadian school, "My problem with speaking English was helped by a teacher who drew pictures of houses and other things and made me understand things this way."

At a later stage, many teachers emphasize creative writing instead of formal grammar; this helps the New Canadians a great deal; although, this is not usually the primary reason for using this method. However, in order for them to obtain results from new Canadians, they need to give them a certain basic English vocabulary to enable them to write. If the words are at least used, they gain meaning. Some of the children I interviewed mentioned grammar as the subject they disliked most and complained at the manner in which it was taught. A German child, Ferdinand, said it was a subject he hated and he was frustrated by it. In Germany, he was taught better; the class was given a whole passage and asked to correct it. In Canada, either they learned by rote or took single sentences; consequently, it was less interesting, and rather mystifying for Ferdinand. Ferdinand was, it should be mentioned, highly motivated to succeed in the school and get a good job when he left even though he was only eleven years old. In such circumstances, it was plain that the problems for children initially less motivated to success at the school would be much greater.

Many children who find the going too difficult just withdraw from the whole classroom situation; they are there in body but not in spirit. When questioned by the teacher, or instructed to do something, some just stare blankly and, on occasion, are submitted to a trial from the teacher who is trying to get a response, and who, in not gaining any, has become unbearably frustrated. On such occasions, the children withdraw even further.[15] It is a form of protection from a situation in which they feel unsure and inadequate. Many children, when questioned, have developed a little smile of withdrawal to shut the teacher off! They feel they can't perform as the teacher desires; they can't get their tongues round words that are very difficult, to explain something in sentences as teachers often demand. A teacher frustrated in this kind of situation may give up trying with New Canadians and just let them withdraw into silence at the back, to be dealt with only when they cause trouble and disruption. Many teachers in classrooms where there is a large number of New Canadians are at a loss as what to do.

A DISCUSSION AND OBSERVATION

An example of much of what I have said is provided by a discussion with, and later observations of, a third grade teacher. My interview with Miss X proceeded on the basis of a lecture on the cultural advantages to Canada of New Canadians; however, as the discussion progressed it

became apparent that this was a concept she was not too happy with, but rather a veneer to please the interviewer but more explicitly to support her concept of herself as being a good teacher in the problems presented by a large number of New Canadians in her classroom. This is not to say she was insincere, just that it became apparent that she experienced considerable difficulty in her teaching in integrating the stated advantages of New Canadians into the learning which was going on in the classroom. Basically, the impression left with the interviewer was of a well-meaning teacher who was somewhat at a loss as to how to cope with the situation.

The observation of her classroom in action confirmed and supported this view. An air of confusion in teacher and those being taught seemed to be the dominant theme. Language problems seemed to be one definite source of this confusion; they were also, in part, an indirect cause of the discipline problems. No words or terms were defined or explained; no attempt to get successful feedback to measure the children's comprehension occurred. The lesson was taught despite the children it was supposed to be directed at; it was as though a glass wall had descended between the teacher and her class. The class consisted of a majority of New Canadians and those of non-English ethnic origin, with four English-Canadian children.

The children were alternatively sullen and disruptive.

The distance that existed between teacher and children was apparent for Miss X spoke of them, and to them, as if they really were not there![16] "This is a zoo class" she said in exasperation at one point. "She has no idea of the behaviour which is expected in the school," pointing to a girl called Maria. The lack of contact and withdrawal in classrooms like this causes the children to be viewed as stupid. Other classrooms composed of children from similar backgrounds, where students are involved in what is going on, appear bright and intelligent. Some teachers, at a loss in a classroom with New Canadians and lower class Canadians, just try to establish the bare bones of classroom rules and routine but never move beyond that point. The substance of classroom organization may be present but the spirit is not. The children may go through tasks in the school day like automation without understanding, just giving the bare minimum of what the teacher seems to be demanding with occasional outbreaks of disruption.

In such a context, the children exhibit stupidity[17] or, perhaps more truly, through stupidity a satire of what is going on. "Why did you raise your hand if you did not know; you have no sense." In this particular classroom, the children are continually raising hands and apparently, like the boy who was reprimanded, do not have an inkling of what is required. It just seems that there is a vague idea that in a school you have to raise your hand. One problem is that

many children submit to school routines and rituals without really knowing their meaning. Their confusion is often added to by frustrated teachers who yell at their stupidity.

ADAPTATION TO SOCIAL CHANGE

The child in the course of his normal development successively and simultaneously is a member of many groups. "The child participates in the life of many groups on his way to maturity. His personality must adapt itself, often by radical changes, to the demands of the new groups and the new roles which he assumes in it"![18] Such radical changes also affect the immigrant child entering the Canadian school system for the first time. However, even though change may often be radical it is seldom completely abrupt. The replacement of one set of group connections by another, even for the immigrant child is not always complete, save where he has entered school directly on arrival in Canada. Usually, he will already have some friends in the neighbourhood of his own nationality who will go to the same school. Transition, which may eventually result in radical changes from one group to another, is gradual. However, the changed social situation continually pressures for adaptive change, for a realignment of relationships and interaction patterns.

In this sense, the immigrant child's situation is not uncommon, children certainly in elementary school are very flexible. The danger is not change itself but of

pressure for massive change in a wide range of areas where the immigrant child may be unable to adapt gradually to such situations. If there is an attempt made to force a wide range of changes at once, it is possible that the child's ability to deal with group changes will be permanently affected. Change may be arrested in one particular stage; most likely in allegiance to the home, the family will become a crutch. Or children may retire to the ethnic peer group for support which they become totally dependent on. In both situations, it is unlikely that the school will have much real effect; there will be a low level of assimilation to Canadian value patterns.

If there is no peer group of common culture for the "threatened" child to retire to he may become isolated or strike up friendship with a much younger child. In the classroom, the grading by age will usually make this impossible. The child will not enter the peer groups associated with his age; his status with other children of his own age will be undermined making it less likely that he will be accepted. The pattern of association with younger children was noticed among a few Italian children in the school yard; this was true of a school which had few Italians. It must be remembered that Italian children are often kept back because of language difficulties.

Culture Shock

The experience for some New Canadians of being thrust into an alien environment, represented by the Canadian school, was too much. A few experienced more than the normal difficulties of adjustment to judge from the reports of teachers and my observation of a few children. The first contact with the Canadian school on the part of the New Canadian child, often not newly arrived to Canada, is very disturbing at the best of times. An experience of "culture shock" occurs in which it becomes difficult for the child to operate efficiently or often rationally in the first month or two. Many children just want to retreat from what is for them a strange situation. Some, however, remain in this state of shock for a much longer time.

This is partly indicated by language difficulties which may recur even after several years in the English-speaking environment of the Canadian school.. Such children demonstrated incorrect grammar and pronounciation which may frustrate and exasperate their teachers. This exasperation is particularly evident when the child continually makes the same mistakes once the right way has been explained, and he has agreed with it and repeated it.[19] In some respects, it can be asserted that this is evidence of the kind of situation which is apparent with culture shock.[20] Certainly the anger of the teacher seems to threaten this kind of child so much that he regresses. It was also tentatively concluded

on the basis of a few examples that these problems were particularly prominent with socially isolated children; children not only isolated from contacts with Canadian children, but often also from children of their own ethnic group. It is significant that language gains its main significance in group interaction.

Many teachers insist that the New Canadian child should be prevented from using his own language in the classroom. Indeed, some teachers who may know the particular child's language often feel that to use it is taboo. The attitude commonly expressed is that if the child is thrown into the classroom situation and allowed only to speak English, he will learn it quickly and not need his native language as a crutch. Often personal experience abroad is given, where, i.e., the teacher learned French by being forced to speak it to French friends and others in order to get the basic necessities of life, such as food and lodging.

In such instances, it is forgotten that it is easier to learn a language when you have the help of friends and, secondly, that a language always appears more significant when it refers to concrete necessities. In the classroom, children who experience difficulty with English often may be completely isolated or have few contacts with Canadian children. In addition, the teacher emphasizes the use of abstract words such as prepositions and pronouns often in the context of a lesson which is, in itself, abstract, for example,

a history lesson. It was plain from my observations that few teachers use concrete methods and aids to teach the abstract bodies of knowledge in each subject area. This is most apparent in teaching language, where the direct method is seldom used.

In one classroom observation I noticed an Italian child sitting right at the back corner clutching a radiator pipe moving a bit of cloth up and down it slowly and deliberately in a kind of daze. I asked the teacher about this child afterwards and was told that the child was very difficult to deal with because she spoke no English and did not seem to respond to anything,even to pictures. This child had been in the school for four months. The teacher had almost resigned herself to the impossibility of ever getting through to the child. Yet, I have known of cases where suddenly such children have opened up, revealing that they know more English than they indicate in the classroom situation. This occurred in the case of an Italian teacher I know; the child brightened up immediately when her name was pronounced with an Italian accent. The child subsequently opened up not only in Italian but in English when the teacher switched from Italian to English in talking to the child.

The tragedy is that such children who are shocked and not attuned to the school environment often appear stupid. The school experience becomes so unpleasant and unrewarding that they just shut off the greater part of their interest

and vitality; within the school environment they just become "cabbages." Situations of humiliation inflicted by frustrated and exasperated teachers only confirm this irrational adaptation. To be involved in a situation in which one expects failure is too dangerous for the ego as Sherif[21] indicated in his book, The Psychology of Ego Involvement.

Ego Involvement and the Immigrant Child

The immigrant child's ego and his self-concept may be greatly affected by his school experience even at the age of nine or ten.

"The ego cannot be regarded as a fixed rigid or permanent entity.

It can be, and sometimes is, considerably altered by stresses and strains and upheavals of one sort or another."[22]

Sufficient pressure of one kind or another can break down an ego to varying degrees. Much literature on sudden and forced socialization in threatening circumstances supports this.[23]

In general it may be said that though there is a tendency toward clique formation in the school,[24] it was less pronounced in every school in the study than in relationships outside. School choices tended to be more democratic and wider, extending across ethnic groups. This, in part, is a result of choices already made on the part of the school and its grade organization in putting children together in a

classroom on a basis of age and ability. This provides a pool from which choices of friends can be drawn which is limited and cuts across ethnicity. In the neighbourhood the pool of possible choices is very great; it is easy to select on the basis of ethnicity alone. The play situation during recess periods provides a situation midway between the class and the neighbourhood. It was significant that in this situation clique formation was often more apparent on the basis of ethnicity in the classroom.

ITALIAN PEER GROUP SIZE AND ASSIMILATION

It becomes apparent that the size of the Italian community and its concentration, is an important variable of acculturation. Where the size of an Italian group in a classroom is such that most of one's friends will be Italian on a purely statistical basis, Italian cultural values are likely to be more resistent to change. However, to say that the opposite is true in a classroom where there are few Italians does not necessarily follow. It will depend largely on the interaction and the context of interaction between Italian and other children. A large range of variables will affect this. It will depend on the proficiency in English of the Italian children entering the classroom, the attitudes and actions of the Canadian children to their Italian classmates, and vice versa, and the context of the action provided by the teacher. On the basis of these and other variables,

the small Italian group in the class, or parts of it, may be pressured or eased into binding together for security, or spreading out for full participation with Canadian children. The latter is, in the light of experience, more likely if, as happens in most schools, there is a proportion of immigrants of mixed nationality with no one group completely predominating. Much of the reason for failure in the education of Italians may be found in the influence of peer group society and the ambivalent feelings of parents to education. But the same is true for working-class children of most nationalities. It is, however, valid to argue that these problems of the lower and working classes are in the case of immigrants compounded by cultural differences, particularly when one remembers the class-bound outlook of European countries. It can be argued that class loyalties are much more significant among people from traditionally-oriented societies.

The Italian child is mainly appraised from the point of view of Canadian standards. This is true where it concerns the pupils irregularities and breaches of school routine. Wherever the Italian problem children in the school become too numerous to remain unnoticed the Italian student looms up suddenly as an outstanding truant. Such conspicuousness is the object of observers' comments attributing the situation to such causes as broken homes, and lack of parental control, in other words, causes applicable to any

social group without regard to the possible cultural basis of the problem.

The tendency to reject the parental traditions and the urge to identify with the Canadian world is stronger in situations where there are few Italian immigrants in the school of neighbourhood. This undoubtedly gives impetus to more normal school attendance, and greater desire to participate in various extracurricular activities.

LEARNING THEORY AND THE ASSIMILATION OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

Child's[25] employs a variety of learning theories to analyze the process of assimilation among Italian children in New Haven. He applies the terms reinforcement, extinction, and avoidance learning to the situation of an immigrant in the process of acculturation and adjustment to the receiving society. The principle of reinforcement states that the attainment of a goal has reinforcing effects upon the behaviour performed in the recent past. Having attained a goal and its rewards, the behaviour will be likely to be repeated. In the case of the immigrant, if he learns the ways, values, and norms of the receiving society and adjusts behaviourally, he will expect to be received into the groups which compose the structure of the society. If this does not take place, if he is rejected, it is likely that the principle of extinction will take effect depending upon how strong his identification is with the behaviours and with the

reference group he hopes to gain membership in. The individual in question may then avoid these behaviours; distinguishing much of his learning in this area. He will be likely to return to the bonds and behaviours of the ethnic enclave. In addition, it is likely that if he were rejected under unpleasant circumstances he would tend to avoid contact with members of the receiving society in similar situations. Thus, he will avoid membership in groups with members of the receiving society. Merton[26] points out that some people may maintain a reference group which rejects and regards them as ineligible. Where reference is maintained with a group of the receiving society which has different norms and behavioural patterns this will entail a break with the old cultural group. The result for the individual will be a marginal position. In the course of time, avoidance of situations involving both groups might result in total isolation. However, this is not a common occurrence.

Merton explains that non-membership groups are more likely to be adopted as reference groups in social systems having high rates of social mobility than in those which are relatively closed.[26] Therefore, some may feel that marginality is worth the lack of warm and intimate social life. But in ethnic groups where either social mobility is very difficult, or where it is not an important value, the rewards of the ethnic group will have their effect in making reference to the receiving society unlikely.[27] In the case of the

individual who has been accepted into a membership group of a receiving society with his new form of behaviour consequently reinforced, he may very strongly reject the behaviours and values of his former group. It is likely that he will over-react to counter the fact that his old allegiances will still have some pull over him.[28] He will also have to prove to his fellows in the new group that he has turned his back on his old associations. That this pattern of over-reaction in a situation can often result in doubt and confusion was apparent in a number of my respondents.

REASONS FOR LACK OF GROUP AFFILIATION

The reasons for the lack of desire for affiliation and companionship are not always clear. Sociometric Studies have shown that individuals tend to prefer persons in the group whom they perceive to be similar to themselves, particularly in the area of social values.[29] It is possible that ineligible persons do not perceive the members of another group as similar to themselves and, therefore, they have no desire to be accepted. Or there may, in reality, be no perceptible similarity. It has been found that when members are made to feel that they are not highly valued they place a lower value on group membership and conform less to the norms.[30] This is the typical defense of the immigrant discussed in Chapter Two who acts on the "principle of avoidance," rejecting his rejectors and returning, if possible,

to closer identification with members of his own ethnic group inside or outside school.

Numerous studies reveal that the amount of interaction and the frequency of verbal communications are directly related to the degree of group cohesiveness.[31] When communication between children is very restricted, unity is decreased. Coherence is affected by the structure of the group. Clique formation, or the presence of sub-group rivalry, will decrease the cohesiveness of the total group though cohesiveness may be high in each particular sub-group or clique.[32]

RESPONSES OF ITALIAN CHILDREN

Information elicited from the question "What kind of person do you think is good friend," in open-ended discussions revealed a number of factors. We will now summarize some of the most significant responses which fall into three categories, "somebody who likes the same things I do," with detailed statements about the kind of things on which friends converge, "kids who like me," and "kids who are like me." Some responses were persued to as much of a conclusion as was possible, as were the others which did not fall into these general categories. Examples of other responses were someone who would "stick by me," or "up for me," "the kids on my block," and"someone who will share and swop with me fairly."

In some cases, the presence of such responses as,

"kids who like me," revealed in open-ended discussion children who felt rejected, one of whom had a very weak self-concept, and felt it was rather utopian to have a friend at all, because whoever would like him? In fact, he had alienated most of his classmates, and worked very hard to alienate me. However, often "kids who like me" merged into "kids who are like me," which is a common product of involvement in a primary group with other children who, in part, through interaction perceive themselves as alike and of liking and being liked by one another. Why they come together in the first place is usually a result of such sentiments. The response "kids who are like me" also revealed a small number of children who were isolated in the classroom group, the implication being that friends are kids like me but there is no one around here like me, so I don't have much to do with them and they with me. We must emphasize however, that the number of isolated children who had few friends is small. Discussion with them revealed significant factors bearing on immigrant adjustments and assimilations.

The level of group interaction of many respondents could possibly be, in part, indicated by whether they responded with the plural "kids" or the singular "someone". There was a correlation between children who were deeply involved in a poor group and the use of the plural, as in the example "kids." Several of the most isolated children

responded with "someone like me," of "someone who likes me." This was also a response of many of those who were involved in peer groups but not in the very center. Often when children responded with more abstract terms of justice rather than liking or identification, such as stating that a friend or friends should be fair, the singular "someone" was used.

SOCIAL STATUS AND GROUP INVOLVEMENT

The social status of a child will rise following group involvement, but membership is often denied because the immigrant child is felt to deviate from the group. A vicious cycle may set up whereby a child is drawn further and further away from involvement. It is only through group interaction that a new perception of the deviant as being similar can develop. Reaction against him and its effects makes the deviant appear increasingly dissimilar as involvement becomes less likely.

One characteristic frequently attributed to a person who is liked, is that he likes others. It is unlikely that the rejected child will like his rejectors. Even as he has been assiduously seeking acceptance, he must defend his ego in a situation of rejection; often this will take the form of disliking his rejectors and indicating it to them in no uncertain terms. The burden of being disliked by someone you want to associate with is intolerable. A series of experiences of actual rejection or supposed rejection will

lead to retreat from that situation, a point we have already discussed in reference to Child's "avoidance theory" of social learning.[33]

Some children, however, may so strongly desire social contact that they continually try for acceptance even in the face of repeated rejection. A case in point was that of Alberto. Alberto was in a class which had a large number of Italian children. What social contacts he had were predominantly with the Italian group. Moreover, it was apparent that he had a strong desire to be accepted by the "Canadian clique"[34] in the classroom. The fact of being Italian labelled Alberto as a member of an out group, even though his relationship with the Italian children in the class was not well developed. He was progressively alienating himself from the Italian group, while not being accepted by the "Canadian group." His English was broken and stumbling and he was confused on some aspects of social behaviour in situations with Canadians. Attempts to please and gain entrance to the social world of the Canadian group of children only caused further alienation and confusion for Alberto. Alberto was rejected because he was not one of them and showed little prospect of engaging in smooth and successful interaction. His attempts to please were often embarrassing to the children, yet, the prospect of socialization which would lead to more acceptable behaviour was denied.

THE CLASSROOM GROUP STRUCTURE

When children meet together in the class group for the first time, some degree of uncertainty pervades the situation. There is a certain amount of jockeying for position. During this time, the members explore the limits of behaviour. Some test the authority and methods of the teacher while, at the same time, assessing one another as well as the teacher. In the early stages of group formation in the classroom, the relationships change rapidly before settling down to a more stable and permanent pattern.[35] According to Sherif, the appearance of group structure is evidenced by, "the appearance of relatively independent roles for the individual members in a mechanical order at relative distances from a leader."[36] A group needs organization and leadership to survive and to carry out its goals. The process of finding a leader runs parallel to a working out of goals. In the early stages both are often unclear.

However, the emergence of a classroom group is also the sign for the emergence of cliques and sub-groups with different leaders, memberships, norms, and goals. In some circumstances of conflict the classroom may be split into entirely separate groups rather than factions of one main group. This latter development was apparent in some classrooms with a large member of New Canadians; they would not or could not develop any constructive forms of interaction with other children in the class. Usually, where the New

Canadian and second generation immigrant groups formed into cliques it was within the structure of a classroom group which, on a number of occasions, promoted interaction across sub-group lines. Such interaction, however, is usually purely instrumental. The purpose is to gain definite goals or is a result of some external threat, such as that represented by the teacher. The cliques encompass the more intimate kinds of interaction which are more and more likely to lead to normative convergence between groups or sub-groups.

Above this we must not forget that the first and most permanent sub-group division to emerge in any classroom in elementary school is that based on sex. The inevitable division that takes place gives perspective to what we discussed about cleaverages between ethnic groups. Boys and girls of the same ethnic group in elementary school are less likely to interact freely than boys or girls of different ethnic groups.

CLIQUE FORMATION

However, even during the comparatively short periods of my observation of some classrooms, it became apparent that in certain circumstances the sub-groups, or cliques entered into a short lived and sometimes uneasy unity. The occasions when this occurred can roughly be split into situations in which the task assignment and lesson organization set by the teacher called for cooperation of children, and situations

of conflict in which the teacher was the target. The cliques were separated mainly because they had different interests and values and difficulty over language, but they were not so mutually hostile that they couldn't interact if the situation required it. Hostility between the sub-groups apart from occasional outbursts, seemed mainly to serve the function of adding cohesion to the sub-group in question. The examples of open conflict seemed mainly to be associated with "scapegoating," and occurred on occasions where the whole class was frustrated with the demands of the school or the teacher. When the class was just plain bored, they would play off against each other. In this they often picked on certain individuals of another ethnic group.

INTERACTION IN THE SCHOOL YARD

The sub-groups and groups which formed in the classroom received much of their stimulation for continued existence from the activities of the school yard.[37] Though many children might have friends in other grades and classrooms, the centre of identification was usually in the classroom group, when it came to recess. While it is true that in the school yard cliques on the bases of ethnicity persisted, it was always likely that some realignment would occur to mix Canadians and Italians or Germans or Poles, etc. The most apparent division in the classroom was not on the basis of ethnicity but on that of sex. For interaction in the school

yard between ethnic groups, as in the classroom, one of the most significant variables was that of size of the particular ethnic group within the school. Schools which had large numbers of Italians evidenced a school yard interaction pattern of greater cleavage along ethnic group lines. The same was true if there were large numbers of Poles or Germans. However, the tendency to clique formation among Italians was noticeably higher even when they formed a smaller group in the school or classroom than another ethnic group.

NORMATIVE CONVERGENCE IN THE SCHOOL YARD

Though it was very difficult to observe directly, it was apparent that normative convergence occurred most frequently in play groups in the school yard and outside school. The convergence that occurred within the classroom was significant but all involved, teachers and students alike, admitted that it did not compete with the children's own groups in influence upon assimilation. In the school yard, it was apparent that despite clique formation along ethnic group lines there was substantial interaction between ethnic groups. Interviews with children and discussions with teachers supported this observation. It was plain that it was here and in the streets that non-English speaking children made the greatest advances in learning English. Centres of group identification formed around interest in particular games and activities. Often inside the school and out in the

streets the key to interaction with Canadian children was in football, ice hockey, and games revolving round television characters. In this respect, television as a medium for assimilation cannot be underestimated.

The pattern of interaction based on interest in sports[38] was true of one of my respondents in particular. Communication with Guido was difficult as his English was limited but, combined with information from his teacher who spoke Italian, I was able to learn a lot about him. He had been in Canada for only one year but his English seemed to be progressing well for so short a time. Guido had a number of Canadian friends and also other immigrant children who were fluent in English. He was well accepted by them and participated at a high level in their interests and games. Canadian football and ice hockey were areas of intense and passionate interest for him. It was these interests which seemed to facilitate and develop his relationships with Canadian children.

NORMATIVE CONVERGENCE AND PATTERNS OF HOME VISITING

It was apparent that home visiting between ethnic groups was more likely if the non-Canadian child was already quite far on the road to assimilation. Another factor was the size of various non-Canadian groups in the particular locality. Not only was home visiting more likely in the areas of low immigrant concentration but was such that the

children were more likely to be substantially assimilated to Canadian values. These factors interacted to reinforce each other. The occurrence of close friendships and home visiting, of which the latter may be an indicator, reinforced the motivations to adopt Canadian patterns and encouraged their future development.

Visits to the houses of Canadian friends are but one indication of normative convergence and assimilation. Another is visits in the opposite direction, of Canadian children to the houses of their non-Canadian friends. The impression gained from respondents was that the move toward assimilation was more towards the Canadian pole. Convergence was in process, but there were more pressures to force the centre of convergence to the Canadian side of the interacting value patterns in relationships between Canadian and non-Canadian. The Canadian child in such relationships, however, made an adjustment to make friendly interaction possible. Such children were in some cases highly in favor of difference. "I like hearing from Paul about his family and what he did in Italy, the games they had. Sometimes we change a game of ours so it's like the way they play it in Italy."

Entrance into the home of Canadians is usually instructive for the Italian visitor, and this is probably particularly so in the case of children. They gain a picture of the kind of social relationships which obtain among the members of the family and an idea of what is valued and

important in that setting. Children see how others are rewarded or disciplined and, particularly in the case of non-Canadians, this may have a profound effect. In most cases, they see a more democratic structure in which childrens' desires are more important. They quickly note the amount of pocket money their Canadian friends are given. They remember the things their Canadian friends can get away with. In due course, they often made similar demands on their own parents. A process in the opposite direction is less common, Canadian children being less likely to be influenced by what they see in non-Canadian friends' homes. "I have three best friends, two of them Canadians; they were born here so were their dads. I went to a hockey game once with my friend, Jim, and his father. His father was nice to us and bought us hamburgers and cakes." In answer to the question, "Has John's father been to your house or your father to his," the response was: "No they just work together. Sometimes my dad has a ride though with John's father to work." They live next door to each other, both men work at the nearby steel works. When questioned, Paul's father said he thought John's was a bit stuck up not really his kind of people."

DIFFICULTIES WITH THE FAMILY

The participation in a social group of mixed ethnic background in which Canadian, and largely assimilated New Canadian children form a substantial part, influences the

Italian child in a direction away from his family. This often causes a compartmentalisation between the two areas of social experiences. This separation, is often permitted as a solution, so long as it enables the family to remain dominant in its area of special concern.

One child interviewed, Mario, is a case in point. He talked about his home life saying that his grandmother lived with the family and spoke only Italian; his parents spoke little English. His grandmother strenuously resisted the use of any English in the house, though both his parents were not really opposed to learning English. Their attitude was that English was not worth the price of disturbing family peace and harmony; it could be learned outside the home in order to get along, but Italian was the language of the home and the family. Mario was well aware of the position and cooperated while, at the same time, immersing himself in social relationships with a number of Canadian children which were highly rewarding to him. However, it was apparent that many of the old group norms of the family were losing their hold. His identification with them had greatly diminished and he merely went along to keep the peace.

It was apparent from my studies that this accommodation was a general pattern. There were some exceptions, particularly with adolescents when, for example, in cases of family conflict words like traitor and deserter might be used. But such conflicts were usually infrequent mainly

because of the high value put by Italians on family stability and harmony. Even Canadian-oriented children and adolescents recognized the great importance of the family.

Some, however, came into conflict with their families when they begin adopting the Canadian ways and make demands to be treated like their Canadian friends. As Merton[39] points out, there is a point when the rewards of belonging to a group deteriorate, and thus there becomes little point in belonging. This, however, usually needs the extra factor of rejection from, or conflict with, the family or Italian peer group to become a completed process.' But, once initiated, this process seems to move towards a cumulative detachment from the group, in terms of attitudes and values as well as in terms of social relations. The degree to which he orients himself toward the out group values, perhaps affirming them verbally and expressing them in action, he only widens the gap and reinforces the hostility between himself and his in-group associated. Thus, Merton[40] describes the effects on social relationships of taking a new reference group.

In the case of two high school students I interviewed a choice had been made for a different kind of life to that of their Italian families. They fully realized the consequences of carrying this through to its logical conclusions and were prepared to face them. Many of high school age who have drifted away from the values emphasized by the family in due course of their elementary schooling are not prepared to face

a break and in some senses return to the fold. Some find themselves marginal, between Canadian and Italian groups. This position was true of two respondents in grade eight of elementary school where there appeared to be some danger of alienation from both groups. They felt estrangement from their family and Italian friends, an estrangement they blamed completely on them. They also experienced severe conflicts in their social relations in the school and relationships with teachers and Canadian children were unsatisfactory. It was significant that both had declined in their academic performance in school.[41]

Such a pattern was also apparent in the case of Roberto who was in the fifth grade. This was a very difficult case of a boy whose growing facility in English seemed to threaten his father's ego. The boy was placed in the painful situation where he became torn between his family and his English speaking friends. From discussion with him, his teacher and his parents (by interpreter) it became apparent that his whole range of social relationships was suffering.

Roberto it seemed had become progressively morose and uncommunicative. He was loosing the friendship of many of the children in his class, and also seemed to employ techniques of dumb insolence at home. All those involved seemed to agree that Roberto had undergone a substantial change to reach this position. His school work was also

suffering, progress had not been maintained and performance had in many ways slumped. A comment made seemed to sum up his conflict, "I can't do anything right, I can't please anyone."

ESTRANGEMENTS

"What the individual experiences as estrangement from a group of which he is a member tends to be experienced by his associate as repudiation of the group; this ordinarily evokes a hostile response."[42]

This was a pattern found among several adolescent Italian boys who had become involved in the object oriented[43] aspirations of the Canadian high school. Orientation to future occupational success and desire for the material advantages they could bring entailed in the minds of their families and many of their neighbourhood friends a rejection of social values and a rejection of the relationships of the Italian community. The respondents were thus often rejected on these grounds while expressing the feeling that they would like to belong but felt rejected. Most of them were well aware, when questioned, of the value of the family and the price of separation.

AMBIVALENT FEELINGS IN RESPECT TO FAMILY AMONG NEW-CANADIAN ITALIANS AND CANADIAN-BORN ITALIANS

The interviews and discussions with Italians in

Hamilton both directly and through interpreter[44] revealed that to the young, both of school age and among those who were working, the family still meant a great deal despite conflicts with parents. One said simply, "My family is me, my life, whatever I do, however successful I become." Many still maintain an extended family link with their parents' family and their peers. But even for those who do not maintain actual contacts, a certain identification and loyalty remain on an emotional level. For some children, it was apparent that the struggle for success in the school and the possible success in the outside world it might bring, was too much for them to take on. Often they identified quite strongly with their national group when pressed. This expressed itself through a desire to follow in their father's footsteps. "I want to be like my father, I don't want to study alone all the time. I want to be like the people in our street." Success was often seen by the respondents as having the consequence of rupture from family and friends. Further questioning in a number of cases revealed that this fear of rupture was accompanied by fear of the world outside the family and friends of the same nationality. A break from the family in these cases clearly entailed isolation in the minds of many of the children responding in this manner.

As Child[2] points out, the cultural group formed by a particular immigrant nationality has many rewards. It is particularly so in the case of Italians with their strong

family and social bonds. "Membership in the Italian group permits enjoyment of participation in social function with people who may accept one more completely as an equal than will any other group of mixed nationalities."[45] Some of the rewards are "acceptance as a perfect equal in status, freedom from attack in social intercourse as a member of a national group of low status and the security of feeling one's self to be a part of a national and cultural group which has displayed a great power and achievement."[46] For the child of elementary school age these factors are not clearly delineated, but there is, for a person of any age, a distinct difference between a feeling of warmth and belonging in a group and a feeling, if not always of rejection, of being misplaced and marginal on many occasions. It must also not be forgotten that the home and family may punish nonconformity by cutting off these rewarding relationships.

THE PERSISTENCE OF ITALIAN CULTURE DESPITE THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL

An important aspect of the cultural orientation of the child of Italian parentage in Canada is the power of his traditional culture to survive in the Canadian environment. This results in a situation where the child reacts to both cultures even where substantial assimilation has taken place. During the pre-school years in a culturally-isolated Italian community the parental culture naturally has almost exclusive

priority over Canadian culture. When the child enters elementary school a conflict between the two cultures, Canadian and Italian, arises. The child's school performance is evaluated according to Canadian norms without regard for his cultural background. His conspicuous behaviour traits are attributed by the school to causes valid for any social group as bad behaviour rather than as behaviour conforming to Italian norms.

In the school the child meets customs and ideas that are new and often incomprehensible to him. He finds that what is considered a proper procedure at home is looked upon as improper by his teachers. Thus, the child finds himself in two cultural worlds. His family opposes his adoption of the suggestions of the school. In his new found desire to be a Canadian, to gain prestige attached to being one, he faces the conflict which must be solved by him alone since neither home nor school will give way to the other. The child is adversely affected by such conflicts. In his cultural orientation, in his social development, and, therefore, in his personality.[47]

In his early relations with school, the Italian-Canadian child often experiences a sense of inferiority in his dealings and contacts with others which evolve into shame of his parental background. This may eventually lead to a rejection of his family patterns in favour of Canadian patterns. He develops a negative attitude towards his parent's

culture and, in the school situation is removed from his immediate environment, ceasing to identify himself with it.

But, it is a fact of significance that the adjustment and movement on the part of the child towards assimilation causes less conflict than would be expected because the stability of a family is important to all its members. The child has the values of allegiance to the family inculcated with great strength over many years. The child may reject the parental culture without impairing his relationship with his parents. Parents also fight back against the invading culture of the school, belittling many of its ideas and values. "She (mother) began ridiculing all my teachers for their ideas, and this made me very sad for she ruined my dreams of becoming a real American."[48]

There is a great deal of evidence that a child may loathe Italian customs while at the same time preserving his allegiance to the family pattern and thus remaining under the control of his parents.

Another element which permits a rejection of parental background without defiance of the parent and the family tradition is the particular area of cultural values within which this rejection of Italian and the acceptance of Canadian patterns occurs. The impact of Canadian culture complexes upon the Italian child in the elementary school and also in films, radio, and TV involves only its most overt manifestations. This is what some would call public culture

which includes architecture, housing, business, sports, compulsory education, Canadian food, political systems, slang, and so on, all of which are within the comprehension of a child. This remains distinct from private culture which embraces the sentiment of Canadian tradition. The children compare the Italian culture to the Canadian public culture, in dress, food, language, and behaviour, but this does not involve moral aspects of the Italian tradition. It is only when there is a frequent pattern of home visiting in association with Canadian friends that this moral aspect is more likely to affect the Italian child.

The influence of the school, particularly in the homogeneous environment of the Italian-Canadian community, begins to recede as the child approaches maturity and gainful employment. As the child grows older, the rigid family traditions which he has rejected in their overt cultural aspects begin again to have a stronger hold on him. As he gravitates toward the parental pattern the child's behaviour towards school gradually become identified with the parental concept and social values. The apparent shift from the initial cultural rejection at elementary school level to an acceptance of parental patterns at the high school age level would seem to be based upon the complexities of acculturation. A variety of factors enter into this gravitation to the Italian family pattern, physical proximity, interaction, and attitudes of the dominant culture. As he grows older, the

Italian immigrant youth increasingly contacts and interacts with Canadian children. He begins to evaluate his own background against that of other groups, immigrant and Canadian. He finds, perhaps, less to emulate and admire than he did at an earlier age and more to value and retain in his own background.

This view was expressed by a number of respondents who discussed their family life. "My grandfather came from Calabria. I know quite well what is good and what is not good in my family. There is no need for me to resent anything that is good and dignified. In our family, there are many things that could well be learned by other people. For instance, I find the old custom of all relatives meeting together a very beautiful custom. But there are others which I feel are old fashioned. Those I don't follow, especially if they make me ridiculous in other people's eyes." Thus, while the child adopts various modes of life, the power of the family retains its hold. The Canadian-born child seldom loses sight of the solidarity of the family and the necessity of being obedient to its patterns. Even when there is a desire to defy parental tradition, a compromise invariably takes place without, however, any undue violation of the basic pattern. In many ways despite its apparent rigidity, the Italian family is very resilient.

It is plain, even with young people, that many expect to live near their relatives upon marriage. Among those not

so desirous of close proximity to relatives it was nonetheless expressed by many that this, in no way, entailed rejection of their relatives. "If I see my relatives less often they won't irritate me and I will have more respect and appreciation for them." Continually, the comments of those who were moving or had moved returned to the point that though they had moved away family contacts and the values of the family were still very important. "Better be away for otherwise you get tired of them and that's not good at all." Thus, there is no apparent desire to break away from the family. On the contrary, respect and appreciation of relatives is a desirable trait.

FOOTNOTES

[1] I. Child, Italian or American (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 40.

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[8] M. Sherif, Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation, (Institute of Group Relations, University of Oklahoma, 1958).

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[25]Op. cit., Child, Italian or American (1943), p. 52.

[26]R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (New York: Free Press, 1957), p. 289.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Op. cit., The Social System (1951), p. 255.

[29]L. Cronbach and R. Taquiri, Person Perspection and Interpersonal Behaviour (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1958).

[30]L. Cronbach, "The Process affecting scores on the 'understanding of others' and 'assumed similarity'", Psychological Bulletin, LII (1955), 177-195.

[31]

[32]Op. cit., Sherif, "Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation" (1958).

[33]Op. cit., Child, Italian or American (1943).

[34]This group was Canadian in the sense that it was fluent in English and was composed of assimilated non-English Canadians as well as English Canadians.

[35]H. Mans, "Understanding Group Processes" in Foster (ed.), Mental Health in Our Schools (Washington D.C.: N.E.A., 1950), 286.

[36]M. Sherif, An Outline of Social Psychology (New York: Harper Bros., 1948), p. 101.

[37]R. Hartley et al., Understanding Children's Play (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952).

[38]H. Halenko,

[39]Op. cit., Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (1957), p. 270.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Op. cit., Helper, "Learning Theory and the Self Concept" (1955).

[42]Op. cit., Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (1957), p. 270.

[43]H. Gans, Urban Villagers (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 129. Gans makes the distinction between individuals who are object oriented to future goals in work, play and family life and those who are group oriented in these areas.

[44]A friend of mine of Italian birth acted as my interpretor on occasion.

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CHAPTER 6

Summary

In Chapter one we set out to detail the relevant literature and concepts in the area of immigrant assimilation. Discussion and analysis of previous relevant work gave a firm base from which to generalize in interpreting our data gathered in Hamilton schools and in the families of Italian children. This data is presented and analyzed in Chapter five.

The first chapter developed the group frame of reference using such concepts as role, reference group, and primary group. It was suggested that these concepts and the kind of social action which they denote provides a good framework for discussion and analysis of the process of assimilation. It was hypothesized that through role learning and role playing in primary groups with members of the host society, assimilation takes place.

In my research it was observed that in situations of primary group involvement between Canadian and Italian children, assimilation began to occur at a significant level. However, what took place in such relationships was not a one-sided movement on the part of Italians alone, but a process of normative convergence which caused change in Canadian children also. Such convergence made possible the smooth

and articulate kind of interaction which encouraged assimilation.

The concept of role was particularly useful in providing articulation between individual, social and cultural levels, on which convergence occurred. It was particularly useful in enabling us to deal with socialization in a meaningful way. Role theory enabled us to talk about status and acceptance within group structure, which encouraged adaptive learning to become reinforced, and the new behaviours it resulted in, repeated.

The examination of assimilation was felt to be incomplete without an examination of the broader social setting in which interaction at the primary group level takes place. Thus we examined the social and cultural factors of both Canadian and Italian immigrant society. In this area we hypothesized variables which affect interaction and subsequent assimilation. It was suggested that Canadian society contained certain factors which encouraged ethnic differentiation, and in part allowed the dominant British Canadian elite to divide and rule. In respect of Italian immigrant society it was hypothesized that the Italian cultural and social values would be preserved by the family. It is felt that the research findings represented in the last chapter support the hypothesis and indicate that the Italian family in Canada maintains itself beyond the first generation as a locus of loyalty to the main social and cultural values and

relationships it enshrines. It was shown that the Italian family is neither rigid nor inflexible in the new surroundings, being prepared in some respects to change and accommodate to Canadian pressures. This capacity to accommodate was the reason for its resiliency and power to survive in the new environment, remaining true to its main values.

In large part the power of the Italian family to survive was due to the common adaptation made by Italian school children to the conflicting pressures of their situation. The most significant finding in our research we feel is that most Italian children studied accommodated rather than assimilated fully to Canadian pressures and influences. Most managed to "compartmentalize" the influences of home and school to prevent conflict and to conform to the demands of each. Certainly in elementary school a significant degree of assimilation took place, though this too, depended on the size of the Italian immigrant group in the classroom, it was not however complete in the majority of cases. For most children it did not take place to the degree that would bring about substantial conflict in the home. It was notable that among the several high school students which were studied in addition to the main sample from elementary school, that a process of return to the values of the home often became evident as the end of compulsory schooling approached.

The total school experience can be described in this way for the majority of children studied: first a period of

shock and disorientation, followed by growing assimilation to the values of the school and their Canadian classmates, while keeping the peace at home, and finally a tendency to return positively to the values of the Italian family and to take on its expected roles for young men and women. Even those children in the sample who seemed destined to move further and further away from their families indicated that strong loyalties still remained as sentiments if not as realities.

APPENDIX I

Methodological Note

In this study we gathered material from books, articles, observations and questioning in the school and in the families of school children. This note on methodology will address itself to the empirical research techniques used by the author and the reasons for their use. The population from which samples were drawn consisted principally of children of Italian birth or ancestry and their families. In addition a number of Canadian children and their families were also studies, to provide a unit for comparison. The schools were in the elementary public and separate systems of the Hamilton educational structure. While informal contact occurred with a number of schools, the greatest proportion of research was conducted in two schools, one separate, the other public.

The research techniques employed were those of unstructured observation and the open-ended questionnaire administered in an interview situation. These techniques were decided upon on the basis of their appropriateness to the situation and its limitations, and the likelihood that they would yield significant results in a study of immigrant children. Since it was often difficult to gain entrance to schools and, having done so to take time away from formal

school activities for my research the sample we were able to study closely was limited. In the light of these limitations it was decided that statistical analysis would be inappropriate, and would yield few significant findings.

In all, forty-five elementary school children were studied and questioned intensively though many others were questioned briefly, including a number of Italian-Canadian high school students. Eight teachers were interviewed, observed and questioned in depth, and twelve families were closely studied. Approximately ten classes were observed in process but prolonged observation only occurred in the case of three classes, at third, fourth and fifth grade levels. The fourth grade class was in a separate school. Most of the sample of forty-five children were drawn from these classes, but a small proportion came from groups outside the school setting and were contacted through their families. Of the forty-five children, thirty were either born in Italy or were born of Italian immigrant parents, ten were Canadian, and the remaining five were German, Polish and British. In interviewing and questioning New Canadian-Italian children, I was assisted by an interpretor. The children ranged in age from eight to twelve years old, the upper age group here was comprised of a number of children who had been kept back. The situation and the nature of our study in many ways dictated that we use unstructured observation and open-ended questionnaire techniques. Preliminary

research indicated the problems of wording and the interpretations of meaning by the respondent. Indeed in some cases even basic understanding of a written questionnaire was a problem. To elicit sufficient information from the children, the open-ended questionnaire was a necessity. Both clarity and understanding were thereby enhanced especially with respect to the immigrant child. At the elementary school level there is a significant proportion of poor readers and this is compounded in the case of New Canadians whose English is not very well developed.

The administration of open-ended questionnaires requires that either the researcher or an assistant be present when each questionnaire is administered. This interview type of situation enabled us not only to clarify difficulties but also to encourage the respondents to talk at some length. This added to the richness and depth of material obtained. We feel that this is of great importance in a descriptive study of this type which attempts to understand how people are affected by social situations and processes represented in this study by the social situation of "marginality" and the social processes of assimilation and accommodation.

The difficulties that were mentioned above with respect to children also apply in large part to the study of their families. Apart from the difficulties encountered in gaining admission to the family circle for observations and questioning it was practical only to study a few families in

depth. This comprised twelve families of which nine were Italian and three Canadian. My study of these families was greatly assisted by a teacher who acted as an interpretor.

Unstructured observation in the settings of the classroom, playgroup, and family, another source of our data also entailed certain practical problems. One of the main ones, concerns the position of the observer and his influence upon the situation he is attempting to observe accurately. The researcher was able to obtain a certain degree of control over this situation in the classroom by comparing findings in a similar situation where as a substitute teacher the researcher was in the position of a participant observer. Prolonged observation in the school, play situation, and in the family, we feel, gave the same kind of depth and understanding of social situations and processes afforded by the open-ended questionnaire technique, though not to the same degree. The data gained from observation also served the function of providing a framework for interpreting questionnaire responses.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire for Teachers and Principals

1. What are the teachers main problems in teaching New Canadian children?
2. What kind of teachers can cope best with New Canadians?
3. What is the ideal educational structure for teaching New Canadians most effectively?
4. Under what conditions do New Canadians become most effectively integrated into the Canadian school?
5. What are the reasons for slow progress in English among New Canadians?
6. What do you feel to be the source of the difference in performance between a New Canadian child who is successful/unsuccessful, in the school?
7. Do New Canadians adjust themselves quickly and easily to the goals and values of the school?
8. How does the family background of New Canadian children influence their performance in your opinion?
9. How do Italian children perform in the school, successfully or unsuccessfully?
10. Do Italian children have problems with language and the general curriculum to a greater degree than other groups?
11. Are Italian children good mixers with other children?

12. Are Polish children good mixers with other children?
13. Are German children good mixers with other children?
14. What do you think are the factors operative in social mixing between children of different ethnic groups?
15. What do you consider to be the place of New Canadians in Canada? What contributions do they make?
16. What do you consider to be the place of ethnic groups in Canada? What contributions do they make?

Children's Questionnaire

1. What kind of person do you think is a good friend?
2. How many good friends do you have in the school? How close are they to you? What are their names?
3. Are they Canadians, Italians, or other?
4. Who sits next to you?
5. Are they firm friends of yours? (If so) Why? (If not) Why not? What are their names?
6. Are your friends outside the school the same as those in the school?
7. Which do you like best, those in school or outside? Why?
8. Do you have different friends in the classroom to those you have in the school yard? (If so) Why?
9. What children does the teacher get most angry at? Why do you think this is so? Do you like them? (If not) Why not?

10. What children slow the class down most? What do you feel about them? (Principally directed at Canadians).
11. Do you think is important to speak correctly?
12. Does the teacher feel that speaking correctly is good?
13. How does the teacher teach children to speak properly?
14. Do you learn about the ways of people of other lands? What places?
15. Have you been into the homes and spoken with the mother and father of your friends? What are their names? What country do they come from?

Specifically for Canadians

1. Have you many friends who come from other countries or who mommy and daddy did?
2. What strikes you most about your classmates from other countries?

Specifically for Non-Canadians

1. What do you think of Canada? How does it compare with home?
2. What do you hope to be when you grow up?
3. Do you get any money for your parents? Is it a regular allowance? How much is it a week?
4. Do you often do bad things you get punished for at home?
5. What happens at home when you have done something bad?

6. Do you think your Canadian friends get off more lightly?

7. What do you feel about this?

8. Which comes the closest to your feeling about yourself:

   I don't like myself the way I am?
   I'd like to change completely?
   I would only like to change a bit?
   I would just want to stay the way I am?

9. What would you most like to be remembered for in school?

   As a brilliant student?
   An athletic star?
   As the most popular?

10. Which of these things would be hardest for you to take?

    Your parents disapproval?
    Teacher disapproval?
    Breaking with a friend?

The interview form utilized was:

What's your name?

How old are you?

Where do you live?

What kinds of people live around your house?

What are you?

What is a "Daddy", "Mummy"?

When Daddy goes to work what is he?

Is he still your Daddy when he is a ?

When he comes home and plays with you etc., what is he?

Is he still a when he's your Daddy at night?

Are you Italian?

What does it mean to be Italian?

Are you Catholic?

What does it mean to be Catholic?

Are you Canadian?

What does it mean to be Canadian?

Can you be Italian and Canadian?

Can you be Catholic and Canadian?

Can you be Italian, Catholic, and Canadian?

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