

Newsletter - December 2017

International Conference

Immigration, the Dynamics of Identity, and Policies for Managing Diversity



Did you know?

To encourage greater interactions, we have decided to extend the deadline for the proposals to **Friday, January 05**. Thank you for sharing the information about the conference in your networks!

All the information regarding the conference - call for papers, terms of submission, programming, community and institutional partners - is available at www.icstconference.com. You can also follow us through our Facebook page: "International Conference in Intercultural Studies June 2018".

At the end of this issue, you will find the registration form for the conference, which can also be downloaded in PDF format from the conference website: <https://www.icstconference.com/registration-formalites-d-inscripti>

We wish you a very good winter break!

WHAT'S NEW?

Programming

Communications - Cultural Representations of Immigration p.2-3

Registration Form p.7-8

Press Review

Immigration: When the Acadian dream turns into a nightmare p.4

Unable to find work, many Syrian refugees reluctantly turn to social assistance p.5

Immigrant parents, refugees face greater mental health challenges; kids' learning at risk p.6

Programming

In the next issues of the Conference Newsletter, we will provide a thematic presentation of the communication proposals of presenters that have been selected for the conference.

In this issue, to give you a taste of things to come, we have decided to present the communications that deal with the cultural representations of immigration in different geographical contexts and from various perspectives - media, politics, society, individual - and what they tell us about the discursive logics that underlie the construction of the Other and the projection of oneself.

Communications - Cultural Representations of Immigration

**Kheira Belhadj-Ziane, Professor -
Université du Québec en Outaouais**

Islam and Muslims in the collective imagination of the social workers in Quebec

Since the last decade, mistrust towards Muslim communities has particularly increased in Quebec. Media coverage of the attacks perpetrated by Islamic terrorist groups in Western societies, public discourse examining Islam as a social problem, or practices related to the fight against terrorism, contribute to the stigmatization of these communities by associating them with potential terrorist threats (Guibet Lafaye & Brochard, 2016, Johnson-Lafleur et al., 2016). This contributes to feeding the collective imaginations where Muslims present themselves as suspect communities of modern times (Breen-Smyth, 2014), built around symbols that evoke barbarism and archaism and favoring many amalgams between Islam and religious fundamentalism (Abdolmohammad, 2014, Parini, Gianni, & Clavien, 2012).

Through this communication, we will examine this phenomenon of imaginary construction in the context of social work by presenting the results of a study conducted with social workers in Quebec. We will see how the perennial engraving of symbols, surrounding Islam and Muslims in collective history, has produced a mythology in their discourse, that is, "an organized and coherent imaginary narrative [...] that claims to be based on a reality and a truth" (Morin, 1982, p.48-49), while it is based on elaborate images, positive or negative, which play a

role in determining the behaviors towards the people concerned by these images (Barthes, 2014). Throughout our communication, we will explore this mythology to better understand its role in the practices of social workers.

**Farrah Bérubé, Ph.D., Professor -
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
(Quebec) and codirector du GERACII**

**Vicky Girard, student - Université du
Québec à trois-Rivières (Quebec) and
student member of GERACII**

***Media coverage of Quebec terrorist
attack: pointing out the management
of cultural diversity***

On January 29th, an islamophobic terrorist attack was perpetrated in Quebec City and six Muslims were killed. In the media sphere, experts, journalists, intellectuals, politicians and even the main public quickly started to search for an explanation of this horrible act. Was it the fault of the mass media and specifically the trash radio? Was it the fault of migrants, of their integration in societies, of religious signs? Was it the fault of politicians, of management of cultural diversity, of historical identity debate in the province of Quebec, of the election of a new president in USA? Was it the fault of Quebecers, of their degree of openness? Was it the fault of international news about illegal migrations, about intercultural tensions and about terrorist attacks in major cities? This event generated on the media sphere a mixed of various views on the causes of a racist act. What was the media coverage of that story? What kind of images on migrants were projected? Which groups of actors publicly spoke out and what did they expressed? This communication presents preliminary results of a content analysis of Quebec city's press from January to March

2017. Results show that the management of cultural diversity was one of the main theme discussed in the media sphere. Also, the case of the coverage of this terrorist attack allows us to study the mediatization of intercultural tensions broadcasted all over the world and specifically when horror is the main actor.

**Nicole Gallant, Professor -
Urbanisation Culture Société Research
Centre, INRS (Quebec)**

**Johanna Cardona, student -
Urbanisation Culture Société Research
Centre, INRS**

***Hiring discrimination? Academic
reframing of the Quebec discussion on
the immigrant unemployment rates***

This communication is part of a vast research project aimed at deconstructing the way in which Quebec's relationship with immigrants is understood and analyzed, particularly the misleading amalgam that is often made between the Quebec identity and xenophobia, or even racism.

Faced with data showing higher unemployment rates among immigrants than among natives, the media and various public figures tend to blame companies (and hence Quebec in general) for racism and discrimination, generally without questioning the other factors that could potentially be involved. These charges are intensified by comparison with other Canadian provinces; the media then reflects on the description of the withdrawal of identity, as if nationalism was the only difference between Quebec and the other provinces. Yet, the unemployment rate is not in itself a measure of the level of discrimination.

By reframing both qualitative and quantitative data on the labor market integration of immigrants and natives, the communication will deal with more variables than current interprovincial comparisons. This refined academic analysis will help to qualify the ideological and normative theories behind these accusations, which hastily concluded with the discrimination in hiring, without taking into account the specific structure of Québec's economy (economy largely based on small and medium-sized enterprises) and other characteristics and retention factors of the local labor force (language characteristics, feelings of belonging), or the heterogeneous characteristics of the immigrants themselves.

**Tayeb Bouderbala, Professor -
Université de Batna1 (Algérie)**

**Moussa Zouaoui, Professor -
Université Sétif2 (Algérie)**

Illusions, fantasies and intercultural imagination among migrants

In accordance with the proposed argument, we will examine the migration issue in its intercultural, anthropological and imagological dimensions. We rely on real-life examples of migration phenomena specific to the Maghreb. From the studies and investigations that we have conducted and from an accumulation of documents relating to the press, testimonies, migrants' narratives, audiovisual documents and fictional narratives, we have been able to outline the borders of an intercultural imagination defined by fantasies, hauntings, dreams, fears, impulses and the most ambiguous and the most contradictory obsessions. It is a question of deconstructing these representations to show the anchoring, the logic, the functioning and the aporias. How does identity and otherness fit together? How do these migrants perceive the host countries, as Eldorado, as a desire and as a dream of freedom, fulfillment and resurrection? How do these dreams shift, upstream and downstream, between the impregnation of roots and the fascination about infinite horizons? We also compare the old emigration and the new migration in a differential perspective. We conclude the study by elaborating a phenomenology of interculturality in a new heuristic and epistemological perspective.

**Hedi Saïdi Professor / Researcher at
l'institut social (Université catholique
de Lille, France)**

When images and words create woes. The treatment of the irregular Maghreb immigration in the French media.

A portion of the "persons without papers" population in France is at the center of a societal, political and journalistic debate, despite their complex situation. Among the controversial and hot media themes of recent years, hosting illegal immigrants in France has become an important sociological and political issue. By making an intrusion in the audiovisual landscape and in the French political sphere, media treatment guides the political discourse, shapes the public opinion on this subject, establishes, constructs and perpetuates the representations of the Other in a political-mediatic society.

The question about the "people without papers" is not treated as a historical and economic phenomenon but seen from the angle of personal journey and adventure. As a result, the subject often shifts from the nationality of these people towards a process which consists of essentializing and naturalizing the difference in the host group/settlement facility.

This delicate context poses a problem between media, policies and "illegal immigrants" questioning how images and information about them are passed on to local citizens. Some politicians, to secure a place in the agora of politics, preferred demagoguery and simplicity instead of a serene and productive debate.

Faced with this confusing situation, we are forced to question how illegal immigration is treated by the media? How to "separate the good from the bad"? How to avoid fear and stigma? How to deconstruct the stereotypes conveyed by certain media and certain policies? How to react to "ethnic" or cultural explanations?

To write this article, we have consulted

hundreds of newspaper articles such as Libération, L'Humanité (marked on the left), Le Figaro, Le Figaro magazine (marked on the right), Le Monde (newspaper considered to be a benchmarking-setting daily), le Monde diplomatique and we watched news broadcast from TF1, M6, France 2 and France 3.

**Catherine Conrad, Geography
Professor - Saint Mary's University**

"Back-Way or Bust: Perceptions of clandestine Migration from the Gambia, West Africa"

Although Gambia is the smallest country on the African continent, per capita it ranks among the highest contributors to "illegal" (clandestine or so-called irregular) migrants who make the treacherous journey to Europe. Images of dramatic rescues and dram on the Mediterranean have flooded the international media, spreading moral panic about invasion as well as humanitarian pleas to improve the conditions of young people allegedly so desperate as to gamble their lives.

This presentation will provide an overview/summary of those who have succeeded (what were their motivations, perceptions, understandings of what they might face) as well as those who have chosen to remain at home.

Immigration: When the Acadian dream turns into a nightmare



They left everything behind and they have crossed the ocean to come live in New Brunswick. They were promised jobs, a warm welcome and a bilingual community. Promises that do not reflect the reality and which eventually forces many to leave the province.

Journalist (Author): Anaïs Brasier
Edimaster: Philippe Duclos

In October 2016, Florence and Nicolas Fizellier, from France, moved to Shippagan, where they live with their two children. They are among the 149 francophone immigrants who arrived that year. However, a year later, the dream that was sold to them turned into a nightmare for the family.

The couple wanted to take over a restaurant in Shippagan, on the Acadian Peninsula. During an exploratory trip, everyone encouraged them, points out Florence Fizellier. Residents, banks and associations: everybody had only good words for the Acadia.

"We were showed the red carpet. We were sold a province with job opportunities, bilingualism, and entrepreneurial opportunities," says Florence Fizellier.

It was only after they had moved that they were told that restaurants were not a good business to invest in and that no banks would lend them money. "So, we underwent a two-and-a-half-year application process based on an entrepreneurial perspective and, 15 days after our arrival, we are told that this is not a good niche."

Florence then tried her luck on the job market; an approach that has also proved difficult. "I sent my application to an Acadian company for a position that perfectly suited my abilities and I obtained an answer saying that they were giving preference to

Acadians."

After a year of efforts and disappointment, the young family cannot take it anymore. They have already packed their things; they are leaving for Quebec in the coming weeks. "We are leaving because we feel like we have been deceived and used. From my point of view, this exploratory trip was meant to inflate numbers relating to tourism."

The Fizellier family is not alone in this situation. Layla Saligane arrived from Morocco in March 2017 and quickly found a job at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB). "However, my husband has still not found a job in his field, finance," she says.

This is an unpleasant surprise for the couple, who had been promised a totally different situation. "New Brunswick's economic market is not the best in Canada, but we did not know when we arrived because when the province did their marketing, they said that we will be professionally satisfied."

"If my husband cannot find a job in his field, unfortunately we will have to leave. We like it here, but money needs to come in as well," says Layla Saligane.

The Importance of Networking

Efforts are being made to ensure that immigration (and immigrants) meets the needs of the labor market, says Thomas Raffy, President and CEO of the New Brunswick Economic Council (CÉNB). We need to look beyond the recruitment of the workforce abroad and focus on providing support to new immigrants and businesses alike to ensure their retention.

"Then why do the many qualified immigrants seeking employment hit a wall?"

"It's a networking problem," says Bruno Lafont, who arrived in Moncton in June 2017 with his wife and three children. Specializing in the supply of raw materials to companies, he still has not found a job.

"I was self-employed in France, so I'm used to approaching people, but I think that since it is a smaller market here, it is also a harder market to enter. There are networks of people who have known each other for years."

Kassim Doumbia, who has been here for 17 years, confirms it. He arrived from the Ivory Coast in 2000 to study at the Université de Moncton, and is now a City Councillor in Shippagan and the Chair of the Welcoming Committee for newcomers to the Acadian Peninsula.

At the end of his studies, in 2006, it was thanks to the network that he had created for himself at the University that he was able to find a job. "A friend from the Peninsula put me in touch with a company in the region who was looking for a Project Manager for international projects."

Many newcomers that he encounters are still unable to find a job without this kind of a boost. "Employers like you to come with a Canadian experience, it's a big challenge for newcomers."

Cultural Differences That Affect Companies

Still, Bruno Lafont has his Canadian experience. Before coming to New Brunswick, he worked for several months at Bombardier in Montreal. However, New Brunswick employers are scared "to take the risk" of hiring someone with a European professional culture, he says.

"I was told in interviews, about this fear, this (negative) image on cultural differences. The resistance comes from them wondering if my culture, my way of doing things will adapt to the culture here."

"This is a challenge we are currently experiencing in New Brunswick," confirms Thomas Raffy of CÉNB. Newcomers are poorly informed about how to submit a resume, to present themselves in an interview and to answer questions, he adds.

Full Article :
<http://ici.radio-canada.ca/regions/special/2017/immigration-francophone-nouveau-brunswick/>

Unable to find work, many Syrian refugees reluctantly turn to social assistance



Ragheb Alturkmani, far right, and his wife, Abir Albasha, second from left, with their teenage sons Belal, left, and Khaled, right, and daughter Heba, 9. 'We have so many people with us who have the desire to work and to be productive,' says Alturkmani, a Syrian refugee who has been unable to find work since the family arrived in Halifax. (Shaina Luck/CBC)

Biggest challenges include lack of English skills, trouble transferring foreign credentials

By Shaina Luck, CBC News Posted: Nov 12, 2017 7:00 PM AT

Ragheb Alturkmani, far right, and his wife, Abir Albasha, second from left, with their teenage sons Belal, left, and Khaled, right, and daughter Heba, 9. 'We have so many people with us who have the desire to work and to be productive,' says Alturkmani, a Syrian refugee who has been unable to find work since the family arrived in Halifax. (Shaina Luck/CBC)

Syrian refugee Ragheb Alturkmani arrived in Canada on a cloudy day on Jan. 27, 2016, unable to say a single word in English, but brimming with happiness he couldn't express.

After he and his wife moved with their young daughter and two teenage sons into the Halifax apartment that would become their home, he decided he wanted to give back to the community that had welcomed his family.

"I found myself going down, cleaning the street," Alturkmani says through an interpreter. "Here I thought I was doing good, helping people by cleaning the entrance of the building."

Alturkmani smiles as he recalls how he swept up what he thought was dirt: It turned out to be salt, put down to de-ice the sidewalk.

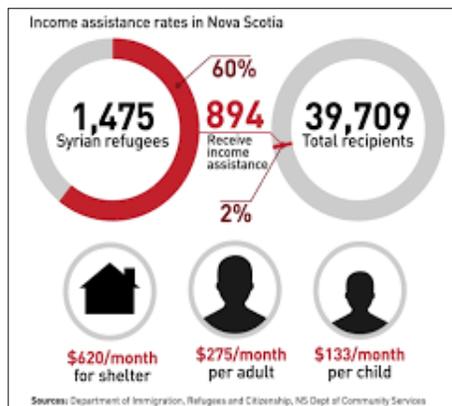
"We have so many people with us who have the desire to work and to be productive," he says.

Seeking work, finding frustration

But Alturkmani, a former school bus driver, is still out of work — and he's not the only one.

For their first year after landing in Canada, refugees are supported by either the federal government or private groups. But that support has ended for most Syrian refugees, and many of those unable to find jobs have turned to provincial social assistance.

Just shy of 1,500 Syrian refugees landed in Nova Scotia between November 2015 and July this year. Of those, more than half — 894 adults and children — were on income assistance as of late September, according to the province's Department of Community Services.



Syrian refugees represent about two per cent of the total number of Nova Scotians receiving such benefits. Income assistance in Nova Scotia

includes \$620 a month for shelter for a family of three or more, and an additional \$275 per adult and \$133 per child each month for personal expenses. Families may also qualify for the Canada child benefit program.

The problem for many refugees who haven't found work is a lack of English-language skills. Another is having Syrian work or educational credentials that aren't recognized in Canada.

The latter weighs heavily on Easa Al-Hariri, who worked as a dentist in Daraa, a city in southwestern Syria, and had a second job in health-systems management with the country's Ministry of Health. He, his wife and their four children now live in Dartmouth.

"I am very depressed," he said in an interview at his family's small townhouse. "For me, it's not just a matter of finding a job or not, to make a living. It's a matter of success or failure. This is what I think about."

"Because already we receive social assistance, actually this is for me very embarrassing," he said. "I used to help people, not people help me."

Al-Hariri is studying full time for his upcoming foreign qualification exams in Canadian dentistry. He is also studying to bring his conversational English to the required academic standard.

He feels he will soon be ready to combine studying with a part-time job. But he can't bring himself to take full-time work in a field outside dentistry, fearing that he may never return to the profession he loves.

He's willing to work under the supervision of another dentist, and suggests low-cost exam preparation courses would help — the type he has seen in other provinces.

As much as he is grateful to the Dartmouth community group that sponsored his family, Al-Hariri feels he is on a solo mission when it comes to getting his credentials recognized. Yet he is determined to succeed in his new home.

Full Article:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/syrian-refugees-struggling-social-assistance-language-barrier-1.4368833>

Immigrant parents, refugees face greater mental health challenges; kids' learning at risk



Image: A family with homemade signs prepares to welcome Syrian Refugees on Dec. 10 2015 at Toronto's Pearson International Airport. OISE research shows immigrant parents and refugees need more support.

Canadian immigrant parents, refugees, women and minorities are at greater risk of mental health issues and socioeconomic challenges, with their children more likely to suffer learning setbacks before kindergarten, a pair of studies by researchers at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto have shown.

Research findings come as the Canadian government prepares to release its 2018 immigration policy- which it says will boost the economy and help refugees.

The initial study - the first of its kind in Canada - Emotional Problems Amongst Recent Immigrants and Parenting Status, published in Public Library of Science's journal PLOS One, shows parents who are new to Canada have higher rates of depression and emotional problems than new Canadian non-parents. This finding is particularly strong among immigrants who were single, female or refugees.

In the second study, School Readiness Amongst Urban Canadian Families, published in the American Psychological Association's Journal of Educational Psychology, the children of many Canadian immigrant families were found to be behind their peers in learning and development before kindergarten. This included early reading and math knowledge, attention, and social skills.

Researchers say this is often because many recent immigrant parents are socioeconomically disadvantaged compared to the rest of the population. Many struggle to provide their children with learning opportunities before they reach school-age.

'Particularly vulnerable'

"When we look at the results of these two studies together, we can see that immigrant families are particularly vulnerable," said Dr. Dillon Browne, who led the studies during his PhD at OISE.

"Not only are the parents at higher risk for mental health issues and financial challenges, but their kids' learning development is impacted before they have even reached the classroom - this could have long-term implications," he continued. "These studies show that it's important to look at how we as a society can better support new Canadian families."

Dr. Jennifer Jenkins, Chair of Early Child Development and Education at the Atkinson Centre at OISE, said, "As a society, it is imperative that every child and every family has the opportunity to grow and thrive. This cannot happen unless there is equal opportunity for economic stability and mental health."

Depression, emotional state of Canadian immigrant parents studied

In the first study, researchers tracked the self-reported rates of emotional and mental health issues of 7,000 immigrants across Canada during their first four years in the country. Results showed Canadian immigrants had a high rate of emotional problems, with one-in-three reporting significant challenges by their second year in the country. These rates were even higher among immigrants who were parents.

"When we saw the impact on parents in particular, it prompted us to dig further - we needed to see how their kids were doing," said Dr. Browne.

At risk: Immigrant kids in Toronto

In their second study, researchers followed 500 immigrant and non-immigrant families in the Greater Toronto Area from the time a child was born until they entered school.

Results show that two-thirds of the struggling families were headed by immigrant parents living in poverty, whose children who were behind in social, emotional and academic skills by the time they began kindergarten.

"In other words, there were gaps in learning before children entered school due to the family's living circumstances after arriving in Canada" said Dr. Browne.

Full article:

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2017-10/uot-ipr102517.ph

Organizing Committee

Dr. David Bourgeois
Saint Mary's University
Department of Psychology
David.Bourgeois@smu.ca

Dr. Jean-Jacques Defert
Saint Mary's University
Department of Modern Languages
and Classics
Jean-Jacques.Defert@smu.ca

Dr. Jean Ramdé
Université Laval
Faculty of Education
jean.ramde@fse.ulaval.ca

Divesh Isuri
ICST Program Development
Assistant
Divesh.Isuri@smu.ca

Registration Form

Date of Submission:

Last Name:		First Name and Middle Name:	
Email:		Phone:	
Professional Status (Community Partner, Researcher, Student, Other)			
Academic Institution (If Applicable):		Name of Service Provider (If Applicable):	
Short Bio:			
Communication	Poster	Workshop	Roundtable
Title:			
Description / Abstract:			
Register to a Roundtable:		Roundtable 9	
Roundtable 1 Roundtable 2 Roundtable 3 Roundtable 4 Roundtable 5 Roundtable 6 Roundtable 7 Roundtable 8			
Do you wish to subscribe to our newsletter?		Yes	No

Do you intend to participate in	Yes	No
Permanent Exhibition at Pier 21 - Wednesday, June 13		
Inaugural Keynote Address + Cocktail - Wednesday evening, June 13		
Banquet - Thursday, June 14 (Additional fees will apply)		
Dinner Show - Friday, June 15 (Additional fees will apply)		

Dietary Restrictions (Vegetarian, Gluten-Free...)

List of Roundtables:

Roundtable 1: Best practices in action research

Roundtable 2: Factors facilitating the transfer and use of knowledge in an intercultural context

Roundtable 3: Refugees (integration, status, program evaluation)

Roundtable 4: Immigration and host communities (reception and inclusion policies, retention strategies)

Roundtable 5: Diagnosis and support for patients in Health Services

Roundtable 6: Multicultural education and intercultural awareness (curriculum development, teaching techniques, support services, evaluation of services)

Roundtable 7: Intercultural issues for business companies (managing multicultural teams, organization and management of processes, developing and adapting to new markets)

Roundtable 8: Immigration and integration of immigrants outside the main centres

Roundtable 9: Language and Intercultural Learning through Telecollaboration