

Small, Charles Asher. *Social Theory – A Historical Analysis of Canadian Socio-Cultural Policies, ‘Race’ and the ‘Other’: A Case Study of Social and Spatial Segregation in Montreal.* (The Hague and Portland: Eleven International Publishing, 2013), xvi + 317 pp

Canada in general, and Quebec in particular, have a very interesting, unique, and at times disturbing immigration history. Since Montreal has always received the bulk of immigrants to Quebec, it is Montreal that is the focus of Charles Asher Small's book, *Social Theory*. Montreal has always been a bilingual city (English and French) since the British takeover of Quebec in 1763, even having had an Anglophone majority from the 1830s to the 1860s, and it has absorbed waves of immigrants from all over the world. Immigrants (with the partial exception of the Irish in the 19th century) did not get acculturated to French Quebec until the passage of Bill 101 in 1977, which required new immigrants to attend French schools. On the contrary, they got acculturated to the English side, to the point that Anglophone Montreal (which had been ethnically British/Irish) has become much more multicultural over time.

It is this background that Small covers in his book. In order to build up to his case study of Montreal, Small first outlines and critically analyzes various theories behind racial segregation, including the Chicago School and especially various Marxist policies (including the role of state intervention). The Chicago School, developed by such social scientists as Robert Park in the early 20th century at the University of Chicago, has contributed much to the study of racial segregation in terms of mapping segregation patterns in a given city. It has given rise to spatial segregation indices like the index of dissimilarity, which was used to measure segregation of various ethnic groups in Montreal for this book. Nonetheless, the historical and socioeconomic context of group relations must also be taken into account, so it is not enough to use empirical segregation indices but rather to also take into account some Marxist theories. Three Marxist approaches that Small discusses in Chapter 4 are the relative autonomy model, the autonomy model (both of these models maintaining that racism is autonomous from class-based social relations to one extent or another and that it cannot be reduced to such relations), and the migrant labour model (much more classically Marxist, in which the emphasis is on the linkages between class relations and racism). In Chapter 5, Small describes Marxist approaches to state intervention in places like Canada in which the state is seen as reinforcing and perpetuating social and class inequalities and as a capitalist instrument of domination of the masses.

Small goes on, in Chapter 6, to describe the social policies of identity in Canada (from colonialism to Anglo-conformity, then to English-French biculturalism, and finally to multiculturalism). While he describes each of the first three relatively briefly, the

bulk of that chapter covers the evolution of multiculturalism since it became official Canadian policy in 1971 as a response to ambiguities regarding Others (of neither British nor French descent) in the landmark 1969 Bilingualism and Biculturalism Report. Despite all the rhetoric, the multiculturalism policy (which contrasts with the “melting pot” philosophy prevalent in the United States) was essentially a reformation of the Canadian status quo.

Quebec has interpreted multiculturalism differently, as it has emphasized preservation of its official French culture. To that end, especially since Bill 101, Quebec placed emphasis on integrating immigrant cultural communities (calling them “communautés culturelles”) while not nullifying the French culture.

In Chapter 7, Small discusses Canada’s immigration and refugee policy history, which was racist up to and including World War II regarding the admission of South Asians, Chinese, Jews, and blacks. While Small devotes a number of pages to each of these groups, including mentions of the Chinese Immigration Act, the Jews account for the highest number of pages in that chapter. Concerning the Jews, Small includes discussion of the “none is too many” policy that severely restricted the entry of Jewish refugees from Europe between 1933 and 1947 when Jews desperately needed to leave Europe because of Nazi persecution. Domestic workers have also had various degrees of difficulty in being admitted to Canada and/or staying there.

Chapter 8 is the capstone of the entire book in that it analyzes and examines racial and ethnic segregation in Montreal based on data from the Canadian Census as well as the earlier chapters concerning the theoretical frameworks and Canadian immigration history. Before the discussion of the segregation data, Small covers relatively briefly the economic development of Montreal along with the historical formation of Montreal’s population. In order to measure segregation, Census data is used for not only the index of dissimilarity (as mentioned earlier) but also the even more relevant index of segregation. People of both British and French descent are quite segregated in Montreal, and they both behave like ethnic minorities in that sense. Many other groups, like the Jews, are segregated (more so than their American counterparts, and more like African-Americans in that respect), though blacks are not as segregated in Montreal as their counterparts in the United States. In fact, Jews are the most segregated group in Montreal. Jewish segregation in Montreal can be largely ascribed to Quebec nationalism and anti-Semitism (and can be seen in relation to the relative autonomy model covered in Chapter 4), while black segregation in Montreal (to the degree that it exists) is largely due to economic factors (including the state policies mentioned in Chapter 5). A reason for the low black segregation in Montreal is that they are spread out throughout the city and they are divided between anglophone blacks and francophone blacks (the latter being largely Haitians). Also based on the Census data, Small depicts socioeconomic dissimilarity between Jews, blacks, British, French, and other groups in terms of income levels, unemployment,

occupations, education levels, and dwelling values. In general, the Jews are among the highest-performing groups in these indicators while the blacks are among the lowest-performing groups.

Interestingly, because Small considers such categories as race, racism, class, native, black, multiculturalism, and Others to be arbitrary, he puts each such label in quotation marks, so that they respectively become 'race,' 'racism,' 'class,' 'native,' 'black,' 'multiculturalism,' and 'Others.' It seems that this is because Small considers such labels to be arbitrary in nature.

It is important to note that the Census data used in this book is from the 1986 Canadian Census. The book was published in 2013 but it seems to have actually been written in the 1990s, given that the latest sources are from 1996 or so and there are a lot of sources from the 1980s and early 1990s as well as beforehand.

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