DIVERSITIES

Depicting Diversities

GUEST EDITOR: Steven Vertovec

Open Forum

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Foreword from the Editors

We are happy to present this Launching Issue of **DIVERSITIES**, a combined initiative of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity with the UNESCO's social sciences research and policy division. It carries on the work of its predecessor, **The International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)**. **DIVERSITIES** is an on-line journal publishing high quality, peer-reviewed articles concerning multiple forms of diversity. It presents new research on different kinds of social difference – including ethnicity, religion, language, gender, sexuality, disability, social status and age: how these notions are socially constructed, how they unfold in different contexts and how they are addressed in policy and practice. The journal provides a forum for discussion, debate, refinement of social theory and development of key ideas at the nexus of research and policy making. Topics and contributors represent a range of global regions.

Steven Vertovec is the Guest Editor of the first Issue of DIVERSITIES which is addressing the very way we look at social differences. In 'Depicting Diversities', a group of social scientists address the challenges of modern societies in providing space for debate on better policies on managing social, cultural and political differences. In a globalizing world, the notion of diverse societies will be ever more prominent and social scientists should not shy away from providing practical support to policy development. Theoretical reflection on the representation of diversities is essential in this respect: nothing more practical than a good theory!

We hope that the new DIVERSITIES will stimulate readers globally to engage in intellectual debate and exchange of ideas, information and research outcomes. Scholars interested in publication in the journal can write to the editors at diversities@mmg.mpg.de, or visit the website at: www.unesco.org/shs/diversities.

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Introduction: Depicting diversity

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Whether we are concerned with ethnic, religious, gender-, age-, sexuality- or disability-related diversities, social scientists, policy-makers and members of the general public tend to be conceptually confined to certain depictions of diversity. To depict something is to describe, to represent, to characterise. In so-doing – particularly surrounding something as socially, culturally and politically charged as 'diversity' – the act of depiction may serve to set or to limit a given discourse, to explore or to promote a particular theory of society, to define or to position a set of groups within a social hierarchy, and to structure or to implement a specific political agenda. Depictions of diversity arise in everyday communication; unwittingly or purposefully, they may become embodied in institutional practices and modes of national governance.

Studying depictions of diversity – their processes of production and reproduction, their effects and transformations – should be an essential task in social science and cultural studies today. Identities, human differences, social structures and patterns of inequality cannot be assumed to be of one kind: they are contextually conceived and enacted. Further research and theory is required in order to understand better the relationships between how diversities (and the groups within a varied social array) are imagined, how they related to social, economic and geographical characteristics, how such depictions reflect or influence social interactions, and how political systems of diversity governance themselves utilise or create depictions of diversity.

Within the Department of Socio-Cultural Diversity at the Max-Planck-Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, which launches the UNESCO journal *Diversities* with this special issue, this topic is approached by way of a conceptual triad of 'configurations-representations-encounters' (see Vertovec 2009). In addressing any specific global context (regardless of scale), 'configurations' refer to how diversity is measured within specific structural and demographic conditions; 'representations' includes ways in which diversity is imagined or depicted, while 'encounters' considers the means and modes by way of which diversities are actually experienced in practice and social interaction. To call this a conceptual triad is to insist that – again with respect to whatever the context being researched – each part of the triad must be understood in light of the other two. Thus, for instance with regard to the theme of this issue, to better appreciate the ways in which a certain context of diversity is depicted (here, by students within Swiss schools, among artists and anti-racists within the 1980s French political and art scene, and by Russian and British policy-makers regarding relations to Muslim organisations), one must also gain a good grasp of the demographic and political-economic context as well as the nature of everyday interactions affecting the groups who employ said depictions. Through a kind of hermeneutic circle – or

www.unesco.org/shs/diversities/vol12/issue1/art6

better, in this case, triangle, researchers can achieve a more complete view on to diversity dynamics.

Each of the articles within this special issue of *Diversities* examines a range of inter-related issues of depiction, or how the dynamics of configurations-representations-encounters have unfolded within particular arenas. The works arise through IMISCOE ('Immigration, Integration and Social Cohesion in Europe'), the Network of Excellence established under the European Commission's Sixth Framework research programme (see www.imiscoe.org). The network links some 30 research institutes and over 500 researchers across Europe. Within IMISCOE, the research cluster on cultural, religious and linguistic diversity has organised numerous streams of research, events and publications. The cluster leaders have been especially keen to promote selected work by young scholars within the network, and the authors and articles presented here have been chosen from among those presented at an IMISCOE cluster workshop on 'Understanding diversity: Theoretical and methodological challenges' held in 2009 at the Max Planck Institute in Göttingen.

Reflecting one of the key research themes within the IMISCOE cluster (see Martiniello and Lafleur 2008), Angéline Escafré-Dublet's piece on 'Art, power and protest' engages significant questions surrounding the politics of representation. The study is set in the early 1980s amid the French public debates and activities surrounding the Anti-racism movement, the mobilisation of the so-called second generation (described at the time as 'children of immigration') and the national March for Equality and Against Racism, known as the *Marche des Beurs.* Escafré-Dublet's interest concerns immigrant artistic production and its relation to the anti-racism political movement. She interrogates the contemporary debates on anti-racism alongside depictions of diversity within a particular national and historical configuration. In this study, we might say that depiction refers to art as a mode of

political expression vis-à-vis its (tokenistic?) inclusion in the art world as 'immigrant art'. A conundrum surrounding such art and expression to this day, notes Escafré-Dublet, is that 'from the point of view of immigrant activists, it is never political enough; from the point of view of immigrant artists, it is never artistic enough.'

Reflecting a Barthian approach to ethnic boundary construction, Kerstin Duemmler, Janine Dahinden and Joëlle Moret offer their study on 'Gender equality as "cultural stuff" '. And in line with Fredrik Barth's salient view, they are interested in the social organisation of cultural difference. Cultural difference – the 'stuff' of the title – is not assumed a priori, but seen to arise in the conceptual or discursive marking of boundaries in everyday inter-actions, here within Swiss schools. The authors observe in group discussions among students the reification of notions of culture, tradition and gender relations. In this way processes of group-making and group-marking are seen through discursive processes of categorisation. We are provided accounts of how young people make distinctions about attitudes to gender, how these become ethnicised and, in turn, how they create moral hierarchies and assertions of exclusion, superiority and domi-nance. Duemmler et al. provide a lucid account of the dynamics and effects of representations (of what is 'culturally different') within patterns of everyday encounter.

Finally, in Ekaterina Braginskaia's contri-bution, we are presented, as it were, with a play on two meanings of representation: as group image and as group voice. Braginskaia takes a comparative look at state roles in formulating these two senses of representation through comparative research on central state policies for the engagement of Islamic organisations in Russia and Britain. The cases comprise very different, and therefore very telling, configurations of ethnicity and religion. In Britain a broad, contemporary policy framework is framed around rhetorics of community cohesion. In Russia, policy con-

tinues a long historical legacy of politically containing national minorities. Yet both countries today temper their policies with respect to common concerns of securitisation (since now both countries have fairly recent experiences of Islamic terrorism). Respective government policies and institutes for relations with Muslim umbrella organisations show not only differential depictions of religious diversity, but also contrasting strategies for managing it. Braginskaia shows how the British government tends to delegate matters to local levels, while the Russian government favours centralisation.

Of course, questions of depiction do not just occur within schools, political movements and governments. The media, workplaces, and public spaces of many kinds give rise to myriad ways of depicting diversities. Further, in order to better reflect on the processes, functions and outcomes of various modes of depiction, social scientists must consider the ways that they themselves selectively depict how various actors and institutions practice, create and represent diversity. We all employ depictions of diversity, and the most culturally sensitive, politically productive and analytically valuable depictions will be those entailing a high degree of critical self-reflection.

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Steven Vertovec is Director of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen and Honorary Joint Professor of Sociology and Ethnology, University of Göttingen.

In the *Open Forum* of this issue, Weishan Huang discusses how culture and economics intertwine in urban re-structuring before and after the 1990 recession in New York City by using the case study of Flushing, Queens. In her article, Dorottya Nagy aims to localise China in its relation to World Christianity and vice versa, focusing on issues such as transnational communities, ecumenical understanding, contextualisation and theological pluralism. The *Open Forum* papers illuminate how we may understand complex social phenomena using a guiding principle of 'super-diversity'.

Editorial Office

Art, Power and Protest

Immigrants' Artistic Production and Political Mobilisation in France

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Abstract

The mobilisation of second generation immigrants in the early 1980s in France has often been studied from the perspective of social movements and political participation. The presence of various forms of artistic creation as crucial vehicles for the expression of this generation has also been mentioned but rarely linked to the mobilisation itself. Drawing from an investigation on artistic initiatives conducted before and after the March for Equality and Against Racism in France (also referred to as the '*Marche des Beurs*'), this paper examines issues of representation, mobilisation and strategies of appropriation as expressed through artistic creation. It argues that immigrants' artistic production contributes to the expression of minority-related demands by enabling particular interests to be represented and by challenging institutionalised interpretations of culture. It investigates the opportunity for immigrant artists to articulate minority-related demands through artistic creation and analyses the relationship between immigrant artists and cultural institutions.

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Introduction

The political mobilisation of first and second generation immigrants has often been studied from the perspective of social movements and political participation (Siméant 1998; Wihtol de Wenden 1988). In the French context, authors have argued that the general distrust of particular interests has forced immigrant groups to articulate their claims alongside labour movements and, as a result, to keep ethnic forms of expression and cultural practices in the private sphere (Rainhorn 2005; Schnapper 1974). However, this approach overlooks the fact that immigrants employ cultural means of expression to voice their specific experience. For instance, in the 1970s, immigrant activists used artistic forms of expression – in particular street theatre – to address the specific issues

they faced, in terms of living conditions but also in terms of identity construction and discrimination (Escafré-Dublet 2008c, 2009). This paper examines the contribution of immigrant artists to the political mobilisation of second generation immigrants in the early 1980s. It takes the example of the 1983 March for Equality and Against Racism and links this political event to an exhibition which took place subsequently in the Centre Georges Pompidou, 'The Children of Immigration' (January to April 1984). It contributes to the discussion on artistic practices as forms of political expression (Martiniello and Lafleur 2008) and shows how artistic production was used to address minority issues in France in the 1980s.

The specific context of the 1980s in France provides an interesting backdrop to explore the

relationship between immigrant artistic production, political mobilisation and government politics. In the autumn of 1983, a group of young people marched across France to claim their right to equal treatment and to protest against an increase in racist crimes. What was announced as the March for Equality and Against Racism was soon to be called the March of the *Beurs*, (*Beur* being the slang word for Arabs adopted by second generation immigrants of North African descent in the early 1980s). The march succeeded in raising awareness of the issues related to second generation immigrants in France, and in attracting political and media attention, and this aspect has been discussed elsewhere (Battegay and Boubeker 1993; Leveau and Wihtol de Wenden 2001). The purpose of this paper is to analyse the role of various forms of artistic expression in supporting the movement and in representing the second generation of immigrants in France. Emerging artists of immigrant descent were driven by the need to express issues pertaining to their generation. At the same time, activists found a medium to voice their demands through artistic production (music, visual arts, cinema, novels or comic strips).

The paper examines the reaction of policy makers and administrative officials to the emergence of an artistic scene in connection with the movement. Elements of a *Beur* culture have often been mentioned in the literature while little attention has been given to its politics and its relationship with state-sponsored culture (Hargreaves 1994; Silverstein 2005). Yet, in the context of 1980s France, politicians and project managers in the Ministry of Culture played an important part in promoting second generation immigrants' artistic production. What were their assessment criteria and to what extent was this a form of acknowledgement of their artistic contribution? Young artists' acceptance by the established group is one crucial element in the analysis of artistic fields (Bourdieu 1992). This paper

contributes to this discussion and explores how being an immigrant artist adds to the challenge of meeting the expectation of the established group.

The documents this article is based on were selected to give different points of view on the events described and to highlight the specificity of the artist's viewpoint. It draws upon working documents of the administration, a video of a meeting between *Beur* artists and project managers at the Ministry of Culture in the wake of the March, and interviews with artists and administrative officials.[1] It explores the point of view on immigrant cultural production from ministers, administrative officials, curators and artists.

Two further points should be clarified in this introduction. First, being a second generation immigrant in the early 1980s meant being born of immigrant parents who had arrived in France during the mass immigration of the post-war period. It meant that those parents were from former colonial countries - mainly Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, but not exclusively. Portuguese migrants represented a major share of the post-war inflow. In 1974, 16.9 percent of immigrants were Portuguese and 14.3 percent were Algerians.[2] However, the expression 'second generation immigrants' tends to refer mainly to people of non-European descent. This can be explained by the racial construction of the Other in society and the clear divide that has long existed between European and non-European migrants (Blanchard et al. 2005). In the early 1980s, the young people who looked different from the rest of French society were those of North African descent. Ultimately, this leads to a focus on immigrant cultural production in the 1980s from the perspective of the *Beur* generation, while questioning how this

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[1] All materials were collected during fieldwork conducted for a PhD dissertation in modern history, Escafré-Dublet 2008a.
[2] National Census of 1974, Source: INSEE (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies).

particular group of people was brought to the forefront and why.

Second, the demonstration requires that a distinction be made between two meanings of the word culture. On the one hand, the tradition of the Ministry of Culture has established a meaning of culture restricted to its artistic component. When created by Charles De Gaulle in 1959, the Ministry of Culture was headed by French writer André Malraux and, since then, its activities have ranged from maintaining the French artistic heritage to supporting artistic production and performances in music, dance or theatre (Lebovics 1999). On the other hand, when second generation immigrants went on a march to ask for equal treatment and the acknowledgement of the multicultural component of society, their claim was cultural from an anthropological point of view. Their demand covered a broader definition of culture that encompasses the various systems of signs and symbols that give meaning to a group. It implied that they were asking to be acknowledged for their own contribution to the national community. The issue with immigrant cultural production in this paper lies in the tension between these two meanings given to the word culture: when immigrants' cultures are considered for their artistic component, and when the issue concerns their place in the national community.

The paper argues that immigrants' artistic production contributes to the expression of minority-related demands by enabling particular interests to be represented and by challenging institutionalised interpretations of culture. It is divided into three parts. First, it examines the artistic scene surrounding the French "*Beur* movement" in the 1980s and the connection between artists and militants. Second, it investigates the opportunity for immigrant artists to articulate minority-related demands through artistic creation. Third, it addresses issues of representation through artistic creation and relationships between

immigrant art and an institutionalised state-funded type of culture.

The Artistic Scene around the March of the Beurs

It has often been argued that the March for Equality and Against Racism was cultural in the sense that the marchers were asking for recognition of the multicultural character of French society and therefore referring to the anthropological meaning of the word culture. This was pointed out by Secretary of State for Immigrant Workers Georgina Dufoix at the time, and it is still her point of view on the event.[3] However, I argue that the March was also cultural in the artistic sense of the word, because it was associated with a counter culture and it shed light on an emerging artistic scene. After describing the mobilisation itself, I will analyse the marchers' choices in terms of protest culture and the components of the counter culture associated with the event.

The March for Equality and Against Racism

The mobilisation itself was rooted in the context of insecurity plaguing the life of second generation immigrants at the turn of the 1980s. Numerous racist crimes took place in the summer of 1983 and the event which sparked the March was linked, in particular, to the difficult relationship between the police and young people living in neglected areas of big cities: while the police were patrolling a group of housing projects on the outskirts of Lyon - the 'Les Minguettes' neighbourhood - a young boy was bitten by a police dog. In reaction to this, a young man named Toumi Djaïdja confronted the policeman. A 20-year-old son of a *Harki*[4], Toumi Djaïdja was the

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[3] *Libération* December 4 1983, and interview by the author with Georgina Dufoix, 12 September 2006.
[4] Harki refers to the French Muslims who enrolled in the French army during the Algerian war of independence (Hamoumou 1994).

founder and president of the local association *SOS Minguettes*. During his altercation with the policeman a shot was fired, injuring the young man.[5] Toumi Djaïdja was then taken to hospital, where he stayed for a few days and was visited by his fellow association members. On the advice of Father Delorme, a local priest involved in the association *CIMADE*[6], the group of young people decided to launch a march that would cross the country, from the south of France (Marseille) to Paris.

When the 'marchers' arrived in Paris, thousands of people gathered at the Place de la Bastille. Such a successful mobilisation was by no means guaranteed from the outset, considering how the project started. The marchers had set out as a small group of people, leaving the city of Marseille on 15 October 1983. Even though they could count on the support of local socialist party units in their trek across the country, they could only really rely on the solidarity of local immigrant associations in terms of food and accommodation.[7] However, they managed to arouse the sympathy of the population they encountered on their way, and when they were nearing the capital, a number of senior political officials came to meet them: the Secretary of State for Immigrant workers, Georgina Dufoix, on 20 November in Strasbourg; the Minister of Culture, Jack Lang, on 29 November; and the Minister of Social Affairs, Pierre Bérégovoy, on 1 December. Upon their arrival in Paris, a delegation of marchers was invited to meet the President of the Republic, François Mitterrand. When the marchers walked out of the Presidential Palace, they had received a promise that foreigners would be granted a residence permit of up to 10 years, which had been a long-standing demand of immigrant associations and was therefore a major political achievement (Weil 2005).

The Choice of a Specific Protest Culture: the Reference to the Civil Rights Movement

The young activists adopted a form of protest culture that emphasised their political demands. They chose to organise a march instead of a demonstration and in doing so made explicit reference to the Civil Rights Movement and the March on Washington of 1963.[8] It was a strong break in terms of protest culture, in comparison with the form of mobilisation chosen by immigrant groups during the previous decade. In the 1970s, immigrants who fought for foreign workers' rights mobilised along the same line as the labour movement in France; they organised street demonstrations, following the call of various immigrant workers' associations (Siméant 1998). In addition to this, protest was focused around the rights of non-citizens, whereas the young activists were French citizens and their demands were framed in terms of equal treatment and anti-racism. The Civil Rights Movement in the United States had managed to put an end to a discriminatory regime, the segregation system of the southern states (McAdam 1999). In their attempt to establish a link with the struggle against segregation, the young activists placed the spotlight on the discriminatory regime of which they considered themselves to be victims.

Moreover, it can be argued that such a choice underlines the transition from the popular figure of the immigrant worker, born in a foreign country, to that of the second generations whose skin colour made them *look* different to the rest of the French population.

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[5] The description of the events appears as such in Robert Marmoz, 'Tout a commencé aux Minguettes', *Libération,* December 3 1983.
[6] CIMADE (Committee in aid of evacuees) is a charity organisation founded in 1939 supporting foreigners' rights, see: www.cimade.org.
[7] Source: media coverage of the event, for instance, *Libération,* 3 December 1983.

[8] The decision is explicitly stated in the flyer announcing the event. Flyer included in a memo by Christian N'Guyen to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 25 November 1983 (Archives of Patrick Weil, box number 51).

The use of a different protest culture highlights both the change in demands and in the activists themselves. However, it is important to note that the break with the previous generation of immigrants was presented as such by the media but not necessarily intended this way by the young activists. It is true that the second generation was less concerned with workers' rights (some of them were actually unemployed) and also less organised along national lines (the immigrants workers' movement comprised a loosely linked group of associations: the Moroccan Association, the Algerian Committee, the General Union of Senegalese Workers, etc). Yet, the young activist Saliha Amara was reported stating: 'It is precisely because our parents fought during the Algerian War that we are what we are' (Polac 1991; see also Mara 2006). It can even be argued that the media downplayed the link with the anti-colonial struggle that still embodied the workers' movement of the 1970s and rather emphasised the new framework referring to the Black Movement. The left wing newspaper *Libération* produced headlines such as 'Beur is Beautiful' (2 December 1983). However, in their attempt to denounce discrimination and claim their right to equal treatment, the young activists who started the March were also denouncing their treatment as second-class citizens, which echoed the anti-colonial claim. There was continuity in the struggle. The major change was rather on the focus of the protest, from foreigners' rights to antidiscrimination, and this was highlighted by the change in protest culture.

A Political and Cultural Movement: Emergence of a Counterculture During and After the Protest

Elements of a youth counterculture gave a specific tone to the protest. In the description of the marchers, the image of young men or women walking along with their headphones over their ears was a recurrent theme in the newspapers and media, along with the idea

that these young people were part of a larger youth culture, involving portable cassette players and rock music. Accounts of the parties that took place in the public areas where they found refuge always mentioned rock music. Finally, when the marchers reached Paris, a concert featured the Lyon-based rock band, *Carte de Séjour* and its lead singer Rachid Taha.[9] The very name of the band – Residence Permit – appealed to the political aspirations of the marchers and the members of the band were also young people of North African descent.

Moreover, the work of some young artists, writers and filmmakers reached wider attention because it tied in with the March. For example, the newspaper *Libération* published a cartoon by Farid Boudjellal to illustrate the 'identity crisis' that all the *Beurs* were likely to experience, i.e. difficult relationships with their parents and the contrast between traditional family values and the challenge of a post-industrial society. Farid Boudjellal was already working as a cartoonist before the March, but his work drew increasing interest, and in a sense, became more meaningful after the event.

With the March for Equality and Against Racism, a number of second generation immigrant artists came to light. For instance, on 9 December 1983, the Ministry of Culture organised a meeting with *Beur* artists and activists to ask for their reactions to the event. Upon closer investigation of the Ministry of Culture's work, it is not surprising that a number of officials and project managers were familiar with this generation of artists.[10] This

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[9] *Carte de Séjour* (Residence Permit) was created in 1983 in Lyon. It became famous with a cover version of Charles Trenet's song *Douce France* in 1986. Rachid Taha later pursued a solo career.

[10] Drawn from the archives of the Ministry of Culture and, more precisely, of the Fund for Cultural Intervention (FIC), a department of the ministry in charge of finding and funding cutting-edge projects in terms of innovation and outreach

should be placed in the specific context of the early 1980s, when Jack Lang was appointed Minister of Culture in the new socialist government, with a larger budget than his predecessors and the mission to increase the scope of its activities from high-brow culture to more popular forms of culture such as rock music, cartoons and street art (Looseley 1999). Yet, the event clearly made the work of these artists politically relevant to the ministry officials.

The Power of Art: Connecting the Movement

The second part of this paper analyses the reaction of second generation immigrant artists to the political mobilisation of the March and evaluates how they aimed to 'represent' the concern of their generation through their work.[11] To this end, I will use the material collected during a meeting organised by the Ministry of Culture on the wake of the March, in its audiovisual and printed versions.[12] I will use the concept of 'generation' to argue that beyond its essential function to give identity to a group, the artistic scene of the early 1980s had political implications: it gave a sense of affinity to the movement and enabled participants to identify with a *cause*.

Searching for commonality: the issue of nationality

At first glance, it is striking that the artists invited by the Ministry of Culture to meet together six days after the March should have contrasting attitudes towards their formal membership of a second generation of immigrants.[13] According to Karim Kacel, he only 'discovered' that he was a 'second generation immigrant' when his album was released and journalists interviewed him as such. In contrast, Mehdi Charef recalls striving to reflect accurately the experience of his generation, with the language of the street, using short dialogues and without trying to justify the actions of his characters. In terms of a strategy of identity, these artists did not all share the same feelings either. On the one hand, Hamoud Graïa explains that before he managed to enter Patrice Chéreau's theatre company, he always refused to play the role of the typical Arab person, even though he made a point of applying to the *Conservatoire* with his 'Algerian papers'. On the other hand, Smaïn thinks that talent has no race and he agrees to play the role of a typical Arab person because he thinks that if he is good, people will forget he has 'curly hair'.

The issue of cultural ascription and the normative expectations of the audience are also pervasive in their discourse. Even though only a few of them were able to visit the country their parents left in order to settle in France, in the eyes of the audience they are associated with foreign artists. In the documentary, a journalist asks Mehdi Charef whether he feels torn about writing in French and refers to Kateb Yassin who used to complain that he *had to* write in French to make himself heard. Kateb Yassin was born in Algeria in 1929 and educated in both

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(e.g. projects targeting rural audiences, disabled persons or immigrants).

[11] For an analysis of the content of their work, see Hargreaves 1994 and Silverstein 2005.

[12] Video footage of the debate on 9 December 1983: 'Jeunesse en quête d'une culture, les beurs prennent la parole', directed by Ali Akika, Centre for Contemporary Archives, National Archives, Fontainebleau, Number 1987 0737, article 10. In addition, the staff of the FIC also published an account of the meeting in the *Cahiers FIC* available at the Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Culture.

[13] The guest artists included Mehdi Charef, who had just published a book on the life of two young men, Patrick and Madjid, growing up in the suburbs of Paris (Charef 1983); Smaïn, who had started out as an actor and was touring as a stand-up comedian; Karim Kacel, who had just released the album *Banlieue* with a song about the life in the suburbs (1982); Hamou Graïa, who was a theatre actor; and Rachid Khimoune, a visual artist. All of them pursued a career in their respective field and are acknowledged artists today.

languages. In the late 1950s, he became famous among avant-garde intellectuals in Paris for his works of poetry in French. Kateb Yassin and Mehdi Charef have two very different backgrounds. As Mehdi Charef explains in the documentary, he learned Arabic from his mother and only knows it in its spoken form; French is the only language in which he can write. However, in the eyes of the journalist, the two writers share similar traits. The experience of the visual artist Rachid Khimoune is similar in the sense that he used elements of calligraphy in his work because he felt that, as an artist with an Algerian background, he was expected to do so. And yet, he decided to use them for their aesthetic quality without paying attention to their meaning. According to him, artists, 'should they be English, American Japanese or Senegalese, are primarily concerned with aesthetics'.[14] These successive experiences tend to cause artists to reject their membership in a specific group, apart from that of the artistic community.

However, upon closer examination, the issue of nationality appears central to the thinking of these artists, and we observe the expression of a specific concern and how it translates into the different realms of politics and arts. In the discussion, Hamou Graïa explains that he made a point in applying to the *Conservatoire* with his 'Algerian papers'. And yet, he does also have 'French papers'. As for Smaïn, he mentions being willing to hold both nationalities (French and Algerian). Indeed, nationality was a burning issue at the beginning of the 1980s. Children born in France to Algerian parents born in Algeria when it was a French colony were French by virtue of the double *jus soli* (Weil 2008). And yet, for children of Algerian immigrants, French nationality could be considered as a betrayal of their parents' fight for the independence of

Algeria.[15] This issue is also reflected in the film Mehdi Charef later directed entitled *Le Thé au Harem d'Archimède*. In addition to the story of the book, he included a scene during which the young Majid meets with a counsellor in the unemployment agency (Charef 1985). The latter recommends that he takes French nationality to be able to apply for an apprenticeship. Madjid refuses, and later on in the film his mother runs after him accusing him of being lazy and not working, to which he answers he could very well work if he took French nationality. Hearing these words, Majid's mother becomes angry and shouts at him: 'Never, do you hear me? You will never take French nationality!' This issue was central for the marchers. In an interview for the newspaper *Libération*, one of them, Rachida, elaborates on the issue and explains that she would not take French nationality even if it makes things complicated to find a job because she would consider it a betrayal.[16]

Connecting the Movement

When looking at the issue of nationality, we observe the successive contributions of activists and artists to the expression of one specific issue pertaining to second generation immigrants. However, more than the mere 'illustration' of a common experience, I argue that activists relied on artists and their work to provide credentials for their mobilisation and give identity to the movement. A discussion between writer Mehdi Charef and activist Magid Benbouriche, shows that the artistic component was part of Benbouriche's political strategy. When Mehdi Charef acknowledges that he did not formally take part in the mobilisation ('I saw the March from the other side, I did not take to the streets') and adds

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[14] Interview by the author with Rachid Khimoune, Aubervilliers, 16 June 2003.

[15] On Algerians' difficulties in admitting to having 'French papers', see Abdelmalek Sayad, *The Suffering of the Immigrant,* Cambridge, Polity Press, 2004.

[16] 'Rachida ou le féminin de beur', *Libération,* 4 December 1983.

that it is better when activists or community leaders 'show the way', Magid Benbouriche answers: 'The work that [Mehdi Charef] did with his book reflects our experience in French society. It is our task, as community organisers, to interpret his work.'[17] Mehdi Charef and Magid Benbouriche suggest a form of 'task distribution' between the work of the artist and the mobilisation of the activists; although each of them uses different tools, both have the same collective objective to bear witness and change the living conditions of second generation immigrants.

The artistic component was part of the mobilisation because it helped create a feeling among young people that they were facing a 'generational issue'. When social scientists mention 'second generations', they refer to the demographic meaning of the word generation. The 'second generations' are the children of the newcomers. In the study of immigrant processes and adaptation, this term refers specifically to various experiences such as acculturation, ethnic construction and integration (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). However, in the early 1980s, journalists and politicians used the term 'second generation' to refer to a specific group of young people of North African descent, who grew up in neglected areas and who encountered discrimination (particularly on the job market). Arguably, many second generation immigrants felt uncomfortable to be associated with a group of people that they did not necessarily identify with - more specifically second generation Portuguese immigrants who felt their specific experience was not being addressed.

However, in line with Mannheim's theory of generation, which differentiates between *generational sites* and *generational units,* it can be stated that second generation immigrants shared a common *generational site* (being in their early 20s and having immigrant

parents), but the March opened their eyes to their common destiny and to their membership of a *generational unit.* According to Mannheim, g*eneration units* 'are characterised by the fact that they do not merely involve a loose participation by a number of individuals differently, but an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with and are formed by their common experiences' (Mannheim 1990: 62). It can be argued that art was the element that contributed to the 'affinity' in the way second generation immigrants experienced the early 1980s in France.

A *Beur* movement existed thanks to the combination of a mobilisation for the equal treatment of second generation immigrants, predominantly of North African descent, and the cultural production that echoed the cause. Most likely, the *Beurs* represented the tip of the iceberg; their demands and their profile did not accurately represent the rest of their cohort. However, a combination of factors such as political mobilisation and artistic production connected a generation of young people in a way that gave context to the expression '*Beur* movement' or '*Beur* generation'.

The Art of Power: Strategies of Appropriation

The paper now turns to the perspective of a cultural institution - the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris - and analyses how it 'represented' the contribution of immigration through the 'Children of Immigration' exhibition (January – April 1984). The initial project was to showcase the cultural contribution of immigrants to society. However, the context of the March gave it a political tone and led to various strategies of appropriation on the part of politicians and activists. The example of this exhibition provides a means to analyse issues of rating and evaluation by an institution of higher culture when it comes to the promotion of

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[17] Quotation from video footage of the 9 December 1983 debate: "Jeunesse en quête d'une culture…", *op.cit.*

emerging forms of art. I will argue that the institution subordinated its criteria to the symbolic dimension of immigrant arts and in doing so denied full legitimacy to their artistic contribution. While some of these artists eventually managed to break through, this example demonstrates the difficulty of representing particular experiences in a Universalist context.

The Organisation of the "Children of Immigration" Exhibition

The project was initiated some time before the March, but the exhibition happened to be scheduled to take place right after (January - April 1984). It featured artists with an immigrant background and a large number of cultural associations were invited to come and share their experiences through videos, live performances and music (Baux and Chapelle 1984).

From the outset, the very fact that the Centre for Industrial Creation initiated the project shows that its aim was both symbolic and artistic. The Centre was created in 1969 to provide exhibitions on design, the living environment and urbanism, and aimed to initiate a reflection on people's lives and their relationship with their surroundings. It was meant to 'bring to light the forms that shape our daily life and make sure that the aesthetic and functional value of objects becomes a major preoccupation for manufacturers' (Centre Georges Pompidou 1985). In February 1982, the department's head, Paul Blanquart, was an urban sociologist who wanted to explore not only the aesthetics of the urban environment but also its social component. With this in mind, he decided to launch an exhibition on the cultural contribution of second generation immigrants in French society. His approach was that of a social scientist. He aimed to explore social practices and their impact in terms of cultural transformation. He was also in line with the new approach adopted by the Ministry of

Culture; in search of innovation and looking at the creative power of a new generation.

Josée Chapelle was appointed curator for the exhibition in 1983. With Veronique Baux, assistant curator, they started to scan the field of immigrant initiatives, in search of innovative projects. In an interview, Josée Chapelle placed emphasis on their decision to search for activities outside the usual official paths.[18] Yet, looking at the artists who took part in the exhibition, it is clear that the sculptor Rachid Khimoune or the writer Mehdi Charef were already in contact with the institution, that is, the Ministry of Culture (cf. their participation in the debate described above). However, when discussing this matter with Josée Chapelle, it appeared that she meant the usual official organisations which promoted immigrants' culture of origin. Indeed, the preservation of immigrants' cultural links with their culture of origin was the target of numerous organisations mandated by sending states, such as the *Amicale des Algériens* or the *Amicale des commerçants et travailleurs marocains*. These organisations were not spontaneous initiatives arising from the immigrant community, but rather nationalistic political structures that foreign governments initiated to maintain migrants' loyalty to the national ideology of the new independent countries such as Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia or Senegal. It is not clear whether these kinds of organisations had a real impact on immigrants' cultural life. However, they had been the main contact organisations for French officials in their attempt to act upon immigrants' cultural life in the previous decade (Escafre-Dublet 2008b). In her attempt to collect innovative artistic work, Josée Chapelle clearly sought to move away from the official line of the emigration states.

The organisation of the exhibition encountered obstacles that demonstrate the complexity and the political potential of such

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[18] Interview by the author with Josée Chapelle, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 20 May 2003.

an event. Although Josée Chapelle and Veronique Baux had been working on the exhibition for a few months, the director of the Centre for Industrial Creation decided to stop the project, arguing that it would cost too much. It was true that the organisation of the exhibition included the funding of costly community projects. However, according to Josée Chapelle, the more likely reason was that the director was afraid of too strong a political mobilisation around this exhibition. Eventually, the curators and artists, who were already involved in the project, lobbied the ministry of Culture and the Social Action Fund (an administrative unit under the supervision of the Secretary of State for Immigrant Workers) and obtained some more funding.[19] The exhibition did open in January 1984, and is an interesting *locus* to examine the strategies of appropriation of both activists and political officials.

The Symbolic Dimension for the Socialist Government

The Minister of Culture Jack Lang, together with Secretary of State for Immigrant Workers Georgina Dufoix, opened the exhibition on 8 January 1984; a premiere for an exhibition featuring immigrant art, and not something that was usual for the Centre George Pompidou, either. In their speeches, both made the link with the March and announced more funding for immigrant cultural production in the future. From the viewpoint of government politics, it was clear that ministers had to show that they stood side by side with the young 'children of immigration' and not against them. When the marchers reached the Place de la Bastille on December 3 1983, Georgina Dufoix had tried to make a speech announcing new legal sanctions against racist

acts but had faced the whistles of the crowd gathered in front of her. This had been later explained by young activists as a sign that their support should not be taken for granted by the government even though their political positioning was clearly on the left.[20] With her presence at the opening of a show at the Centre Georges Pompidou – a field of activity slightly outside the scope of her responsibility – Georgina Dufoix demonstrated that she was open to the various forms of expression that the second generation of immigrants decided to chose, should it be politics or art.

From the viewpoint of French cultural policies, Jack Lang was there to show that the Ministry of Culture was ready to consider immigrants' art for its artistic value, to recognise its quality, and beyond that, to acknowledge its legitimacy. In this sense, Jack Lang's visit to the marchers, and later on, his presence at the opening of the Pompidou exhibition, indicated that the Ministry of Culture intended to make immigrant cultural production a new area of intervention and expertise.

This has to be placed in the context of the relationship between France and the governments of certain emigration countries. As mentioned above, it was considered that immigrants' cultural life was the exclusive domain of their government of origin. Regarding second generation immigrants, the French government could claim a right to address their cultural needs by virtue of the fact that they would become French nationals at the age of 18. However, in the specific context of Franco-Algerian political relations, this was a highly sensitive matter. In 1983, the French government was in the process of re-negotiating agreements with Algeria, and the Algerian government proved touchy on the topic of second generation Algerian immigrants growing up in France. The Algerian official line was to condemn the 'de-culturation' or the

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[19] 360 000 francs from the Ministry of Culture and 150 000 francs from the Social Action Fund, i.e. 52 percent of the total budget for the exhibition. From a document found in the archives of the Centre Georges Pompidou, 1984.

[20] *Libération,* 6 December 1983.

French 'cultural invasion' of their identity.[21] Against this backdrop, the Algerian government looked unfavourably upon Jack Lang's visit to the marchers and the prospect that second generation Algerian immigrants could become the target of French cultural politics.[22] The fact that the Minister of Culture opened the exhibition proved symbolic in the sense that he acknowledged the second generation's artistic contribution but also indicated that he intended to make it an area of intervention, which was a new political approach to second generation immigrants' cultural life.

The Political Potential for Immigrant Political Activists

The immigrant militant scene was also quick to recognise the political potential of the event. The newly formed IM'media agency took part in the project and seized the opportunity of the exhibition to criticise the institution and government politics. IM'media was created in 1983 out of the 'mobilisation of twenty or so young immigrants living in several French cities with the objective of participating in the production of information about young people living in disadvantaged areas and of combating the general distrust between young people and journalists'.[23] IM'média connected a network of associations in France, from which a number of video montages were selected and featured in the exhibition.

However, upon closer investigation of the funding application of IM'média to the Social Action Fund, it appears that Samir Abdallah, former founder of immigrant newspaper *Sans Frontière,* was part of the project, along with Paulo Moreira, who worked on *Mosaïque* (a TV show about immigrants' life in France). Not just initiated by 'twenty or so young immigrants', it was rather the case that some experienced activists in the field of immigration news decided to connect various emerging associations into a network for the promotion of information on young immigrants. During the exhibition, IM'média issued a magazine describing the event and criticising the content for not sufficiently addressing issues relating to second generation immigrants' life in France.[24] In an article entitled 'Cultural New Deal' ('New Deal culturel') they criticised the institutional 'grip' of the Centre Georges Pompidou on the content of the exhibition. In doing so, IM'media maintained a traditional form of political opposition to the institution when it comes to immigrant cultural production. In the 1970s, the government had also resorted to cultural means to support its return policy (organisation of a theatre festival entitled *Le Printemps des Peuples Présents*, for instance). Even though the change in political orientation was strong between the two periods, the activists demonstrated that they could still exert oppositional pressure.

The Challenge of Representing Immigration

From the viewpoint of the second generation immigrant artists participating in the show, the issue lies in the tension between the acknowledgement of their work for their immigrant background and not for its artistic value. The primary focus of the exhibition being to *acknowledge* the cultural contribution of second generation immigrants, the artistic quality of the work was not the priority for the curators of the show. According to Josée Chapelle, their aim was to state that second

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[21] 'De-culturation' was mentioned in the notes of the first conference on French emigration organised by the Algerian government in Algiers (February 1973); 'cultural invasion' was mentioned in a letter sent from the French ambassador in Algeria to the foreign ministry in France (20 May 1984).

[22] Notes included in the working documents of Secretary of State Georgina Dufoix, 20 May 1984.

[23] Funding application from IM'média found in the Notes from the Administrative Board of the Social Action Fund, 19 January 1984.

[24] M'Media, "Le New Deal culturel à Beaubourg", *Bulletin de l'agence IM'Media,* 18 January to 23 April 1984, Paris: Agence IM'Media. Archives of the Centre national d'art et de culture, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France.

generation self-expression existed, 'here it is'.[25] Therefore, the show featured works from both professional and amateur artists presented side by side. For the show, curators had commissioned works by artists such as the sculptor Mohand Amara, the artist Mehdi Lallaoui, the photographer Joseph Marando and visual artist Rachid Khimoune. Their works were displayed among various projects initiated by community organisations: a video montage from a group of young people from Montbéliard, some pencil drawings and some poems from another group. According to Khimoune, when he came to install his work, he found himself among young people who 'did not know what they were doing'[26] and to him, they contrasted with artists like him; he had studied at the Beaux Arts and was trying to start a professional career (by then, he had had a number of solo and group shows, cf. Khimoune 2001). Khimoune had been involved in the support committee to maintain the exhibition when Paul Blanquart had called for its halt, and before the exhibition opened, he met with Jack Lang and other artists at the Ministry of Culture. There is no denying that having his work on display at the Centre Georges Pompidou was an important stage in his career. However, Khimoune expressed a feeling of frustration by pointing out the difference between his work and some other pieces of the show. That the artist owed his participation in a collective exhibition at one of the country's major artistic institutions to his immigrant origin was problematic. 'I would rather have my work featured in an exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou because of its value and not because my parents were immigrants'.[27] Organising an exhibition on the

grounds that immigrant contribution has to be *recognised* may have led the curators to lower their standards of selection, therefore creating frustration among some artists.

The question of artistic quality and the issue of creating a double standard of selection have to be viewed from the perspective of the Ministry of Culture's mandate. When created in 1959, the ministry's role was to make accessible humanity's greatest masterpieces (as stated in the founding decree of 24 July 1959). From the outset, the work of the ministry was to select and promote works of art under certain artistic criteria that made them likely to be considered as masterpieces. Along with the task of managing museums and other artistic institutions, the administrative officials in the Ministry of Culture assumed the role of art critics. The question of artistic quality became a matter of great importance and, in the case of the Children of Immigration exhibition, creating a double standard of selection was a way to deny the fundamental right of each individual to be treated equally. French Universalism leaves few options to artistic institutions other than to apply a form of double standard when it comes to making room for symbolic forms of representation. The system lacks fluidity in accepting representative forms of art, such as minority art or forms of creative expression created by marginal groups. This comes from the original mandate of the Ministry of Culture that was to avoid the promotion of amateur and regional forms of expression in the context of the country's reconstruction after the Second World War. However, this central element to French cultural politics creates a major obstacle to the recognition of immigrants' contribution to the national culture.

Finally, in their attempt to display the cultural contribution of second generation immigrants, the organisers of the show also wanted to create a space for lively debate and

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[25] Interview by the author with Josée Chapelle, 20 May 2003.
[26] Interview by the author with Rachid Khimoune, Aubervilliers, 16 June 2003.
[27] While his father had arrived from Algeria in 1946, Rachid Khimoune was born in France and grew up in the South West. When he was a teenager, he moved to Aubervilliers, in the Paris

region, with his parents. He now lives and works in Aubervilliers.

to bring together immigrant cultural productions with different origins (Algerians, Portuguese, Caribbean, etc.). For instance, images of Portuguese rock bands were on display side by side with African jazz dancers; performances in the amphitheatre featured music from the Caribbean on one night, North African theatre the following night and African dancers the day after. Yet, during an interview with a young girl from Montbéliard who worked with artist Antoine de Bary on an art piece about girls of North African descent and their relationship with tradition, it was clear that the time she spent in the exhibition was devoted to making contact with fellow second generation immigrants of North African descent.[28] This could easily be explained by the higher proportion of works produced by artists with a North African background in the exhibition, which reflected their proportion in the French population (in 1982: 14.8 percent of immigrants were Algerians; 9.1 percent were Moroccan, 5 percent were Tunisians and 15,8 percent were Portuguese).

However, transnational studies also demonstrate that the primary focus of immigrants and their children is to negotiate their cultural affiliations with both the host society and their culture of origin. It is therefore questionable that this would allow room for meeting with different cultures in the host society. That strategy is a convenient choice for the advocates of a melting pot in which all cultures come together. The organisation of the exhibition reflects this ideological principle: that all immigrant cultures should meet and demonstrate their integration into the French culture. However, this does not always match the various interests at stake, and primarily conflicts with the fact that identity construction happens at the individual level and that institutions can hardly direct the process.

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[28] Participant in the show interviewed by the author, Paris, 12 June 2003.

Conclusion

That immigrants' protests are cultural *per se* is reflected in the use of cultural production during and after a political mobilisation such as the March for Equality and Against Racism. Moreover, because the March had brought *Beurs* into the spotlight, and even more so, because the expression of immigrant-related diversity was politically challenging in the French context, the exhibition which opened in the Pompidou centre a month later raised a number of issues. It revealed the political symbolism of showcasing immigrant artistic contributions to the nation, but also the difficulty of acknowledging emerging forms of art in such a context: from the point of view of immigrant activists, it is never political enough; from the point of view of immigrant artists, it is never artistic enough.

The example of the *Beur* movement of the early 1980s in France provides insights for understanding issues pertaining to cultural politics and migration-related diversity. It demonstrates how immigrant artistic production can become a tool to voice immigrant demands and to contribute to connecting a movement. It shows that immigrant arts challenge national lines and help us refine our understanding of national models. It allows us to appreciate how French understanding of Universalism is expressed at the level of cultural policies towards second generation immigrants. Moreover, comparing the viewpoints of the institutional representatives, journalists, artists and immigrants, gives an insight into the general process of ethnic construction and categorisation. The picture of the 1980s is relevant for today in the sense that it contributes to our understanding of cultural ascription and ethnic categorisation. While categories inform the practice of policymaking and governance, the rationale surrounding immigrant artistic production give us insight into how they were formed.

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Gender Equality as 'Cultural Stuff': Ethnic Boundary Work in a Classroom in Switzerland

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Abstract:

The idea of boundary work has become a key concept in studies on ethnicity and provides new theoretical insights into the social organisation of cultural difference. People articulate ethnic boundaries in everyday interactions using conceptual distinctions to construct notions of 'us' and 'them'. This study is based on an empirical case study (ethnographic fieldwork, interviews) with young people (16-21 years old) in a Swiss vocational school. The results emphasise that the moral imperative of gender equality is the most significant category used to create boundaries between Swiss and Albanian migrants. Our study considers boundary work as relational and thus examines the strategies of both the Swiss majority and the (male) Albanian minority. Results suggest that the boundary itself is seldom contested by either Swiss or Albanians, and we argue that the visibility of the boundary ('brightness') is closely linked to larger power relations in society between those groups.

Introduction

In the course of their everyday lives, individuals engage in conceptual distinctions which join some things, objects, people or events together and separate them from others along certain boundaries. The idea of boundary work has come to play a key role in important new lines of scholarship across the social sciences (for an overview, see Pachucki et al. 2007), and it opens up new theoretical insights into the social organisation of difference. Modern societies are, by definition, places of intensified diversity and hetero-geneity, hereby producing new contexts in which 'difference' is constructed and inequa-lities are (re)produced. In short, the question of how 'differences' are socially organised is gaining new pertinence in such contexts. What are the conceptual distinctions used by individuals in everyday interactions and in discourses to construct notions of 'us' and 'them'? In other words, how can the properties of boundaries be described and by what mechanisms and dynamics are boundaries created, activated, maintained, disputed, subverted, bridged or crossed? In this article, we aim to further advance the boundary-making approach in the study of ethnicity as it was developed during the last decades (for a recent overview see Wimmer 2008b).

Based on the work of Weber, Durkheim, Barth and Bourdieu, contemporary writers have developed an idea of ethnicity which is not perceived as a result of differences between pre-defined, fixed groups with some kind of natural demarcated boundaries, but "rather as a dynamic process of constituting and re-configuring groups by defining the boundaries between them" (Wimmer 2008a: 1027). We aim to contribute to the growing

literature (Espiritu 2001; Korteweg and Yurdakul 2009), first, by showing through an empirical case study that gender is the most salient category, the 'cultural stuff' in the words of Barth (1969: 15), which is mobilised to create, maintain and contest ethnic boundaries. More exactly, the idea of *gender equality between women and men* becomes the moral imperative upon which an ethnic boundary between Swiss and Albanians is legitimated and a 'we' and a culturally different 'you' is built and contested in everyday encounters among young people.

Scholars recently contributed to this debate by analysing mainly the perspective of *either the majority or the minority group*. However, ethnic boundary work is necessarily relational and a two-way process of collective self-identifications and external categorisation (Barth 1969; Jenkins 1997). Furthermore, boundary making has to do with power relations and social inequalities between majorities and minorities. Because of this, and with the aim of contributing to the burgeoning literature, we ask how the 'stigmatised others' engage, contest and react to exclusive boundaries in the larger society. What counter strategies can the minority deploy? By what means, arguments and practices can they challenge those institutionalised ethnic boundaries?

The article is based on a qualitative case study with young people of different origins in a classroom context. In the first section, we introduce the idea of ethnicity as boundary work and relate it to gender, thereby focusing on two intersecting forces of domination and subordination. This is followed by a brief outline of the methodology. Then, the established and 'bright' boundaries (Alba 2005) between Swiss and Albanians are described based on the existing literature, because, obviously, boundary making in a classroom is not free from the wider societal context but is anchored in it. Next, we present the ethnic boundary work among the students and the ways in which it is taking place around the

moral imperative of *gender equality*. This produces a differentiation between the Swiss and the Albanians – but also a hierarchisation – while legitimising the exclusion of the latter. Then, we depict the counter strategies of the stigmatised group: the communality of those strategies is that they do not aim to call into question or blur the boundary. Instead, students of the minority take this line as granted and naturalise it in such a way that the boundary adopts almost a primordial character. However, these students develop strategies of the *excluded*. In the concluding remarks, some reflections of a more theoretical nature are developed. We argue that questions of power and domination have not yet received the full attention they deserve within the boundary-work literature. If boundaries are institutionalised through reified ideas about culture, tradition and gender relations, it is impossible for minority groups to blur or shift them.

Ethnic boundary work: relationality, forms and gendered 'cultural stuff'

The notion of boundary has been used throughout the social sciences, rendering social classifications visible across a wide variety of contexts. In general, boundaries are understood as having both *social and symbolic dimensions*; this article mainly deals with the latter. Symbolic boundaries have been defined as 'conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorise objects, people and practices. [... They] also separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group membership'. In addition, social boundaries are 'objectified forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources and social opportunities' (Lamont and Molnar 2002: 168). In daily interaction, actors are involved in struggles over social distinctions and classifications through which symbolic boundaries can shift. When symbolic boundaries are widely agreed upon, however, they can take on a constraining character and they can

become social boundaries (Lamont and Molnar 2002: 168).

With regard to ethnicity, since the 1960s scholars have put forward the idea that ethnic groups exist solely through the creation and maintenance of their *boundaries*. It was Barth (1969) who insisted that ethnic groups must be understood as the outcome of *self-definitions* and *ascriptions offered by others*, hereby adopting an interactional and relational perspective of ethnicity. According to him, ethnic groups are maintained through relational processes of inclusion and exclusion, and different cultural elements – called 'cultural stuff' (Barth 1969: 15) – are mobilised in order to mark a difference to other groups and confirm similarities among the in-group.

For our purpose, three elements of these theoretical debates need to be further discussed as they will be of relevance for our argument: the *dialectic* and *relational* character of ethnic boundary work, the different *forms of boundaries*, and the idea of mobilising *'cultural stuff'* in order to mark communalities and differences.

Relationality

Following Jenkins (1997: 54ff.), we refer to a twin process of *group identification* and *external social categorisation* which underlies this relational and dialectic character of boundary work. On the one hand, individuals must be able to differentiate themselves from others by drawing on criteria of similarities and shared belonging within the in-group. Such ethnic communality is a form of monopolistic social closure; it defines membership, eligibility and access. On the other hand, this internal identification process must be recognised by outsiders for an objectified collective identity to emerge. Such external categorisations are intimately bound up with power relations and relate to the capacity of one group to successfully impose its categories of ascription upon another set of people and to the resources which the categorised collectivity can draw upon to resist that imposition, if

need be. Racism, to give an example, is most typically a result of social categorisation. The power to name ethnically can be formal, where, for instance, the state designates particular criteria for ethnic classification. This way Jenkins draws an analytical distinction between *groups* and *categories*, introducing the idea of power relations.

Our article takes up this point. We examine how young people identify and define themselves in terms of groups and how they are identified and defined by others in terms of categories. We are interested in the distinctions that the majority group (Swiss) use to draw boundaries (i.e. by their identification as a group and in categorisations of out-groups). However, we also reveal the counter-strategies that the stigmatised group (Albanians) produce to affect the meaning given to them by others. This means exploring group identifications – what it means for Swiss and for Albanians to belong to their group (what defines their differences, similarities) – and how they are influenced by the external categorisation that members of the two groups hold in regard to each other.

Forms of ethnic boundary work

The boundary-making approach highlights the potential transformative character of ethnicity. Ethnicity varies in relation to social and historical contexts and from one society to another as it is understood as the momentary result of the actor's (individual, nation-state, media, etc.) struggles over classifications about 'us' and 'others'.[1] Zolberg and Woon (1999) provide a conceptual starting point for any discussion of boundary change, distinguishing three types of boundary work: boundary *crossing, blurring, and shifting*. Boundary crossing corresponds to the classic version of individual-level assimilation;

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[1] This does not mean that they would not develop persistence – especially when there are institutionalised boundaries.

someone moves from one group to the other without any real change to the boundary itself. Boundary blurring implies that the social profile of a boundary has become less distinct; the clarity of the social distinction involved has become clouded, and individuals' location with respect to the boundary may appear indeterminate. Boundary shifting involves the relocation of a boundary so that populations once situated on one side are now included on the other; former outsiders are transformed into insiders. Wimmer (2008a) distinguishes five main strategies deployed by actors to transform boundaries: to redraw (shift) a boundary by either *expanding* or *limiting* the domain of people included in one's own ethnic category; to modify existing boundaries by *challenging the hierarchical ordering* of ethnic categories or by *changing one's own position* within a boundary system, or by *emphasising other*, non-ethnic forms of belonging. In this article, we are interested in the strategies and forms to transform boundaries that we find among the young people in a class. However, the capacity to transform boundaries depends on the social position individuals occupy (i.e. migrant minority or Swiss majority) and on the existing dominance schemes (here gender and ethnicity) that are widely agreed upon in society.

Gender as 'cultural stuff' used for ethnic boundary work

Any 'cultural stuff' in common can provide a basis and resource for ethnic closure: language, ritual, kinship, economic way of life, or lifestyle more generally – an idea rooted without doubt in the writings of Max Weber. He defined ethnicity as a subjectively felt sense of belonging based on the belief in a shared culture and a common ancestry (Weber 2005 [1922]: 355ff.). According to Weber, different cultural markers can be used to reinforce and maintain this sense of belonging: myths of a common historical origin, phenotypic similarities, or any cultural practices seen as typical for the community. As

a consequence, ethnic boundary making refers to meaningful differences and similarities which do not signify real confirmation.

The case study reveals that gender is highly relevant for both processes of ethnic group identification and external categorisation. We understand gender as a relational and analytical category. Accordingly, gender can be described as the social construction and production of the feminine and the masculine (a dichotomous matrix), related to identities and subjectivities but also producing systems of domination and subordination (Butler 1990: 880; Gildemeister 2001: 531). This is reflected, for example, in the division of labour, in social representations, ascriptions, behavioural expectations or in general in the social status of men and women. Gender is neither a biological characteristic nor a stable socialised identity of individuals, but an element that is actively re-produced in social practices and interactions ('doing gender') (West and Zimmermann 1987).

Scholars of intersectionality have drawn our attention to the simultaneous and interacting effects of systems of oppression on the basis of gender, 'race', religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc., as categories of difference (Anthias 2002; Crenshaw 1991). This has proven to be a powerful critique of mutually exclusive categories, such as 'women' or 'foreigner', that have served to mask intersecting and interacting relations of domination and inequality. Following these ideas, in this paper we will focus mainly on two intersecting forces of domination: gender and ethnicity (and – to some extent - 'Islam') which are related to our topic of boundary work.

Gender as well as ethnicity can be described in terms of boundary work. Thorne (1993) emphasised in her study the interactional work of children in schools that continuously maintained a difference between boys and girls ('borderwork') as there was a social pressure to behave and to live up to the ideal of being a boy or a girl (for Germany, see

Kelles and Breidenstein 1998). However, we are primarily concerned here with ethnic boundary work coupled with representations about gender. Scholars have already reported from different parts of the world and based upon different empirical case studies that reified cultural differences have been linked with reified perceptions of gender relations and that those ideas have been mobilised in order to legitimate hierarchical boundaries between ethnic groups (Nader 1989; Nagel 1998). We propose that the boundary perspective can help in overcoming essentialised ideas of 'cultural difference' (critically, among others, Grillo 2003; Stolcke 1995) by showing that it is not a natural, substantivist cultural difference with regard to gender relations which is the raison d'être for the existence of groups, but that subjective mobilisation of such ideas by actors produce the groups in question. It is not the possession of so-called 'cultural characteristics' that makes social groups distinct but rather the social interactions with other groups that make the difference possible, visible, socially meaningful and recognised or confirmed by others.

The study, research methods and the classroom setting

Studying ethnic identifications and categorisations was the aim of a qualitative research project with young people of a Swiss vocational school characterised by multicultural diversity.[2] Boundary work is particularly relevant among adolescents since social belonging to groups is especially important during this period of life. While they gain independence from parents and the family,

young people have to position themselves in schools, in peer groups or even in the labour market. The importance of belonging is visible in the various classifications that young people refer to in order to differentiate groups (e.g. dress styles). However, recognition and acceptance of belonging play fundamental roles because they often depend on certain criteria and sometimes on ethno-national origin. Young people in a classroom in Switzerland are generally heterogeneous regarding ethno-national origin, religion or gender, and they are not necessarily friends but must spend some time together. Therefore, boundary work might become highly relevant among young people in the school context.

Moreover, carrying out such research in a school allows one to go beyond a particular ethnic group or immigrant community and to focus on a specific context and on the social interactions that happen between people in this context. The presence of both children of immigrants and youth from Swiss families allows the study of their dialectic involvement in ethnic boundary work (external cate-gorisations and group identifications). What must unfortunately be left out in this analysis is the role of the school.[3]

The school of this case study is situated in a town (60,000 inhabitants) in the German-speaking part of Switzerland which is characterised by the ethno-national diversity of its population: as in the rest of Switzerland, around 20 percent have a foreign nationality, coming, in particular, from the former Yugoslavia (e.g. Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia) or Germany, Portugal, Italy or Spain. Regarding the religious affiliation of the population,

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[2] The study is funded by the Swiss National Research Programme NRP 58 'Religions in Switzerland' and conducted by a research team composed of the three authors. Although this article is based on data from only one specific class, the study includes fieldwork and interviews in nine different classes in two regions of Switzerland.

[3] Such a larger perspective could allow going beyond the categorisations and group identifications among young people and enable taking into consideration the institutional context where they occur (Schiffauer et al. 2002)(for such an approach see Schiffauer et al. 2002).

Catholicism is dominant and – in comparison with other regions – the town has been Catholic for a long time.

Ethnic boundary work can be empirically studied in social interactions. For this reason, ethnographic fieldwork (observations during lessons and breaks) was carried out during four months in 2008/2009 in a class. One female researcher of the team[4] spent at least one day every week during this period with these young people. In addition, she carried out group discussions and different types of personal interviews with students as well as with teachers and directors. Interviews and observations were transcribed by the researcher and data analysis was based on the Grounded Theory research approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This allowed us to triangulate data stemming from interactions between students (observations) with interview-data gathered from conversations between the researcher and the students. In an iterative process, we developed codes and more abstract concepts from this different data. Data analysis and discussions occurred regularly in the research team in order to debate codes, concepts and theoretical ideas (peer debriefing) (Flick 2006). Gender equality was one of the main concepts we observed focusing on ethnic boundary work. However, it dominates in interview-data (compared to the observation) since our questions stimulated ethnic boundary work whereas the spontaneous situations in class were generated by the students themselves and were therefore less frequent.

The students in the class were 16 to 21 years old and had already finished secondary school. They did a manual apprenticeship, working in different small artisan companies, mostly outside the town in suburban or rural areas, where they learned the practical issues of their profession, and attended theoretical lessons one day a week in school. There were 17 pupils in class; the number in terms of men (7) and women (10) was quite balanced.

The students who took part in the interactions or interviews mentioned in this article are briefly introduced here. Cornelia and Luisa[5], both 18 years old and with Swiss parents, were best friends in the class. Sabine (20 years old) and Chiara (21 years old) also had Swiss nationality while their fathers had come originally from Portugal and Italy, respectively. There were also two second-generation migrants – Admir (16 years old) and Edi (18 years old) – with parents from Montenegro and Kosovo, respectively. While Admir was born in Switzerland, Edi arrived when he was very young. Both had the original nationality of their parents and had been granted Swiss citizenship. Admir and Edi formed a group together with Stefan (18 years old, Swiss parents), and ethnic origin was a recurring topic among them. For instance, Stefan, although being Swiss, regularly mentioned that he could also be considered a 'foreigner' like Admir and Edi since he had grown up with a lot of 'foreigners from Kosovo' and, therefore, he would be conscious of their preoccupations and values. Sabine, Chiara, Luisa and Cornelia also perceived this group of young men as the 'foreigners' as the group participated regularly in the performance of this image. Finally, there was Martin (18 years old, Swiss parents) who had no close relationship either with Admir, Edi and Stefan or with the other women.

Although our aim is to understand how students themselves mobilise their ethnic belonging to mark boundaries, we find it nevertheless important to highlight whether they are Swiss or second generation migrants in order to show what social position they hold (majority or minority from former Yugoslavia) and how their boundary work strategies could be interpreted from this perspective.

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[4] The researcher is the first author of the article.

[5] Their names have been changed for this article.

'Bright' boundaries between Swiss and Albanians – Retracing the dominant discourse

We argue that we can nowadays identify symbolic as well as social boundaries between Swiss and Albanians. Albanians in Switzerland are confronted with social exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination; the boundaries between the two groups have been institutionalised, and 'folk classifications' contribute to the stereotyping of Albanians in terms of cultural difference. As it is against this background that the young people in our case study are engaged in boundary work, we have to take into account this dominant discourse which informs their categorical distinctions.

Albanian-speaking migrants are among the most important immigrant groups in Switzerland in terms of both number and public debate. Albanians have been working in Switzerland since the late 1960s, as Yugoslavia was a traditional recruitment region for so-called guest workers. These guest workers were mostly young men without families (Leuenberger and Maillard 1999). From the 1980s onward, the political and economic situation in the former Yugoslavia, and specifically in Kosovo, has deteriorated drastically, directly increasing emigration pressures. At the same time, with the shift in immigration policies in Switzerland, and specifically with the implementation of the 'three circles' model in 1991, the recruitment of workers from the former Yugoslavia was no longer possible.[6] From then on, immigration to Switzerland was only possible by seeking asylum or through family reunification. The Swiss admission policy – as those of other countries – created different categories of migrants through a kind of 'ethno-national-sorting'. Immigrants from the former Yugoslavia were now categorised as members of the so-called 'third' circle, considered to be culturally the most distant from the Swiss people (Dahinden 2009).

Confronted with economic hardship and with increasing political unrest at home, the Albanian workers slowly abandoned their plans for returning and decided instead, whenever possible, to bring their families to Switzerland. As a consequence, since 1989 there has been a steady increase in the Albanian population in Switzerland through chain migration, and a feminisation of the migration flow has been observed. Moreover, Albanians were one of the groups hardest hit by recession in the 1990s following the economic restructuring of the labour market. Since then this group has been affected by economic marginalisation and unemployment, and their socio-economic position is low (Piguet 2005).

This 'ethno-national-sorting' of the Swiss admission policy and the ongoing public discourses have had different side effects. Until the 1980s the Yugoslav immigrants remained relatively unnoticed by the Swiss public. However, parallel to the reinforcement of 'Otherness' in Swiss immigration law through the circles model of cultural difference, the Yugoslavs have come under fire from the media and in public: drug dealing, violence, patriarchal culture and family structure, crime and high unemployment are the catchwords which are today connected with this section of the population. There has been an increasing tendency to explain the observed social exclusion of some of these immigrants by stressing their cultural peculiarities – or even their cultural 'incompatibility', as expressed by some right-wing parties (for details, see Dahinden 2005). Recent studies have shown that first- and

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[6] The first circle consists of EU/EFTA countries. The second circle includes the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The recruitment of qualified workers was – and still is – possible. The third circle concerns all other non-European countries: recruitment is and was only possible exceptionally and under condition of high qualification. Meanwhile Switzerland adopted a dual admission policy – in line with most European countries with which it has agreements of free mobility – linking it with qualification.

second-generation migrants from the former Yugoslavia are confronted with cultural stereotypes and discrimination, for instance in the labour market (Fibbi et al. 2003) and regarding access to Swiss citizenship (Fibbi et al. 2005).

Alba (2005) maintains that the precise nature of the ethnic boundary is important. Some boundaries are 'bright' – the distinction involved is unambiguous, so that individuals know at all times which side of the boundary they are on. Others are 'blurry', involving zones of self-presentation and social representation that allow for ambiguous locations with respect to the boundary. The nature of the minority-majority boundary depends on the way in which it has been institutionalised in different domains, some of them are correlated with an ethnic distinction rather than being constitutive of the distinction itself. In turn, the nature of the boundary fundamentally affects the processes by which individuals gain access to the opportunities afforded to the majority. On surveying the available literature, we argue that, in this case, we are dealing with a boundary which is 'bright' in its character, and upon which it might be difficult to do 'blurring' work. However, we do not know how individuals contribute in daily interactions and discourses to the maintenance of this boundary. Do we find the same boundaries in the classroom as in the surrounding society? Are those boundaries modified or contested by agents of the majority or the stereotyped minority? These questions are at the core of the following sections.

Ethnic boundary work: mobilising a dichotomy of gender relations and establishing a moral imperative

During fieldwork, we observed how young people trace a clear and simplistic dichotomy between two different types of gender relations. On the one hand, there exist – in their view – *hierarchical gender relations* where men have more 'authority' than women

and where men dominate women, and, on the other, they trace *equal gender relations* where we find equality between the sexes.[7]

Moreover, they *ethnicise* this dichotomy and allocate each type of gender relations to a specific ethnic group. Hierarchical gender relations are identified as typical for Albanians or for migrants from the former Yugoslavia in general. Equal ones, on the contrary, are supposed to be representative of the Swiss population. Second-generation migrants as well as the other students in class actively take part in the social construction of this 'ethnic difference'. They confirm it by identifying themselves collectively with one type of gender relations and by categorising others as agents of the opposite. Furthermore, gender equality becomes a *moral imperative* and produces a clear *hierarchic order between ethnic categories*. Accordingly, one day some students in the classroom mobilised the idea of 'cultural differences with regard to gender relations' (equality versus inequality) in order to provoke others and work on boundaries.

Establishing the boundaries: Differentiation and dichotomisation

In the afternoon, students regularly attended a practical course during which they worked individually at their desks and discussed private matters with each other. One day, while the teacher was not in the room, the researcher who was present witnessed the following scene:[8]

Admir (second-generation Montenegrin) turned around on his chair and asked Sabine (Swiss) with a little smile on his face: 'Are you

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[7] Both ideas of gender relations are submitted to a particular heteronormativity, the norm of having heterosexual relationships which perpetuates the distinction between men and women.

[8] This and the following exchanges or interviews took place in a Swiss-German classroom and were translated by the researchers.

in favour of (gender) equality?' Sabine did not answer. Instead Martin (Swiss) reacted: 'I definitely am!' The discussion continued; Admir stood up and suddenly said a phrase but I (researcher) only understood the word 'beat'. Thereupon Martin responded again: 'I don't do that.' The word 'beat' used by Admir attracted the attention of the whole class. Most of the students abruptly stopped their work, observed the scene and listened to the discussion. Then, Admir proclaimed in a loud voice that it would be important in life to find a woman to marry while still young, and Edi declared that Swiss people get divorced anyway. Some students in the class objected to Edi's statement and Cornelia (Swiss) said with a little smile: 'But your women don't dare to get divorced.' Edi answered back, also with a little smile: 'They obey us at least.' […] Suddenly Chiara (Swiss, Italian) intervened and shouted agitatedly: 'The way you treat your women. That they want to marry early in life is because of the pressure from your nation. I feel I have to defend as I am also Swiss.' […] The spontaneous discussion in class ended up of with a call from two women sitting in the back of the classroom: 'I don't want a foreigner' and two other women completed: 'Except people from Southern Europe.'

In this situation, the idea of *gender equality* was used by Admir to provoke one of the women in class (Sabine). Although he did not succeed in provoking her, he contested a normative concept regarding gender which is widely accepted in liberal democracies – gender equality – defining the rights of men and women as equal and women's emancipation as a must. He was aware that it could be a sensitive topic and therefore, he played with it as a provocation – making visible the performative nature of ethnicity. In other words, Admir is conscious of these moral ideas linked to gender relations, and he uses them consciously in order to provoke and to work on the ethnic boundary.

He had some success, as some students, in particular the other women (e.g. Cornelia, Chiara), responded to this incitement since they perceived this kind of provocation as typical of men coming from the former Yugoslavia who do not accept – in their view – equality between men and women ('But your women don't dare to get divorced' or 'The way you treat your women'). Admir and Edi were seen as representatives of a 'different culture' favouring hierarchical gender relations that are too distant from the Swiss people favouring equality between men and women. The Swiss women confirmed the ethnic boundary by categorising themselves and the 'Other', mobilising specific ideas about cultural gender differences. When it comes to the boundary, they know which side they are on, and which side the 'Other' is on.

Interestingly enough, migrants from Southern Europe (Italy, Portugal or Spain) were not perceived as a different 'Other' and have – in the classification system of these young women – crossed the ethnic boundary and now belong to 'them'. The ethnic boundary was expanded by including southern Europeans in their own ethnic category while reinforcing the boundary between Swiss and migrants from the former Yugoslavia. Luisa made that very clear in an interview:

> Well, I would say that I have a certain opposition or concern about the Albanian culture and I decided that I don't want this. Even if they have grown up here, their genes instruct them how to treat women. And I would say that even my parents wouldn't be happy, if I had an Albanian [boyfriend]. In my view, the Germans, the Italians, the Portuguese, they all would be okay.

In sum, moral imperatives about gender relations – intimately connected with ideas about power relations and domination schemes between men and women – characterise the symbolic boundary that is mutually mobilised by the students in the class to provoke each other and to articulate ethnic

differences. In this sense, members of the majority (i.e. Cornelia) as well as of the minority (i.e. Edi) confirm this symbolic boundary between Swiss and migrants from the former Yugoslavia. Cornelia mobilises the idea that 'their' women are oppressed and Edi confirms her argument by mobilising the idea that 'their own' women have to obey men. The situation shows further that group identification and categorisation mutually stimulate and reinforce each other during social interactions and that in this case everybody agrees upon the boundary – there is no blurring – *making the boundary 'bright'.*

What is interesting is that the imperative of gender inequality is not exclusively used by the two young men to mark a symbolic boundary between the Kosovar and the Swiss, but the idea is continuously confirmed by others. In fact, the category 'Albanians' serves as a counterpoint for other students to proclaim that 'Swiss people' have realised equal rights between men and women – although we know from many studies that this is far from being the case in Switzerland (Branger 2008).

Hierarchisation and segregation

This dichotomisation is also visible in an interview with Stefan. The young man said that he had many friends with a foreign nationality, in particular from Kosovo, and that is why he knows that they are really different from Swiss people:

> Simply the way of thinking, the opinion somebody has. There are, for instance, I don't know, Albanians. Albanians differ from us, from the Swiss, in the position they have towards a woman. If they get married, the woman stays at home and cooks. Among us, among Swiss people, the woman also works as the man does [...] as I already said, I think it is a prejudice against women that they have to do such things. I think a woman has her own mind, she can decide on her own, what she wants to do and what she doesn't. And a man

shouldn't force a woman to do something that she doesn't want to do.

What we can read out of the quote is that Stefan is directly producing a moral hierarchy and a hierarchical order between the ethnic categories: it is obvious that the equality model is more valued and better than the women-in-the-family model. Stefan underlines his argument by describing a contrast: in his view, men and women in Switzerland are more equal because women generally have paid employment and also have the right to work. Since Albanian women do not work outside the family after marriage or do not have the right to do that – according to Stefan – they are inferior and do not hold equal positions. Stefan reifies the two ethnic categories and justifies the difference in an over-simplistic and homogenous way since he talks neither about Swiss women who do unpaid work at home nor about Albanian women who have a professional activity after marriage – both of which, obviously, exist. His argumentation refers to an egalitarian discourse which stresses women's economic independence as a precondition for equality between men and women. Stefan confirms it, arguing that this lifestyle is typical for Swiss people and ascribes himself to this group, placing himself on the 'good' and dominant side of this moral imperative. Moreover, he activates a powerful discourse against Albanians as not corresponding to this liberal principle, even if he sees himself as a friend of 'foreigners'.

He also mobilises similar strong classifications and attributions in public on the school yard which reinforces this specific representation about Albanians – and contributes to a 'brightening' of the ethnic boundary. One day, when Admir was chatting and flirting with another migrant woman from former Yugoslavia during a break, Stefan reminded him loudly that he would get in trouble with the father or brother of this girl – presuming that this woman is not allowed to have an unreserved relationship with a man

and must not enjoy sexual liberty. Albanians are confronted with such attributions about their supposed typical cultural behaviour in everyday life and they are obliged to position themselves towards these categorisations. We will show later what counter-strategies they deploy.

Legitimating exclusion

However, the ethnic boundary between Swiss and Albanians is not only based upon differences but is at the same time exclusionary. The young people also explicitly assume that unequal gender relations are 'bad' and therefore legitimise a hierarchic order of the ethnic categories producing a specific system of dominance. Different interviewed women made it clear – when asked about marriage – that they would reject a close relationship with an Albanian from Kosovo, and as Chiara put forward, she would even reject such a relationship for a future daughter of hers.

> I don't know, an Albanian perhaps, yes I would be worried about an Albanian [as boy-friend for my future daughter]. (Interviewer: And why?) I don't know, because he may mistreat her.

Luisa (Swiss), in contrast, justifies her argument in more detail and not only with ethnic but also with religious 'differences'[9] when she speaks about Albanians and thereby mobilises the category of Muslims:

> Before, I had a lot of Albanian women as friends. How they are disrespected! They don't have the right to have a date or to go out. The son is free to do everything. Among the Muslims, they are even forced to marry somebody although they say it isn't like that anymore. But a hundred percent, if they finish school and have nothing to do, they do it and

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[9] There are Catholic and Muslim Albanians from Kosovo living in Switzerland.

they push her towards somebody. And yes, I never want my children or my grand-children to grow up in such a relationship. And not only because of bad experiences with them, it is simple; they are simply completely different from a Catholic and from a Protestant.

In a similar vein to Stefan, Luisa mobilises the principle of gender equality, but she uses it in reference to a highly moralised topic, namely forced marriages. Albanian women are – according to Luisa – not free to have a date, to go out or to decide whom they want to marry. Although she is aware that (some) Albanians describe such practices as belonging to the past, she does not grant them the right to have a say about it. This example makes clear how the majority can impose a discourse about the practices of the minority. Moreover, she legitimises her arguments with her own experiences, arguing that she befriended female Albanians in the past. This exclusion is not only expressed in the interview. Luisa - after the spontaneous discussion in class - directly addressed Edi and said that she is opposed to Albanians as partners because she had had bad experiences with them.

Luisa reifies the categories 'Albanian' and 'Muslim' in a homogenous way and draws a boundary between Swiss women and Albanian women. Furthermore, she mobilises 'religious differences' between Muslims and Protestants/Catholics but does not mention different religious ideologies: rather, she uses religion as a marker to boost the ethnic boundary (Mitchell 2006). Starting in the 1990s, Muslims have been highly stigmatised in public debates in many European countries (Schneuwly Purdie et al. 2009). The wearing of a headscarf and more recently a niqab by Muslim women is presented as implicating a general subordination of women. In an earlier study, Lutz (1991) revealed that migrant women of so-called 'Islamic background' are assumed to be oppressed by male power in western representations. In particular, the idea of Islamic patriarchy often serves to assume

general male control over women's sexuality (e.g. virginity) and is thus regularly mobilised as a counterpoint to the sexuality of the liberated western woman.

Luisa re-activates such representations and enacts a power relation by accentuating supposed 'cultural differences' which serve to exclude Albanians and Muslims. In other terms, religion intersects here with ethnicity and gender and produces not only 'bright' boundaries but also interacting systems of dominance.

Counter strategies to face exclusionary boundaries

Until now we have mainly described how two dichotomised types of gender relations (one based on equality between men and women, the other based on unequal relations) are employed by students to draw a clear and bright ethnic boundary. It was shown that members of the majority as well as of the minority contribute to this boundary work by reinforcing the same boundary. This boundary is not neutral, however, as it implies a hierarchical order where people belonging to the category 'Swiss' are perceived as 'superior' to those with origin in the former Yugoslavia. We could say that the categorisations we found in the larger society were reproduced in micro-social interactions in the classroom. However, the story is more complicated. We argue that different strategies can be depicted that aim to counter the boundaries and the hierarchical order they imply.

Three different strategies adopted by actors can be identified in this specific class: First, the male members of the minority contribute to the dominant discourse by *reassessing the values associated with being a man*. Second, they *call into question the hierarchical ordering* of the boundary by proclaiming their own moral superiority with regard to gender relations. Third, some members of the majority as well as of the minority *try to blur the existing boundaries* (mostly with little success) by emphasising non-ethnic forms of belonging

or by challenging the reified nature of the boundaries.

Reassessing the value of being a man and boundary drawing against women

At first sight it seems paradoxical that members of the minority contribute to the 'brightening' of the ethnic boundary by confirming the dichotomy of the two types of gender relations, and identify themselves with the stigmatised category – stigmatised at least by the majority in class and by liberal moral principles. However, the empirical material shows that *male members* of the minority subscribe to this non-equality model of gender relations because they can use it to subvert their individual subordinate status. They do so by emphasising another boundary, the one between men and women in which they dominate, to counter the ethnic boundary that stigmatises them. The gender boundary they highlight (for instance, in their provocations about gender equality) allocates to them recognition and power within their ethnic group and compensates for their lower status in the ethnic hierarchical order.

Admir and Edi argue in the interviews that gender relations are typically hierarchical in the Balkan countries – in both Catholic and Islamic regions. Accordingly, women have, as they express it, less authority than men in their culture of origin, which contrasts with countries like Switzerland. In an interview with Edi, he says that he has more Kosovar friends than Swiss friends and explains that they do things differently:

> … [F]or instance, regarding women. Most of the women have quite a say in Switzerland. A woman says quite a lot. Among Albanians it is little. A woman has also for sure some authority, but not too much. Swiss people pay more attention to a woman, more attention than Albanians. I think that a woman is allowed to say something, of course, that's clear, but not too much.

Later he goes on to explain why women have less authority than men among Albanians:

> Women are discriminated. They are not allowed to say much, in the past they were not at all. I watched a documentary on the television where a woman was getting married. She had a sack on her head and was sitting on a horse. Then, she was brought to her husband …

Edi justifies male domination of women by mobilising the idea of 'tradition'. He mentions the exchange of women between different families as – in his view – a traditional marriage custom. In the same way, Admir claims in an interview that it is a typical tradition for the Balkan countries that 'women have to go to men' when they get married and not the other way round. He adds that he would never change his residence for a woman.

Patrilocality and arranged marriage appear in these discourses as practices that are legitimated by tradition. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983) describe how practices which are considered traditional serve to justify values or behavioural norms and enable the maintained continuity with the past or to define a community. 'Tradition' can be mobilised as 'cultural stuff' in order to subjectively produce communality and difference. Various practices, rituals or symbols – be they real or fictive – find their place within this umbrella idea of tradition and each can be mobilised.[10]

In the case of Admir and Edi, tradition is used as a discursive element to legitimise a hierarchical order between men and women. They draw a boundary between the sexes and this conceptual distinction allows them to identify with the supposed dominant male part in relationships with women from the former

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[10] Traditions, despite their initial definition, are sometimes recent re-inventions and deliberate constructions to draw boundaries.

Yugoslavia. In a situation where the ethnic criterion situates them on 'the wrong' and subordinated side of the boundary, *insisting on the moral imperative of gender inequality* gives them some power and recognition of being a man.

One day in school, when the pupils had to discuss in small groups graphics showing migration flows to Switzerland, Edi argues towards Stefan and Admir that he is an Albanian and that their women are responsible for all the housework. His father would not even touch a sock. The young men laugh about that comment and Edi tries to convince his friends that it is like that among Albanians and that it should be like that. In a personal interview with Edi, he also explains that it is of capital importance that his sister gets married. From his point of view, being responsible for a husband and a family seems to be the prime duty for an Albanian woman – despite the fact that Edi's sister will certainly also do an apprenticeship.

This strategy of emphasising their position in relation to one type of boundary (the gender boundary) over another (the ethnic boundary) may help Albanian men reassess their own value: being a dominant man is preferable to being a subordinated Albanian. However, this strategy does not question the ethnic boundary itself. Although the male members of the minority *counter their subordination* by reassessing the value of being a man, they continuously contribute to and confirm the ethnic boundary work described above.

Inverting the ethnic hierarchical ordering – proclaiming one's own moral superiority

However, the empirical findings reveal additional strategies aiming to modify the ethnic boundary. These strategies question the hierarchical ordering between Swiss and migrants from the former Yugoslavia, and the minority tries to prove their moral superior lifestyle in comparison with the Swiss. The kind of morality that is emphasised is closely linked

to women's behaviour in their relationships with men.

In the classroom debate described above (as well as in the personal interviews), Admir and Edi proclaimed that Swiss marriages mostly end up in divorce, something that – in their view – does not happen to Albanian families. The common failure of Swiss couples is implicitly attributed to women's freedom in comparison with women coming from the former Yugoslavia. This attribution is a joint construction by members of both the majority ('your women don't dare to get divorced', implying that Swiss women have the freedom to do so if they want to) and the minority ('at least they obey us', making it clear that the non-contested subordination of women to men has led, as a positive consequence, to enduring marriages). While the students of Swiss origin emphasise the value of women's freedom, the male students with immigrant parents argue that enduring marriages are an important value, even if it means less freedom for women. This is certainly also a strategy of legitimising the dominance of men over women. It gives a rational and moral motive for men to control 'their' women. By doing so, Edi and Admir aim to invert the ethnic hierarchical order that is imposed on them by the majority students of Swiss origin. They aim to show that inequality in gender relations has an important advantage, namely, to safeguard important moral values, which is not the case among Swiss families.

However, strategies aiming to change the ethnic hierarchical order of the boundary exceed the realm of family values to include sexual behaviours, in particular those of women. In class discussions as well as in interviews, Admir and Edi repeatedly argue that it is impressive when men have sexual relations with different women, but they strongly despise women acting the same way. Although this kind of discourse is widespread among youth of all origins, a new ethnic boundary is drawn around the sexuality of

women. In an interview, Admir says he does not find it right for women to 'sleep around':

> It is like that. Well, maybe for Swiss people it is normal [he laughs]. But I can't say for them. And we have been brought up differently. For instance, when we want to marry we look for a virgin.

In this quote, a 'we' (migrants from the former Yugoslavia) is constructed where morally ireproachable behaviour is expected from women, in contrast to a 'them' ('Swiss people') who do not care and find it normal that women have multiple sexual relations before they get married. The inverting of the hierarchical order is here quite clear with an attempt to change the signifier of the boundary. The dominant discourse in the classroom is about gender equality and in this field students whose parents came from the Balkan region have no chance to win the game, i.e. to be considered on top of the hierarchical order. Instead of contesting the boundary, the young men actively try to *change* the emphasis put on its *content*: moving from a gender equality ideology, they bring in a replacing ideology related to the safeguarding of women's sexual integrity and morality. Based on this new 'cultural content', these young men have the means to assert the moral superiority of their own ethnic group over the 'immoral' majority. This becomes very clear by looking at how Edi responded to Luisa when she was declaring that she had had bad experiences with Albanian men. Edi hereupon laughed and excused Albanian men with the comment: 'They don't want bitches.' The honour of women stands here as the signifier for a whole group's superiority (Alexander 1996; Espiritu 2001). In light of this, challenging the moral superiority of the Swiss people in their interactions with students in the classroom can be seen as a way for the male members of the minority[11] to

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[11] There were no Albanian women in this specific class.

gain control of their immediate environment – the classroom as a public place – and to challenge the subjugation of their ethnic category in Swiss society.

Blurring the ethnic boundary

These examples confirm the bright nature of the ethnic boundary between Albanians and Swiss. In view of this, it might be not surprising that members of the minority as well as of the majority *only tentatively* engage in 'blurring strategies'. Only occasionally do they bring up this kind of boundary work aiming to render the ethnic boundary less distinct and sharp. For instance, Luisa was interviewed together with her best friend Cornelia, the young woman who accused Albanian women of not daring to get divorced (in the interaction with Edi and Admir, see situation above). While Luisa presents a reified image about Albanians in the interview, Cornelia suddenly sets up counter-arguments against her view:

> I don't care about that. Certainly there are different countries where women are treated differently and even here in Switzerland. But there are also exceptions. And, nonetheless, I would never be together with a boyfriend I don't love and I can't love somebody who mistreats women whether he is an Albanian or whatever.

Cornelia objects to the homogenous and reified image about Albanians presented by Luisa. Despite her affirming gender equality and the importance of women's respect in the same way, she does not link a behaviour that is supposed to disrespect women to a particular ethno-religious group. She breaks up the ethnic boundary by putting weight on universal values of women and human rights – being respected as a woman. In other terms, she emphasises non-ethnic forms of belonging, namely, being a woman, a human being, to divert the focus from ethnic belonging.

Some efforts to blur the ethnic boundary can also be observed among the subordinated

minority group. One day during recreation with his friends Stefan and Admir, Edi mentioned that Albanian men, on top of dominating women, also deal violently with them. Admir (and Stefan) immediately disagreed with Edi: 'Albanians don't deal violently with women. Not all Albanians.' Admir tries to blur the ethnic boundary by recalling that there are also differences within the group and by contesting the reified image of Albanians as a homogeneous ethnic category of people having hierarchical gender relations where men also wield physical power over women.

Both examples show that reified ideas about Albanians circulate and how social categorisations can change from situation to situation. It must be noted, however, that members of both the majority and the male minority groups only seldom attempt to blur the ethnic boundary. Moreover, these attempts are mostly ineffective and have little weight when confronted with the important boundary work that has been described until now, which mostly contributes to maintaining and reinforcing the boundary.

Conclusion

Against the background of an institutionalised ethnic boundary between Swiss and Albanians from the former Yugoslavia, we observe that among young adults in a vocational class the moral idea of *gender equality* is mobilised in order to work on that ethnic boundary. The moral imperative of gender equality becomes a vehicle for the ethnic majority (Swiss students) to articulate differences towards migrants from the former Yugoslavia, particularly against Albanians. It serves to assert cultural superiority over the ethnic minority and to legitimate exclusion and dominance. One conclusion is that this dominant gender discourse is powerful in defining the migrants as 'culturally different' and in putting them in a subordinated position in society.

The study highlights important theoretical elements: It demonstrates that neither the

boundary work by the majority nor the counter-strategies by the male minority aim to call into question the difference between Swiss and Albanians. Instead, students take this line for granted and naturalise it in such a way that the boundary adopts almost a primordial character. This goes along with a well established system of domination based on interacting categories of difference. Following Alba's (2005) typology, this boundary can be described as 'bright', meaning that it is clear on which side of the boundary a person is localised (migrant minority or Swiss). 'Blurred' boundaries exist when multiple identifications (e.g. on both sides of the boundary) are allowed. As we have seen, this is hardly the case in this vocational class.

When there are 'bright boundaries' towards minorities in society, visible for instance in ethno-national politics, re-affirmed in reports by the media and kept alive by political agitation of right-wing parties, blurring or crossing strategies can only occasionally occur – even among young people – because their arguments rarely find support from other social actors and institutions. Our results make clear that this specific Swiss environment has established a strong hierarchy between an underprivileged Albanian migrant minority and the Swiss privileged majority.

This also becomes visible in the kind of counter-strategies of the stigmatised group who also use ideas about gender relations to work on and to modify that boundary. On the one hand, we saw that male members of the minority invoked 'gender inequality' as a 'cultural tradition' in order to reaffirm their *self-esteem and to reassess their superior position as men*. On the other hand, these young men tried to assert *moral superiority over the dominant group* by emphasising the moral integrity of migrant women from the former Yugoslavia (in comparison with 'unrespectable' Swiss women) and the importance accorded to family and enduring marriages (in contrast to high divorce rates among Swiss couples).

The stigmatised ethnic group is faced with exclusion and there is only little room left for them to deploy counter-strategies which could shift or blur the boundary and convince others that they are not 'culturally' different. Instead, they engage in counter-strategies that finally contribute to 'brightening' the boundary even further and which valorises and reinforces their 'cultural difference' at the same time. One might argue that those strategies are the only two remaining options to react toward the hierarchy and to keep a kind of dignity and self-respect.

However, these strategies reinforce an ideology of male superiority over women and have important consequences for Albanian women who are simultaneously subjected to two interacting systems of oppression: an ethnic one (being Albanian) and the gender one (being an Albanian woman). In theoretical terms, the male members of the minority mobilise a specific axis of domination (gender) in order to respond to the subordination they experience in the ethnic axis of oppression (Klinger and Knapp 2007).

We argue that our study shows that power relations and intersecting systems of dominance have not yet received the full attention they deserve within the burgeoning boundary-work literature. There have been a number of studies – also in classrooms – focusing on the identity and boundary performances of young people (for Germany see Weissköppel 2001). However, such micro-centred analyses are seldom related to the wider societal context in which they are anchored. We argue that if symbolic boundaries are widely agreed upon and institutionalised through reified ideas about culture, nations, tradition and gender relations, then minority groups have to deal with social boundaries that assume a kind of natural and objectified character. This in turn renders it impossible to blur, cross or shift the boundaries.

However, our findings were gathered in a specific context of one class where ethnic

boundary work took place between *the male members of the minority* and mainly *the female members of the majority*. It would be interesting to look closely at the strategies that Albanian women deploy in their boundary work. Further investigation is needed, for instance, by comparing these findings to boundary work in other classrooms, to find out about the strategies adopted specifically by female members of the minority, as well as those additionally deployed by the other students in general.

Furthermore, we emphasise that the results – although our analysis was mainly concerned with ethnic boundary work – confirm and contribute to studies about gendered 'borderwork'. All of these strategies by young people not only manifest an ethnic boundary, but continuously perpetuate a difference between the feminine and the masculine, amplifying heteronormativity and fostering ideologies about the place of man and woman in society.

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Official Discourses and Patterns of State Engagement with Muslim Communities in Britain and Russia

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Abstract

The article discusses the institutional complexities and policy discourses of Muslim governance and representation in Britain and Russia in light of the distinct national narratives of state-Muslim relations. Religious governance is not only determined by the patterns of state-religion relations but is also influenced by the level of state involvement. The article focuses on a series of interactions between state officials and Muslim representative institutions to highlight individual patterns and discourses of the two approaches to religious accommodation: 'horizontal' and 'vertical'. The British horizontal approach focuses on liberal multiculturalism and its communitarian preference for resolving internal tensions within local communities. Russia's increasingly conservative policy of consolidating Muslim institutions and building strong relations with official Muslim representatives is typical of the vertical approach. Over the last 10 to 15 years, state policies on Muslim integration and representation have revealed a similar desire to promote moderate forms of Islam. This is evident from extended programmes of state-funding for Muslim communities and stronger cooperation with Muslim representative institutions. A close analysis of state engagement with Muslim Councils brings to light the internal dynamics of horizontal and vertical state-Muslim relations in the two countries.

Introduction

State engagement with Muslim minorities in Europe has resulted in a number of fruitful discussions on state-Islam relations and studies on accommodating Muslim minorities within the European settings (see, for example, Bader 2007; Cesari and McLoughlin 2005; Maussen 2007; Soper and Fetzer 2004). Building on the comparative literature of religious governance, state-religion relations, as well as national accounts of Muslim integration, the article presents an attempt to disengage the debate from its purely European context of church-state relations and patterns of integration. Although the research agenda has extended to occasional comparisons with Muslim populations in the United States or Australia, the Russian dimension has rarely been addressed (Cesari 2006; Minkenberg 2007). Similarly, Russian scholars often avoid making comparisons and consider state-Muslim relations in Russia as a distinct, self-contained field of research (Hunter 2004; Malashenko 2007; Yemelianova 2002). Without diminishing the value of the existing research, the article argues for a stronger incorporation of the Russian agenda into the overall research.

State relations with Muslim minorities in the two countries have been shaped by a number of different historical and contextual factors, including the nature of Muslim communities, institutional mechanisms of minority representation and patterns of state interaction with religious leaders (Malashenko 2007; Modood 2005). However, over the last 10 years, state policies on Muslim integration have revealed a similar desire to engage with moderate representatives within the increasingly securitised patterns of state-Islam relations. Recent terrorist activities experienced by the two countries have led to a similar approach of complementing the counter-terrorist agenda with attempts to build community resistance to terrorism from within. Both countries seek to integrate Islam within its institutional framework of state-religion relations, both are engaged in granting Muslim citizens equal religious and cultural rights. And yet, the ways in which the Russian and British authorities communicate their agenda are different. The British case illustrates a strong reliance on local partners and community initiatives, whereas the Russian efforts have largely focused on encouraging consolidation of previously fragmented religious institutions.

The article argues for the need to attach greater importance to the political aspect of religious governance in the two countries. It discusses policy discourses and a series of interactions between government officials involved in promoting Muslim integration and Muslim community spokespersons engaged in representing Muslim interests in the public sphere. A common element of the two approaches lies in state preferences for using intermediary institutions to regulate Muslim religious practices. There is a shared determination to promote moderate forms of Islam to strengthen a sense of national unity and social cohesion. A brief analysis of the different discourses of state engagement with Muslim representative institutions – the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and Russia's Council of Muftis (RCM) – provides a useful framework to compare and contrast the ways in which the two modes of governance are being conceptualised.

The cases provide two different representations of religious governance: 'democratic' and 'hierarchical'.[1] In an attempt to move away from a politically sensitive nature of the two terms, the paper suggests a more neutral wording of 'vertical' and 'horizontal' modes of engagement which become reinforced through particular communications on local and national levels. The British example of horizontal governance focuses on liberal multiculturalism and its communitarian preference for resolving internal tensions within the local institutional framework. Russia's increasingly conservative policy of consolidating Muslim institutions and building strong relations between Muslim senior representatives and state officials on the national level is exemplary of its vertical approach.

The study is largely based on official documents, public statements and communications between state officials and state-recognised representatives from Muslim organisations, with a particular emphasis on the institution of the Muslim Council.[2] The 'official' nature of the data offers little evidence of the extent to which the proposed ideas have been put into practice, considering the inherent discrepancy between the good intentions and the actual outcomes. However, a close analysis of these official

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[1] See Bader's distinction between democratic (bottom-up) and hierarchical (top-down) modes of governance in V. Bader. 2007. "Regimes of Governance of Religious Diversity in Europe. Introduction". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33 (6): 871-877, Special Volume, State Governance of Islam in Europe.

[2] The article is based on data collected from primary and secondary sources, including analysis of official documents and reports on Muslim representation in Britain and Russia, public speeches and communications between public officials and the MCB's and RCM's respective representatives. Additional data on the Russian case is derived form a series of interviews which I conducted with the members of the RCM and Russian Muslim elites in Moscow and Tatarstan .

communications, public discourses and interchanges provides an invaluable insight into the thinking behind the two approaches of managing religious representation: (1) by engaging with a number of local-level organisations in Britain and (2) supporting high-level centralised Muslim religious institutions in Russia.

The article is divided into four parts, bringing together contextual differences and discursive convergences of the two cases. Part I focuses on different state approaches to the governance of Islam, while Part II argues that despite their differences, the two states are engaged in similar policy discourses of securitising their Muslim agenda. This becomes evident in the shared determination to accommodate Muslim needs by fostering moderate forms of Islam. Part III discusses the different character of the Muslim Councils and a very similar intermediary role they play in representing Muslim communities before the state. It compares and contrasts their institutional features and examines them within their individual contextual settings. Part IV examines the nature of horizontal and vertical engagement through the lens of state-Council communication focusing on specific discourses of each approach and its implications.

I. Official public discourses on state-Muslim relations: extended typologies

The following section examines the British and Russian discourses of accommodating Muslim socio-religious needs within the distinct national contexts. It focuses on general policy directions and shifts within the policies. Religious governance is a flexible and negotiable process. However, the extent to which any changes are being communicated depends on the opportunities and restraints offered by the individual settings of state engagement with religion and society. Building on Soper and Fetzer's proposed typologies of church-state relations (Soper and Fetzer 2004) and Koenig's models of political organisation

(Koenig 2005), I suggest extending different patterns of state-religion relations by putting a stronger emphasis on the level of state involvement. Without neglecting the religious aspect, the public discourses of state engagement with society can provide a more nuanced understanding of the political element. While the British case provides an illustration of diversified, community-based interaction, the Russian approach focuses on an increasingly centralised, top-down approach to communicate with Muslim institutions.

British perspective

Britain's approach to integrating Muslim communities developed as a result of its colonial legacies, local immigration and ethnic issues, and a series of re-interpretations of liberal multiculturalism as a guiding principle of ethnic and religious tolerance. It has been marked by a strong tendency to decentralise activities designed to promote social cohesion and to provide local solutions to common national problems. State-religion relations in Britain have been based on the principle of cooperation between the state and different religious groups. Although the Anglican Church enjoys a privileged position of being the 'established' religion, other religious communities are not required to be registered or officially recognised. The British engagement with Islam envisages provisions to ensure that different Muslim groups have equal access to community representation.

British multiculturalism in its traditional form has failed to recognise the importance of religion in defining Muslim identity and has done little to address Muslims' religious requirements. Although practical elements of religious rituals were respected, their spiritual dimension has not been given enough attention. As Lord Parekh noted in 2006, 'when individuals privilege their religious identity … they want to be Muslim Britons not British Muslims' (Parekh 2006). The growing alienation of practising Muslims, coupled with the threat of Islamic radicalisation, prompted the British

government to change its *laissez-faire* multiculturalism and reconsider its official discourse on Islam. Following a series of consultations the government has worked towards modifying its agenda on Muslim integration.

In the last couple of years, the discursive emphasis has shifted from recognising racial differences and celebrating cultural diversity to promoting the peaceful coexistence of faith communities. The government took an active role in formulating a new brand of inclusive multiculturalism, designed to address Muslim concerns within a general discourse of shared British values. Generally low levels of religiosity among the British population can partly account for public acceptance of this ideological transformation of multicultural politics. The idea of 'common unifying values' has been used as a persuasive rhetorical device to justify a policy shift: from the original cornerstone of recognising the communities' cultural distinctiveness to promoting social cohesion. According to Tony Blair, being British still implied the 'right to be different', however, it now also increasingly demanded the 'duty to integrate' (Blair 2006).

In a lecture on multi-faith Britain, former Home Secretary David Blunkett has acknowledged that the '[g]overnment has a role to play' but has reduced it to the need to 'facilitate interaction between the different faith communities, and between them and the wider community' (Blunkett 2003). In an attempt to isolate radical Islam and ensure that it lacks strong support in Muslim communities, the British government presents itself as a guardian of common values and institutions of parliamentary democracy, while beginning to pay more attention to Muslim religious needs. It promises to support the work of its 'empowered communities' by helping them 'challenge those work[ing] against…the shared values' (HM Government 2009, 90).

There is a small indication that the state acknowledges that there is no easy assimilation between 'the secular liberal and the person whose faith is inseparable from their politics'

(Miliband 2009). However, it is also keen to praise many British Muslims for binding together the values of liberal democracy with their own religious identity (Miliband 2009). In its efforts to promote Muslim integration, the British state has put strong emphasis on engaging with a variety of moderate Muslim organisations and civil society groups to promote British values and build internal resilience to radical Islam. The results of the measures designed to prevent extremism have been rather mixed (House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee 2010).

One of the key criticisms expressed in the recent House of Commons Report highlighted the risk of reinforcing the Muslim identity through its purely religious dimension, without recognising Muslims' multiple roles in different social and cultural situations such as work, family or community (House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee 2010, 21-23). This represents a potential discursive shift towards a greater recognition of Muslim rights as ordinary citizens without necessarily 'essentialising' their ethnic or racial identity (as has been the case in the past) or its religious dimension, as was advocated by the current policymakers. The willingness to undertake a wide-reaching consultation on the issues of integration, terrorism and Islam with various Muslim representatives illustrates a degree of flexibility of the British approach.

Russian perspective

Russia's discourse on accommodating Muslim minorities has developed within its distinct regional, historical and political setting. It has been strongly influenced by the desire to integrate cultural diversity within the dominant religious and ideological framework. The specificity of Russia's engagement with Muslim communities is based on a mix of 'multi-ethnicity', 'multi-confessionalism' and 'multi-cultural diversity' that escapes any familiar label of narrowly defined multiculturalism or assimilation, making it an interesting

addition to the standard dichotomy between the two approaches. While the economic and social factors continue to dominate the Muslim agenda in big cities, the existence of large, geographically dispersed Muslim communities requires the state to differentiate its policies on the regional level. Whereas some integrationist rhetoric may be at times sufficient to accommodate the needs of Russian Muslims in the Volga region, it is often inadequate to engage Muslim communities in the North Caucasus.

Russia's interaction with Muslim communities has not only involved integrating Muslim migrants, but also Russia's own ethnic Muslims living within its territorial borders. Strong regional differences provided Muslim communities with their particular political and ethnic character, while different schools of Islam in the Volga region and the North Caucasus have led to different interpretations of Islam and interaction with local authorities (on Tatarstan, see Nabiev et al. 2002; on the North Caucasus, see Bobrovnikov 2002; Knysh 2007; Zelkina 2000). Tatar Muslims in the Volga region have been exposed to religious and political integration as a result of Russia's efforts to impose first Christian and then Socialist values on the predominantly Muslim region (Filatov 2002, 93-96; Ro'i 2000). Despite their strong national aspirations, they represent the most culturally assimilated Muslim community, relatively open to government efforts to centralise regional administration and religious representation.

The North Caucasus, on the other hand, has remained Russia's primary security concern, from the days of colonial expansion in the nineteenth century to the Chechen Wars and the current region-wide instability, with the latest explosions on the Moscow underground exacerbating Russia's security situation (Sagramoso 2007; Souleimanov 2007). Aware of the volatile character of the North Caucasus and its complex clan system, the state does not aspire to regulate Muslim communities there as much as it does in the Volga region, nor does it

attempt to influence traditional sources of local and religious authority. However, in light of the renewed counter-terrorist campaign against radical Islam and the use of force to boost regional security, a more interventionist approach to religious governance seems increasingly likely.

Russia's preference for vertical governance of Muslim communities mirrors the centralising dynamics introduced in other parts of social and political life. However, some of its current features have also been shaped by the state's previous efforts to engage with Russian Muslims. Historically, accommodation of Muslim interests in Russia has been an integral part of the state's approach to integrating its different peoples, while preserving some of their cultural autonomy. Short-lived liberal phases of greater respect for Muslim religious institutions have been followed by more authoritarian periods of suppression of Muslim practices in line with state security concerns and ideological preoccupations.

Official regulation and structuring of Muslim representation along hierarchical lines began under Catherine the Great when she set up first Muslim Spiritual Boards to guarantee the country's internal stability.[3] In the nineteenth century, colonial expansion in the North Caucasus and forced Christianisation of Muslim populations in the Volga Region led to further consolidation of Russia's influence over its Muslim populations. The repressive Soviet methods of integrating different ethnic groups and fostering a new brand of ideological atheism significantly weakened Muslim elites and destroyed many Muslim institutions. The Bolsheviks initially welcomed Muslim aspirations of equality and recognised a certain affinity between Islamic and Communist ideals, allowing a limited degree of Muslim representation through the state-controlled

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[3] The Orenburg Mohammedan Spiritual Assembly was officially inaugurated in Ufa by the Empress' edict of 4 December 1789.

Muslim organisations, such as the DUMERS.[4] Although this might have provided a degree of institutional continuity with Muslim institutions today, periods of cooperation were short-lived, with repressive measures inflicting considerable damage on Muslim organisation and educational capacity.[5]

The way the Russian state has envisaged its engagement with Muslim communities over the last two decades underwent a series of shifts, closely following the changes in political and social spheres: from more liberal encouragement of Muslim institutions to more conservative consolidation from within. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian policy has been marked by a continuous re-assessment of its national ideas on religion and identity. In the President Yeltsin era of the 1990s, a positive use of rhetoric focused on 'religious revival', 'respect for individual identities' and 'greater autonomy of institutions', whereas the actual policies were partly tainted by extensive corruption and fragmentation of Muslim institutions. Vladimir Putin's successive governments have been preoccupied with building closer ties with 'traditional religions', including Islam, to consolidate religious and social institutions and promote multinational unity. Considering the more privileged role of the Orthodox Church and the relative disadvantage of Muslim minorities, the Russian government felt the need to redress the imbalance.

A significant development in state-Muslim relations in the Putin-Medvedev period has been the crystallisation of a new brand of conservatism, exemplified by the vertical distribution of power and selective engagement with top Muslim officials rather than a wider range of Muslim civil society organisations. Putin's (and now Medvedev's) agenda of transforming Russia into a powerful sovereign nation has been accompanied by the Kremlin's drive to reformulate and re-appropriate the discourse on nationalist unity based on Russia's multifaceted heritage and spiritual values (Laruelle 2008).[6] Russia's interaction with Islam has focused on formulating the most suitable approach of engaging Muslim communities within its own particularly centralised mode of governance.

II. Converging challenges: encouraging 'our national' Islam

The previous section focused on some of the key differences in how British and Russian government institutions and officials conceptualise the governance of Islam and engage with Muslim communities. What is rarely discussed is the degree of current convergence between the two discourses of building stronger bridges with the Muslim minorities. Similar security concerns and the lack of provisions for Muslim citizens to exercise their religious rights encourage government officials to 'nationalise loyal forms of Islam' and engage with moderate Muslim representatives in a more regulated way.

Despite Russia's distinct historical experience of state-Muslim relations, the current challenges faced by the post-Soviet elites are not dissimilar to those experienced by the British authorities. Both countries make attempts to rebuild Muslim infrastructure and improve the living conditions for Muslim citizens. Both share analogous security concerns regarding Islamic radicalisation. In order to accommodate Muslim minorities within the national interests of the majority, the state caters for the needs of its Muslim citizens, respects their rights and provides legal recognition of moderate Islam. In return, Muslim citizens are expected to promote

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[4] DUMERS, the Muslim Spiritual Board for European Russia and Siberia, later renamed the Central Spiritual Board (TsDUM), was formed in 1944 as the official governing body for the Muslims living in the territory of the Russian Federation (the RSFSR).

[5] For further details on the three dynamics of Russia's historic engagement with Islam, see Braginskaia (forthcoming).

[6] On Russia's unique ideological synthesis of spiritual and nationalist values, see Surkov 2008, 9-27.

tolerant Islam, in tune with the national civil values.

Moreover, state efforts to develop a British or Russian brand of Islam present an attempt to 'appropriate' the Islamic faith by disengaging it from its foreign roots and fusing it with the familiar sets of national values. There is a shared conviction that today's tension over Islam, and particularly its radical represen-tations, is not linked to 'our', 'home-grown' Islam, but to its 'imported version' (Markov 2009). A report commissioned by Communities and Local Government in 2007 states that 'British Islam is emerging as a powerful response to radical Islam' and that this version is 'integrationist and dynamic' (Department for Communities and Local Government 2007).

State efforts to engage with moderate voices from Muslim communities and promote 'home' versions of Islam demonstrate that both coun-tries seek to complement their counter-terrorist policies with a series of 'softer' measures designed to promote moderate Islam. They are accompanied by an increased level of state involvement in regulating and funding specific Muslim institutions whose agenda (or at least discourse) is compatible with the official line on religious tolerance and moderation. Similar measures involve state-sponsored programmes for imam training and Islamic education and improved provisions for Muslim religious practices and prayer spaces.

In Britain, state initiatives provided funding to local Muslim projects through the 'Community leadership fund', with extra resources being allocated to engage Muslim women and youth to participate in community life (Communities and Local Government 2008). Further funding channelled through the strategy of *Preventing Violent Extremism* have included subsidising and developing imam training programmes and materials designed to strengthen the connection between the Islamic faith and British secular values. Although these measures play a positive role in fostering more active participation, they are typical of the efforts to monitor and regulate Muslim

initiatives. Similarly, Russian officials tend to emphasise a policy of non-intervention into religious activities (Putin 2006). However, the state-sponsored programme of support has also included a more systematic patronage and monitoring of Islamic scholarship and education. For example, the Fund to Support Islamic Culture, Science and Education, established in 2007 by the joint efforts of state officials and senior Muslim representatives, has been created to selectively channel resources for publishing Islamic literature and Muslim educational projects.

State attempts to develop effective mechanisms of engaging Muslim communities have been accompanied by an increasingly conciliatory and inclusive discourse of 'shared values' and 'national belonging'. Official statements reveal a desire to find a common denominator between the allegedly shared civil values and a certain significance of being a British or a Russian Muslim. Moreover, there is an attempt to limit negative associations between Islam as a religion and extremism as a form of violence. For example in Britain, the discourse has focused on expressing British values through the notions of democracy, the rule of law and mutual tolerance between different faith communities. Gordon Brown talked of the need to 'disrupt the promoters of violent extremism … where by emphasising our shared values across communities we can both celebrate and act upon what unites us' (Brown 2009). That same year, guidance on counter-terrorism communications stressed the need to exercise caution and not make any unnecessary links between Islam and terrorism (Research, Information and Communications Unit 2007). There is a growing consistency in the rhetoric from different British government agencies, which aims to reinforce the same messages of home-grown, moderate Islam and its compatibility with the British way of life.

In Russia, the notion of shared values is conceptualised through the use of patriotic rhetoric and calls for national unity based on the moral and spiritual capital of Russia's

'traditional religions'. The official programme of the 'United Russia Party' for 2009 praises Islam as one of Russia's 'traditional religions', which are 'keepers of wisdom and experience passed down through the generations' and are therefore indispensible to understanding current social problems (Edinaia Rossiia 2009). President Dmitrii Medvedev has acknowledged the large contribution 'Muslim religious organisations make towards the civil peace and spiritual and moral upbringing of generations, fighting against extremism and xenophobia' (Medvedev 2009). Interestingly, he also calls on the media to be more sensitive and not to use the expression of 'Islamic extremism' because 'thugs have nothing to do with religion' (*Kommersant* 28 August 2009). A clear preference for a neutral discourse on security issues and the Islamic faith is thus a shared feature of state policies towards Muslim communities in Britain and Russia.

III. Muslim representative institutions: different organisations, similar functions

Official endorsement or at least selective engagement with Muslim representative institutions is an integral part of the secular institutionalisation of moderate forms of Islam in Europe. A number of studies on secular management of Muslim representation have focused on the processes leading to the formation of such Muslim representative organisations and their subsequent evolution into state-endorsed partners, entrusted with promoting Muslim integration (Lawrence 2006; Silvestri 2005).[7] State efforts to set up an administrative institution responsible for regulating Muslim religious practices in the public sphere has been particularly evident in France, where the Ministry of Interior played an active role in setting up the French Council for the Muslim Religion (CFCM) to give Islam its official status.[8] A clear constitutional separation

between state and religion and egalitarian accommodation of Muslim minorities facilitated the creation of such an institution, designed to represent Muslims' civic interests before the state, rather than their religious identities.

The lack of a similarly strict or reinforced separation between state and religion in Russia and Britain makes the conceptualisation of the secular governance of Islam more complex, resulting in a more nuanced set of relations between the state and the institution of the Muslim Council. In Britain, a greater variety of religious organisations has encouraged the government to develop decentralised patterns of engaging with Muslim representative institutions, which has been evident in official discourses on Muslim integration. In Russia, the existence of hierarchically structured Muslim institutions for religious representation and a degree of continuity in relations between Muslim religious leaders and government officials have contributed to the ease with which a more centralised dynamic of interaction has developed. A close cooperation between Muslim leaders and the government officials has been equally reinforced by a particular fusion of religious and patriotic rhetoric based on Russia's conceptualisation of its multi-ethnic and multi-religious identity.

Before examining the two different dynamics of state-Council relations in Britain and Russia, the following section focuses briefly on the two intermediary institutions, their different cha-racteristics and, what is most interesting, their similar administrative functions and limitations. The MCB and RCM act as auxiliaries to state policies of Muslim integration. By actively engaging with these organisations, the state attempts to 'steer' Muslim representation and promote moderate forms of Islam. A brief analysis of a series of interchanges between the Councils' leaders and government officials in

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[7] For a useful overview of studies on represen-tative Muslim bodies, see Maussen 2007, 30-31.

[8] On the creation of the CFCM, see Laurence, and Vaïsse 2006, Chapter 5, and Amiraux 2003. A

further comparison between the administrative functions, internal divisions and the role of the CFCM and the RCM in the constitutionally secular governance of Islam in France and Russia can be found in Braginskaia (forthcoming).

Britain and Russia brings to light the two contrasting patterns of horizontal and vertical regulation of religious representation.

The two Councils are very different institutions in the way they have developed, their institutional make-up, ethnic and religious composition, and internal power relations. They are highly contested by other organisations and must compete not only for state patronage, but also for community support. They claim to represent the majority of Muslim populations and aspire to be the main 'national' defender of Muslim interests before the state and other faith groups. However, they often suffer from internal disputes and a legitimacy deficit.

Very little comparative research has been done on these institutions to date (on the MCB, see Birt 2008 and McLoughlin 2005; on the RCM, see Silant'ev 2007 and Tulskii 2003). There is a tendency to dismiss them as unrepresentative and irrelevant. Some Muslims criticise them for being too closely linked to the government, while some state officials do not like some of the radical elements within these institutions. The leaders of the Councils are faced with an almost irreconcilable task of not upsetting the government while attempting to maintain their grass-root support.

The MCB was formed in 1997 as an umbrella body with over 500 local, regional and national affiliates, following a long process of consultation with a number of Muslim associations and organisations. In the aftermath of the controversy surrounding the Rushdie Affair, an independent 'National Interim Committee on Muslim Affairs' (NICMU) was formed in 1994 to carry out a countrywide consultation on the issues affecting the Muslim community. The questionnaires reconfirmed the need to create a representative umbrella body, which would pave the way for the eventual formation of the MCB. Today the Council consists of different working committees and a board of counsellors, with the General Assembly elected from the national, regional and local mosques and affiliated organisations every four years. It seeks to represent different Muslim interests,

speaks out on the impact of Islamophobia and anti-terrorist legislations, actively engages in the public life of Muslim citizens and promotes inter-faith dialogue.

The Council's leadership is keen to show its community roots and presents the institution as 'an initiative of the community, led by the community, for the service of the community' (Research & Documentation Committee of the MCB). Although the Council emphasises its voluntary basis, its creation has been strongly welcomed by the government. The Council gives voice to a number of moderate as well as radical Islamic figures. Although this provides a more pluralistic representation of Muslim interests, it hinders the Council's ability to work as a coherent actor. Some of its radical Islamic ideology and the style of community activism are increasingly challenged by other Muslim representative bodies, including the British Muslim Forum and the Sufi Council of Britain. Its over-reliance on the affiliated organisations undermines its grass-root support, while close identification with the government creates a problem for engaging with young Muslims.

The Russian Muslim Council is a centralised religious organisation which consists of the heads of the Muslim Spiritual Boards, under the leadership of Moscow-based mufti, Sheikh Ravil Gainutdin. It was formed in 1996, following a series of internal clashes within the existing regional structures of Muslim institutions and was created in direct competition to the long-established institution of the Central Spiritual Board (TsDUM). During Soviet times, the TsDUM represented Muslim interests within the Russian Federation (or the RSFSR). The turbulent 1990s provided new opportunities for creating new alliances and groupings within the Muslim Spiritual authorities, with the RCM gradually emerging as one of the clear favourites of the government.

The Council is currently one of the three large coordinated Muslim bodies in Russia. Unlike its British counterpart with its more democratic form of internal governance, the RCM represents a tightly structured,

hierarchical organisation. While remaining closely linked to the government, it claims to represent the majority of Muslim religious organisations in the public sphere and is increasingly entrusted with representing Russian Muslims in the international arena. It also has strong connections with the state and Moscow's local authorities. There are many other organisations that belong to the competing TsDUM, under the regional leadership of Mufti Talgat Tajuddin, while Muslim organisations in the North Caucasus are largely represented by the Coordinating Centre of Spiritual Boards of Muslims. Over the last few years the idea of creating a more unified body to represent Muslim interests has gained wider popularity with the heads of the three institutions. Although it is a religious duty of Muslim believers to unite and work together, in the Russian case, it is also symptomatic of hierarchical opportunities offered by the state's vertical approach to governance.

Despite their inherent differences, the Councils share similar priorities, administrative and religious responsibilities and play a similar role in state governance of Islam. They place the interests of Muslim citizens (practicing or non-practicing) on an equal footing with other religious groups by facilitating Muslim practices. They negotiate with public authorities to secure permissions for religious spaces and the renovation of places of worship. Both institutions deal with the issues of imam training and fulfilling state requirements by incorporating national civic values into the curriculum of Islamic education. Both regulate *halal* provisions, coordinate the dates of Islamic festivals and assist with provisions for the *hajj*. In other words, the two institutions carry out many mundane but crucial functions essential for supporting Muslim communities, negotiating with government officials and engaging with other religions.

The internal dynamics of religious governance requires the Councils to be effective administrators. However, their institutional legitimacy rests on a delicate balance between the spiritual and political responsibilities. If they become too religiously focused, they lack the ability to represent non-practicing Muslims within the officially secular debates. The British Muslim Council never claims to be a religious organisation: the accommodation of religious groups implies 'recognition and support of communities rather than… ecclesiastical or spiritual representation' (Modood 2009, 183-84). The Russian Council, on the other hand, aspires to be a religious body, although some of its spiritual credentials and the knowledge of Islam are continuously challenged by younger, more educated Muslims.

Should these councils not be purely administrative instruments or mechanisms for facilitating everyday life of Muslim communities and proactively catering for minority interests? If the emphasis is on 'governance' and religion is to be understood in its purely cultural dimension, the state is perhaps right to engage with the Councils as institutions representing Muslim interests in promoting the 'common good' (Britain) and encouraging 'national moral revival' (Russia). On the other hand, if the Councils only represent a cultural dimension of the Muslim identity, they face a risk of becoming religiously hollow institutions, lacking in spiritual authority and support from practicing Muslims. They become increasingly vulnerable to accusations of being 'co-opted' by the state to 'manage' Muslim communities. Stripping the institutions of their religious authority might result in an unnecessary friction between the secular and Islamic sources of authority.

IV. State-Council relations: horizontal and vertical modes of religious governance

The Muslim Councils are independent intermediary actors entrusted with representative and administrative functions over Muslim minorities. However, their institutional capacity is influenced by the specific regime of religious governance within which they operate. A further analysis of the ways each Council interacts with the state brings to light the

internal dynamics of horizontal and vertical patterns of state-Muslim relations. The scope of this section will be limited to discussing the opportunities and constraints provided by the mode of state engagement with the Councils and the level of competition from other Muslim organisations.

MCB and the British Government: the freedom of engagement

Over the last 10 years the British government has developed a rather complex relationship with the MCB by not only closely cooperating but also distancing itself from the institution. In the late 1990s, the New Labour administration welcomed the creation of the MCB as a more centralised organisation collectively representing Muslim interests in Britain. The MCB may not be fully representative of all Muslim opinions in Britain, but its organisational structure is based on democratic principles of consultation and internal elections.

The Council enjoys good relations with the government if it refrains from making any radical statements and cultivates the idea of 'common good' which resonates with the British values of social cohesion. It is instrumental in reducing community tensions, promoting moderate forms of Islam and accommodating Muslim interests. However, its refusal to take part in the Holocaust Memorial Day in 2006 as well as its more recent statements about the situation in Gaza cost it the government's financial and moral backing. Ruth Kelly openly voiced a clear strategy of 'funding … [only] … those organisations that are taking a proactive leadership role in tackling extremism and defending … shared values' (Kelly 2006). This move was strongly criticised by the MCB, which had its funding cut as a result. Dr. Abdul Bari, the former Secretary of the Council, wrote in response that the 'indication that only those organisations that agree with your particular strategy as the best way to fight extremism will receive your favours is another way of saying that only those who support your government can expect to receive public funds' (MCB 2006).

A vast diversity of Muslim groups, encouraged by a more liberal framework of state-religion cooperation and less invasive policies, allows the British government to be more selective in its choice of partners for governing Islam. The highly competitive environment of Muslim representation in Britain ensures that the Council is not the only representative of Muslim interests (Qenawi 2007). There are no provisions precluding state financial assistance to religious organisations and the state does not necessarily have to rely on a single Muslim institution to engage with Muslim communities. The British government has been free to channel financial resources to specific Muslim organisations, as has been recently demonstrated by its support for the Sufi Council and the British Muslim Forum.

A key advantage of the British horizontal approach is its flexibility. While the government is free to distance itself from one of its institutional partners, it is also free to re-instate its relations with the institution, provided a series of conciliatory steps have been made on both sides. Most of the interactions take place between the leadership of the MCB and senior officials in the Local Government. Following the exchange of letters between the MCB and the Department for Communities and Local Government's Secretary General earlier this year, there is currently a clear improvement in the state-Council relations. The government has promised 'not to be cut off entirely from significant voices in the community' as it welcomed the Council's support for British forces abroad and its determination to build better relations with the Jewish community (Denham 2010).

The change in the government's position may also be explained by the growing criticism of the way it distributed financial resources under the *Preventing Violent Extremism* programme. The report from the House of Commons, mentioned earlier, voiced a growing concern that the government's involvement in regulating and funding Muslim activities may have reflected its desire to 'engineer a

"moderate" form of Islam, promoting and funding only those groups which conform to this model' (House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee). The strength of the horizontal approach to religious governance is its extensive and arguably more democratic engagement with civil society institutions and a greater capacity for policy change.

Discursive shifts in formulating the general direction of state policies on Muslim representation may not be indicative of the actual changes in policies themselves but are representative of the changing dynamic of how these policies are being conceptualised and communicated. A potential danger of the British approach may lie in its over-commitment to Muslim communities and inability to provide adequate and simultaneous support for a variety of Muslim activities. While this approach does not always result in improving the lives of Muslim citizens, it is often accompanied by somewhat over-zealous ideological and security demands on Muslims to integrate and share British values.

RCM and the Russian Government: the institutional consolidation

Close cooperation between official Muslim figures and state officials is an important element of Russia's vertical governance of Islam. While Muslim leaders draw attention to 'Muslim patriotism' and praise the good care the government takes of its Muslim citizens, the government acknowledges the input of Muslim religious authorities and organisations in 'fighting against extremism and xenophobia' (Medvedev 2009). The Council's spokesmen prefer to emphasise the partnership aspect of their engagement with the state. There is a shared understanding that the internal stability and spiritual revival of the nation requires a consolidation of Muslim structures of administration. This arrangement gives a greater justification for the state efforts to bring state-Islam relations within its own vertical structures of administration.

Highly centralised, vertical structures of government support have become the norm, so much that according to one commentator, 'a specific feature of the Russian state is that everything is permeated by the state'.[9] Russia's vertical arrangement of state-Islam relations allows the Council to act in the interests of the state while representing Muslim communities. Although in the domestic sphere many Muslims may resent the Council's strong commitment to the state, in foreign relations such an arrangement has proven quite effective. The state benefits from the RCM's ties with Muslim institutions abroad to build a stronger emotional connection with its Muslim citizens, while a systematic accommodation of its Muslim communities presents Russia in a better light to the Muslim World.

Recent discussions on the unification of Muslim regional organisations highlight the current drive for greater consolidation of Muslim institutions within the hierarchical principles of religious governance. In 2005 the idea to create a unified structure of Muslim authorities and elect a single Mufti of Russia was met with certain scepticism by religious leaders and Muslim communities alike (*Kommersant* 22 April 2005). By 2010 the renewed discussions on consolidating Muslim representation have been largely welcomed by the RCM and other official Muslim organisations, with Sheikh Ravil Gainutdin suggested as one of the most likely figures to head the new consultative structure.

According to the opinion poll conducted by the League of Muslim Journalists in March 2010, the majority of Muslim leaders support a gradual unification of regional Muslim boards, although some have stressed the need for bottom-up representation and warned against the dangers of creating such an organisation from the top (Muslim Press, March 2010). Creating a single, unified organisation of Muslim representation is beneficial to promoting Islam

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[9] Interview with senior representative from *Islam.Ru*, Moscow, 15 October 2008.

and combating extremism. It reflects a growing readiness to resolve internal leadership disputes and overcome the fragmentary nature of Russia's *umma* (Muslim community). And yet, it is also symptomatic of hierarchical consolidation authority and a centralising dynamic of religious administration.

In the Russian context, where unofficial organisations remain relatively weak, this tight partnership may be viewed as a necessary step to ensure that Muslim communities are represented at the national level. A more centralised form of governance is beneficial to consolidating the flow of financial resources and political opportunities needed to improve the Muslim infrastructure. Some commentators suggested that it might be helpful to use the model of the Orthodox Church to represent Muslim religious interests. Although these ideas are difficult to implement because of the a-hierarchal nature of spiritual authority in Islam, state officials look favourably on the possibility of having one Muslim interlocutor to engage with. Moreover, there is a widespread belief that a single national Muslim organisation, consisting of the key moderate Muslim figures loyal to the Kremlin, can provide strong opposition to radical Islamic movements, particularly in the North Caucasus.

However, over-reliance on the vertical mode of engagement has a number of implications for the governance of Islam and the representation of Muslim communities. The first issue is the problem of the bureaucratisation of religious figures by close identification with the state. By bringing Muslim representatives within its administrative mechanisms, the state risks widening the gap between Muslim leaders and the communities they represent. Close cooperation with the state leaves the official Muslim figures vulnerable to accusations of channelling down state demands to integrate and root out any manifestations of extremism, rather than voicing up the economic, social or political needs of Muslim communities. Moreover, the lack of competition from other

organisations reduces the level of institutional transparency and accountability.

Another implication of the vertical power distribution lies in the asymmetrical representation of Muslim interests along ethnic and religious lines. Different schools of Islamic thought which have given a special character to Muslim representation at the regional level may have partly contributed to the difficulty of forming a single representative organisation in the past. While these tensions are unavoidable, they become a serious issue if one ethnic community is allowed to dominate the Council and project its own agenda. This asymmetrical distribution of power may lead to a rather skewed institutionalisation of Islam with the interests and beliefs of one community promoted as the official version of Islam.

For example, Tatar representatives have traditionally occupied key positions in the RCM. They exercise a considerable influence as the government looks more favourably on their moderate teachings, namely the Hanafi school of Islam (on the Hanafi teachings, see Gainutdin 2009). A Tatar brand of Islam has been considered suitable for the Russian context because of its strong preoccupation with education and moderation and long tradition of imam training. However, any efforts to create a single administrative body of Muslim representation will have to take into account Russia's diverse Islamic traditions and beliefs.

Finally, the vertical patterns of religious governance can become unstable because of the built-in rigidity of its pyramid-like structure. It is difficult to imagine the state changing its set of preferred interlocutors once certain bureaucratic provisions are in place without upsetting the entire arrangement. If the relationship between the government and the RCM, or an even more centralised organisation, deteriorates, will it still be possible for the state to retract its support and disengage as we have seen in the British case? If this is simply a matter of replacing one Muslim official with another, how independent and representative would such an organisation be? Discrediting the

credentials of a state-endorsed institution cannot but negatively reflect on state-Muslim relations.

The Russian approach of close cooperation with specific Muslim figures contains a strong preference for a top-down institutionalisation of Islam. However, the patterns of such a vertical engagement have not been 'locked in place'. There is some limited scope for discussing alternative arrangements to improve the lives of Muslims in specific social or educational domains, provided Muslim unofficial organisations are given sufficient space within the public sphere.

Conclusion

The article addressed the question of religious governance by comparing state engagement with Muslim communities in Britain and Russia. It has tried to expand the existing state-religion typologies to incorporate a stronger political dimension and differentiate between liberal and conservative ways of accommodating minority rights. While the factor of state-religion relations is critical to understanding the complexities of state-Islam engagement, the political element and the associated bureaucratic tendencies play an important role in state policies towards Islam.

The securitised approach to accommodating Muslim needs has resulted in a partial blurring between the state's responsibilities towards its Muslim citizens and a strong state involvement in Muslim representation in the public sphere. While in Britain this has been communicated by delegating the authority to the local level, Russia has been increasingly involved in centralising its institutional structures and creating an overarching discourse of national unity and spiritual revival. Although both approaches have had some successes, they have also shared a number of criticisms, including asymmetrical representation of Muslim interests in Russia and excessive 'essentialising' of Muslim religious identity in Britain.

Finding 'suitable' partners within the Muslim communities who are sufficiently qualified to represent the complexity of Muslim religious, social and political interests is one of the most challenging aspects of state policies on Islam. Without underestimating the key differences of horizontal and vertical patterns of state-Muslim relations, the research agenda can particularly benefit from identifying the level of convergence. State efforts to control the promotion of moderate forms of Islam have challenged the established arrangements between state and religion and questioned the acceptable boundaries of state involvement with intermediary institutions. These similarities bring out certain aspects of state paternalism, which has hindered the state engagement with Muslim communities through excessive prescribing of 'acceptable' forms of moderate Islam and tighter controls on anything that does not 'fit' the requirements.

The article has focused on tracing horizontal and vertical tendencies of Muslim governance by analysing a series of interactions between state officials and Muslim senior representatives. It highlighted some of the discursive shifts and policy reformulations in light of the security challenges and potentially divisive measures that tend to isolate the religious element of the Muslim identity. Political institutionalisation of Islam encourages negotiation and accommodation not only of Muslim communities to the secular management of religion, but also of traditional state-religion relations to the presence of Muslim communities. This highlights a certain fluidity of secular arrangements and the states' willingness to act not only as regulators and facilitators of this process but also as supporters of Muslim representative institutions. The official rhetoric on Muslim integration continues to treat 'Muslim citizens' as a problematic 'category', whose 'separate' rights/needs have to be protected, while its 'Islamic' activities are monitored. And yet, there is a promising indication that a more neutral discourse might lead to more inclusive patterns of engagement, respecting the plurality of Muslim identity, without necessarily securitising its religious dimension.

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Immigration and Gentrification –

a case study of cultural restructuring in Flushing, Queens

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Abstract:
The aim of this article is to introduce how culture and economics intertwine in urban re-structuring before and after the 1990 recession in New York City by using the case study of Flushing, Queens. My research will bring in a cultural perspective to contribute to the understanding of gentrification as economic, social and cultural restructuring under the impact of international immigration. First, this case of neighbourhood transfiguration was initially triggered by a private immigrant developer, not a cooperation, whose successes were based on factors including Taiwanese immigrants' residential and housing preferences in the 1980s and 1990s. Ethnic residential preference and cultural tastes are cultural factors which accelerated gentrification during the early 1990s recession. The residential pattern of Asian immigrants in New York has showed the continued concentration of ethnic enclaves since the 1980s. Secondly, there has been diversification in Flushing since the 1980s, which is different from the kind of gentrification which creates a social, economic, and racial hegemony in a neighbourhood. The diversification of races and ethnicities in this neighbourhood has increased since the 1980s through the contribution of post-1965 and later post-Cold War immigrants, especially the settlement of Asian immigrants. We need to distinguish between gentrification that creates homogenous racial or ethnic communities that push immigrants out, and this new form of super-diversity gentrification, based on a transnational flow of capital that fosters diversity and uses diversity as a form of investment capital.

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The first aim of this article is to introduce how culture and economics intertwine in urban re-structuring before and after the 1990 recession in New York City by using the case study of Flushing, Queens. The early 1990s recession was a turning point for gentrification in New York, but this turning point has still not been satisfactorily explained. Many argue that gentrification is now fundamentally different than it was in the 1970s and 1980s, but overlook the details of how it works (Lees 2000). Others (Bondi 1999; Ley 1996) hint

that the process has changed but provide few summaries of what those changes might be. My research will bring in a cultural perspective to contribute to the understanding of gentrification as economic, social and cultural restructuring under the impact of international immigration. Second, this study also discovers that there were two waves of diversification taking place in Flushing. The first wave was caused by post-1965 migration and the second wave by post-Cold War migration. We need to distinguish between gentrification that creates

www.unesco.org/shs/diversities/vol12/issue1/art6

homogenous racial or ethnic communities that push immigrants out, and this new form of super-diversity gentrification, based on the transnational flow of capital that fosters diversity and uses diversity as a form of investment capital.

Many studies focus on the question of changes in gentrification before and after the 1990 recession and argue that the early 1990s slowdown was actually a precursor to accelerated gentrification because baby boomers might choose the inner city as a place of retirement (Lees and Bondi 1995; Ley 1996). This assumption raises another question concerning the rationale of what and how gentrification takes place in suburban areas. Indeed, Flushing, located in northern Queens, is a newly gentrified suburban city.

Hypotheses, Research Questions and Research Method

This study examines the interconnection of cultural preference and economic factors in the gentrification of Flushing, New York. Gentrification has been defined as the production of urban space for more affluent users. Most studies on gentrification focus on economic factors. In the past 15 years, there have been some debates on both cultural and economic factors in urban studies (Barnes 2003; Ley 1996). The economic school tends to look at the demand and supply side. Some argue that the return of gentrification after 1990 represents nothing less than a reassertion of economics over culture. Recognition of the importance of the cultural factor slowly appears in cases studies, such as Hackworth (2001) and Mitchell (1999). Culture has been recognised as a meaningful – rather than a structurally residual – factor in the production of urban spaces. A wave of urban studies has explored the role of culture in the production of cities during the past decade (Mitchell 1999). Yet the divide between economic or cultural restructuring does not always provide a complete analytical tool. There is no clear division in many case studies.

Both Mitchell and Hackworth point out that the idea is not to simply add culture as an extra autonomous variable in the study of cities. As Mitchell (1993) said, 'Treating culture as an explanatory variable in the production of landscapes can sometimes downplay the ways in which culture is deliberately produced by economic interests to increase the circulation of capital.' For example, Mitchell's study in Vancouver demonstrates how the ethos of multiculturalism was deployed and purposely managed by wealthy Hong Kong real estate interests to justify the hyper-valuation of real estate markets in Vancouver, British Columbia. Her research focused on how the actions of real estate developers increased land value by using ethnic culture as a tactic, or what Hackworth and Rekers (2005) have called the performance of 'ethnic packaging'. Based on her findings, Mitchell suggests that culture is neither completely organic nor completely autonomous in the production of urban space.

Hackworth's (2002) study on gentrification points to four fundamental changes in the way that gentrification works in New York City. First, corporate developers are now more common initial gentrifiers than before. Second, the state, at various levels, is fuelling the process more directly than in the past. Third, anti-gentrification social movements have been marginalised within the urban political sphere. Finally, the land economics of inner-city investment have changed in ways that accelerate certain types of neighbourhood changes.

Many other case studies in New York City neighbourhoods tend to focus on the relationship between gentrification and capital investment in the inner core of New York. In another study on citywide inner-city real estate investment, gentrification, and economic recession in New York City, Hackworth (2001) discovered that suburban areas of eastern Queens, southern Staten Island, and the eastern Bronx experienced a milder reduction of sales activity during the recession than the inner core. After the recession, the highest

percentage gains in sales activity were experienced in the inner core, whereas the suburban fringe experienced a more limited rise. New construction activity was relegated mostly to the suburban fringe of the city – predominately to Staten Island and eastern Queens. Much of central Queens experienced a decrease in the number of demolitions during the recession, suggesting that disinvestment there was slowing. Massive immigration throughout the 1990s had kept demand for housing there strong (Hackworth 2001).

The change of centre/periphery growth is different to ethnic concentration in Queens. How do we understand ethnic concentration as in the case of Flushing? Is it white flight, an ethnic enclave or ethnic succession? Historically, Chinatown has been viewed as an ethnic ghetto or minority community. Earlier studies consider Chinatowns in North America as 'characterized by a concentration of Chinese people and economic activities in one or more city block which forms a unique component of the urban fabric. It is basically an idiosyncratic oriental community amidst an occidental urban environment' (Lai 1973: 101). New immigrants consider ethnic communities to be a shelter within the host society. They obtain ethnic social capital by finding documented or undocumented jobs from co-ethnic employers and also find comfort in enclaves due to the limitation of linguistic dependency and ethnic food preferences.

As for the decrease of the white population in Flushing, it was partially caused by the old residents moving out after selling their properties to newcomers for hundreds of thousands of dollars. 'White flight' is a term indicating the departure of white residents from urban communities as the population of minority residents increases. Laura Pulidos believes that the process of suburbanisation and urban decentralisation contributed to contemporary environmental racism (Pulido 2000). The decline of the white population was associated with the increase of the Asian population. In an interview with me, Dr. L. F.

Chen, member of the Taiwan Merchant Association and member of the board of directors of the Taiwan Center, notes that there was discontent and conflict with old white residents during the increase of the Asian population in the 1980s and 1990s.

'Ethnic enclave' is a term indicating that an ethnic neighbourhood retains cultural distinction from a larger, surrounding area. It also indicates an ethnic business that is run by the members of the community. Ethnic enclaves may be formed involuntarily, which is similar to the concept of an 'ethnic ghetto', due to housing discrimination or the preference of religious minorities. What are the initial decisions establishing a divided ethnic neighbourhood separate from main-stream culture and old Chinatown? In this regard, I will elaborate on the history of the building of 'little Taipei' in Flushing later. Community business leaders in Flushing may also find ways to promote ethnic enclaves as tourist attractions, such as the promotion of the Lunar New Year Parade.

Could ethnic enclaves trigger gentrification? Hackworth and Rekers (2005) argue that some of these areas function as abrading mechanisms to produce nearby residential gentrification. Some neighbourhood institutions have recognised this attraction and have begun to manufacture a saleable form of ethnicity to tourists and prospective residents alike, called 'ethnic packaging' in reference to the process of gentrification in Canada. Hackworth and Rekers discovered that '[t]hese institutions actively manage and sell an ethnic identity that is increasingly at odds with nearby residential patterns. The commercial areas of these neighborhoods now function less as areas of identification of the stated group, and more as ways to market each neighborhood's residential real estate markets' (Hackworth and Rekers 2005: 23). Could packaged ethnicity facilitate gentrification? Hackworth and Rekers present several thriving cases in Canada in which they explored the relationship between produced culture and economics in the

gentrification of ethnically defined inner-city neighbourhoods (Hackworth and Rekers 2005).

While examining social change in Canadian inner cities since 1970, David Ley (1996) hypothesised that the resurgence of the middle class in downtown areas is linked to the growth of professional and managerial employment in service industries and to favourable government policies. Ley documents the emergence of a new middle class and the origins of their residential preferences for downtown neighbourhoods. He concludes that neighbourhood movements and reform politics have been elitist, mainly serving the interests of the affluent new middle class, and that reform politics also foundered due to the divided interests of the new middle class.

Like Ley, the 'culture school' sees gentrification as spatial expression of a critical class (Caufield 1994; Ley 1996), built on the notion of consumer dominance in tastes. According to this view, neighbourhoods gentrify primarily because tastes and preferences have changed, including an increasingly large segment of society that rejects the suburbs – because of the distance to work, the isolation, the lack of diversity – in favour of inner-city living (Ley 1996). In the case of Flushing, gentrification involves the changing tastes of different ethnicities instead of simple social classes. The changing tastes of ethnicities refer not only to change in consumption, but also to changes in values and beliefs, etc.

The research used in this study involved a triangulation of methods, including ethnography, GIS analysis, and focus groups. The ethnography and focus groups were carried out during the Ecology of Learning Project between October 2007 and June 2008. GIS analysis was conducted together with Dr. Norbert Winnige at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in 2010. United States census data was used to identify the pattern of ethnic residential preference.

Transfiguration of Flushing

Throughout its history, New York has been a city of immigrants and one of the gateway cities to the United States. The flow of immigrants has changed not only the demographics of New York, but has also revitalised some declining neighbourhoods. My research has discovered that Flushing is not a 'satellite city' of the traditional Chinatown (Manhattan) as described by sociologist Jan Lin (Lin 1998). This article argues that the rise of Flushing created a promised land for Taiwanese entrepreneurs in the 1980s and 1990s and has more recently become a new centre for ethnic Chinese immigrants after September 11, 2001.

From 1880 to 1920, close to a million and a half immigrants arrived and settled in the city, so by 1910 fully 41 percent of all New Yorkers were foreign-born (Foner 2007). More than two and a half million have arrived since 1965. A survey of New York City households taken by the US Census Bureau in 1999 revealed that 40 percent of the city's 7.4 million people are now foreign-born.[1] The top five groups in 1990 - Dominicans, Chinese, Jamaicans, Italians, and residents of the former USSR – made up just under 30 percent of all post-1965 arrivals there. In 1998, the top five groups were Dominicans, immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Mexicans, Chinese, and Guyanese.[2]

Asians coming to America, including Chinese, have increasingly settled in Queens, New York. We have witnessed the concentration of Asian residences and the new formation of an Asiantown in Queens. In 2000, half of Asian New Yorkers lived in Queens, where Asians constituted 19 percent of the population.[3] According to the 1990 Census,

[1] U.S. Census Bureau 1990, http://www.census.gov/.

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, March 1998, http://www.census.gov/.

[3] Asian American Federation, http://www.aafny.org/default.asp; U.S. Census Bureau 2000, http://www.census.gov/.

there were 164,586 Asian Americans living in Queens. Among them, 145,362 were post-1965 arrivals.[4] In 1998, the number went up to 159,973.[5] Asians comprised nearly a quarter of the city's post-1964 foreign-born population (Foner 2000).

Since the 1980s, Flushing, Queens, has been the site of a new and revived commercial zone. Its prosperity reflects not only the successful investment of Taiwanese and Korean merchants, but also the formation of a new Asian community with a unique kind of religious pluralism. The 2000 United States Census Bureau ranked Queens County as the ninth most populous county in the United States with over 2.2 million residents.[6] According to the Census Bureau, Queens County experienced an over 14 percent increase in population since the 1990 census. The 2000 Census also reflected the growth of the Asian population in Queens County with over 391,500 people identifying themselves as Asian Americans. More than half of Flushing's population is Asian American, and many of the neighbourhoods around Flushing also have an increasing number of Asian American residents. It is also claimed that Flushing has the largest ethnic Chinese community in the New York metropolitan area, surpassing the number in Manhattan's Chinatown.

A Different Kind of Gentrification Triggered by a Minority Group

The initial transfiguration of Flushing took place in early 1981, before the financial recession in the late 1980s, and was triggered by a minority group, Taiwanese American immigrants. Similar to Hackworth's description, developers, seeking potential benefit, usually initiated changes. The initiative which prompted the transfiguration of Flushing was

started by a single Taiwanese immigrant, Tommy Huang. One might expect to see the involvement of the state in fostering this transformation, but, interestingly, the state was not present in this case. The Flushing Business Improvement District (BID) was not established until September 2003, disregarding the protest from small merchants who were afraid of being marginalised by this transition. The aid of the local government arrived after the transfiguration of this neighbourhood. Finally, the anti-gentrification movements were initiated by old white residents who had been marginalised and eventually moved out of the neighbourhood by selling their properties. This is somewhat different from Hackworth's description of gentrification.

Gentrification in the area can be traced to a Taiwanese developer and the savings he brought with his family from his home country. From the 1930s to the 1950s, the neighbourhood had been predominantly white Anglo-Saxon Protestant and most churches had large, active memberships. In 1981, there were only two restaurants in downtown Flushing; in 1998, this area became the fifth largest shopping area in New York City. How did this development take place? One man, Tommy Huang, created a real-estate empire in Queens by constructing hundreds of buildings, a tale begun on Main Street in Flushing. No one could have predicted that the 27-year-old Huang would create New York's second Asiantown in the 1990s.

There are several reasons for the concentration and investment of Taiwanese business capital in downtown Flushing. First of all, starting in the late 1970s, these family-oriented type immigrants were middle-class people who owned private capital and who emigrated from Taiwan with their fortunes due to the development of Taiwan's economy. This middle-class population lost their old business networks when they migrated, but real estate was still a business in which they prospered. Second, in the 1980s, a global immigration market where nation-states

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[4] U.S. Census Bureau 1990, http://www.census.gov/.

[5] U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and March 1998.

[6] U.S Census Bureau 2000, http://www.census.gov/.

competed with each other to attract potential business immigration emerged. Immigrant visas became ever more available to people with financial resources who were willing to invest in the host country (Tseng 1997). The major question became where they would invest in real estate. Why would Taiwanese newcomers choose Flushing over Elmhurst, which was also a main destination for many early Taiwanese immigrants in New York? Investment in Flushing created one of the few alternatives to Manhattan Chinatown for many Taiwanese immigrants, including Taiwanese overseas nationalists and individual investors. However, my interview with Tommy Huang, a pioneer private developer, unveils the cultural logics that underlie both residential and investment preferences for early Taiwanese Americans.

According to the interviews with Tommy Huang and L. F. Chen, Huang's vision brought him to invest in downtown Flushing, a declining neighbourhood where more than 50 percent of shops were closed in the 1980s. Huang started his first development project on Main Street between 37th Avenue and 38th Avenue. He first targeted new Taiwanese immigrants based on the calculation of cultural and social capital. Due to zoning restrictions, some land Huang purchased in downtown Flushing was intended for commercial and light industry purposes. For commercial zones, office buildings are built and sold for business quickly. More than half of the commercial buildings were built by Huang in the 1980s, and later five apartment buildings and one mall. Yet his first success was with commercial-and-residential combination buildings.

How could a small developer with only $500,000 transfigure the landscape of downtown Flushing? The economic decline of downtown Flushing may have provided a golden chance of buying inexpensive land, but it was culture factors that helped Huang sell his first building even without actually starting construction. Huang realised that Taiwanese immigrants favoured commercial-and-resi-

dential combination housing, as they did in Taiwan. Huang designed the three-story buildings mixing street-level stores and second and third levels of residential housing. Owners could easily rent the first and second levels to new immigrants and live on the top level. Many of them might also choose to run small businesses on street-level stores, rent the second floor out, and live on the top floor. This kind of building design reflected the characters of Taiwanese as conservative investors who gained the security of owning real estate.

Mixing commercial and residential housing also provided a financial benefit. Legal restrictions prohibit developers from selling residential buildings before they complete the whole construction. In contrast, New York state law was more relaxed on commercial buildings. Huang could actually start collecting 10 percent of the down payment by showing his floor plans to his buyers, and another 10 percent after the developers finished partial construction of buildings. Therefore, Huang, as a small developer, could create the Flushing miracle with limited capital within a decade.

Huang's innovation in real estate development is based on his careful calculation of the cultural habits of new Taiwanese immigrants in the 1980s and New York State Law. Before the 1980s, most Taiwanese and Asian immigrants lived in Elmhurst, Queens, an ethnic enclave, or later, in Long Island for better school districts. Why would Taiwanese and Asians move to Flushing? I argue that it is because of ethnic residential preference, cultural taste or cultural preference. Here I provide two analyses to prove this assertion. The first one is a counter-argument to that of Jan Lin, who regarded the transfiguration of Flushing as a satellite city of old Chinatown in Manhattan. The second is an analysis of residential patterns based on US census data since the 1980s.

Lin (1998) argues that the emergence of satellite Chinatowns in the outer boroughs of New York City is mainly an outcome of congestion in the core Chinatown of Manhattan. As Lin pointed out, the emergence of a gateway

town conforms with an emerging area of primary settlement for new immigrants to the metropolis. Examples of this are Crown Heights for West Indians and 'little Odessa' in Brighton Beach for Russian Jews. These trends contrast with classic urban suppositions that inner-ring suburbs (such as New York's outer boroughs) would be areas of secondary settlement for upwardly mobile immigrants (Lin 1998).

Although Flushing today has become a gateway for new flows of labour and capital that are leapfrogging the core, I disagree with Lin's claim that Flushing, which he calls a satellite Chinatown, was initially formed as an area of secondary settlement. The investment in Flushing was based on a developer's careful calculation that Taiwanese immigrants were seeking a politically, socially, and ethnically different settlement area than that of 'traditional Chinatown', where most of the old settlers

were from Taishan, Canton, and Hong Kong.

Lin correctly observed the emergence of a satellite, such as the new Chinatown on Eighth Avenue in Brooklyn (or sometimes called Sunset Park Chinatown). This satellite is an extension of both the lower and upper circuits of the enclave economy; restaurants and garment sweatshops can be found in satellite Chinatowns as well as transnational banks and foreign investors. Lin also stressed that residential and economic decentralisation on a fundamental level is determined by ecological variables of population density, scarcity of housing, and high land values in the urban core. Residential out-movers are additionally motivated by preferences for privacy and space; their outward geographic mobility, enabled by household savings, also reflects upward social mobility. Economic out-movers follow somewhat in the path of residential decentralisation; small enterprises find that labour is available in
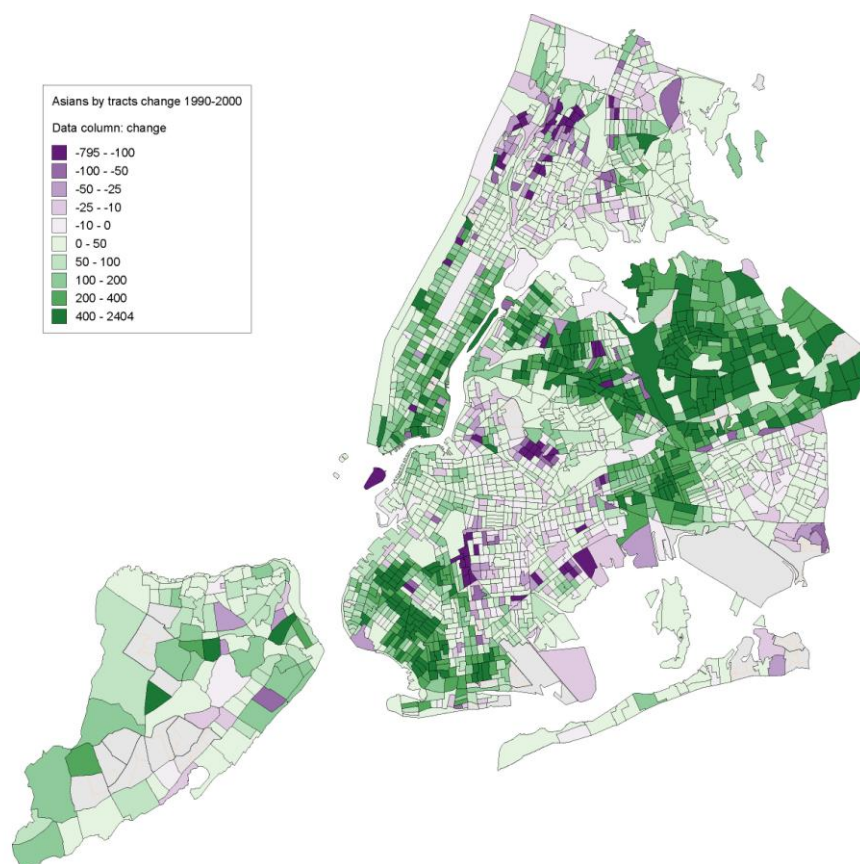
Map 1. Asians by track change 1990-2000. Dr. Norbert Winnige and Weishan Huang.
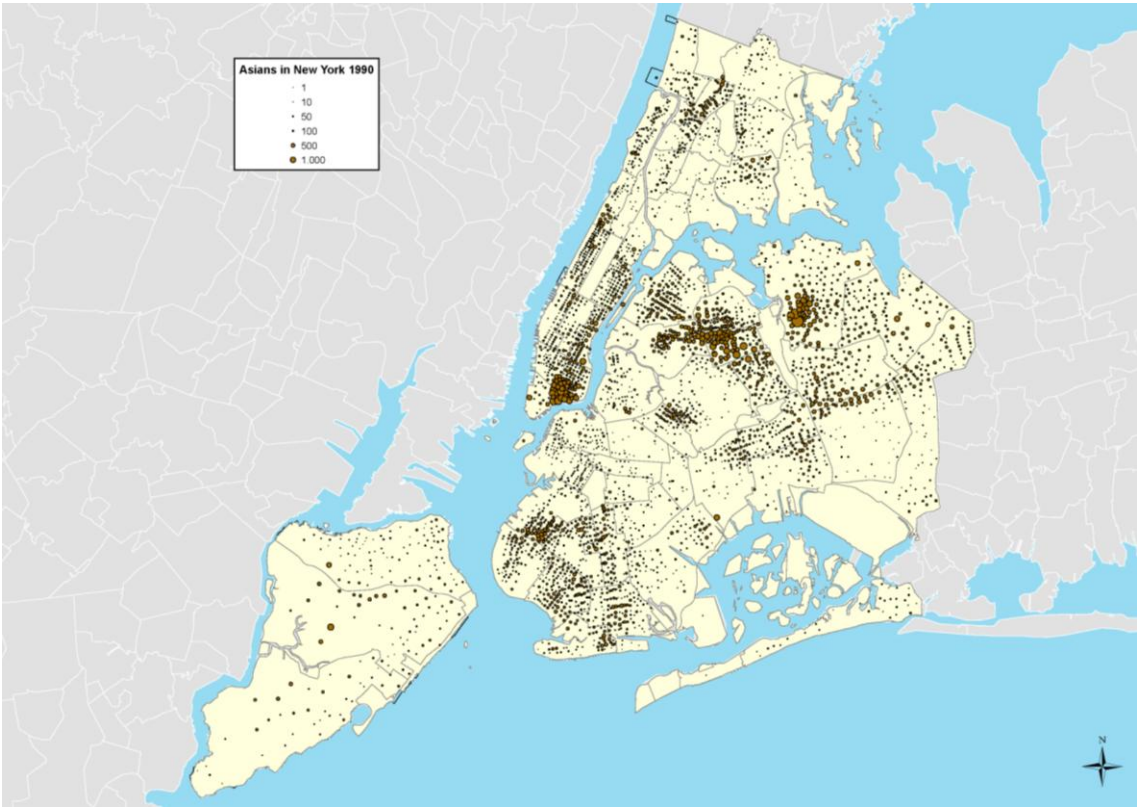
Map 2. Asians in New York 1990, Dr. Norbert Winnige and Weishan Huang.
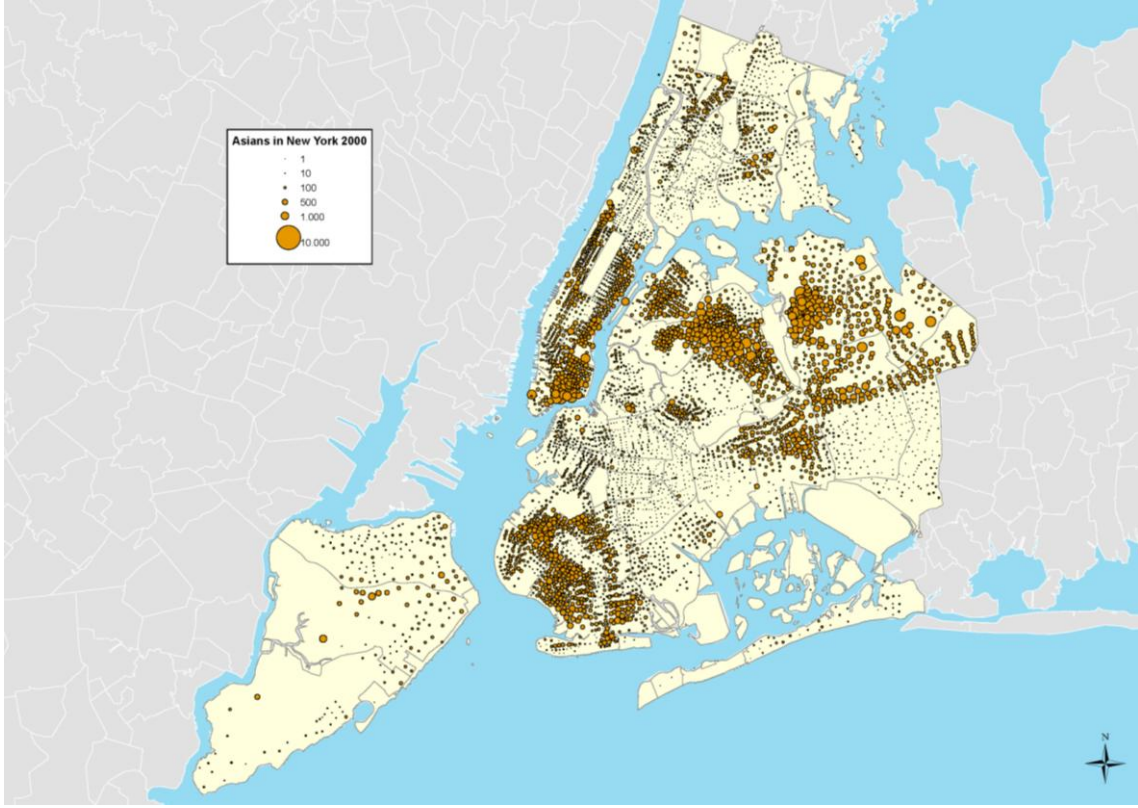
Map 3. Asians in New York 2000. Dr. Norbert Winnige and Weishan Huang.

the outer boroughs, and banks similarly find that residents there have monetary savings to deposit and invest (Lin 1998).

In the late 1990s, Flushing received more and more new Chinese immigrants not only from southern China but also from both eastern and northern China. Where do they like to live and whom do they like to live with? Our GIS map tells us that Asians tend to live with Asians in New York, including in four Asian concentration neighbourhoods.

On this map, besides the heavy concentration of Chinese in traditional Chinatown, Manhattan, Asians tend to choose neighbourhoods with a high concentration of Asians. This similar residential pattern of Asians can be observed in the neighbourhoods of Flushing (Queens), Elmhurst (Queens), and Sunset Park (Brooklyn).

Map 2 and Map 3 illustrate the process of concentration of Asians. US Census data can only illustrate the special choices for new Asian immigrants, but cannot tell us more about who they are and how they make the decisions about residential preference. My previous ethnography has discovered that Taiwanese elites and nationalists tend to choose Flushing, Queens, as new settlement because of social, political, and economic reasons. Taiwanese elites, many of whom have high educational backgrounds, preferred to live in Flushing in order separate themselves from the image of traditional working-class immigrants in Chinatown, Manhattan. Overseas Taiwanese nationalists, many of whom were persecuted by the Kuomingtang (Muo Ming Party) regime and could not return to Taiwan, were busy building a 'Little Taipei' as a base for political solidarity. The examination of the Asian immigrant profile in Flushing will continue in the next section.

The Investment in a New Promised Land – the Continued Gentrification of the Neighbourhood

The gentrification of Flushing did not slow down because of the economic recession. We see the pattern of continued concentration of

ethnic residential patterns in Flushing (also Sunset Park in Brooklyn). Cultural gentryfication accelerates and sustains the continued economic gentrification in these neighbourhoods.

According to the US census, in 2006, the Chinese population made up 57 percent (63,811) of the entire Asian population in Community District 7, Flushing. In 2006, Flushing residents in CD 7 were composed of 57 percent Chinese, 26 percent Korean, 8 percent Indian, 4 percent Filipino and 5 percent other Asian immigrants.[7]

Chinese immigrants increasingly moved to Flushing for business and for residence purposes. The building of a 'Little Taipei' in Flushing faded in the late 1990s as post-Cold War Chinese new immigrants quickly outnumbered Taiwanese immigrants. When post-Cold War Chinese immigrants moved into New York, their presence further diversified the already diverse ethnic communities. Each ethnic sub-group tends to form its own social networks for business and later hometown associations for political identity and solidarity. New York has witnessed an increased process of diversification of cultural and political groupings among ethnic Chinese communities over the last two decades.

According to the information from the New York City Planning Department, the continued trend of neighbourhood gentrification in Flushing continues. The median rent has increased from $832 in 2000, to $1095 in 2005 and $1160 in 2006, which is almost a 40 percent increase in six years. The median home value has increased from $269,043 in 2000, to $496,500 in 2005 to $535,700 in 2006, which is almost a 50 percent increase in six years.[8]

Ethnicity and cultural intimacy among Asian immigrants are the factors accelerating the gentrification. The capital investment of

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[7] New York City Department of City Planning, http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/home.html.
[8] New York City Department of Planning, http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/home.html.
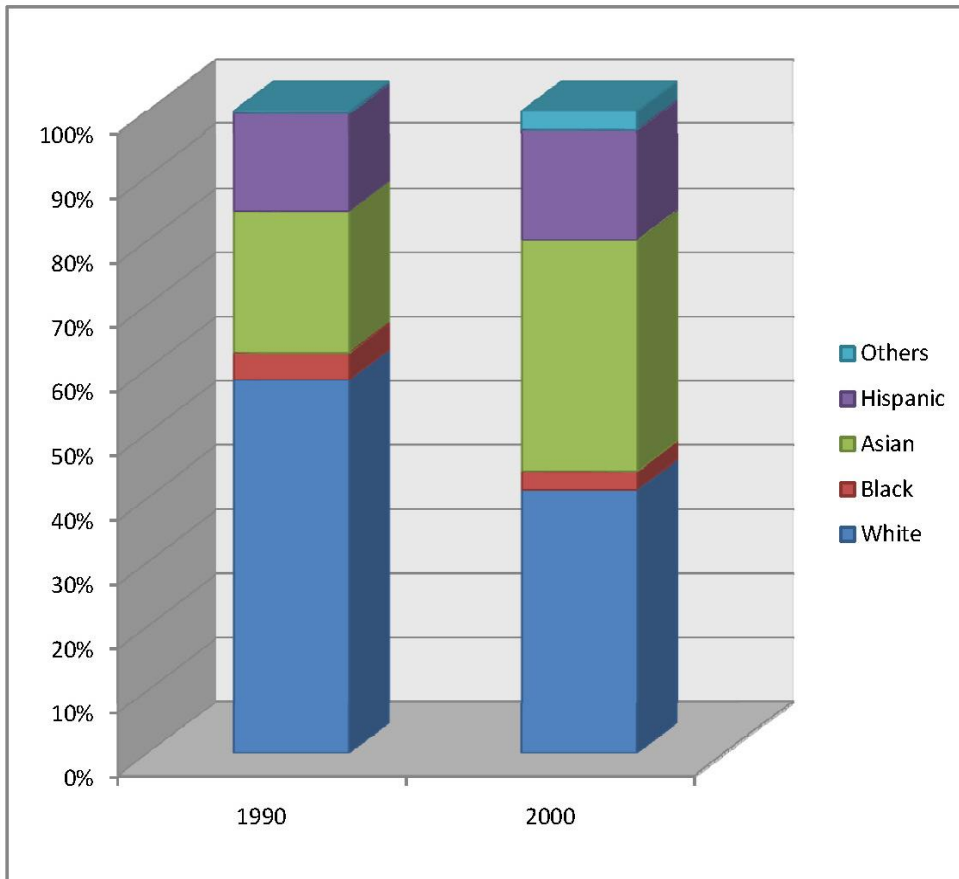
Figure 1: CD 7 Asian composition 1990-2000. Dr. Norbert Winnige.
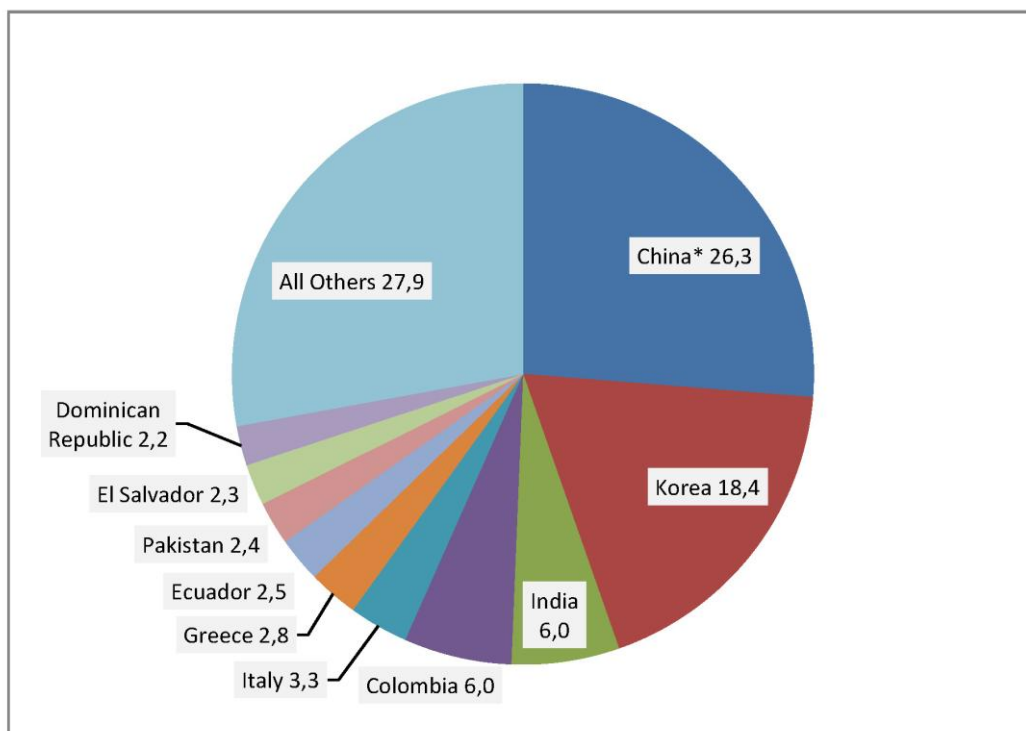
Figure 2: CD 7 Foreign-born population 2000. Dr. Norbert Winnige.

Queens CD7 Median Rent 2000-2006

1095

832

1160

Medi..

2000   year 2005   2006

Queens CD7-Median Home Value, 2000-2006

535700

490300

269043

Median Home Value
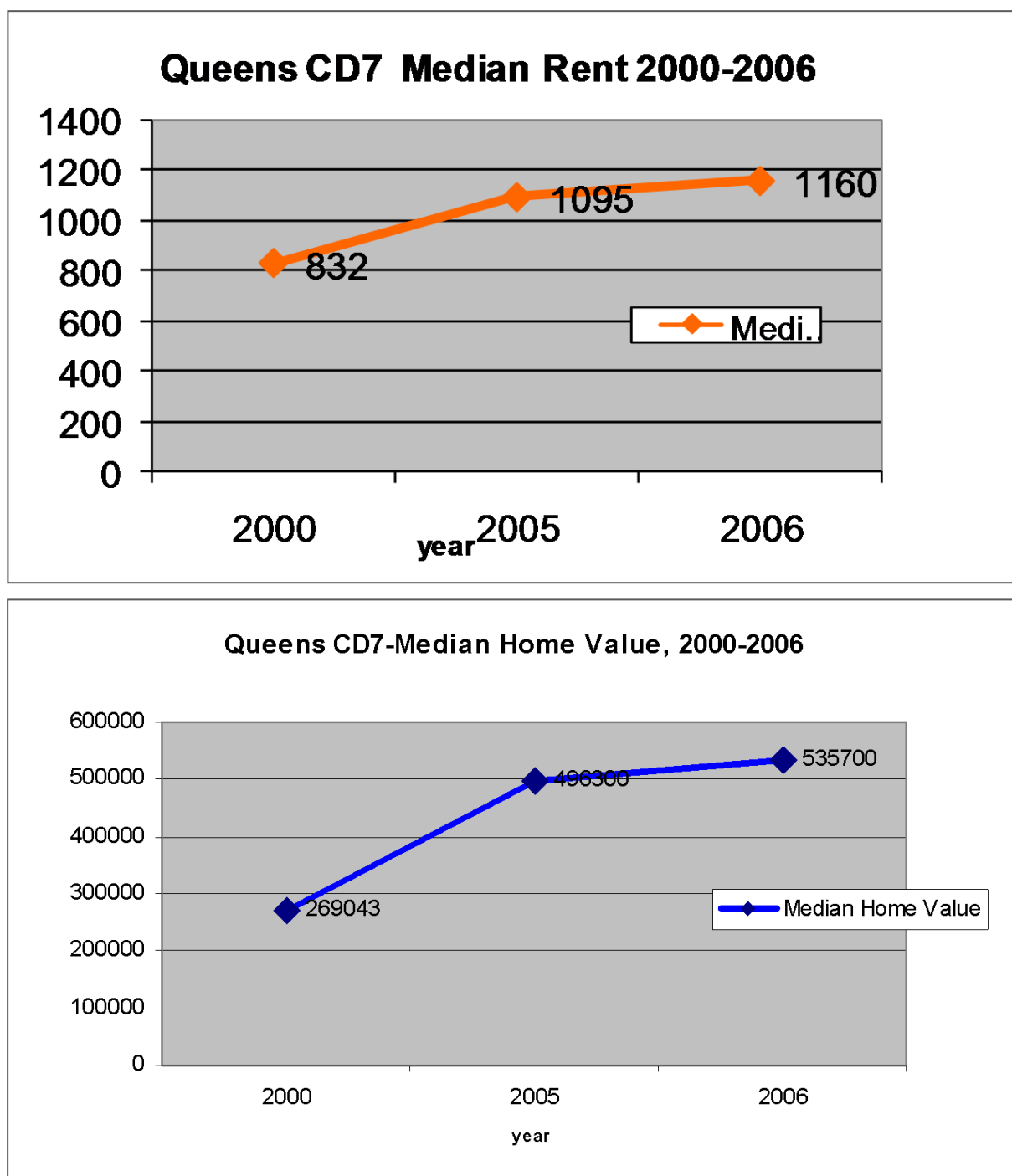
2000   2005   2006

year

Figure 3: EOL project in 2008.

Taiwanese immigrants in downtown Flushing is a significant element in the commercialisation of this area, yet Korean immigrants were also involved in this hot market (Chen 1992). Flushing was declining in the 1980s, but in the eyes of Taiwanese immigrant developers, Flushing is a place that serves as an important transportation hub in Queens, a location with great potential to realise their dream in the United States, and a promised land for economic and social well-being.

Conclusion

The above analysis of US census data and ethnography aims to bring a cultural explanation to the study of gentrification before and after the recession of 1990 in Flushing, Queens. First, this case of neighbourhood

transfiguration was initially triggered by a private immigrant developer, not a cooperation, whose successes were based on the factors including Taiwanese's residential and housing preference in the 1980s and 1990s. Ethnic residential preference and cultural tastes are cultural factors which accelerated gentrification during the early 1990s recession. The residential pattern of Asian immigrants in New York has showed the continued concentration of ethnic enclaves since the 1980s, as Map 1 and Map 2 demonstrated. The cultural perspective fills in the gap of our understanding that gentryfication in Flushing is not just an economic and social restructuring, but that ethnicity and culture are the main factors generating and accelerating gentrification. This suggests that there is a strong connection between cultural identity and gentrification, which may apply in other case studies as well.

This data contradicts Hackworth and Smith's (2001) claim that the changing state of gentrification indicates the return of heavy state intervention in the process. They argue that state intervention has returned because, first, continued devolution of federal states has placed even more pressure on the local government to actively pursue redevelopment and gentrification as ways of generating tax revenue, and second, the diffusion of gentrification into more remote portions of the urban landscape poses profit risks that are beyond the capacity of individual capitalists to manage. In contrast to this argument, I did not find the hand of local or federal governments in Flushing's gentrification.

Secondly, there has been diversification in Flushing since the 1980s, which is different from the kind of gentrification which creates a social, economic, and racial hegemony in a neighbourhood. The diversification of races and ethnicities in this neighbourhood has increased since the 1980s through the contribution of post-1965 and later post-Cold War immigrants, especially the settlement of Asian immigrants. This has led to historian Scott

Hanson referring to Flushing as 'the most religiously diverse community in America… There are over 200 places of worship in a small urban neighborhood about 2.5 square miles'. [9] Today, you can find the Quaker Meeting House, St. George Episcopal Church, the Free Synagogue of Flushing, St. Andrew Avellino Roman Catholic Church, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, existing side-by-side with immigrants' churches, and Buddhist Hindu and Sikh temples in Flushing, which were built by diverse new residents.

Steven Vertovec has coined the term 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007) to describe the extreme pluralisation of minorities which is increasingly an aspect of European mega-cities. Yet European super-diversity is still characterised by an increasing pluralisation of minorities facing relatively homogeneous national majorities. One interesting concept of super-diversity is noting similar changes in urban settings in both North American and European cities and patterns of diversification among ethnic groups themselves (Fong and Shibuya 2005; Vertovec 2007). I have found a similar story in Flushing.

There is a multidimensional diversity that we have to recognise in the ethnic Chinese community in New York, which includes linguistic, social-cultural, social-economic, and social-political diversity. Regarding linguistic diversity, the earlier Chinese immigrants speak Taishanese and Cantonese while Taiwanese immigrants speak Taiwanese. The newcomers include those from Fuzhou, who speak Fuzhouese, Wenzhou, who speak Wenzhouese, Shanghai, who speak Shanghaiese, and Southeast Asian Chinese immigrants, who speak various dialects. Most ethnic Chinese can communicate in Mandarin. In addition to linguistic diversity, ethnic Chinese immigrants

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[9] 'Historian Scott Hanson Discusses Religious Diversity in America'. *Ask America* webchat transcript, August 19 2008, http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/August/20080819162731xjsnommis0.5391199.html (accessed 9 September 2010).

often have distinctive cultural customs. As for socioeconomic diversity, old immigrants and Hongkongese have more capital and are generally middle class. Newcomers, such as those from Fuzhou, have less capital and are usually blue collar workers. As for sociopolitical diversity, ethnic Chinese immigrants are from everywhere in Asia, hence, they have various political identities and can build hardly any solidarity in political action.

In ethnic Chinese communities, the pattern of diversification has taken place since 1965, adding the new wave of Taiwanese immigrants to old Cantonese immigrants, a second wave of undocumented Fuzhouese immigrants since the late 1980s, and in a more current post–Cold War wave, Chinese immigrants from various provinces of China who have immigrated since the opening of China.

As this research revealed, instead of explanations resting solely on economic or solely on cultural arguments, we need to examine how culture and economics intertwine in urban re-structuring. We need to distinguish between gentrification that creates homogenous racial or ethnic communities that push immigrants out, and this new form of super-diversity gentrification, based on a transnational flow of capital that fosters diversity and uses diversity as a form of investment capital. While concepts of class are still relevant, this type of analysis needs to pay attention to class distinction within immigrant communities.

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Where is China in World Christianity?

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Abstract

Recent years have witnessed an articulated attention given to 'China' as a rising economic power. Parallel to this economic perspective, a renewed attention to the relationship between China and Christianity has also started to become verbalised in speeches of such prominent persons as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Pope and the general secretary of the World Council of Churches. China is accentuated on the agenda of missionary organizations. Where do fascination and passion for China come from? How does this China-fever influence certain processes within contemporary World Christianity? Where is China in World Christianity today? The present article aims to contest the oversimplifications exercised in the China question and maps the complexity of trajectories involved in the question of the China-World Christianity nexus. Looking at certain examples of global-local dynamics, the article aims to localise 'China' in its relation to World Christianity and vice versa. In doing so, the article focuses on issues such as transnational communities, ecumenical understanding, contextualisation and theological pluralism. The present contribution argues that the 'where' question in this case poses the challenge of moving beyond the geographical and numerical mappings. In order to understand the multiple theological connotations of the 'where' questions, the article proposes a new missiological-ecumenical approach which perceives 'super-diversity' as a guiding principle for the integrity of World Christianity.

The media rhetoric regarding 'China's century' and 'China's rise' of the first decade of the twenty-first century has found its way into both popular and academic theological language. Recent speeches of prominent personalities belonging to Christian organisations or churches support the argument that China is a major topic of consideration within the discourse on contemporary Christianity. In March 2009 the Vatican launched a Mandarin-language version of its official website. Prior to that, in 2007, Pope Benedict XVI had issued the letter 'To the Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church in the People's Republic of China', which stresses once again the importance given to China and especially the official connection to the Vatican of Roman Catholic believers.[1]

Similarly, official contacts between the Church of England and the Three Self Patriotic Church in China have been intensified. The

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[1] The Pope declared May 24, the Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians, as an annual 'day of prayer for the Church in China', http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/letters/2007/documents/hf_benxvi_let_20070527_china_en.html, accessed on 30 May 2010.

World Council of Churches, especially during the time of Dr Samuel Kobia[2] as its general secretary, has started to pay more and more attention to the China issue through seeking contacts on different levels with Christian communities in China, through theological, social and diaconal projects. Next to these a booming business of missionary involvement is mushrooming for the study field of missiology. From the so-called tent-makers to pseudonymous missionaries, the variety of missionary activities within China is too large to be caught in a few sentences. What is so phenomenal about the missionary engagement with the China question is that missionaries arrive in China from all parts of the world, while in their turn missionaries born in China go all over the world.

Parallel to and intermingling with the China fever of Christians (both from Chinese and non-Chinese parties), is a remarkable celebration of what is called Chinese Christianity both in academic and popular theological/missiological writings. It is not only the rise of China and the believed rise of Christianity within China that is being celebrated, but Chinese Christianity itself. One of the most prominent paradigms in this celebration is that referring to the Nestorian roots of Chinese Christianity (Christianity as a good, old religion), thus demonstrating the continuity of Christian presence among the Chinese all through the ages. The paradigm reaches its climax when it argues that Chinese Christianity, or Christianity in China, has become and is becoming more and more Chinese. The paradigm is grandiosely shaped in such a way that it fits the Jenkinsian idea of the next Christendom (Jenkins 2002), and goes even beyond that, predicting the future of worldwide Christianity as one dominated by

or centred around so-called sino-theology[3], which would mean that the main discourses and subjects of priority on the agenda of world Christianity will be set by Chinese people and according to Chinese logic.

The above section clearly demonstrates China fever. Looked at from a Christian point of view, this is accompanied by a number of conceptual problems. One can see how easily 'the China question' and 'the Chinese issue' tend to be lumped together and that there is little or no awareness that 'China' and 'Chinese' might mean different things for different people. The Christian China-fever and the celebration of Chinese Christianity consciously or unconsciously propagate demagogic theological views and oversimplifications of the question at stake. It is this tendency to oversimplify against which the present article brings arguments and builds up a possible alternative, a more realistic view, allowing the China-Chinese—World Christianity nexus to be looked at, reflected on and taken as a starting point to build further conceptual frameworks, which could in turn contribute to the improvement of practical, concrete, person-to-person projects.

The major argument of this article is that the China-Chinese—World Christianity[4] nexus cannot be essentialised; in order to avoid any essentialisation and essentialism, the article introduces the principle of 'super-diversity' as a productive and useful tool to study the

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[2] An example of how Kobia's first attempts to initiate contact have been evaluated by the WCC's Chinese counterpart can be seen at http://www.china.org.cn/english/photo/189736.htm (accessed 25 April 2010).

[3] The term should not be confused with the homonymous term adopted by a circle of scholars of
Christianity in the PRC during the last two and a half decades (see Lai 2006).
[4] The concept of 'World Christianity' within this nexus also requires a thorough revisiting, yet such an exercise goes beyond the primary scope of this article. It is beyond the aim of this article to elaborate on the concept of 'World Community' as evoked by the concept of 'World Christianity'. See e.g. Baudot 2001, where mutual learning was one of the accentuated attitudes towards diversity. On the earliest conceptualisations of world community, see Meister 1964.

question at stake. As the actual parameters of the present article require compact formulations, it will remain the task of many 'to be written' articles to elaborate more on certain issues and arguments raised within these pages.

Where is China?

The basic and most crucial conceptual problem for the China-Chinese—World Christianity nexus is the so-called China puzzle. There is an ever-growing scholarship trying to settle the issue and trying to find out which are the exact elements which allow a conceptualisation of these terms. What is China? What is Chinese? How do these two basic questions relate to each other and what are the consequences and configurations resulting from their interrelatedness? How far can one force the contents and limits of these concepts? Is it at all possible for scholars to settle the issue when discourses at grass-roots level surprise one with ever newer spelling-outs of China and Chinese? Is there any final authority which can reveal a final thought on these questions? Parallel to this fundamental issue is the problem of translatability, and the transposability of concepts produced within the Chinese languages to English as the lingua franca of scholarship.

This article argues that, although the China-Chinese question might look like a Sisyphean challenge, it is to scholars engaged in the task more than merely the perpetual motion of moving the same stone and getting nowhere. Explorations of the China-Chinese question do lead scholarship - and therefore also practical engagements with the questions - further. The most important step, which is still too often skipped in reflections on the China-Chinese—World Christianity nexus, is indeed the awareness of the huge complexity present within it.[5] The interval between China and

Chinese behaves like the interval between 0 and 1; it contains endless elements and components,[6] yet it is useful and productive. Every time one touches this interval, one must be aware that there are only some components which can be given immediate attention while all the others remain unaddressed.

The present article has chosen to approach the China-Chinese interval with an initial question:

Where is China? The question implies a specific type of localisation. China goes far beyond merely a certain geo-political entity, but it always remains connected to it, whether or not it has been or will be called by that name at certain times in history. The question can be answered on multiple levels, and it is exactly this plurality of possible answers which already initiates the complexity of the subject matter. Beyond the 'made in China' experience which accompanies every segment of daily life, China is present outside the People's Republic of China (PRC) through the most diverse forms of past and present migrations: international students, migrant workers, business (wo)men, high professionals and small traders holding a PRC passport, to name but a few. But China is, even more importantly, present in and through the people of older and newer generations of political refugees and emigrants who are actively engaged in forming an image of China for non-Chinese through the lens of their life experiences. China becomes real or imagined through different sets of experiences, and these experiences predict actual reactions to China. In this way the answers given to the 'Where is China?' question bring with them the questions of 'When is China?' and 'Who is China?' as well.[7]

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[5] It is common among Chinese scholars to start their talks on the subject with sentences such as: 'Everything you say about China is true, and its opposite is true as well.' Often this statement

aims to illustrate the huge size of the question in geographical terms. The statement could be extended to the conceptual maximum of the China-Chinese question.

[6] The non-Chinese are also part of the interval.

[7] The author is thankful to William A. Callahan, who through his book, although within a

Chineseness

The question of 'Chineseness' is another complex concept evoked by the interval. Chineseness is experienced, constructed, nurtured and envisioned by different groups, in different places and with different purposes. Once again, the vagueness of the term should not make one think that it is an empty one. Chineseness, or being Chinese, is a major identity marker for many people around the world. How this identity marker is spelled out in lifestyles, world views, individual, communal and corporal practices, in social, political, and economic arenas, remains to be investigated.

The peculiarity of the nation lies in the fact that it does invite essentialism. Chineseness is something which should be detectable and identifiable; Chineseness should be the force which creates unity within diversity. 'Global Chinese themselves seem to feel an obligation to find Chineseness themselves and translate it to their children' (Wickberg 2007: 178). The need to capture Chineseness seems to be strongest within migration processes, where next to the migration experience itself as an identity maker, forceful identity markers are also needed for the maintenance of human integrity, both individual and communal. Following this logic, the main differentiation for constructing Chineseness, connected to life-experiences, would be the presence or lack of migration within the process. Here again, one has to distinguish among several factors, such as internal migration processes within the PRC itself, migrations from Chinese-dominated language settings to other Chinese-dominated language settings, and migration from Chinese-dominated language settings to non-Chinese-dominated language settings. These distinctions to a certain extent suggest the role of languages in finding the essence of being Chinese. Yet, one has to bear in mind that several different Sino-Tibetan languages are involved in these processes. Due to the

different context, stimulated this new way of looking at China (see Callahan 2010).

accelerated migration processes emerging from the PRC[8], it can be observed that Mandarin has become a dominating tool to negotiate Chineseness on a global scale, yet the Mandarin language is not and probably never will be seen as the essential element of Chineseness.

Chineseness as an adopted identity marker creates power of a different sort; it creates the sense of a powerful community moving on the global stage, a community which exercises power at different levels and to which power others react, either positively or negatively. Through such reactions, the China-Chinese—World Christianity Nexus emerges.

The Nexus

The China-Chinese—World Christianity nexus is a theoretical one, since metaphorically what is called World Christianity includes and is also built up by China (as defined here), and it also contains the challenges which go together with Chineseness. Yet, on the theoretical level it is appropriate to talk about a nexus, since in contemporary theological/missiological discourses there is a tendency to segregate and talk about the relationship between certain continents, states, ethnic groups and nationalities and World Christianity (e.g. Bays 1996: Viii; Buswell and Lee 2007; Koschorke and Schjorring 2006). Such talks still evoke some remnants of Western-centric theologizing/missionising and the conceptual tools inherited from this. Even when it is functional to adopt this rhetoric, one has to be cautious to what extent this nexus becomes more than theoretical. The danger of essentialisation is present also within this context.[9]

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[8] And within missionary involvements, the power position of Taiwanese missionary agencies is also a significant and connected phenomenon.

[9] One good example of how essentialisation can take place is the recently published book by Sebastian and Kirsteen Kim, *Christianity as a World Religion* (London: Continuum, 2008). An outstanding material for educational purposes, yet through the very structure adopted, the book

One of the most valuable contributions of the concept of 'World Christianity' and related concepts is that its terminology points to the world as the context for theology and/or missiology. This implies that, similar to ethnographic methodological problems, theological/missiological studies (also carried out with ethnographic methods), should consider the question of how the area being studied (theoretically hermetically sealed) relates to the whole, to the rest of what there is.

The present article argues that the theoretically proposed nexus calls attention to the complexity of trajectories, connections, networks and contexts of interrelatedness. Because of the limitations of the present article, in the following the enquiry will be into phenomena, dynamics and issues strictly related to the PRC.[10] Attention given to migration processes within these dynamics is one way to work with the nexus in a proper way. By focusing on migration processes internal to the nexus, it will become clear that within the nexus a huge variety of actors, interests, theologies, missionary ideas and practices are present. Then, through the lens of migration, the article will consider two other perspectives which are crucial in dealing with the nexus. The first one is the set comprised of culture, ethnicity, nationality, nationalism and patriotism, the second one is the issue of post-denominationalism.

Migration

As elaborated earlier, both international and internal migrations play a significant role in shaping the nexus. While more and more attention is being given to the phenomenon of international PRC migrants, theologically speaking little attention has been given to the PRC's internal migrants and their role in shaping different forms of Christianity within the PRC. According to some estimates the number of internal/domestic migrants in China rivals the total number of international migrants worldwide. China's population is increasingly mobile[11], and this migration lifestyle significantly influences the formation of Christian communities, conversion processes and narratives as well as the development of theologisation/missionization. At the basis of migration is the search for a better life, the aspiration for that which could not yet be reached. Therefore, these aspirations and desires are fundamental in constructing theologies under the conditions of migration. Theologies are connected to lifestyle goals, which emerge from unique and individual life (hi)stories, from specific historical and material conditions and are always connected to global social transformations and changing circumstances (Castles 2008). Internal and international migrations are connected. Countless migrants have both internal and international migration experiences. This is the case for students, labourers, professionals and others.

Increasing attention is being given to the international migrations positioning the PRC within World Christianity. This is also because of the countless missionary organisations situated outside the PRC which aim to Christianise China. The process has been spectacularly intensified in the last decades. International migration then implies a two-way

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chooses to localise World Christianity according to the geographical territorial divisions of continents. This reinforces the danger of developing continental narrowness, whereas World Christianity studies within the contemporary framework of globalisation is precisely about ties, networks and trajectories which go beyond any territorial essentialism.

[10] This is done with the awareness that the PRC is just one, though a significant, component of the China-Chinese interval.

[11] Between 1995 and 2005 the proportion of the population on the move in China doubled, and according to some estimates it increases by five million every year (see Fan 2008, especially pp. 162-79). Within this process the category of peasant migrant plays an important role. The importance of peasant migrants forming theological discourses should not be underestimated either.

movement: from the PRC elsewhere and from elsewhere into the PRC. Within these dynamics, PRC students studying abroad are one of the major vectors for transmitting and transporting Christianity not only to the PRC but around the world.

The idea that Chinese overseas students can be used in the larger missionization plan of China has been in existence for a long time.[12] There is a peculiar parallel between the arguments used in missionisation rhetoric in the early decades of the twentieth century and that of the contemporary era. Arguments about the collapse of so-called traditional Chinese culture (whatever that may be), modernisation, and the exceptionalism of Christianity as a highly developed religion were then and still are popular (Hall 2006), and these go hand in hand with the conviction that Chinese international students - China's future intellectuals - are the best candidates to solve the spiritual crisis. Missionary involvement among Chinese international students worldwide is very diverse and is rooted in several different theologies. The argument about China's spiritual vacuum (see Spence 1991; Yang 1998), etc., can be only partially sustained, and the usage of the argument to demonstrate the growth of Christianity in China should be applied with even more caution. The Christianity which travels through the channel of the international student is a very diverse one, sometimes even unrecognisable by some Christians as being Christian at all. Every process of conversion is individual and unique, yet it is 'produced by many stages of transmission, in the context of particular societies and their tradition' (Morrison 1992: 5), and beyond that within

diverse contexts of subgroups, and forms of Christian tradition and spirituality.

Diversification is natural and unavoidable but it does not fit into the paradigm of 'Chinese Christianity'. Yet, that paradigm is still artificially sustained and nurtured both by Chinese and non-Chinese. It seems that the burned–out part of World Christianity needs Chinese Christianity in all her size, power and triumph in order to imagine the dominance of Christianity on the planet called Earth. In this sense there is indeed a new Christendom under construction – a Christianity which celebrates numbers, achievements, and aspires to a certain power.

Migration within the nexus helps one grasp the complexities of the paradigm of 'Chinese Christianity' within the whole of World Christianity. An essentialised China and Chinese are needed in order to show triumph and victory on the global stage.

A surplus set: culture, ethnicity, nationality, patriotism, nationalism

Naming these terms in a row is playing with (academic) fire. It is obvious that these concepts can never be handled at once in just a few sentences. Yet bearing in mind the awareness-raising ambition of the present article, these concepts are placed next to each other in order to capture the major pillars of the obsession with Chineseness and to avoid essentialism. 'In the habitual obsession with "Chineseness", what we often encounter is a kind of cultural essentialism – in this case, syncretism – that draws an imaginary boundary between China and the rest of the world' (Chow 1998).

The events of 1949 have been often interpreted in recent history as the moment when the world, and the Christian world (whatever that might be) in particular, 'lost' China. A continuously developing discourse on the loss of China intensified during the Cold War period and inquired within economic, political, cultural and theological studies as to who was responsible for the loss of China (to

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[12] One of the earliest examples of realising this idea is the programme initiated in 1911 by John R. Mott and called Committee of Friendly Relations among Foreign Students, which aimed to introduce Christians and influence society through their Christian identity (see Wheeler et al. 1925).

the Communists) and how China could ever become an equal member of 'our' common humanity and, more specifically, a player on the stage of World Christianity. With overlaps, since the late seventies, China's opening up and the massive societal and economic transformation within the PRC, with consequences for the rest of the world, have fueled a sense of 'China re-found'.[13]

Since the late seventies the concept of 'greater China' (*dazhonghua*) has also been introduced in popular discourses (newspapers, magazines) as well as in economic discourse (Harding 1993). As is often the case, the meaning of the concept is not clear; one has to pay attention to the actual networks to which the concept might refer. Parallel to the economic ties and networks, missionary networks were also activated and created in order to spread the Gospel among 'Chinese' people. In this re-discovery of China, 'even those who have devoted lifetimes to the study of that country are not immune to fantasizing or peddling their fantasies to the public at large, and there are always Chinese witnesses who, for reasons of their own, are anxious to authenticate such fantasies.' The celebration of China in these terms is also connected to the fact that intellectuals in diaspora are rewarded and praised for their work on minority cultures and they are important in disrupting the nature of knowledge production in the 'West' about the 'East', in this case China.

This article speaks of a 'surplus set', since these concepts in theologising and missionising practices are constantly interwoven and it is impossible to draw their boundaries. Where does patriotism end and nationalism start? How do nationality and ethnicity differ? The academic literature on the surplus set is abundant in providing all kinds of theories and arguments.

At this stage, this article confines itself to some examples, some vignettes, and

statements which might illustrate the argument of complexity.

The rhetoric on China's minorities, ethnic groups and the importance of their Christianisation is shared by many groups. The China Christian Council (CCC) acknowledges the need for ethnic/minority church leaders who minister among their own people, and therefore is engaged in specific training programmes for them. The CCC has published the Bible and Hymnal in the languages of seven minority groups. The following example fittingly illustrates the type of rhetoric to be found here:

> China is a unified, multi-ethnic country, with fifty-six nationalities. The Han people account for ninety-two percent of the total population of the country, leaving eight percent for the other fifty-five ethnic nationalities. The principle that guides relationships among ethnic nationalities is equality, unity and common prosperity. The law prohibits discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic nationality in China (Wu 2000).

Taking another example from a different context is the organisation called Asia Harvest. The Asia Harvest operates with a missionary vision which accentuates the importance of reaching ethnic groups, minority groups, tribes, in short smaller groups within Asia's nation states.[14] Hattaway's article (2009) "The

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[13] The association with the story of the Prodigal Son should not be taken too far.

[14] The organisation describes itself as being 'an inter-denominational Christian ministry working in China and other nations of Asia, helping with strategic and life-changing projects, and seeing God perform exciting and extraordinary things. We work alongside Asian church leaders, including house church leaders in China, helping and equipping them to focus on reaching the lost. Our main focus is China, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Bhutan and northern India. Within these seven countries are approximately 1,000 unreached tribes and ethnic groups', see http://www.asiaharvest.org/index.php, accessed on 29 April 2010. One of the peculiarities of the program, however, is that it also propagates the printing of Bibles in the Mandarin language. This observation needs further investigation.

Father's Heart Reaching Tribes in Remote Asia" provides a good example of how this missionary theology is being verbalised. Here once again, diversity is created and maintained primarily through ethnic boundaries defined in hermetic and static identity components (culture, language, history, history of earlier missionisation, etc.). This missionary strategy uses Matthew 24:14 as one of its core texts where in this reading Christ's return only happens when all the nations and tribes have heard the Gospel.[15]

A third example can be taken from the scene of the international migratory setting in the USA. A recent study demonstrates that establishing groups for PRC students at university and college campuses has additional side-effects, one of which is that they attract young people labelled as 'Chinese American'. The study concludes by stating that 'the desire for ethnic seekership leads many Chinese American young people to join Chinese Christian student groups on campus. The young people are not interested in Christian religion, per se, but because they want to make friends with people of similar ethnicity, many find the Chinese aspect of such groups appealing' (Hall 2006: 145).

The surplus also appears outside theological/missiological writings. David Aikman's (2003) book is a perfect illustration of how simplification goes on to create theological/missiological dangers. Aikman maintains that China is in the process of becoming Christianised and suggests the idea that within a predictable period of time the Christian worldview will dominate China's political and cultural establishment. Christianisation and China's becoming a global power go hand in hand. Aikman goes so far as to suggest that there will be a time when the Chinese state will use power in the same responsible way as the United States (governed according to Christian principles) (Aikman 2003).

> China's moment of its greatest achievement - and of the most benefit to the rest of the world-may lie just ahead. That moment may occur when the Chinese dragon is tamed by the power of the Christian Lamb. The process may have already started in the hopes and works of China's house church leaders (Aikman 2003: 292).

The above examples demonstrate the interwoven nature of the surplus set. The observation developed through looking at the surplus set shows that cultural, ethnic and national essentialisation lies at the heart of the phenomenon. Essentialism and essentialist generalisations concerning the China-Chinese (world) Christianity nexus result in theoretical perspectives, political and theological/missiological agendas that efface the real problems and challenges of this nexus.

It is within these essentialisations that the paradigm of Chinese Christianity is cherished. The danger of the paradigm is that it makes the ethnic, cultural, and national essentials the major definer of Christian identity. In this sense the patriotic propaganda within the PRC and the nationalist rhetoric including but going beyond the PRC build up the same kind of Christianity: an essentialised one, which easily leads to what can be called nationalistic Christianity or Christian nationalism. The patriotic propaganda (Kung 2002) so concerned with building a real and single Chinese church and the different missionary movements underlining the rise of Chinese Christianity and its prophetic vocation for the contemporary global situation all share traces of this sort of nationalistic Christianity.[16]

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[15] Paul explains that the New Testament's word is intended for nations. Ethne refers to ethnic groups and not political countries: 'God's plan is for every ethnic and linguistic representation of mankind to be present in heaven' (Hattaway 2009: 6).

[16] One of the best examples of nationalism defining a missionary agenda is the development of the Back to Jerusalem movement. Similar types of nationalistic Christianities can be seen in the African context and in other Asian contexts

The paradigm of Chinese Christianity draws a sharp boundary between Chinese and non-Chinese Christianity. The construction of such a boundary helps adherents of both sides to construct and nourish certain types of identities, self-awareness and subjectivities of different groups and subgroups of the 'authorised' categories. In these discourses, the notion of 'difference' gains much attention, in the concrete case 'the Chinese as the other, the different one'. The otherness, the Chineseness is seen as a pre-given, real and unquestionable category or identity marker, which consequently only produces and reproduces the Other as such.

It remains a question for further study to thoroughly examine how Chinese Christian nationalisms created in different times and by different groups relate to each other. The surplus set makes theologians/ missiologists aware of the dangers of essentialism in regard to nationalism. This is an obvious lesson of the nexus, but it is a lesson to be learned for other contexts as well.

Post -denominationalism

The question of post-denominationalism is the third and last question the present article highlights while focusing on the China-Chinese—World Christianity nexus. Similarly to the previous section, here too one encounters essentialisation. Post-denominalisation is an essentialist notion present within theological/ missiological discourses, and even more within the field of ecumenicism. Parallel to essentialist definitions of culture, ethnicity and nation, the post-denominational label detriments many groups and members of the Christian community. The present article argues that denominationalism as a phenomenon exists in China and that there are countless PRC citizens living outside China who do belong to confessional churches.[17] Therefore, this article argues, the

so called post-denominational church as related to China matters is a myth, artificially constructed and sustained by both theologians and church leaders within China, by Chinese theologians outside China and by non-Chinese theologians and church leaders as well.

One of the earliest and clearest formulations of the vision of the so-called post-denominational church in China was offered by Dr. C. Y. Cheng, a delegate from China at the 1910 Edinburgh Conference. 'Since the Chinese Christians long for more and look for yet greater things …we hope to see in the near future a united Christian Church without any denominational distinctions' (cited in Gairdner 1910: 184-5). Gu Mengfei, from the Chinese Christian Council, begins his essay (one of six winning essays written for the sixtieth anniversary of the WCC) by quoting Cheng and repeatedly stating that 'Chinese Christians enjoy united worship, and the churches have entered the post-denominational era' (Gu 2008: 271). Cheng continues, 'This [the lack of denominational distinctions] may seem somewhat peculiar to some of you, but, friends, do not forget to view us from our standpoint, and if you fail to do that, the Chinese will remain always a mysterious people to you', and '[s]peaking generally, denominationalism has never interested the Chinese mind. He finds no delight in it, but some times he suffers for it!' (*ibid*: 285). Wing Kwong Lo, from the Lutheran Theological University in Hong Kong, prefers to speak about non-denominationalism as propagated by politics and so-called official church politics, rather than about post-denominationalism. He argues that because of the political situation, a

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as well (Korea being another significant example of this).

[17] The limitations of the present article do not allow detailed discussion on the concepts of

denomination, denominational, and denominationalism, yet it is important to bear in mind that a theological re-evaluation of the concepts would be useful to highlight the different connotations of these terms. The primary argument along these lines questions the 'denomination equals division' thesis and proposes viewing these concepts (which have become confusing and loaded) as identity markers instead.

whole generation of Christians grew up who did not have the experience of denominationalism in the sense in which denominations were present in China before 1949 (see Lo 2001).

The refusal to use the concept of denomination as an identity marker might be partially explained by the argument that, as with many other terms in religious and theological vocabulary, the concept of denomination is viewed and labelled by Chinese people as a Western concept. Similarly to the concept of religion, denomination is believed to be unrecognisable for Chinese people and therefore not functional within the Chinese context.[18] Yet the question remains whether the phenomenon itself labelled as denominationalism is really so strange to the 'Chinese mind'. The accentuation in recent times of Pentecostal dominance in China might be one of the major arguments with which the post-denominational myth could be questioned.[19]

Yet, the myth is there and the myth is flourishing and it has much to do with the dynamics briefly described in the previous section on the surplus set. During his visit to China in 2006, Samuel Kobia, by that time general secretary of the WCC, stated among other things that, '[t]hough the Chinese culture is renowned for its ancient history, now when we think about Chinese Christians, we think about the future, because more and more Christians are realizing that if we are to live the prayer of Jesus Christ that all should be one, then we need to be post-denominational in character' (WCC 2006).[20] But post-denominationalism is not the state of affairs in China. The above arguments and illustrations result in the conclusion that the aspiration towards the so-called one Chinese Church, as an identity marker, functions similarly or identically to the outworking of the concept of 'denomination'.

Super-diversity

Avoiding essentialism means avoiding both the artificial and imaginary construction of the Other and the imposition of Sameness in order to achieve harmony. Essentialist approaches to the China-Chinese – world Christianity nexus pose a particular danger for perceiving Christianity as a World Religion. A useful method for resisting oversimplification is the cultivation of a critical stance that continuously revisits the localities of the Chinese-China – world Christianity nexus, and those of Christianity and other identity markers more generally. This article is a call to speak up against any essentialism which makes one believe in a static picture of World Christianity, and, within that picture, in the static category and predictable nature of what is labelled Chinese Christianity. Revisiting history, observing and perceiving contemporary phenomena are useful tools in avoiding essentialism.

The present study proposes the adoption and conceptualisation of the term 'super-diversity' within theological/missiological discourses. The term was coined by migration scholar Steven Vertovec in the field of social sciences, and within that in the area of

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[18] The difficulty of such arguments lie not so much in the question of translatability but rather in the willingness to recognise and identify similar human phenomena, patterns of thinking, acting and feeling beyond the categories of Chineseness. (In the same way there is a set of Chinese concepts about which untranslatability is proclaimed; e.g. *guanxi*).

[19] See Luke Wesley, *The Church in China: Persecuted, Pentecostal, and Powerful* (Baguio: AJPS Books, 2004). In the foreword of the book, Walter J. Hollenweger, former Professor of Mission at the University of Birmingham, writes that he became convinced that 'Chinese Pentecostalism is perhaps the most numerous and probably also the most important Pentecostalism *of the* world' [italics his], (Wesley 2004: X). The author himself does acknowledge both the complexity of the China question and that of Christianity within it.

[20] Statements such as 'As a post-denominational church, you are in a class of your own, and we want to learn more from you' were also formulated (WCC 2006).

migration studies; nevertheless the present study argues that the term may be adopted and productively used within the theological/missiological discourse and in ecumenics as well. Vertovec's elaboration of the term begins with a temporal parameter:

> In the last decade the proliferation and mutually conditioning effects of additional variables shows that it is not enough to see diversity only in terms of ethnicity, as is regularly the case both in social science and the wider public sphere. Such additional variables include differential immigration statuses and their concomitant entitlements and restrictions of rights, divergent labour market experiences, discrete gender and age profiles, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents. Rarely are these factors described side by side. The interplay of these factors is what is meant here, in summary fashion, by the notion of 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007).

Super-diversity used in this sense continuously accentuates that diversity is more than the awareness of ethnic differences. Vertovec's super-diversity calls attention to the significant new variables which appear within the intense dynamics of contemporary globalisation.[21] The super-diversity principle also appears in the multiple modernities paradigm (Eisenstadt et al. 2002).

Within the theology-missiology-ecumenics context, Vertovec's term recalls the pedigree of the unity in diversity principle, which is still a treasured and leading principle within interactions and policy-making aiming towards living, confessing and serving together.[22] The concept of diversity linked to Christian unity within the ecumenical debate is heavily loaded. This is especially the case with Christian discourses on the China-Chinese – World Christianity nexus, where the concept of diversity and the principle of unity in diversity has been linked to Confucian vocabulary, and respectively to the building of a harmonious society. Using diversity in this context makes one aware that it is desirable to talk about China's Christianity rather than about Chinese Christianity or the Chinese Church, yet it does not convincingly liberate the discourse from the dominance of a certain group or groups of Christians who set the tone and shape the framework of the discourse. 'We allow different theologies and liturgies, but do not permit to rehabilitate the denominational organizations. Our purpose is to establish a full Chinese church' (Chen 2005). From such statements the usage and purpose of the diversity concept can be interpreted as being a tool toward constructing the one and single Chinese church, within which many sorts of diversities might be celebrated except the diversity of what is Chinese.

The concept of super-diversity questions the legitimacy of aiming for the construction of any ethnicised/nationalised or possibly nationalist church. Because the image of such ethnicised/ nationalised church is in formation (this formation being done by Chinese and non-Chinese adherents) in the case of what is called China and/or Chinese, theologians/ missiologists are challenged to react to it.

The principle of super-diversity in this sense changes the steps of the logic. Whereas the concepts and principles of diversity or unity in diversity envision the unity of different theologies and liturgies based on a shared Chineseness, super-diversity goes beyond this and articulates the questionability of artificially constructed national, pan-racial, or pan-continental identities. Super-diversity does not necessarily connect to the idea of unity. Theologically and missiologically it does acknowledge the one invisible yet existent

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[21] For a thorough elaboration of the author's perception and conceptualisation of globalisation, see Nagy 2009: 17-74, where the author works with context-symbolism in order to underline that behind all globalisation dynamics the acknowledgement of active human agents is undeniable.

[22] Super-diversity also recalls the pedigree of multicultural theologies.

Church, yet it does not pretend to become the tool to achieve actual visible organisational, church diplomatic and structural unity among Christians.

Super-diversity is a new concept which teaches one to look at World Christianity with new eyes, with a look which takes complexity into account and therefore does not come up with ready-made answers and easy solutions for complicated problems. Super-diversity calls attention to the fact that diversity is far more than ethnic or denominational diversity. Within the framework of globalisation and ecumenical approaches, super-diversity compels theologians/missiologists to reflect on the multiple layers of the specific contexts through which diversification can best be comprehended. It is through this approach that the experience of plural theologies will grow, and it is through this experience that diversity will be freed from the captivity of ethnicity, nationality, nationalism, race, denominations or denomination-like labels. In this way the China and China-related questions of this article also partially act as a case study which may after examination provide adaptable lessons for similarly-behaving paradigms (e.g. Korean Christianity, Filipino Christianity, or on a larger level African Christianity).

One can see that the paradigm of 'Chinese Christianity' is built on the one-sidedness of an imagined/adopted/constructed ethnicised/national category. But different manifestations of Christianity can also be perceived and looked at as cultures, in the way elaborated by Ulf Hannerz. Hannerz talks about three dimensions of culture: ideas and modes of thought, their forms of externalisation (public communication), and their social distribution (Hannerz 1992: 6).[23] The difficulty and the challenge lie exactly in the language of World

Christianity, which necessarily makes one take the world (the whole world, as one indivisible unit) as the theological and theologising context. The super-diversity paradigm adopted and applied for theological/missiological discourses in ecumenic studies makes one aware that 'the gaze which explicitly aims to describe, rather than unravel, the inherent complexity[24] of its object will never rest contented with a single-factor account, but will always be on the lookout for additional forces and new angles' (Eriksen 2007). This practice and way of observing fuel theology/missiology to operate carefully on the edge of the inclusion/exclusion game.

'Theological judgment has to be exercised in order to give meaning and structure to the cultural materials that figure in Christian social practice: those materials are vague and circulate in many versions, with many different potential or actualized associations with other cultural materials and particular patterns of social action' (Tanner 1997: 160). The principle of super-diversity is a salutary reminder that Christians cannot control the movements of the God they hope to serve. It helps them to remain open to the Word by keeping them from taking their own point of view for granted. Super-diversity, then, as a guiding principle, helps one to comprehend diversity as the product of the effort to be a Christian in different cultural, social, ethnic, and other contexts. Super-diversity is an awareness that the development, maintenance and formation of Christian identity creates multiple theological/missiological contexts, which relate to the larger context encompassed in World Christianity. In this sense super-diversity is always bound up with creation and creativity.

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[23] Also see Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections* (London: Routledge, 1996), where he argues that homogenising processes associated with industrial-society nationalism are being counteracted by heterogenising globalisation processes.

[24] From a theological point of view, N. H. Gregersen elaborates on the concept by distinguishing seven types of complexity (descriptive, constitutional, organisational, causal, functional – these are ontological categories -, algorithmic, effective – these being computational categories) (Gregersen 2004).

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