Ethnographies of Urbanity in Flux:
Theoretical Reflections

Edited by Italo Pardo, Giuliana B. Prato and James Rosbrook-Thompson

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Special Issue, *Ethnographies of Urbanity in Flux: Theoretical Reflections*
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Ethnographies of Urbanity in Flux: Theoretical Reflections

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With more than half of the world's population now living in cities, and this proportion set to increase to two-thirds by 2050, the ethnographic study of life in urban settings has never been so urgent and important. Urbanisation proceeding at such a pace has meant increases in the number and size of cities, a process that continues to alter the social fabric of urban centres, sometimes in profound ways. While the definition of city is varied and culturally and politically specific, urban conglomerations are widely identified as hubs of cultural and ethnic interaction as well as challenging settings for future sustainable development. Not surprisingly, achieving 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' has become one of the 17 fundamental goals of the '2030 Sustainable Development Agenda' adopted by the United Nations in 2015. In such a framework, urban policies have become fundamental in the achievement of the whole Development Agenda that aims to bring peace, social justice and prosperity for all present and future generations. However, ethnographic research shows that all too often urban policies are failing to provide real solutions to the problems that mark life in contemporary cities worldwide — environmental and security issues continue to be major concerns alongside socio-economic disparities.

Ethnographic research is an 'art of the possible', and in cities there are many possibilities. Combined with specific research objectives, the application of ethnographic methodology leads to a great variety of approaches and to new paradigmatic challenges, as testified by the vibrancy of this peer-reviewed, open-access Journal, by the discussions developed in the volumes *Anthropology in the City: Methodology and Theory* (Pardo and Prato eds 2012), *The Palgrave Handbook of Urban Ethnography* (Pardo and Prato eds 2018), by the debate hosted by *Diogenes* (Pardo, Prato and Kaltenbacher eds 2015) and by the contributions to the series 'Palgrave Studies in Urban Anthropology'[1] and 'Urban Anthropology'.[2] Undergirding the intellectual and organisational efforts of the growing number of high-calibre scholars of different generations who contribute to the activities of associations like the International Urban Symposium-IUS[3] and the IUAES Commission on Urban Anthropology,[4] ethnographic research in urban settings and its findings are attracting increasing attention from non-anthropologists and from professionals and decision-, law- and policy-makers.

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[1] See https://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/14573

[2] See https://www.routledge.com/Urban-Anthropology/book-series/ASHSER1320

[3] See https://www.internationalurbansymposium.com/ especially 'Events'.

[4] See https://www.iuaes.org/comm/urban.html

Recent publications have stimulated a robust debate. The contributions to this Supplement to *Urbanities–Journal of Urban Ethnography* meet the Journal's mission and track record developed under the joint editorship of a social anthropologist and qualitative sociologists with the active collaboration of a multidisciplinary Scientific Board. It is in such a line that the essays that follow take stock of the discussions developed through a one-day Conference on 'Urbanity: Empirical Reflections' held at Brunel University in May 2018 and a five-day School cum two-day Seminar on 'Cities in Flux: Ethnographic and Theoretical Challenges' held at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge in June 2018. Both exercises were organised under the auspices of the International Urban Symposium (IUS).

This Supplement brings together social anthropologists, sociologists, architects, historians and urban planners committed to an empirically-grounded analysis of cities in order to develop reflection on a number of pressing methodological and theoretical questions relating to urban change. Their work contributes to demonstrate the potential for methodological and theoretical development in the shared awareness of the unique contribution that ethnography offers for a better grasp of our rapidly changing and increasingly complex cities (Pardo and Prato 2018a, 2018b).

Developing the Field

Considering anthropologists' prominent role in this ongoing debate,[5] it will be useful to summarise key aspects in the development of anthropological research in urban settings — 'urban anthropology' for short. With a few exceptions (for example, Dumont 1951, Firth ed. 1956, Redfield and Singer 1954), until the 1970s, established academic disciplinary distinctions had led anthropologists to focus on tribal societies, or village communities, while staying generally away from the urban setting as a field of research. One reason for such a choice was rooted in late-nineteenth century disciplinary divisions, whereby cities, especially in Western industrial societies, were the designated realm of sociological enquiry.

Thus, until the mid-1980s, urban research in Western industrial societies continued to be left out of the mainstream disciplinary agenda (Pardo and Prato 2012). This applied, in particular, to mainstream British anthropology. Significantly, while the anthropological study of kinship in London directed by Raymond Firth in the 1950s (Firth ed. 1956) influenced sociological research on the effects of post-war governments' social housing policy on working class communities (Wilmot and Young 1957), it did not lead to the development of anthropological research in Western cities. The lack of interest among British anthropologists might be explained by the proxy nature of the methodology applied in the urban work of Firth and his team, as

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[5] For extensive reflections of the development of this field and the state of the art, see Prato and Pardo (2013) and subsequent Fora on 'Urban Anthropology' (*Urbanities* 2013 and 2014), and Pardo and Prato eds (2012 and 2018).

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exemplified by their work on kinship in North London (Firth et al. 1970). In this case, too, the research was motivated by the post-war social reconstruction policies. The North London research focused on a sample of middle-class families living in the Highgate area. The selected families were interviewed by a team of female graduate students under the directorship of Firth and his associates, Hubert and Forge, who were not actively involved in the collection of data. Participant observation intended as long-term immersion of the researcher in the field, was not carried out. As pointed out by Pardo and Prato (2012: 9), these problems encapsulated by research by proxy that lacked the long-term engagement of the researcher in the field resurfaced in the 1980s, raising the risk of seriously crippling the development of anthropological research in the urban West. Significantly, however, in the mid-1980s pioneering holistic anthropological research was done in a Western city which applied the traditional methodological paradigm of social anthropology, while also adapting new research methods borrowed from cognate disciplines (Pardo 1996: 4-9).

While, as we have seen, research in Western cities was initially largely neglected by mainstream anthropologists, since the first half of the twentieth century historical events and geo-political changes stimulated some to address processes of urbanization in developing countries, especially Africa and Latin America. Such research did not significantly contribute to the development of urban anthropology. Only in the late 1960s did the anthropological establishment, especially in the US, cautiously begin to acknowledge the relevance of such research, which, reminiscent of the British case of the late 1950s, focused on 'problem-centred' studies, such as poverty, minorities — including ethnic minorities — and urban adaptation.[6]

The 1970s saw the publication of several books and articles debating the conceptual and theoretical definition of 'urban' and the extent to which 'urban' anthropology differed from 'traditional' anthropology. Some endeavoured to define the city as a specific 'social institution' with its dynamics and social, economic and political relations, thus maintaining that urban anthropology was anthropology *of* the city. For others, urban anthropology was 'simply' (more or less classical) anthropological research carried out *in* urban areas. Anthropologists have strongly endorsed this second point of view, in line with the epistemological stance that since the 1990s motivates most to define their field of study as *anthropological research in urban settings*, rather than *urban anthropology* (see contributions in Pardo and Prato eds 2012 and 2018). This stance reflects a shift in focus from the community studies inspired by the 'urban ecology' model of the Chicago School and the processes of urbanization in post-colonial societies to political economy, city planning, the legitimacy of grassroots action and of governance, the relationship between the local and the supra-local and their significance to urban dynamics. However, these two approaches — anthropology *of* the city and anthropology *in* the city — need not be reciprocally exclusive. As Prato has noted (2018

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[6] Hannerz's essay (1969) is a good example of this approach.

[2015]), they may well spring from — apparently incommensurable — conceptualizations of city and the attendant, rather pointless, classifications of 'city types' and the 'essence of urbanism'. This has led to endless debates and various attempts, from different disciplinary perspectives, 'to develop a grand theory of the city … [and] generalizations about "urbanism" and "urban life"'. (Prato 2018: 2).

Methodologically, as anthropological research in urban areas started to grow, concern among the disciplinary establishment engendered a paradoxical situation. While sociologists became increasingly interested in the ethnographic method, some senior British anthropologists working in cities openly questioned the applicability of participant observation in urban areas, which eventually translated into an advocacy for new methods and for an 'anthropology by proxy'.[7] Initially, such a methodological stance played the perverse role of justifying the objection that (classic) anthropology could not be done *in* the Western Industrial city. So — as mentioned earlier — for a while, the danger of this subfield being dismissed altogether was clear and present. However, in the mid-1980s a new generation of British-trained anthropologists convincingly proved that not only was participant observation possible, but that its combination with new techniques in the construction of case studies produced good results in urban Europe (Pardo 1996). This pioneering work emphasized that the application of the tried and tested anthropological paradigm in Western urban settings produced findings that had broad theoretical relevance, pointing to the key fact that a holistic analysis and attention to the relationship between micro- and macro-processes raise no question on the validity of traditional fieldwork.

During the 1990s, new developments in urban anthropology led to the investigation of the relationship between ordinary people and the ruling élite and the legitimacy of governance, as well as social space, marginalisation, crime, violence and conflict, and movements of resistance. In the early twenty-first-century situation marked by the re-emergence of localism, transnationalism and the political project of multiculturalism, this trend addresses the urgent need to understand the city as a 'crucial arena in which citizenship, democracy and, by extension, belonging are critically negotiated' (Pardo and Prato 2011: 12; see also Holston ed. 1999) and the morality of law and politics are increasingly questioned and scrutinised (Pardo 2004, Prato ed. 2009, Pardo and Prato eds 2011). These issues are increasingly relevant in Western and non-Western societies. There is a growing interest in ethnographically-based analyses on urban change in Africa, Latin America and post-socialist countries; mega urbanization in India and China; urban conflict in the Middle-East and South-East Asia (Pardo and Prato eds 2018).

Anthropology has come a long way since the days when the only legitimate ethnographic research was to take place in exotic, rural locales. Today an increasing

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[7] For an analysis of this approach and its consequences, see Pardo and Prato (2012: 9-10) and Prato and Pardo (2013).

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number of anthropologists carry out research in cities, including Western cities. Contemporary urban anthropology is intrinsically trans-disciplinary (Pardo et al. eds 2015), and it often gets very close to or draws from related disciplines such as sociology, history, geography and communications (to name a few), which need not be cause for concern. Unlike much work produced under the rubric of 'urban studies' — most of which focuses on physical space as a central paradigm — anthropology is based on rich and detailed empirically-based ethnographic analyses. Anthropologists and their methodological apparatus are uniquely positioned to cast light on the evolution of our urban world and its political, economic and cultural dynamics.

While it is, of course, true that too rigid boundaries between disciplines do not reflect reality, it would be misleading to erase all boundaries. It is now widely agreed that our commitment to the ethnographic soundness of our findings should promote fruitful contaminations. Today anthropologists find it increasingly difficult to define their field of study, for global changes force them to take into account data that traditionally are academically 'allocated' to other social sciences and to the humanities; in particular, sociology, political science, economics and history. The main concern is how to apply the traditional anthropological methodology to contemporary Western and non-Western societies and, where adaptations are needed, how to avoid losing disciplinary identity. Of course, like cultures, scientific disciplines are not static. They are dynamic entities, continuously changing and developing. They alter their identity, though they always do have an identity.

Thus, new collaborations arise, widening the field of interdisciplinary research; and yet there is no interdisciplinarity without disciplinarity (Pardo et al. 2015). In studying the complexity of the world in which we live, interdisciplinary work — in the sense of cooperation among scholars with different disciplinary backgrounds and the exchange of ethnographic research findings — is undoubtedly of critical importance in gaining an informed, adequately articulated understanding of human beings in society and — as mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction — in the achievement of 'Sustainable Cities and Communities'.

A warning is probably due here. Engaging in the study of what has become a universal goal — and possibly identifying solutions to problems — should not translate into attempts to produce 'universal models' (a well-known underlying temptation in the social sciences); that is, blueprints that inevitably fails to take into account the sociologically significant diversity of urban traditions across the world. Nevertheless, a lesson may be learned from Weber's analysis of the city 'ideal type'. As Prato notes (2018), although Weber was stimulated by the European medieval city — and its ancient antecedents of *polis* and *civitas* — in describing the city ideal type he 'offered a comprehensive language for a comparative analysis of ethnographically diverse cities. Significantly, while previous theorists had focused on European cities, Weber looked comparatively at urban traditions across the world, stressing that different cultures and

historical conditions would result in different types of cities.' (Prato 2018: 4). The Weberian ideal type moves beyond the conceptualization of the 'urban' in terms of physical space. It refers to 'qualities' that characterize urban dwellers, which could be applied to the analysis of contemporary urban realities and dynamics; most importantly, 'citizenship, in the sense of "individual" civil, economic and political rights.' (Prato 2018: 6). These 'qualities' ask scholarly research to look at the city 'at once as *urbs*, *civitas*, and *polis*; that is, as a built-up area, as a social association of citizens, and as a political community. Focusing only on one of these aspects would be inexcusably reductive.' (ibid.). Of course, suggesting that a sociological analysis of contemporary cities should take into account the aspects of the *urbs*, *civitas* and *polis* does not mean imposing a new Western model. It means that we should be aware that 'it is not the city […] as *urbs* that produces the distinguishing qualities of urban life; rather, it is new historical conditions that determine the emergence of a new meaning of "being urban", influencing our conception of the common good and of associated life in a shared "urban space" that is not just the physical built-up space (the space of the *urbs*) but is also the space of the *civitas* and if the *polis*, which is increasingly manifested in a virtual space.' (Prato 2018: 9). Comparative ethnographic analysis across disciplines has a pivotal role to play.

Ethnographers, we suggest, need to engage with the argument that, although the complexity of life somehow compels to specialise in a specific field, there is absolutely no need for such a complexity to translate into academic complication and disciplinary insecurity. Current urban ethnography carries recognizable stature and profile.

Urbanity
The foregoing stimulates on-the-ground reflection on 'Urbanity'. Clearly, Urbanity refers not only to a specific form of life, aspects of urban policy, sociological demands or political changes, but also to intercultural relations in the complexity and heterogeneity of urban life. Urban settings are undoubtedly places where cultural, social, economic and ethnic coexistence can be explored. There, the political aspect of difference becomes visible.

Urbanity can adopt many different forms according to the city's historical, social, cultural and political trajectory. Values and norms, and a shared sense of identity to people's understanding, and living, their urbanity. To address urbanity, we need to look at the changing nature of social interactions, and its effects on the structuring of political and economic spaces. We need to look at how urban dwellers encounter others and how they distance themselves from others — creating social spaces of and for themselves.

By definition, cities have always hosted heterogeneity, open-endedness, broadness, lack of prejudices and self-criticism. However, contemporary experiences of urbanity ask us to reflect on a key issue that is becoming ever more pressing, politically, socially and economically, therefore analytically. Specifically, tolerance of the other

may translate into welcoming attitudes and social and economic exchanges (see, for example, Pardo 2009, 2012). However, under certain conditions, tolerance turns into toleration. It has been observed how such shift has often been an unintended consequence of the political project of multiculturalism. In particular, multicultural policies have in some cases 'exoticized otherness' (Grillo 1998), while in other cases they have produced the further marginalization and ghettoization of minorities, or at best, policies marred by mere 'tokenism' (Prato 2009). Under those circumstances, heterogeneity gives rise to outbreaks of violence.

Urban settings can be seen as places of opportunity and danger. Typically, urbanites may talk of a particular place as 'dangerous' and of another as 'safe', giving reasons based on their own experience or that of others. Examples abound of how these perceptions of urbanity have been seized upon to implement policies that challenge fundamental democratic principles and rights of citizenship.

As with many other themes engaged with in this Special Issue, the tensions inherent in the liberal-democratic model of citizenship have only rarely been the focus of ethnographic fieldwork, though the few exceptions have brought out the complexity of this field while helping to clarify key issues (Pardo and Prato 2011 and contributions in Pardo and Prato eds 2011). This scarcity of production is surprising given more general interest in the affective, or substantive, element of citizenship (as opposed to its more formal dimension). Exceptions to this trend have offered valuable insights and allowed us to flesh out the substantive dimension of citizenship (Baumann 1996, Fenster 2005, Pardo and Prato eds 2011, Rosbrook-Thompson 2015).

Doubts over the allegiances of would-be citizens are often alluded to in the context of migrants, especially those suspected of occupying space above, below or between nations. Again, here there is a tendency for scholars to wax theoretical rather than explore the loyalties and affinities of migrant groups at a more granular level via ethnographic enquiry. Attempts at the latter have certainly paid dividends, with fieldwork detailing how identities play out in terms of concrete actions and behaviours (Prato 2009, Pardo 2009, Rosbrook-Thompson 2015, Ciubrinskas 2018). The theme of the movement of population cuts across several contributions to this Supplement, from the dynamics of diaspora across continents (Ciubrinskas, Pardo) to economic migration in the EU (Armstrong, Rosbrook-Thompson and Hobbs) and the stereotypical categorization of migrants (Prato).

In many instances practices and rituals associated with memory and remembrance order, renew and embellish people's identifications with urban spaces (Cervinkova 2016). Memories of suffering and tragedy are conducive to the retracing of group boundaries — poignancy has an adhesive quality (Cervinkova and Golden, and Maidano and Armstrong in this Supplement). Sometimes, it is loss in a sporting sense that demands the reliving of misery amid company. This is not to trivialise sport and the identities which, as ethnographic work has shown, are expressed and embroidered

through sporting contests (Armstrong and Giulianotti 1999, Armstrong and Giulianotti eds. 2001).

Many of these ethnographies analyse behaviours and practices at the intersection between sport and crime, in many instances these correspond with contests over the ownership and meaning of urban space. The themes presented in these studies underline the fact that notions of legality and legitimacy are seldom coterminous. As Pardo (1995, 2004, 2018, 2019) has shown on the basis of ethnographic fieldwork in Naples, what is legal is not always understood as legitimate and what is illegal is not always understood as illegitimate.

People's reasoning along these lines is often prompted by engagement in informal economic activities (Moretti, Spyridakis in this Supplement). It is here that city dwellers avail themselves of structures of opportunity and, in doing so, demonstrate that the formal and informal, legal and illegal, often shade into one another (Pardo 1995, 1996; Rosbrook-Thompson and Armstrong 2018; Spyridakis 2011; Vande Walle 2008). It is perhaps in the sphere of housing where informality most profoundly shapes urban space (Prato 2017). As van Gelder (2013) has illustrated, there are many paradoxes concerning the relationship of informal settlements and respective legal systems in cities, particularly in the developing world (Moretti and Prato in this Supplement).

Several contributions bring out the vagaries of the relationship between governance and the people on the ground. We see how informality in the housing sphere often entrenches existing spatial segregation between groups defined along class and/or ethno-religious lines (Jones in this Supplement). Sometimes, it is the effects of official policy that reinforce, embellish or bring to an end the relationship between groups and places (Malzer in this Supplement). In some cases, government-sponsored schemes engender significant changes in the urban landscape (Chakrabarti in this Supplement), while in other cases mismanagement of governance significantly harm tolerance and integration (Pardo in this Supplement).

The outcomes of top-down urban regeneration for marginalised groups have been well documented (Lindsay 2014), while problems with so-called 'culture-led' urban regeneration have also been identified and explored (Miles and Paddison 2005; DeSena and Krase 2015). For those on the receiving end of state austerity measures, informality can emerge as a survival strategy (Rosbrook-Thompson and Armstrong 2018, Spyridakis in this Supplement) while here, again, questions of legitimacy are relevant (Pardo and Prato 2019). Welfare programmes introduced and intensified in the name of austerity are tied to notions of trust and responsibility (Pardo 2000); the way such programmes are experienced by recipients/subjects reflect mechanisms that create different 'categories' of citizens (Pardo and Prato 2011).

In a nutshell, the story of urban ethnography points both to the ruddy complexion of current empirical research in urban settings and to the epistemologically healthy state of the art. The essays that follow exemplify both these key points, as they demonstrate

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the quality of the growing ethnographically-based work in this field and the contribution that the findings make within and without the academic disciplinary boundaries. They underscore the conviction that urban ethnographically-based research may well be key to the future quality of urban life.

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A Botched Urban Change: A Case-Study from Central Naples[1]

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This article draws on anthropological research in Naples to study critical dynamics of integration versus exclusion and of tolerance versus toleration engendered by the socio-economic impact of a huge and largely illegal foreign immigration on a local life marked by increased crime, insecurity and urban decay. Turning on its head a situation previously marked by generally positive relationships and economic collaboration between local people and immigrants, in the eye of the indigenous population the spiralling increase in uncontrolled immigration has made their neighbourhood dangerous and unliveable. The discussion invites reflection on mismanagement of the power to rule that breeds intolerance and conflict in a social, economic and cultural context traditionally oriented to hospitality and tolerance. The latter, it is argued, urgently need to be restored alongside *mutual* trust between governance and citizenship. The evidence suggests that this goal might be achieved by a governance that pursued a working combination of local residents' traditional tolerance, demographically and culturally compatible changes, fair and implementable legislation and, last but not least, a genuine drive to apply the law firmly and fairly.
Keywords: Uncontrolled immigration, tolerance vs toleration, misgovernance, trust.

Introductory Notes

Since the late 1990s, Naples (Map 1) and its Province, like most of Italy, have experienced substantial demographic changes brought about by a huge and largely uncontrolled influx of foreign immigrants from non-EU countries. Since the mid-2000s, these changes have increased dramatically engendering an urban superdiversity (Rosbrook-Thompson and Armstrong 2018) that, in the eye of the indigenous population, has made their neighbourhood dangerous and unliveable. Here, as across Italy and beyond, these dark overtones prevail.
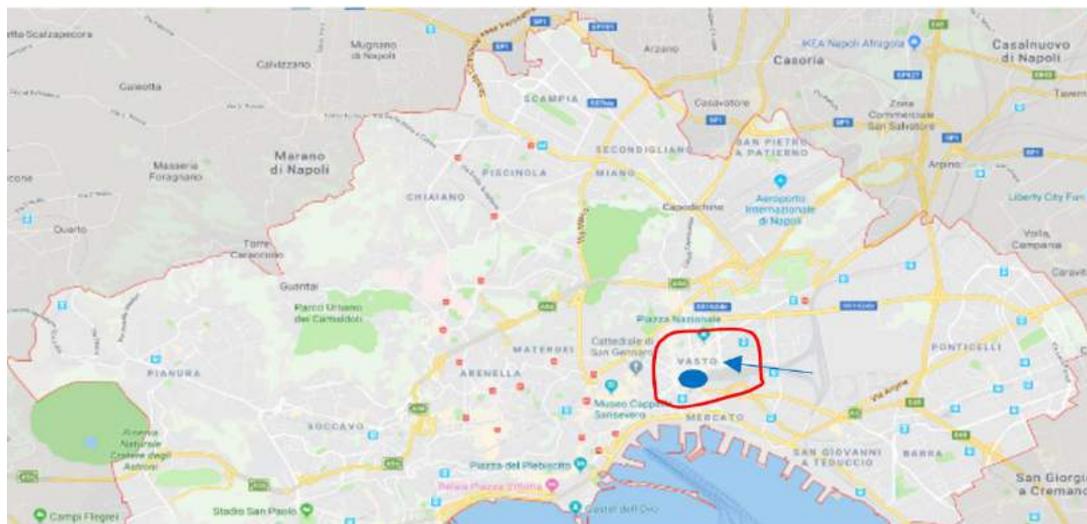
Map 1. Naples. Piazza Garibaldi is marked by a blue dot; the relevant surrounding area is circled in red.

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I draw on anthropological field research in central Naples to study how this phenomenon has engendered critical dynamics of integration versus exclusion and of tolerance versus toleration. These oppositions and their worrying ramifications were incisively discussed ten years ago by Giuliana B. Prato in her early, and at the time bravely argued, critique of multiculturalism as a political project (Prato 2009). In that example of what Laura Nader (2018) has recently called 'contrarian anthropology' that questions assumptions that inform entrenched mindsets, Prato and the contributors to her book (Prato ed. 2009) drew on ethnographic evidence to examine this obnoxious project on the ground. Their robust analysis aptly foresaw its failure, bringing powerfully to light its contribution to furthering injustice and inequalities; a failure now of course broadly recognised in the specialist literature and, critically if belatedly, in politics.

In my Naples-based contribution to Prato's book I found that forms of conflict were minimal and sporadic, and relationships between local people and immigrants came across as relatively smooth and generally positive. In particular, the case material on joint entrepreneurial activities indicated not only tolerance of difference but, most significantly, productive economic collaboration (2009: 109-15). Later, urged from a distance by documentary evidence and media reports, I returned to Naples to investigate new developments. With specific reference to the relationships between the autochthonous population and foreign immigrants, this new fieldwork brought out a very different picture from that I was familiar with. The empirical situation stimulated reflection on the 'mismanagement of the power to rule that breeds intolerance and conflict in a social, economic and cultural context traditionally oriented to hospitality and tolerance' (Pardo 2017: 149). Perhaps the most striking observable consequence of such mismanagement of power was a turning of tolerance into toleration, which appeared to be progressing into aggressive, in some cases, violent rejection of the large, and growing, number of foreign immigrants living and operating locally. As Hannah Arendt (1958) taught us, however, things become irreversible only when people accept them as such. It is therefore significant that in the most affected areas of Naples residents fight for restoring decency and peace of mind in their neighbourhood.

What had happened? What could explain such an incredibly radical change of attitude among ordinary Neapolitans? What had turned a traditionally tolerant and open people into people who deeply resented the situation in which they felt they were forced to live, the foreign people who populate it and the local and national ruling élite whom they deem responsible for it, and whom they deeply despise?

As I have indicated, documentary sources suggested that the demographics of foreign immigration had undergone a dramatic change, both numerically and culturally. Numerically, according to the information produced by the Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (Italian Institute of Statistics, henceforth ISTAT), the change was significant indeed; the influx of foreign immigrants had increased considerably, and we now know that the incremental rate keeps rising.[2] As indicated by Caritas in their annual reports, foreign immigrants legally present in Naples and its Province have steadily increased: in 1996, they were 33,229; in 2004, they were

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[2] See ISTAT http://www4.istat.it/it/archivio/208951

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70,134; in 2019, the number had risen to 134,330.[3] On the ground, I found that the presence of foreign immigrants was indeed larger than that reported in the official documents. Culturally, I soon realised, the change was even greater. Up to the early-2000s, most foreign immigrants originated in cultures from Eastern Europe, the Philippines, Latin America and so on, which were fundamentally in tune with the local one. Instead, the subsequent unregulated influx of foreign immigrants accounted for people who are bearers of cultures, whose precepts are received by ordinary local people as alien and incompatible with their values and way of life; they originate mostly from North, West and sub-Saharan Africa, the Horn of Africa, Bangladesh and Pakistan.[4] This process started almost imperceptibly in the 1980s,[5] as small numbers of such immigrants began to operate in the city, but accelerated slowly in the 1990s and, then, rapidly during the past ten-to-fifteen years. So, today's outlook is exponentially different from the relatively recent past. According to the ISTAT, in 2017 6% of the Naples population were legal immigrants.[6] Although the feeling I have drawn from participant observation tends to tally with experts' belief that the illegal presences now vastly exceed this figure, for obvious reasons, no reliable data on illegal immigrants are available.[7] Their numbers can only be inferred, with a great degree of approximation, through on-the-ground experience. Equally importantly, ethnographic experience can help us to understand the perceived weight, among the autochthonous population, of the impact of foreign immigration — legal and, most importantly, illegal — on local life.

The present discussion is based on the material collected during recent fieldwork aimed at looking at how the situation on the ground had evolved and finding out how ordinary Neapolitans talked and felt about it.[8] An extended analysis of the findings of my research belongs to a book-length discussion, now in preparation. Here, I focus on the area around Piazza Giuseppe Garibaldi (henceforth, Piazza Garibaldi; see Map 1). Traditionally known to Neapolitans as *'a ferrovia* (literally, the railways), the piazza is dominated by the largest rail station in South Italy.[9] For reasons that will become clear as we proceed, the piazza and the surrounding area are constantly in the local, national and international spotlight.

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[3] Caritas (2019). For data on immigrants' employment in Naples, see Ministero del Lavoro (2018).

[4] Currently (Caritas 2019), there are 1,580,000 registered Muslim immigrants in Italy (an increase of 2%). The total registered immigrants are 5,255,503 (that is, 8.7% of the total population).

[5] This process has been the object of numerous studies (King ed. 1999, Spagnuolo 2005).

[6] See https://web.archive.org/web/20170806142909/http://www.demo.istat.it/bil2016/index.html.

[7] According to police sources and judiciary reports, many are undocumented. For various reasons, which I have discussed elsewhere (2009), many of them cannot be easily expelled.

[8] Since the mid-1980s I have conducted anthropological research in Naples (for an outline, see Pardo 2018), involving the preliminary study of documentary sources and long-term fieldworks based on participant observation, informal interviews and the construction of case studies of individual, groups and event. As part of my ongoing research interests, I conduct periodical fieldtrips to the city and its Region.

[9] The Stazione Centrale (Central Station) is the main railway station in the city and the sixth busiest in Italy in terms of passenger flow.

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A huge number of immigrants originating from Africa and Bangladesh have established themselves in this area.[10] The progression of their settlement follows a familiar pattern which, with the exception of a recent passing glimpse of a different kind of policy, stands stubbornly unbroken. As reported to me by my local informants, a few individuals act as 'front-people'. 'While playing nice to the locals', an indigenous local activist said, 'they rent a flat, which they proceed to fill with the largest possible number of fellow immigrant sub-renters from their country; in some cases, the latter may move to Naples from abroad or from elsewhere in Italy on the "invitation" of those who now live and operate locally'. This kind of accommodation seems to offer living conditions marginally better than those offered by the hostels that I describe later. When I did fieldwork in the mid-2010s several Bangladeshi were my neighbours. They, all men, quietly shared two flats in the building where I lived near Piazza Garibaldi.

A Corner of the Field

Many travellers drive, fly or sail to Naples. Most arrive by train or coach. The main train and coach stations are located in Piazza Garibaldi. From here, one can travel on via metro, bus or rails connections throughout the city, its periphery, the hinterland and the region. The Piazza, which for several years has undergone renewal work (now completed), is close, to the South and South-West, to the port and the motorway system. Some of the city's main street markets are in the vicinity, as is the Centro Direzionale located within walking distance to the North-East (Green Dot, Map 2). Started in the mid-1980s and completed in 1995, this broadly pedestrian cluster of eye-catching skyscrapers, fountains and broad walkways is Naples service centre. It hosts major business headquarters, company offices, University departments, the main branches of energy companies, banks and financial establishments, a church, the headquarters of several departments of the local bureaucracy, telecommunications hotspots, the Regional Assembly, the Courts and luxury Hotels and restaurants. The Centro Direzionale's underground system lies in sharp contrast to its sleek above-ground outlook. It was originally intended to offer underground facilities, car parks and passage-ways that are now largely unused by the general public, because unsafe. Mirroring the state of many areas in the city centre, it is now a graffiti-strewn concrete domain dotted with uncollected rubbish and discarded objects (mattresses, broken furniture and household appliances, and so on) where cockroaches, rats and stray cats and dogs reign supreme.[11] It is an underground badly-lit world where few people dare to go; among them a few homeless people who find shelter there.

It does not seem unreasonable that Neapolitans should expect Piazza Garibaldi to be one of the city's welcoming spots and 'calling cards', alongside the airport and the passenger sections of the port. Like the owners and staff of the few good hotels and restaurants located on its South-West and West sides, my Neapolitan friends say that 'despite all that's going on'

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[10] Observation and interviews suggest that legal and illegal immigrants live and operate in different areas of the city and its periphery, each basically dominated by people of the same ethnic origin.
[11] The interested reader can see report of 3 December 2019 by the local investigative journalists, De Crescenzo and Di Biase, and the attached telling photographs; available at: https://www.ilmattino.it/napoli/cronaca/emergenza_rifiuti_napoli-4901491.html.

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they have 'a right to wish that the Piazza and its environs were in decent conditions'. For a long time, reality has failed to meet such legitimate expectations.
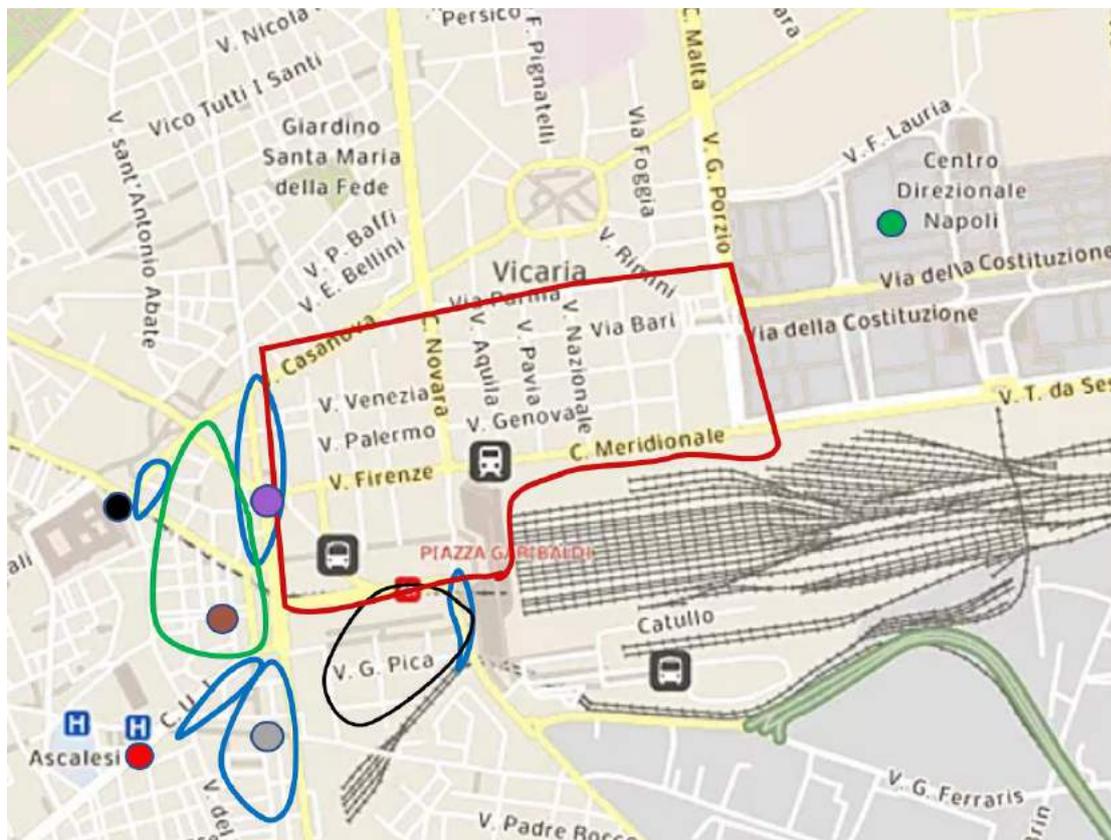
Legend

Areas circled in Blue: Rubbish Peddling
Area circled in Red: The Vasto Neighbourhood.
Areas circled in Black: Predominant Bangladesh Presence.
Areas circled in Green: Predominant Chinese presence.

○ Centro Direzionale.
● Porta Capuana.
● Piazza Principe Umberto.
● The Duchesca Neighbourhood.
● Porta Nolana.
● Corso Umberto I (Rettifilo).

Map 2. The Piazza Garibaldi area.

Reflecting the current state of most of the city, the Piazza's environs could be appropriately described as an urban mess rife with street crime at the expense of passengers and passers-by. In the words of residents, the large urban sprawl surrounding the piazza is 'a badly lit, decaying and menacing nightmare thick with graffiti, grime and filth'. This area brings together traffic chaos and street harassment, urban decay and rubbish, political slant and targeted inefficiency, legal and — mostly — illegal immigration, and trafficking in almost everything, from counterfeit merchandise to sex, drugs and danger.[12]

Ninety percent of the so-called immigrant reception centres of Naples and its Province are located around this Piazza. Some of the thousands of foreign immigrants from non-EU countries — whom Italians call *extracomunitari* — who populate the area are in Italy legally

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[12] According to recent assessments (for example Caritas 2019), 20,255 foreign immigrants are incarcerated in Italy for various crimes, accounting for 33.9% of the total population in Italian prisons. Sixty-six per cent of 18-20-year-olds in jail are foreign immigrants.

on a refugee status or hold an immigration permit. Many are not. Some arrived in the country legally, were granted a temporary permit but overstayed it and then proceeded to disappear from the official world, which is when they became particularly vulnerable to the grasp of ethnic gangs specialising in drug-dealing, prostitution and various forms of slavery. Many more who now populate the city entered the country illegally and lack documentation — in Italy, they are collectively called *clandestini* (literally, clandestine people). Most are young and seemingly in good health. They originate, as I have mentioned, from Africa (mainly settled in the area outlined in red in Map 2), China (mainly settled in the area outlined in green in Map 2) and Bangladesh (mainly settled in the area outlined in black in Map 2). At the same time, the number of Roma has also grown exponentially.

This complexity develops in a city where, according to ISTAT, the officially unemployed are 24.2% percent of the active population, reaching 50.4% percent among the local young (15 to 29 years of age); this, in a context where according to Eurostat (2019), 53.6% of the population in the Naples region, Campania, runs a serious risk of falling into poverty (on an income level 60% lower than the national average) and social exclusion.[13]

Residents complain that it begs belief that this clearly difficult situation should be selectively ignored by the local administration, which they resent as unforgivable *laissez faire* that may serve certain élite groups but harms the ordinary people who have to live with its consequences. Lino, a Neapolitan friend I made in the mid-1980 (Pardo 1996: Ch. 2), cites 'the damage done by militants of Centri Sociali, who can count on the support of powerful politicians and enjoy strong links with organised groups of immigrants'. Over the last decade, the influence of fringe extremist groups that support both foreign immigration and the present administration has increased, as have what local ordinary people and experts (Simonazzi and Casadei 2018) call 'new forms of slavery'. For Lino, as for many other local informants, this is 'a cancer' that for expedient political interests and the economic returns for a few has been instrumentally allowed to grow and metastasise in the urban fabric, harming the ordinary many. According to current judicial inquiries (DIA 2018: 146-201), the aforementioned fringe groups engage in political aggression and violence while growing number of immigrants are managed by autochthonous criminal gangs and, increasingly, by their ethnic counterparts. On-the-ground experience suggests that, whatever the underlying political and economic strategy may or may not be, under these conditions it is hard to see integration as a viable project. It will be useful to outline a few major aspects of what comes across as a difficult combination of problems that appears to be brewing into widespread conflict.

Piazza Garibaldi was once equipped with adequately welcoming structures that have run into disrepair; some have been turned into residences for large number of illegal immigrants living at the margins of society; in some of these establishments, a few rooms are turned into prostitution dens. The sidewalks are now home to con-artists, pickpockets, bag-snatchers and drug and porn peddlers. On the North-West side of the square, the side streets criss-crossing the *quartiere* (neighbourhood) Vasto (indicated by a blue arrow in Map 1) offer graphic evidence

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[13] In 2017 this percentage was lower: 46.3% of the local population ran this risk (Eurostat 2019). On official unemployment statistics, see ISTAT http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=20745

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of the socio-economic deterioration surrounding Piazza Garibaldi.[14] They are rubbish-clogged open-air urinals scattered with drug-dealing hubs, and are often enlivened during the day but especially at night by knife fights between rival gangs of young immigrants that make the headlines in the media.[15] The Vasto is populated by around 15,000 Neapolitans (Comune di Napoli 2006), a large number of African immigrants — legal and illegal — who live and operate there and their fellow countrymen who live in the province and join them daily for business. Some man the licensed stalls on Piazza Garibaldi's sidewalk selling fake ethnic objects and a variety of knickknacks. Some patrol Piazza Garibaldi on foot peddling their wares and making all sort of offers to passers-by. Others operate there and the surrounding area, dealing in various dubious activities, including drugs and the sale of sexual services. Many display their wares on impromptu, easily dismantled stalls or on rugs laid on the pavement. The police rarely intervene. When they do, a peddler said to me 'all you've to do's run away; then you just can't be traced'.[16] When the police are in the area, word quickly spreads and the peddlers pack up and move elsewhere. I witnessed how they pick up the four corners of their rug, wrap the lot and go. When the need arises, it is equally easy for their stalls to disappear swiftly; they lift the cardboard sheet on which the wares are fixed, fold the cardboard box holding it and move on. As for the limited capital needed to start this kind of business, those I met said that they borrowed from family or friends.

Much of the supporting structure of what appears to be an efficient cooperation between well-organised autochthonous and allochthonous crime gangs lies in the large network of back streets, extending several blocks to the North-East. Here, foreign prostitutes solicit in broad daylight, part of a rampant sex trade that takes off at night. Here are located dozens of illegal 'warehouses' and a large number of basic guesthouses, small hotels and bed and breakfast establishments that are officially part of the CAS network,[17] but in fact act as incredibly overcrowded hostels for immigrants.[18] Using these places to host the huge numbers of people arriving legally in Italy from Africa is how the local administration seems to be actually 'coping' with the consequences of what authoritative commentators (Nordio 2018, Del Tufo 2018) describe as an 'open arms' ideology that in recent years has led to a description of Italy as the 'soft underbelly' of the EU.[19] Apparently, many who, in their own words, 'are fortunate

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[14] The Vasto is part of the 0.7-square-kilometre Vicaria district outlined in red in Map 2.

[15] A documentary broadcast nationally on 11 November 2019 offers an all-too-brief but telling portrait of this urban situation (*Quarta Repubblica* 2019:
https://www.mediasetplay.mediaset.it/video/quartarepubblica/napoli-quartiere-vasto_F309976201011C14).

[16] Conversations with foreign immigrants were conducted in Italian, English or French.

[17] The CAS acronym stands for Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria (literally, Extraordinary Welcoming Centres).

[18] I have found that there is no exaggeration in the claims made by local resident associations, who found that one of these establishments 'accommodated' 28 legal immigrants in 5 rooms, another accommodated 52 in 9 rooms. They counted 101 legal immigrants in a hotel that has 15 rooms and 112 guests in one that also has 15 rooms.

[19] For a recent visual testimony, see https://www.tgcom24.mediaset.it/cronaca/troppi-richiedenti-asilo-nel-rione-vasto-di-napoli-gli-abitanti-chiediamo-piu-legalita-_3169735-201802a.shtml

enough to have a place in a decent room' take it in turn to sleep in the same bed; one small room may host up to ten people, who do their cooking there, on camping stoves. These establishments have communal toilets and washing facilities. Field research and witnesses' reports suggest that this set up is replicated across central Naples and, in greater scale, in the hinterland. There is more.

Through network links or gangs' imposition, these legal placements are joined by a much larger number of illegal 'placements' not only in hotel rooms but also in the basements, cellars, stairwells or terraces of overcrowded buildings. While on two occasions I could glimpse into these buildings I could not gain sufficiently prolonged access to these places; so, I can only report what I have been told by African-immigrant informants, some of whom described their cramped living quarters as almost impossible to endure. Here, the expression 'almost impossible' is explained, in a sense ironically, by the ugly stories they told me. They tally with the outcry of a young Neapolitan resident with whom I spent much time in the field. It is indicative and worth reporting at length. Referring to one such building, this university student said,

> 'What is going on there is not hidden, it is not a secret. Drug-dealing, prostitution, pickpocketing, bag-snatching and stabbings are under anyone's eye. Much more goes on behind closed doors, so to speak. In short, this is a public case of total state failure, you know. This is a failure also of the part of the Neapolitan owners of the houses, who are complicit in such degradation. In that building there is a grocery store, a sex den, a dormitory on the rooftops and the stairwell, as well as three illegal canteens. In three apartments, illegal immigrants cook food to take away or to eat in; at lunchtime there is a long queue outside these apartments. In this building live *extracomunitari* who are my friends. They are good, respectable people who make a living as best as they can, without stealing, dealing in drugs or selling their bodies for sex. They, though, are forced to live in an indecent way and have to endure being painted with the same brush as their illegal neighbours. We [he and his local neighbours] have reported what is going on to the competent authorities, to politicians, but nothing has been done. How is it possible to know and at the same time tolerate? This is what depresses us and makes us feel that us, and them, we are totally abandoned to our destiny.'

Groups of young Africans are routinely seen apparently just hanging around or lounging at the entrance of small back-street hotels, ethnic shops, not-always-legal betting dens, internet cafes, ethnic takeaways and other assorted outlets. My own experience of some of the ethnic food outlets that have mushroomed in this area met the damning report of a health and safety officer who asked to remain anonymous. The statement reported below exemplifies the dismay felt among the officer's peers:

> 'You wouldn't believe what we find in the licensed so-called ethnic food shops, restaurants and take-away establishments here [the Piazza Garibaldi area] and across Naples and the periphery. The forefronts and areas open to the public are

usually superficially acceptable; greasy floors, table-tops and chairs relatively clean but filthy beneath, and so on. The rest is awful. The smell these places release in the street outside is nothing compared to the stench in the filthy cockroach- and rat-infested storerooms and backrooms and in the kitchens, where they cook the food. Not to speak of the dirty cooking equipment and their unwashed hands and bodies. Of course, we duly file our detailed reports. When the reports are followed through, the places lose their licence and get an injunction to close. When the follow-up controls are done and the place actually closes [. . .] well, that's not the end of the matter. Some places stay closed for good. Some simply open elsewhere, so we run into the same operators over and over. Many, after a while, have their license reinstated and are allowed to re-open. Most just carry on illegally. We keep doing our job but . . . it all seems a bit pointless. I don't know what's going on [. . .] it feels like we are engaged in a depressingly losing struggle.'

This problem, which has not escaped the attention of investigative journalists,[20] is widely discussed among local residents. As my old friend Lucia remarked, 'not much seems truly to change', though. Lucia belongs to the fourth generation of a family that has lived and worked in this neighbourhood. She said to me: 'the residents are exasperated and now they are starting to organise themselves to react. Under the eyes of all, Naples' visiting card has become a cesspit invaded by all kinds of aggressive squatters.' Significantly, I found that, like Lucia, both my autochthonous neighbours and other native informants whom I had long known from previous field research or met anew while updating my material met reports in the media and in the judicial files as they both raised serious issues of health and security. Let us now look briefly to other hot spots in this area.

As one walks on to the end of the North-West side of Piazza Garibaldi, one reaches the area directly opposite the train station. Here, in the area outlined in green in Map 2, it is the Chinese community that rules the roost of legal and illegal trading in goods imported from China or produced locally. Official statistics apart, even to a casual observer the huge presence of Chinese enterprises is undisputable. In the 1980, the only visible evidence of Chinese presence in the city was a restaurant near the *Questura Centrale* (the main Naples headquarters of the state police) and exotica sold in select shops run by Neapolitans. Now, Chinese shops run by Chinese people dominate the Duchesca neighbourhood (brown dot, Map 2) and are gradually extending to the Porta Capuana area (black dot, Map 2) at one end of this neighbourhood and to Porta Nolana (grey dot, Map 2) at the other end. Beyond central Naples, the most obvious examples of Chinese business expansion are the large local production of merchandise in sweatshops like those of San Giuseppe Vesuviano, a small town in the province, and the huge distribution centres in the Gianturco area, at Naples' immediate South-East periphery. On the other hand, a simple bird's-eye view of the seemingly endless rows of Chinese shipping containers in the city's commercial port gives a rough idea of the volume of imports.

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[20] For a summary of their findings, see, for instance, Falco (2018).

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Rubbish Matters

The area around Piazza Garibaldi is also a hub of rubbish peddling, which over time has expanded throughout the areas outlined in blue in Map 2. Regularly reported in the media (see, for example, Folle 2019), it takes place in the Piazza and extends southward to Porta Nolana and its back streets and northward into Piazza Principe Umberto and its environs (purple dot, Map 2). The rubbish trade, mostly run by Roma immigrants, also reaches North-West to the Porta Capuana and, on Sundays, to the Corso Umberto I, known to Neapolitans as Rettifilo (red dot, Map 2). The rubbish peddlers are regularly seen rummaging in the dumpsters, and then proceed to display and sell what objects they have scavenged — mainly shoes and clothes, but also reading glasses, purses, hats, gloves, and so on. My informants find, of course, no consolation in knowing that a similar trade takes place in Rome and elsewhere in Italy under germane styles of local governance.

In past works I have dealt extensively with the issues raised by uncollected rubbish and by the associated vermin in Naples and its Region (Pardo 2011, 2019). In Piazza Garibaldi, as throughout the Region, public space is periodically swamped with uncollected rubbish bags ripped open by stray dogs and cats and by sewer rats increasingly unafraid of human beings. Narrow alleyways become chocked and main roads turn into ever-narrowing bottlenecks. As pavements disappear under the rubbish, pedestrians are forced to walk over festering heaps, doing their best to dodge the vermin but, of course, powerless against the revolting stench and exhalations. This reality accounts for a critical aspect of an urban context whose obvious decay is exacerbated by immigrants peddling objects scavenged from dumpsters. Each of these problems raises serious concerns for public health; combined, they do so very seriously. Much responsibility for this dangerous combination lies with the Naples government. As residents and traders in the city centre grow concerned for their health, a highly explosive situation is brewing that brings to mind past riots motivated by similar reasons (Pardo 2011: 32-38).

Naples residents are allowed to deposit household waste in the evening in dumpsters permanently placed by the walk-side and emptied during the night.[21] The council authorities must provide dumpsters in sufficient numbers, look after them and keep clean them and the sites where they are located. Rubbish collection is the responsibility of the Council's sub-contractors, whose low sense of duty has periodically allowed rubbish to accumulate — interestingly, with clockwork regularity, this generally last several weeks during the summer months.[22]. In the areas peripheral to Piazza Garibaldi, as throughout the centre, many residents, autochthonous and legal immigrant street traders and shop keepers have lost hope in having the local authorities clean up their neighbourhoods. Some take direct action, organizing into

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[21] Council regulations state that rubbish should be placed in the dumpsters outside working hours, between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m.

[22] In the summer, temperature easily rises to over thirty degrees Celsius (eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit), which generally combines with high humidity. The Naples government charges residents for rubbish collection on top of the comparatively very high council tax.

neighbourhood 'cleaning squads' that sweep rubbish off the roads and remove graffiti,[23] while shopkeepers both help them and lodge damning complains through their associations.

The foregoing combines with rubbish-peddling. As an angry local resident typically put it, 'despite the pretty obvious legal and health issues involved, this kind of trade goes on unchallenged, including in the very hot Summer time. We just seem to waste our breadth complaining to the municipal police and the council. No one listens. So, we have organised protests. But to no avail. We will just have to take more decisive action'.

In 2014, the local administration decreed that anyone caught rummaging in dumpsters would be fined 500 euros on the spot. The text of this decree of November 2014 reads:

> 'Those found in breach of this order, are to be punished by the application of the fine of EUR 500–in accordance with art. 7a TUEL and art. 16 of the Law of 24 November 1981 No 689 and s.m.i. and with the immediate destruction of the waste collected from the rubbish bins and of the equipment used for its collection and transportation' (my translation).[24]

Subsequently, fines were duly issued (*La Repubblica Napoli*, 27 November 2014) but left uncashed because the transgressors were officially destitute or could not be identified. Local residents and traders seemed, therefore, to have a point as they resentfully complained to me that that their grievances were met with indifference by municipal police who seem to be 'informally instructed' to turn a blind eye. Sometimes, when the police do take action, they are attacked by the rubbish peddlers and end up in hospital.[25]

Most important, not only basic aspects of social order like security controls and imposition of the law (Weber 1978: Chap. 8: 753-84; Burman and Harrel-Bond 1979: Introduction; Lloyd-Bostock 1979) are sporadic and generally ineffective, but an unlikely contrast takes place that needs attention. Observation tallies with informants' reports on the local authorities' application of double standards in dealing with licensed native street traders, on the one hand, and with illegal immigrant street traders, on the other. For example, on one occasion, I witnessed interesting dynamics while discussing the rubbish trade situation and its ramifications with my informants in a back street, near Porta Nolana. We stood two blocks away from where a little earlier several rubbish peddlers had quickly packed up and run away from the police, whose presence was now preventing the resumption of the trade in their eyesight. Later that day, following a pattern that I have repeatedly observed across Naples and that appears to be established (Giannino 2018), the police left and within minutes the peddlers were back *en mass*.

So, I could be not surprised to hear a shopkeeper state, 'I respect the police and appreciate their efforts but what they are ordered to do is futile. This kind of occasional and time-limited police action is clearly insufficient. It is obviously for show. Clearly, the authorities are taking

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[23] For meaningful examples of such action, see Medolla (2019) and Folle (2019).

[24] See, for example, http://www.napolitime.it/59631-mercato-abusivo-dei-rifiuti-napoli-il-sindaco-ferma-questa-pratica.html

[25] For media reports of recent aggression against the state police see Folle (2018) and https://www.vocedinapoli.it/2018/05/29/notte-di-violenza-nel-quartiere-vasto-carabinieri-circondati-e-aggrediti/

us for a ride. They are just not interested in truly addressing the problem'. This view echoed through my fieldnotes and case studies. Recently, residents' groups like the Comitato Quartiere Vasto and the Comitato Orgoglio Vasto[26] and the associations of shopkeepers have lodged formal complains. Exemplifying local grievances, a member of the latter said, 'Since these people started peddling rubbish, sales have dropped by 50% and keep dropping; still, it continues. I have lost many regular customers, and passers-by have almost completely disappeared because this area is dirty and unhealthy. It is criss-crossed by rats unafraid of human beings. I don't know how long I can carry on doing business.'[27] Another pointed out, 'We've asked for help from the Municipality, the prefecture and the police headquarters but no action has been taken to protect our safety. This part of the city is abandoned to itself and, of course, residents cannot cope with this social emergency on their own'.[28]

While this goes on, however, the law is strictly applied to autochthonous traders, who are heavily fined when they break the rules. Claudio, a shopkeeper in his mid-thirties, sells household goods from tiny premises which he rents at an ever-increasing price. Lack of space in the premises makes it necessary 'to display the merchandise outside, on the walk-side space adjacent to the shop', for which he cannot get a licence. Like many local shopkeepers, Claudio has been repeatedly fined by the municipal police. He says, 'I'll just have to keep paying the fines till I go bust. Unfortunately, I just can't do like the illegal peddlers who operate here, run from the police just to reappear when it is safe, and if caught cannot be made to pay because officially they've no income and usually no i.d.'. Similar cases abound in my ethnography. Peppe and his sons and daughters are among the traders who operate Christmas stalls, the profits accounting for most of their yearly income. A serious problem started a few years ago, when his and others' permits were withdrawn, which in a context where ordinary people are at a high risk of poverty (see note 13) came across as a rather peculiar decision. Ever since, Peppe has attempted to run his Christmas stall, sometimes successfully through bribery, sometimes not. Like his fellow traders, Peppe is 'sorely aware' that unlicensed immigrants' street selling continues unchecked throughout Naples. Including in the area where he would trade at Christmas. When the prohibition to trade was first issued, Peppe's eldest son remarked, 'my family will now be in real trouble, while illegal immigrants can sell what they want where they want'. Recently, I asked him whether his view of the situation had changed. He said in frustration, 'Yes, it has. I'm angrier than ever but I'm not alone, you know. No one listens. This place is a mess. The rubbish trade has grown. Illegal commercial and service activities and receptions centres continue to mushroom. But I and lots of others who feel like me will find ways to deal with this'.

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[26] Respectively, Vasto Neighbourhood Committee and Vasto Pride Committee. Alongside its participation in organised protest, the latter's commitment to improve the area has recently made the headlines (Covella 2019).

[27] For recent accounts in the press, see, for example, Folle (2020).

[28] According to Confesercenti, the traders' association, an impressive number of businesses run by Neapolitans have closed in recent times: 25% in the Vasto district, 40% in the Piazza Garibaldi area and 90% in the nearby Gianturco area, which, as mentioned earlier, is where large Chinese distribution centres are now located.

A Bad Situation Gets Worse

In September 2018, Neapolitans living in the Vasto made a plea for the local administration and the state to re-establish control over the territory where they live and reinstate law and order there. Their open letter was addressed to government leaders and amply publicised in the press. It read:

> 'Mr President and Mr Vice-Presidents of the Council of Ministers, we appeal to you so that our homes and our lives are not abandoned to the law of the strongest. In spite of the commendable and valuable work done by the state police and the carabinieri, who are always present and ready to defend us from aggression, we are afraid. It is no longer possible to raise our children in a neighbourhood that is perpetually in a state of siege, where even a look can trigger a guerrilla war. We only ask to be allowed to live quietly in an environment free of ethnic tensions, like our neighbourhood was just a few years ago. Our peaceful neighbourhood is fading away along with its people, who are no longer able to live and work here: there are so many activities that have closed or that will close soon, with occupational consequences that will further affect local families, who are already struggling to make ends meet. Today, the Vasto is a powder keg ready to blow up at the first spark, which would bring Italians and foreigners to battle with unpredictable and uncontrollable consequences. We ask the national institutions to help prevent this from happening. We want the authorities to regain control of the territory, through both police action and political action aimed at safeguarding the rule of law and the constitutional freedoms of the citizens put at risk by those who dictate their own law made of violence and abuse.' (my translation)

Much official rhetoric and politicking followed. However, according to the ordinary Neapolitans who live here, not much has improved.[29] 'If anything', they say, 'the situation is getting worse, as more African immigrants move in and more trouble develops, progressively, daily.' Carlo, a teacher whom I met in the mid-1980s during my original fieldwork remarked:

> 'Here, in the Vasto, we're citizens just like those of the Vomero [a posh neighbourhood]. And yet, here, you feel you are in a no-man's land: dirty, smelly, hostile. Here, there are schools, including one mostly attended by adolescent girls, who must walk through the neighbourhood on their way to and from school. Here, violence and the threat of violence reign in the air, where immigrants of all colours and their turf wars dominate. They sell drugs, thieve, sell cheap sex or just hang about, seemingly intent on doing nothing. Once it is dark, they let loose tribal-based feuds amid screams, bottle- and stones-throwing, knife fights. In broad daylight, just ask them to let you pass or stop shouting and count yourself lucky if you don't

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[29] The Comitato Orgoglio Vasto points out that over the last 5 years the presence of *extracomunitari* in the neighbourhood has increased by 400%.

end up like the shopkeeper who, on opening his shop the other day, did just that, was hit on the head and is still in hospital with a fractured cranium'.

Giulio, a 45-year-old craftsman, added, 'In the neighbourhood there is a general feeling of growing tension and insecurity as we are often alone in dealing with episodes of petty crime, neglect and violence'. Giovanna, a middle-aged resident who recently replaced her sister working part-time as an assistant in a local shop, matched eye-catching headlines in the local and national press when she said:

> 'Every day bands of African immigrants do battle with broken bottles and knives in the street just outside my building. Why are these people here?' Her eyes filled with tears as she went on to say, '"Whore!" has been repeatedly shouted at me and my daughters. At us! And why? Because we don't cover our bodies head to foot. Last week, my older daughter was physically harassed by one of those people. She reported him to the police. Nothing has happened yet; he still sells ethnic clothes at the street corner. Every day, I grow more afraid for me, for my family. Who is supposed to protect us?'

In anger, Lucia met these views, as she described immigrants' shows of their Islamic culture and values as obnoxious, and the attendant practises as offensive; particularly, though not only, to women. Giovanna's neighbour, a woman in her mid-thirties who manages a shop a couple of hundred metres from the building where she lives, added, 'they become verbally aggressive, spit on you if you just look at them; some go as far as pawing you. It's revolting'. She carried on saying 'Anyone who lived or worked here for just a few days would find out what violence and degradation we experience day in day out'. Claudio, a 41-year-old accountant, remarked, 'it isn't just that immigrants sell rubbish, peddle drugs and assault each other; they harass us; people like me often end up in the emergency department of the local hospital. It's all the worse, if you're a woman or are old'.[30]

Residents have demonstrated strongly, repeatedly making the headlines locally and nationally (see, for example, Garau 2018). When discussing with me his experience of this situation, a local university student remarked:

> 'Twice, my sister and my fiancée have had abuse hurled at them while walking home or standing on our balcony; now they no longer walk on their own. I am disgusted by the irresponsibility, hypocrisy and racism of our high-born rulers and their cohorts. Cocooned in a life of privilege, they pontificate about "human solidarity" and "hospitality" while enjoying life in their posh neighbourhoods'.

He carried on saying, 'Clearly, they don't care about the hundreds of poor immigrants who end up dwelling where us, the less privileged, live. They don't care that our neighbourhood has become a slum'. His fiancée remarked, 'We are afraid of walking alone, especially at night but also during the day. We are forced into a curfew. We don't dare having a coffee on our own or

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[30] Hospital staff reports and the police and judicial files both corroborate my material and offer an incomplete picture, for many instances are not formally reported to the authorities.

taking our children to school. It's a waking nightmare!' Their young friends, a man and a woman in their early thirties, said, 'to avoid violence and abuse, we are forced to return home before dark. We go out after dark in cars and only in large groups. Does this sound normal to you?'

The foregoing brings to mind vividly similar remarks made by my informants in the mid-2000s, which I discussed in my early contribution (Pardo 2009) to the critique of multiculturalism (Prato ed. 2009). In particular, it brings to mind the illustration of the critical opposition of tolerance to toleration brought out by a dinner conversation with Lello, his wife and adult children.[31] As I discussed in detail in the cited essay (Pardo 2009: 112-14), both generations described how certain immigrants, particularly from African countries, posed worrying challenges to their and their significant others' daily lives. They highlighted the friction they experienced in dealing with the culture and approach of foreign immigrants who originated from Islamic countries; a culture and approach which, I have found, local people collectively regarded then, as they do now, to be sharply in conflict with their moral values and way of life. I suggested to Lello and his children that they were perhaps generalising too harshly. Echoing the views that I have reported above and similar others that I have recorded recently, Lello's daughter, Rosaria, a non-practising lawyer, replied:

> 'That is easy for you to say; you don't have to deal with those people on a daily
> basis. We are not being racist or narrow-minded, here; like most people we know,
> we generally get on very well with immigrants. Some have culture and religious
> beliefs that look strange to us but, as long as they are respectful of us and of our
> ways, we welcome them and appreciate what they have to offer ["like the Chinese",
> her brother said in an aside][32]. The people we are talking about, however, make no
> secret, in words and actions, that they despise us, our culture and our way of life.'

Rosaria's brother, an engineer, nodded his approval as Lello added, 'that applies to us all, and especially to women, whom they regard as a kind of sub-species. Every day the papers report their involvement in armed aggression, violent burglary, attempted rapes, rapes and gang rapes. Even if we did not want to believe the papers, we still would have our own direct experience of their contempt, bullying and violence'. This met the remarks of a local priest, who illustratively said:

> 'The neighbourhood is angry. But, mind you, I've never met a racist here. We must
> not confuse intolerance for the total lack of rules, of civilisation, of decorum, of
> tranquillity, of security, with racism. No one would want to live this way, not even
> the most welcoming person in the world. This neighbourhood cannot help all these
> incomers. We need to offer something decent to those who arrive. As there seems

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[31] Lello is a small entrepreneur who for many years has been one of my principal informants (Pardo 2009).

[32] This remark is worth mentioning because it tallies with what many informants' view of Chinese immigrants who, in short, may well be far more numerous than any other immigrant ethnic group, but are generally described as 'people who are respectful, work hard and mind their own business'.

to be no viable strategy for reception, arrival should be limited. Otherwise integration just becomes impossible.'

Back to my exchange with Lello and his family, I put to them, as I did recently to my other informants, that some people would call them intolerant. Rosaria, encapsulated a concern voiced then as now by most local people as she said:

> 'Of course, not everyone believes the same thing, but I don't have to put what another person believes on the same level as what I believe. If a terrorist blows up innocent people in a bus, I shouldn't be expected to respect his beliefs, values and behaviour and to hold them on the same level as mine, when I think that life is sacred. If someone wants to take away my hard-earned freedoms as a woman and a citizen, not only I don't have to comply but I better fight. Does this seriously mean that I am judgemental and intolerant? Tolerance and political correctness have become twisted.' She added, 'Disagreement with someone's beliefs and behaviours is not intolerance, it is discernment and conviction. If we are to hold everyone's beliefs and behaviours on the same level and become accepting of them, why do these people would not hold my opinions on the same level as theirs? Why should they be intolerant of them? Why must I give up what I believe and approve what they believe in? Why should *I* integrate to *them*? Do you not see a double standard here? Surely, having values, opinions, beliefs and moral standards does not equal fanaticism.'

'What will become of us?': Reflections from the Field

Reasonable minds might expect that over the last 15 years or so, governance would have developed and implemented appropriate policies that addressed both the situation and ordinary people's concerns. We know that this cannot be said to have happened. We know that foreign immigration, especially but not only of the kind deplored by Rosaria, Peppe and their fellow Neapolitans, has grown exponentially and has become entrenched in large swathes of the urban fabric. We also know that residents of Naples' less privileged districts may have reason to feel that the authorities — local and national — do not care about what they describe as their 'worrying predicament'. As I have argued at length and in detail elsewhere (Pardo 2012: 68-74), ordinary Neapolitans have long had reason to feel treated as second-class citizens. This feeling has now strengthened considerably in the face of what is received at the grassroots as governance's unforgivable failure to manage power responsibly in the interest of the wider society. From their viewpoint, it is only consequential that the intense feelings aroused by the combination of adverse events that I have described should translate into action.

My local informants have seen their neighbourhood become, in their own words, a '*terra di nessuno* (no man's land), where security and decent living conditions have disappeared'. Their individual and collective protests have evolved into a semi-permanent vigilantism involving mostly young men and some young women; as a local woman in her late twenties said to me, 'We have realised that we couldn't just sit back and wait for a happy ending. We

had to take action'. Reminiscent of classic anthropological analyses (Abrahams 2000) of the moral legitimacy accorded to action that attempt to address the socio-economic cracks caused by bad governance and mismanagement of power, baseball-bat-armed people have taken to patrolling their neighbourhood, especially in the evening when residents return home. They state, 'We keep an eye especially on violent and disorderly immigrants who harass our women or engage with frightening regularity in fights and aggression'. At the same time, organised attacks have been mounted against the rubbish traders, sometimes extending to drug-dealing immigrants. Described in some local media as 'Fascist extremism', these actions have nonetheless gained ordinary people's approval. On occasion, large numbers of local residents join in, while others throw objects from their windows on the rubbish traders. These new developments bring to a head the concerns of local councillors who long ago feared that 'The situation in the area around the station […] continues to be dramatic and the risk of a very violent clash between the residents and the many non-EU citizens who camp out feeding the many illegal activities present in the area becomes more and more probable'.[33]

Immigrants who are legally in Italy and have endeavoured to integrate in the local society express their dismay, too. When discussing this problem with me, several, of various ethnic origin, found common ground in saying that they resent the behaviour of many new incomers, especially those who operate illegally, and who hurl abuse at protesting locals. 'They give a bad name to foreigners as a whole' was a common remark usually followed by the explanation that, as put by Maria, 'this kind of behaviour seriously harms the hard work that people like me have done for many years and our efforts to fit in and feel at home here'. Maria is a Latin American graduate in economics in her late thirties who emigrated to Italy over 20 years ago and now runs a legitimate business in partnership with a Neapolitan woman. I met Maria in 2004 (Pardo 2009: 116-18), when I learnt her story and recorded how she started working informally as a maid and slowly built her present position through apt management of the complex relationship between the formal and the informal. Now happily married to a Neapolitan self-employed electrician with whom she has two children, she feels fully part of local life. She says she feels 'threatened as a woman and as a businessperson, and disappointed as an immigrant, by so much blatant illegality tainting the diverse immigrant community in Naples'. A man in his forties from Sri Lanka who runs an internet café and call centre in the area where most rubbish sellers run their business remarked, 'I've strived to make it here. For many years I have been happy. I felt safe, accepted. I felt almost like a local. Now I'm afraid for me and for my family, for my wife. I get threatened every day and my customers are afraid to come to the shop. If this goes on, I'll be forced to close and go away'. An older man from the Philippines, who, now in his mid-fifties, has succeeded in developing a small local enterprise, said,

> 'I and my wife have lived and worked in Naples for many, many years. My children
> have gone to school and now also work here. We have loved it here. We felt we

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[33] See *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (18 May 2017):
http://corrieredelmezzogiorno.corriere.it/napoli/cronaca/18_maggio_07/napoli-l-allarme-verdi-c-rischio-uno-scontro-violentissimo-residenti-ed-extra-comunitari-8c3b00fc-5218-11e8-a738-a158166f2af5.shtml

fitted in. Neapolitans have warmly embraced us. Now […] now!? Thing have changed. I see foreigners who want to impose their culture and way of doing things on the locals. I see many who are dirty and menacing. I see them abusing local residents verbally and physically. I feel betrayed by wrong policies. And I feel that things are changing for me. I feel it in the air. I feel it when passers-by look at me sideways. I feel it when people who don't know me see my darker skin and stare with hostility, while not long ago no one would care about the colour of my skin or the way I speak. Things are getting uglier. I fear for me, for my family. Our world is falling apart. What will become of us?'

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing both raises worrying questions and engenders sobering thoughts. Will the concerns of ordinary Neapolitans and legitimate foreign immigrants continue to fall on deaf ears? Will the city's highly problematic areas be made decent, safe, liveable and well-managed superdiverse (Rosbrook-Thompson and Armstrong 2018) urban settings? Will tolerance and cooperation between local ordinary people and foreign immigrants be re-established? The present situation and its diachronic development might well inspire serious doubts in the mind of a realist. Indeed, to feel doubtful one does not need to be a die-hard sceptic; a level-headed observer simply needs to consider the conditions under which immigrants and the autochthonous population are forced to live and co-exist. Interestingly, recent but short-lived political action of a new kind aimed at curbing illegal immigration and regulating the legal influx, was widely applauded among my informants as promising, because it opened a window on what could be achieved. The situation is indeed not hopeless.

It could be argued that a style of governance that pursued a working combination of local residents' traditional tolerance, demographically and culturally compatible changes, implementable legislation and, last but not least, a genuine drive to apply the law firmly and fairly might do the job. We know that, despite the progressive worsening of the situation in which they are forced to live, local people are far from resigned to tolerating it as unchangeable, which may well end up proving Hanna Arendt (1958) right. Radical change needs, however, to occur in the management of power and much work needs to be done on restoring goodwill among the population, a key element that is in scarce supply and urgently needs to be reconstructed alongside an informed mutual trust between governance and citizenship.

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Changing Cities: Migrations and New Urbanities in Contemporary Europe

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In this article, I draw on ethnographic material collected in Albania and France to address the diversified nature of contemporary migrants and new forms of mobility and discuss the way in which they influence changes in the urban environment, social relations and lifestyle. Such diversity also includes new forms of mobility that involve middle-class urban residents who have moved to rural or semi-rural areas, exporting their urban lifestyle and, in some cases, triggering a form of gentrification that has changed the local housing market and has engendered the flourishing of new services and businesses. The ethnographic analysis of these changes has also stimulated further reflection on the meaning of 'urbanity'. I discuss the distinction between 'immigrants' and 'foreign residents', and the cultural meaning attached to the socioeconomic status of 'economic migrant' and 'expatriate'. The Albanian and the Franco-British cases bring out how the local context and cultural factors interact with the newcomers' specific circumstances in determining their position in the local society.
Key words: Migrants diversity, Albania, British expatriates, urban policies, change.

Introductory Notes

The advent of the so-called 'new urban millennium' has sparked a renewed political interest in urban-related research. The year 2008 has been singled out as the critical historical moment when, for the first time, the global urban population outnumbered the rural population. Given their cross-cutting nature, urban issues are recognised to have a significant impact on several Goals of the UN '2030 Sustainable Development Agenda'. Urban regeneration — and the attendant upscaling of central city areas — has been presented as the strategic pathway to the solution of such problems as environmental issues, social inequalities and decent, affordable housing; in practice, however, this has been none other than a tactical means to making a city more attractive to new tourist markets and global capital investment. Urban policies are also failing to address the diversified nature of contemporary demographic movements and the different impact that they have on the urban environment and city life. Such diversity also includes new forms of mobility that involve middle-class urban residents who have moved to rural or semi-rural areas, exporting their urban lifestyle and, in some cases, triggering a form of gentrification that has changed the local housing market and the flourishing of new services and businesses.

In this article, I draw on ethnographic material collected in Albania and France to address the diversified nature of contemporary migrants and new forms of mobility and discuss the way in which they influence changes in the urban environment, social relations and lifestyle. The ethnographic analysis of these changes has also stimulated further reflection on the meaning of 'urbanity'.

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Migrants Diversity[1]

When I began reflecting on the new forms of demographic mobility, two descriptions of human migration flashed through my mind. One is ethnographic, the other poetic. Let me start with the ethnography. While I was doing research in Brindisi in the late 1980s, a successful local entrepreneur told me that he had rejected the suggestion to move his business to the North of Italy. Experience, he said, had taught him that, because of his southern origins, he would be treated as an immigrant, a 'rich' immigrant perhaps, but a 'migrant' nonetheless (Prato 1993). This entrepreneur's observations brought to mind a poem dedicated to the transhumant shepherds of Abruzzo, in central Italy, which stimulated comparative reflections. The poem, written by Gabriele D'Annunzio (1903) at a time of heavy Italian migration abroad, is infused with the kind of nostalgia often associated with migrants; a melancholy that, according to D'Annunzio, never leaves the hearts of those in 'exile'.[2] However, although he seemed to share the melancholy and nostalgia of these seasonal migrants, he did not consider himself, nor would he be generally regarded as, a migrant. The son of a rich landowner from the city of Pescara in Abbruzzo, he had an urban upbringing, later moving to Tuscany and, then, to Rome, France, Dalmatia and back again to Italy. In short, he could be described as a flamboyant cosmopolitan who moved confidently among the aristocracy and the most fashionable literary circles of early twentieth-century Italy.

Both the example of the Brindisi entrepreneur and the nostalgic mood of D'Annunzio's poem raise interesting questions about migration; first among them, how to identify who is 'categorized' as a migrant. Does this 'status' depend on geographic provenance (as in the stereotypical portraits of southern Italians), ethnic origin, or economic status? If this is mainly a socioeconomic category, how do we understand it in a way that makes sense of the distinction between, for example, 'immigrants' and 'foreign residents'? Is this category still analytically relevant to our understanding of the rapid transformation of the scale and scope of the contemporary global transboundary demographic mobility?

According to the United Nations, in 2013 the number of people living outside their home country amounted to 232 million (Thornhill 2013). These international migrants include a varied range of people: from those traditionally categorized as 'economic migrants' to international students living abroad, to so-called 'lifestyle migrants' and professionals working abroad, traditionally defined as 'expatriates'. The 'professionals' have been further subdivided into 'foreign executives in local organizations' (FELOs) and 'self-initiated expatriates' (SIEs).[3]

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[1] This section and the following two on postcommunist migrations in Albania and on British expatriates are abridged versions of G. B. Prato, 'Views of Migrants and Foreign Residents: A Comparative European Perspective', originally published in A. Vailati and C. Rial (eds), *Migration of Rich Immigrants*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016: 179-198.

[2] Such melancholy is vividly illustrated in the last lyrics of the poem: 'Alas, why am I not with my shepherds?' (from 'The Shepherds', in G. D'Annunzio, *Halcyon: Dreams of Distant Lands*, first published in 1903 by the Publisher Treves of Milan).

[3] Inkson et al. 1997, Peltokorpi and Froese 2009, Bozionelos 2009.

This complexity, together with the continuously changing geopolitical situations and the attendant global interests, demands a new approach to the study of contemporary migration that acknowledges the importance of a cross-disciplinary dialogue. Furthermore, when looking at new trends in labour force mobility, such a new approach should also take into account the role played by the interaction among social, economic, legal, political and cultural factors in the quality of migratory policies and in the status of foreigners in the host society. Legal and political factors may include bilateral agreements between countries; laws on the free movement of people, as in the case of the European Union (EU); agreements between governments and private sectors; and issues specific to the immigration policy of each country (Da Silva 2018, Giordano 2012, Ruspini and Eades eds 2014). Social and cultural factors may be linked, among other things, to the role of transnational families and diaspora communities, and lifestyle migrants (Rubel and Rossman 2009, Benson and O'Reilly eds 2009). Of course, as anthropologists, we cannot ignore that, with variations in degree and intensity, all these factors influence native people's attitudes toward migrants and the latter's position in the host society (Fernandes and Morte 2011; Pardo 2009, 2012). Although most studies have traditionally focused on 'poor' migrants, new research is increasingly carried out on the aforementioned FELOs, often focusing on cross-cultural interactions in the workplace (Arp et al. 2013), and on skilled migrants' social capital and networks (Ahmed 2012, Casado Diaz 2009). The attention paid to these international migrants would stimulate a redefinition of traditional analytical categories, such as 'expatriates' and 'economic migrants'.

In the sections that follow, I discuss the distinction between 'immigrants' and 'foreign residents', and the cultural meaning attached to the socioeconomic status of 'economic migrant' and 'expatriate' (usually identified as 'rich immigrant') in relation to two European regions — specifically, in Albania and France — that have experienced a large influx of foreign residents and expatriates in the past two decades.

The first part of the discussion addresses the extent to which internal migration and the increasing presence of foreign residents have influenced urban policies in major Albanian cities, like Tirana, the country's capital. The second part of the article looks at British expatriates in the North of France. The Albanian and the Franco-British cases highlight how the presence of rich foreign residents (and in the case of Albania of broader geopolitical and economic interests), on the one hand, and 'economic migration' on the other, may affect urban policies and the local housing and land market. At the same time, these two ethnographic cases bring out how the local context and cultural factors interact with the newcomers' specific circumstances in determining their position in the local society.

Postcommunist Migration, Foreign Residents and 'Urban Renaissance' in Albania
Albania is historically considered a country of emigration (Prato 2009). However, since the collapse of the communist regime in 1990, Albania's major cities have become the recipients of a large number of new residents. This new demographic mobility has occurred on two levels. On the one hand, there has been a significant internal migration. The rural North was

particularly affected by the postcommunist economic crisis and the consequent deterioration of the infrastructure. The combination of these negative events triggered the exodus of the working-age population from the mountain areas. Those who could not emigrate abroad moved to the country's urbanized areas, leading to a high demographic concentration in the central coastal region, mainly in the Tirana-Durrës area. On the other hand, major cities like Tirana have experienced a large influx of foreigners who reside there; they are, diplomatic personnel, NGO activists, executives in local organizations, consultants to the Albanian government and to other key public institutions, and private investors. Furthermore, alongside transnational entrepreneurial ventures, migrants' remittances and new businesses established by returning migrants have injected a considerable amount of capital without necessarily producing widespread welfare. These new demographic and economic phenomena have engendered significant changes that, while generally affecting people's lifestyle, have truly benefitted only a minority of the population. An example of selective beneficial changes is illustrated by the scheme called *Rilindja e Qytetit* (Urban Renaissance) promoted by the mayor of Tirana in 2000. The scheme stimulated the design of several urban plans targeted to make life comfortable for the foreign residents and the new Albanian élite and, the dominant rhetoric stated, to make Tirana a dynamic 'world-class' city attractive to further investment. In contrast, the areas inhabited by a significant number of internal migrants, who moved to Tirana in search of jobs and better living conditions, have been mostly neglected and generally bypassed by this 'renaissance'. Most of the internal migrants live in the urban peripheries that lack basic services and infrastructures. This internal migration and the presence of foreign residents have contributed, in different ways and degrees, to the rapid transformation of the urban landscape, generating what many observers describe as a 'dual city'. In order to understand why and how this dual reality has developed, it is important to examine the processes that spurred the unplanned, unauthorized urbanization of Tirana's periphery.

Informal Urbanization Beyond the 'Yellow Line'

The rapid development of new urban areas at the periphery of Tirana is the outcome of the postcommunist reforms; in particular, the newly acquired freedom of movement and the rights to private property and to private business. As a consequence, the population of the metropolitan area of Tirana has exploded from about 250,000 to well over 800,000 registered inhabitants.[4] In the process, an uneven development has taken place, leading to the aforementioned 'dual city'; that is, a trendy and fast modernizing inner city and an urban periphery mostly characterized by illegal buildings and a lack of basic infrastructure (Pojani 2010). Considering some historical factors will help to understand these processes.

The contemporary suburban settlements are located outside the so-called Yellow Line, which, under communism, defined the limits of the 'allowed' expansion of a city. Yellow Lines were imposed on every city by the communist regime as borders beyond which a city could not

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[4] These figures do not take into account people who live in Tirana but are not registered as residents.

expand.[5] They were an important element of the communist urban planning strategy implemented after 1960. This was, de facto, an antiurbanization strategy with a threefold aim: to foster the development of rural areas and of the suburban industrial districts; to control urban growth; to control demographic mobility. Once a city's expansion reached the Yellow Line, the excess population was forced to move to other, less populated cities or to newly created towns (Aliaj 2003). As Pllumbi (2013) points out, this urban control was justified as a form of planning strategy aimed at achieving an 'optimum city size', a concept based in part on the nineteenth-century idea of 'garden city'.[6] Emulating the Soviet project of self-sustaining urban settlements, the communist garden city was meant to be part of a larger 'urban administrative area' (Prato 2017), which included state-owned farms and publicly managed cooperatives — located outside the Yellow Line — whose priority was to supply the urban population.

Following the fall of the communist regime and the economic collapse of the state cooperatives and industries in the early 1990s, the farmland and business buildings were leased to private individuals. Initially, the privatization process benefitted mainly the former communist nomenklatura, who took advantage of their position and contacts to acquire state properties. At the same time, parcels of state-owned land and ex-cooperative farmland were allocated as private property to worker families and to residents of the state farms on condition that they would work the land and become independent farmers. However, the new legislation on the redistribution of formerly confiscated land led to thousands of land claims. It soon became obvious that the postcommunist state bureaucracy was not equipped to administer this new situation. Many Albanian informants — private citizens as well as public officials — have pointed out to me that land allocations and redistribution were made quickly, and on many occasions arbitrarily, and that it was often difficult to draw clear boundaries for the allocated plots of land (Prato 2011). Moreover, state land recipients were told that the document testifying to their parcel assignment had to be intended as a long-term lease and did not specify future rights (Bloch 1998). The difficulty in determining the final status of these state lands, together with demographic pressure from internal migration, led to the creation of an 'informal' land market, whereby land recipients began to sell 'informally' their assigned parcels to rural immigrants and building speculators. Other rural migrants and low-income families who could not afford regular housing in the city centre contributed to accelerating the 'informal land market' phenomenon as they occupied illegally plots of private or public-owned land on the suburban fringes, where they built houses without permission — in most cases, ownership was

[5] Exceptions were made for major cities like Tirana, Durrës and Shkodër.
[6] The concept of 'garden city' was developed in the late nineteenth century by Ebenezer Howard (1898). Many early twentieth-century architects who embraced this concept proposed the creation of 'garden city communities' in metropolitan areas; that is, residential neighbourhoods surrounded by parkland and pasture. In Tirana, the 'garden city' model had been applied by Italian urban planners first in the 1920s and in a more significant way later through the 'Bosio Plan' of 1940, which created the shape of Tirana as a pedestrian-friendly city with radial roads converging to the centre — to be reached within 30 minutes from any direction—and circular roads at the outskirts (Prato 2017).

claimed following the pre-communist customary law (Bardhoshi 2011). As soon as the land was claimed and built upon, even if illegally, it became available for sale on the informal market.

The social and cultural dynamics, and the economic and political implications of this kind of informal market have been studied from different disciplinary perspectives (Bardhoshi 2011, Felstenhausen 1999, Pllumbi 2013). For the purpose of this discussion, it is relevant to point out that these 'informal' areas amount to 40 percent of the urban expansion of Tirana and that they are located outside the old Yellow Line boundary. In particular, the initial squatter settlements grew in four specific peri-urban areas: Kamza to the northwest, Babruja to the north, Sauk to the south and Yzberish to the southwest. These areas were well located — they were near transport routes and could be easily connected to electricity and water supply lines. Most significantly, the strongest expansion occurred toward the northwest, along the planned EU transportation Corridor VIII (one of the major European Ten-T Corridors). The pressure to acquire land for development produced widespread speculation, rampant unauthorized building and, unsurprisingly, an increase in the (informal) market value of the land. A study carried out on the Kavaja and Durrës corridor routes in 1995 (Felstehausen 1999) identified more than 1,000 shops and businesses per square kilometre in the suburban areas. This study also documented the rapid development in the commercial use of highway space for approximately 50 meters on each side of the road.

The informal land market and the construction of new houses and businesses in these areas have occurred in the absence of public planning, street layout and infrastructure. Sanitation and sewage were inexistent. Water and electricity supply were achieved by illegally tapping into the public grid. As these areas have become more urbanized, these services have fallen under the control of illegal ward bosses who charge each household a hook-up fee.

From the 'Right to the City' to Planned Urban Renaissance

Inner-city Tirana, too, initially experienced an 'informal' development in part similar to that described above. In a perverse interpretation of the 'right to the city' that followed the collapse of communism, ordinary people not only began to enjoy access to previously forbidden areas, such as the so-called *Blloku* (blocked area)[7] but they also occupied public spaces. Inside the Yellow Line, both old residents and a few newcomers began squatting in public spaces between houses, and the city's parks, claiming these spaces for commercial activities, including small shops, kiosks, and above all restaurants and bars that catered to the increasing number of foreign residents and to the new Albanian economic élite. Parallel to the establishment of these commercial activities that allowed people to earn a living, the need for new housing led to real estate speculation in the centre. New high-rise buildings mushroomed unplanned, totally out of control (Pllumbi 2013). In some cases, old houses were illegally 'extended' into public space,

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[7] The *Blloku* was the residential district where the communist leadership lived. The dictator Enver Hoxha had his villa there. Armed guards constantly patrolled the boundaries of this area, which was off limits to ordinary Albanians.

as their inhabitants built additional rooms, bathrooms (or simply toilets), kitchens, storerooms, and so on. In other cases, the public space outside residential buildings was divided into private courtyards. In the absence of urban planning, these unauthorized constructions generated what could be appropriately called a 'collage' city. By the mid-1990s, Tirana had become a construction site dotted with countless new or renovated buildings that emerged next to rundown neighbourhoods.

Thus, postcommunist Tirana has probably become the fastest-changing capital in Europe. Under the aforementioned '*Urban Renaissance*', the city's mayor, Edi Rama, ordered the demolition of all the illegal kiosks, restaurants and bars built in the city-centre's public areas after 1991. Most of the illegal constructions in the centrally located Rinia Park were also destroyed. As part of this renewal process, previously grey apartment blocks were painted in bright colours, though the usually gloomy interiors were often left unchanged. As I have mentioned earlier, this 'Urban Renaissance' project, which sought to turn Tirana into an attractive, booming and modern European capital, mainly targeted the city centre. Examples abound. The *Blloku* became an upmarket neighbourhood with shopping areas, trendy bars, restaurants, nightclubs and casinos. This once secluded residential area, now the 'playground' of the young Albanian élite, is very attractive to foreigners, who enjoy the local facilities. The centrally located Rinia Park has been transformed into a green commercial area with renovated buildings, including some illegal constructions that have survived the cleansing order by the mayor. The complex known as the Taiwan Center has become the most popular gathering place in Rinia Park, with its expensive restaurants, outdoor terraces facing a fountain, bars, a bowling alley, club and casino.

Since 1994, half a dozen urban plans for Tirana have been drafted with the help of foreign consultants and local NGOs, whose influence depended on their relationship with the political party in power. Because of the continuously changing political situation, many of these plans did not undergo the established approval procedure; thus, their legal status remained unclear, often amounting to an 'informal' agreement between the consulting firm and their political interlocutor (Prato 2017).[8]

Over time, the urban development projects have gradually radiated outward, first toward areas within the official boundary of the city (the Yellow Line), then, toward the informal areas. Many of these projects are about the construction of modern, multifunctional centres along the highway connecting Tirana to the port city of Durrës and on the highway to the airport, or in the direction of developing residential areas.[9] These multifunctional centres are supposed to be

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[8] The most recent Central Axis Masterplan focuses on Skanderberg Square and its surrounding boulevards. The Plan includes the construction of ten 85-meter-tall towers around Skanderberg Square, two of which — the TID business centre and the 4-Ever Green Tower — now dominate the urban landscape with their multifunctional 25 floors that include residential apartments, shopping facilities, office space, and luxurious hotels with panoramic views.

[9] Typical examples are the Mall of Albania and the City Park to the northwest — they include shops, cinemas, casinos spa centres, luxurious hotels with high-tech conference facilities — and the Tirana

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easily accessible — either by private car, through renovated or new main roads or by public transport. In particular, a strong emphasis is put on the new privatized transport system, which aims to put an end to the informal services that emerged in the late 1990s in response to the dilapidated public transport system inherited from the communist period. At the time, informal transport was provided by privately run minivans (*furgonë*) that ran more frequently and reliably than the public buses and also reached destinations not normally served by public transport. Many people, including wealthier residents, preferred to use these *furgonë* also because during their intercity journey they would pick up and drop off people on request along the route. Following the privatization of public transport that began in 2001, new legal requirements for running the service were introduced, including a special license. These changes caused a decline in the number of *furgonë* in operation (Pojani 2010). In 2004, intracity *furgonë* were eventually banned. By 2006, nine out of ten urban lines had been privatized and were operated by four companies. However, not all suburban areas were served by these lines, and the companies charged a considerably higher fare for suburban destinations. In 2016, urban bus lines charged 30 Lek (approximately US$0.30) per ride, regardless of the distance travelled within the city, and were legally bound to offer monthly passes and reduced fares for students. In contrast, not only were fares higher on suburban lines,[10] but they also varied depending on the distance travelled, and monthly passes were not available. Still today, few residents in the informal areas own a car, so they are among the people who are most heavily dependent on public transport. Furthermore, the younger residents point out that this situation makes it more difficult for them to go to school and to attend university, and makes it impossible for them to enjoy the nightlife in the city centre. Thus, the image of a 'dual city' is reinforced.

We know that these informal areas are located outside the historic Yellow Line. While this Line seems to have lost its original meaning of delimiting the boundaries of urban growth, it has acquired a new meaning. It has become a symbolic line within society, indicating differences of status. It is now a dividing line between the formal and the informal city. It is a line of segregation, separating the 'true' urban residents — who include the original inhabitants of the city and foreigners — and the newcomers, who are still seen as outsiders who do not have the 'right mentality' and culture to live in the city. As Pllumbi has aptly noted, 'The phenomenon of the expansion of the city resembles a patchwork puzzle, the patches here are separated and suffer in their vulnerability and lack of identity. The Yellow Line is transformed in a social wall that separates the components of the city' (Pllumbi 2013: 79–80). Not only do most foreign residents usually not integrate into the local society — at most they seem willing to associate with the local élite — but also, most significantly, it would appear that the old urban residents, who claim their right to the city, do not wish to grant that same right to the rural migrants.

East Gate to the southeast, which is described as Albania's largest covered retail and entertainment centre.

[10] For example, a round-trip fare to reach the informal settlements west of the city was 100 Lek (US$1.00); a considerable sum for low-income commuters and students (Pojani 2010).

The Tirana case seems to mirror Krase's observation (2012) that the transformation of the urban landscape produced by migration introduces a new ordering of city life. Here, while rural migrants have changed the suburban landscape, the inner city has been changed by urban planners to satisfy what local administrators perceive to be the needs of the foreign residents and to transform Tirana into a 'world-class city' that would hopefully attract new investors and rich immigrants. Following Lofland (1985), it could be argued that here the built environment is symbolically communicating people's position and the ordering of the urban inhabitants in terms of spatial location, and that it does so in such a way that urban residents will know a great deal about each other simply by looking.

British Expatriates and Economic Migrants in the Nord-Pas-De-Calais
In contrast to Albania, the United Kingdom has historically been a destination for many foreign migrants, mainly from former British colonies. Beyond this historical pattern, there are two demographic phenomena that need attention: the increased presence in the UK of European nationals as a consequence of EU 'free movement' policies, and the growing number of Britons who move abroad. Here, I shall focus on the latter phenomenon.

An expatriate is by definition a person residing in a country other than his/her homeland. In common usage, however, this word is usually applied to professionals and skilled workers working abroad for a specific length of time or to so-called lifestyle migrants, often including pensioners who move abroad in search of a better climate or lower living costs. The category 'expatriate' does not, therefore, include all 'migrants'. In particular, it does not include manual labourers, or the so-called economic migrants; that is, people who are poor and move abroad to earn money and improve their living standard. In this light, we should ask to what extent the increasing number of British people living in northern France is to be considered an expatriate community. As we shall see, Britons residing permanently in northern France are by no means a homogenous socioeconomic group, and some of them would certainly fit the category of economic migrants.

In addition to lifestyle migrants, it must be pointed out that during the second half of the twentieth century, a combination of many factors created a global market for professional expatriates. Contrary to 'traditional' professional expatriates, some chose to move abroad on a short-term basis, while others did so permanently. Many commuted between their new residence abroad and their workplace in the home country. To many Britons from southeast England, northern France was ideal for such 'commuting' expatriation, which is described in the literature as self-initiated expatriation (SIE). Initially, the SIE category referred to the significant number of young people who every year moved abroad 'for a prolonged period of travel, work, and tourism' (Inkson et al. 1997: 358). The concept was later broadened to include other groups of 'expatriates' (Bozionelos 2009, Selmer and Lauring 2011), generating a considerable number of subgroups that are so different from each other as to make one wonder whether a single category is a useful analytical tool. To complicate matters further, perhaps unnecessarily, Suutari and Brewster (2000) have suggested that when the geographic and

cultural distance is limited, as in the case of people moving to neighbouring countries, it would perhaps be more appropriate to use the expression 'self-initiated foreign experience' (SFE).

So, are the British expatriates in the Nord-pas-de-Calais an example of SFE? The ethnographic cases that I have studied would simply suggest that they could be broadly described as relatively rich immigrants. Although they are not particularly well-off, they are generally wealthier than the native inhabitants.

Drawing on ethnographic material collected in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, in the discussion that follows I look at a community of Britons (mainly from southern England) who over the last 15 to 20 years have moved to northern France in search of a better lifestyle. Many are pensioners, while others are professionals or small-scale entrepreneurs. Rather than moving to big cities, they choose to reside in midsized towns that offer cheap housing and living costs and are easily reachable from the UK — most are a 30- to 50-minute drive from the ports of Calais, Dunkirk or Boulogne. This choice fits nicely with the French government's interest in populating the country's economically declining semi-rural and post-industrial areas. For the expatriate community, better living conditions mostly mean being able to afford a British-style social life that they could no longer sustain in their home country.[11] Furthermore, expatriates often qualify for many financial benefits, including tax benefits either in the country of origin or in the host country. For example, UK pensioners can benefit from the 'Qualifying Recognized Overseas Pension Scheme' (QROPS). This scheme has become popular among British expatriates due to the tax advantages it offers. Pension funds left in the United Kingdom are heavily taxed, in some cases up to 50 percent; however, if the UK pension fund is transferred to a QROPS, the pensioner can avoid UK taxation.[12]

Most of the British expatriates whom I have met in northern France appear to rely on a network of acquaintances and friends. Some say that they have been helped by their 'old boy' network, or by their membership of gentlemen's clubs back in the UK. In a significant number of cases, it would indeed appear that people could have not afforded to expatriate without the help of their networks. In recent years, the number of Britons moving to this part of France has increased so significantly that a real estate agent has aptly chosen the name 'L'Abri-Tanique' for its business, playing on the French words *abri* (shelter) and *britanique* (British). This firm advertises its services as a bilingual real estate agency for those who want to buy or rent a townhouse, a farmhouse or any other property near the Channel ports.

The phenomenon of British expatriates living in European countries is, of course, not new. In 2009, more than three million British people lived abroad, half of whom were in EU

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[11] In the cases of professionals who lost their jobs or entrepreneurs who went bankrupt, they say that they could not face the shame of living in disgrace and relative poverty in England.

[12] The QROPS was launched in 2006 by Her Majesty Revenue and Customs (HMRC). It can be used by UK residents who have accrued a pension fund but have left the UK either to retire or to work permanently abroad — in a country recognized under the scheme.

member states.[13] Notoriously, many have moved to Italy, Spain and the South of France. In Italy, most initially settled in Tuscany slowly growing in such a number that this Italian region became known as 'Chiantishire'. Their presence rapidly changed the housing market, and when prices became too high, newcomers started settling in nearby Umbria and, then, Marche. British expatriates in Spain are also a well-known phenomenon (O'Reilly 2000, Benson and O'Reilly 2009, King et al. 2000, Gustafson 2009). In her study of British expatriate women in the Costa Blanca, Ahmed (2012) describes how they establish social barriers not only between the network of expatriates and the native population but also within the expatriate community, determining who is accepted in their circles. Most of these women make a clear distinction between 'acquaintances' and people with whom there is a 'shared sense of community'. However, in many cases it is a 'superficial' feeling of belonging that satisfies their need for security and safety. As Ahmed points out, such a feeling can be switched on and off for pragmatic purposes. Above all, belonging to the expatriate network seems to be a matter of being able to continue their British lifestyle. As these expatriates do not seem interested in learning the local language and culture and integrating into the wider society, Ahmed notes (2012), their establishment and maintenance of these social networks is a strategy for thriving in a foreign environment.

Contrary to this Spanish situation, the British expatriates in northern France do not live in 'segregated' residential areas or away from the native population. Although belonging to the network of local British expatriates gives a sense of continuity to their lives, most of my informants seem to make an effort to integrate with their French neighbours.[14] Some have taken French citizenship. Although British nationals did not need to have a French passport to reside permanently in France,[15] they chose to become French nationals for two main reasons. One was pre-emptive and stimulated by the debate that preceded the 2016 'Brexit' referendum; many said that, at their age, it was unlikely that they would move again and, thus, wanted to make sure that they had the legal right to remain in their 'new home' whatever the outcome of the referendum. The other reason was more immediately practical and had to do with social integration. This second reason was given mainly by those who had established a local business, such as a bed and breakfast or other tourist-related activities. They said that by taking up French citizenship, they were showing the local community their determination to become fully integrated into local society. They hoped that their business would benefit from this choice, gaining local people's support and help. In both cases, however, my informants were keen to point out that they have not lost their British citizenship. They saw their dual citizenship as an advantage.

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[13] Britons represented the highest of expatriates among OECD countries (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). For the past ten years, British emigration has stood at about 400,000 people per year.

[14] On British expatriates to southwest France, see Benson (2009). O'Reilly (2000) discusses aspects of integration in the host society with reference to British expatriates in Spain.

[15] This rule may change following the UK exit from the EU in January 2020.

Let us now look in more detail at the socioeconomic composition of the British living in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais. As I mentioned earlier, some are retired. However, a significant number, especially failed entrepreneurs in the UK, have established new businesses locally, in most cases a bed and breakfast. Others, less adventurous, look after the houses and gardens of fellow Britons who have not yet moved permanently into the area and who use their properties seasonally or rent them out. They may be people whose pension is too low even for the cost of living in this part of France and who, therefore, complement it with this kind of activity, or they may be people who have not yet accrued enough pension contributions and commute periodically to work in the UK on part-time contracts.

Some more adventurous expatriates, who do not have skills employable in the current labour market but are still of working age, have started a business that they call 'alternative tourist experience'. They advertise among their British networks, offering hospitality in their French chalet (or, in some cases a chateau; that is, a house bigger than usual set on several acres of land) to paying guests and a 'full immersion' in the local way of life. Usually, such 'alternative tourist experiences' consist in food and drink tours with visits to local *caves* (winemakers) and specialist wine merchants, tours of local *brocantes* (secondhand, or vintage shops), visits to flea markets and open-air activities such as cycling or horseback riding in the countryside. Sometimes these activities are combined with painting lessons or French book-reading sessions. Also in this case, the acceptance of the local French inhabitants appears to be fundamental to the success of the business, especially considering that many customers are people passing through the area.[16] As these people stop at local cafés and restaurants, they are informed of this 'alternative' tourist opportunity by the locals who run these businesses. In this symbiotic relationship between the locals and the expatriates, the latter direct their friends and, if in business, their paying guests to patronize the local cafés and restaurants.

The relationship between the locals and the expatriates is, however, not always so idyllic. Some opposition to the presence of 'too many British' arose when some expatriates began to speculate on the housing market. These self-declared 'housing entrepreneurs' began to buy derelict properties at very low prices — in some cases paying little more than the value of the land — which they proceeded to restore at low cost using inferior materials and, then, sell to newcomers at prices far above the local market value. This practice has inflated the housing market and has made it more difficult for local people to become homeowners.

Significantly, while the United Kingdom is the OECD country that 'exports' the most expatriates, all the major British political parties have engaged in an increasingly heated debate on revising the country's immigration policies. As we know, the (legal) principle of free movement of people from other EU member states became the focus of attention in this debate. EU visitors have been collectively labelled as 'migrants', including those young people who would rather fit the description of SIEs. Meanwhile, there has been pressure from various lobbies to encourage the presence of so-called 'rich migrants', such as rich Chinese or Russian entrepreneurs, Arab 'expatriates', and so on. Equally interesting, while the Britons who move

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[16] These are usually British tourists travelling to other French destinations.

abroad continue to be described as expatriates, regardless of their socioeconomic status, foreigners who decide to settle in the UK but come from certain countries — including some EU countries — continue to be labelled as 'migrants', even when they are financially wealthier than most native Britons.

Migrants and New Urbanities: A Comparative Ethnography
In the last two decades of the 20th century, cities have experienced new forms of demographic movement, including an outward migration of urban residents who have moved to the suburbs to live or work — we could, thus, say that the 'urban' has been delocalised. At the same time, there has been an increase in foreign immigration in cities that until relatively recently had not experienced this phenomenon. New financial and political agreements, changes in the labour market and cheaper travel have made it easier for people to move to other countries. New analytical constructs, such as FELOs and SIEs, have been devised to describe the status of the various kinds of new 'migrants'. Given this scenario, here I have addressed the heterogeneous nature of demographic mobility and the impact that new forms of migration — whether temporal or long-term, and how they are affecting urban life socially, economically, culturally and politically. Let me sum up what a comparative analysis reveals.

Migrant: An Arbitrary Categorization
The Albanian and Franco-British cases analysed here highlight the arbitrariness of migrant categorizations. We have seen that, when discussing socioeconomic categories, people's wealth does not refer merely to monetary or, more generally, material wealth but also to social and cultural capital. In the Albanian case, some of the rural migrants who settled at the urban periphery managed to accumulate substantial economic capital through their involvement in the informal land market and building speculation; and yet, they have persistently been considered 'outsiders'. These newcomers are not considered to be full urban citizens because they are the bearers of a cultural tradition that conflicts with the new dominant political project to transform Tirana into a 'world-class city'. As I have observed, the informal zones in which they have settled are 'self-regulating systems' where 'legitimizing moralities (Pardo 2000) allow people to operate and to make a living' (Prato 2018: 64). This has created a 'dual city' phenomenon whereby residents in the informal areas have been treated as second-class citizens (Pardo 2009). In contrast, Britons who move abroad see themselves and are portrayed in their country of origin as 'expatriates' and, regardless of their wealth, they are usually seen as 'rich migrants' in the host society.

The different attitudes that have emerged in this discussion make one wonder whether the status of new migrants is determined by a new hierarchical 'reputation-based' categorization, whereby the status of the migrant is assessed on the basis of the international reputation of the migrant's country of origin. It is noteworthy that this reputation is essentially linked to the international recognition of the political and economic weight that a country is allowed to have in the continuously changing geopolitical framework. Of course, in this scenario, it is irrelevant

whether this reputation reflects reality. What matters is that the 'virtual' status of the country meets the criteria established by a well-understood but unspoken ranking. It is not surprising, therefore, that people who decide to move abroad from countries like Albania will continue to be categorized as (poor) migrants, whereas people who do so from countries like Britain will continue to be regarded as (rich) expatriates. However, the case of British expatriates in France and the literature on expatriate communities more generally show that, although expatriates do not consider themselves 'migrants', their eagerness to belong to a network of compatriots is not, after all, so different from the nostalgia of the cosmopolitan D'Annunzio. Perhaps they, too, dream of being with 'their shepherds'.

Another aspect of migration that I have considered is the way in which it affects the urban environment and city life. In particular, in this scenario, we should ask what does it means to be 'urban'.

Changing Urbanity

The changes brought by migratory fluxes seem to compound with new geopolitical interests. Albania is a case in point. Pressured by the international community, the Albanian government has sought solutions to infrastructural problems linked to the informal areas. So, in 2006, it established the 'Agency for the Legalization, Urbanization and Integration of Informal Areas/Constructions' (ALUIZNI) — a special body of the Ministry of Urban Development. ALUIZNI is meant to cooperate with international investors, NGOs and private stakeholders in the implementation of various projects that targeted informal areas across the country. Given the strategic, economic and demographic relevance of the Tirana-Durrës metropolitan region, special attention has been paid to address the problem swiftly there. This region is the fastest growing in Europe; it covers two counties (*qarku*) and includes the country's capital city, its main port, more than a quarter of its population and almost two-fifths of its economy (Prato 2017). Significantly, this region is situated along the route of Corridor VIII, which has attracted substantial government and international financial investment (Prato 2018).

Positive changes have also occurred in many inner-city areas. In line with EU programmes on smart, green, sustainable cities, pedestrian routes and bike lanes are new aspects of Tirana's landscape. Pedestrian areas are most welcome in Tirana for, regardless of age, residents enjoy socializing outdoors; it is not unusual to see the older generation playing cards or simply chatting in the city's parks, whereas younger people love to engage in long promenades, locally known as the *xhiro*, through car-free boulevards and pedestrian paths. The promenade, a typical aspect of outdoors socialization in many north Mediterranean countries, is another aspect of life that could not be enjoyed under communism and has been eagerly been rediscovered or, in the case of the younger generation, discovered anew. The newly discovered ecological awareness is also reflected in the controversy surrounding the rehabilitation of the 'Gran Park of Tirana' that includes an artificial lake built in 1955, the royal palace — now the residence of the President of Albania — the botanical garden, swimming pools and an amphitheatre. In spite of the establishment of an 'Agency of Parks and Recreation', the

controversy continues on the plans to reduce green areas, including the botanical garden, in order to make space for offices, housing, hotels, public buildings and a new motorway (the Tirana Outer Ring Road).

The changes described above seem to be part of a broader project of urban gentrification which should bring a 'Europeanizing transformation' of Albanian cities. Albania's urban gentrification seems to reflect global trends on inner-city transformations (Atkinson and Bridge eds 2005, Krase and DeSena 2015). However, as the Franco-British ethnography shows, gentrification is not generated only by the 'city marketing' approach, nor is it confined to large cities; in small towns and peri-urban areas it is also triggered by new forms of migration — specifically, the outward urban mobility. As in the Franco-British case, urban newcomers transform the landscape of the areas in which they move. In some cases, their schemes of housing renovation de facto 'evict' the local population; in other cases, their practices, domestic arrangements and business activities remodel social relations and lifestyle.

Elsewhere I have argued (Prato 2018) that the 'urban' has extended beyond the administrative boundaries of the city not simply in terms of built-up area but also, in terms of life-styles, behaviours, social interactions, economic activities and so on. Therefore, ethnographic analysis, and urban policies, cannot focus merely on the physical space. According to the UN Development Agenda, the future of our world depends on environmental sustainability and urban resilience. However, we should recognize that these goals cannot be achieved through the application of abstract, homogenising models. The strength of ethnographic research lies precisely in its contribution to our understanding of how abstract models are negotiated at the local level, and how new historical conditions influence the emergence of new forms of urbanity.

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Dislocation and Criminality: The 'Lithuanian Problem' in East London

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In this article we use the findings of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Newham, East London, to examine how the local police approached what they termed the 'Lithuanian problem'. With one in ten recorded crimes being attributed to Lithuanian migrants, we detail the police's attempts to characterise these migrants and divert their energies away from criminal activity. In doing so we draw on three related areas of the academic literature: the nexus between gender and migration, a more specific focus on Lithuanian masculinity, and the insights provided by alien conspiracy theory. We argue that the processes of othering through which police defined Lithuanian criminality not only overlooked intra-group differences but also contributed to the perpetuation of the 'problem'.
Keywords: Ethnography, crime, migration, gender, masculinity, alien conspiracy theory.

In the year 2009-10, one in ten of all recorded crimes in the London Borough of Newham (LBN) was credited to a group labelled 'Lithuanians'. This statistic prompted attempts by local police to define and address the 'problem'. In what follows we seek to describe and analyse these attempts and explore the stories of a number of Lithuanian migrants whose lives and behaviours were the loci of intervention. More specifically, we analyse the findings of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2011 and 2013 using three related areas of the academic literature: the nexus between gender and migration, a more specific focus on Lithuanian masculinity, and the insights provided by alien conspiracy theory.

We begin by reviewing these areas of the literature before detailing the setting and methods of our ethnographic fieldwork. We proceed to describe police attempts to define and solve the problem, and explore the life stories of three male migrants who were inducted into rehabilitation programmes. The discussion ends by drawing conclusions about police attempts to address the 'Lithuanian problem' and describe how these attempts played out.

Migration and Dislocation: Gender, Emotion and Alien Conspiracies

Our review of the extant literature is divided into three parts. The first pertains to migration and masculinity, the second to masculinity and suffering, and the third to alien conspiracy theory. As noted by McIlwaine et al. (2006), research on migration has until relatively recently been subject to skewed perspectives on gender. That is, the orientation of researchers in this area has swung from one underpinned by a set of normative assumptions bound up with male migration and so-called masculine traits, to one which, in seeking to redress the balance, focuses on the specificities of female migration. The first was shot through with migratory dispensations rooted in risk-taking, adventurousness and courageousness. The latter is largely concerned with the emancipatory potential of female migration. The animating principles of male migration have not been cast solely in a positive light; issues including gender violence and desertion have been identified with the plight of male migrants.

This has subsequently been complemented by a more nuanced approach which takes account of how gender influences migration and, in turn, how gender and its associated practices, behaviours and so on are reconstituted through migratory realities. This two-way-dynamic takes place not just in receiving nations and locales but within what scholars have

called 'transnational social fields' (Fouron and Glick-Schiller 2001, Huang et al. 2000, Mahler 1999, Pessar 2005, Yeoh et al. 2003). It is in moving across borders, becoming aware of expectations and norms attached to gender and relating these to the expectations and norms of one's own culture that negotiation proceeds. Indeed, this process of negotiation has challenged much of the received wisdom regarding gender and migration, with rites of passage associated with marital eligibility and breadwinner status giving way to the male migrant as 'trailing spouse' (a role traditionally reserved for female migrants).

In their study of male migrants working in the low-pay end of London's service sector, Mcllwaine et al. (2006) used research findings on masculinity to make a set of original claims about male migration and embodiment and emotion. They describe how the migratory experience is embodied in ways that correlate with the performative dimensions of gender and, more specifically, how physical events and emotional experiences are hallmarks of gendered migration. They also complicate the narrative in which such low-paid migrant workers are cast as a monolithic group with regard to their social positioning. While this group of male migrants was concentrated at the low-pay end of London's service sector, this masks the fact that they were drawn from an array of backgrounds in both social class and ethno-national terms. These various class positions inflect migratory paths together with the narratives through which migrants make sense of their current predicaments.

One set of emotional experiences considered by Mcllwaine et al. (2006) encompasses anxiety, pain and suffering. This is a theme which dominates discussion of Lithuanian male identity and one which proves significant in our own analysis of Lithuanian male migrants in East London. Tereškinas (2010) has situated the social suffering of Lithuanian men in relation to the dislocation wrought by the transition to post-Soviet rule. Rapid social, economic and political change left many working-class men marginalised and unable to construct the kind of life narratives that would rationalise their plight against a backdrop of newly-minted 'successful' masculinities. The resulting deficit in terms of self-worth and feelings of anxiety and despair was mitigated by a set of destructive practices including alcoholism and violence. Men who choose to leave Lithuania do so partly in order to address this deficit but, as we will see, feelings of anxiety and inadequacy continue to find expression in destructive patterns of behaviour while being thrown into relief by gender norms in the host society.

Our final frame of analysis draws on the criminological notion of the alien conspiracy theory. This identifies key threats to the normative order as emanating from alien, essentially foreign sources rather than from within the UK's own backyard. As a consequence, the response to alien transgression emphasises the deviant pathology of recent arrivals, which becomes extended to entire communities. As Marotta has noted, 'the stranger comes to symbolize the very ambivalence that the ordering impulse is attempting to destroy' (2002: 42). We argue that in discourses related to the Lithuanian community, boundaries between natives and 'foreigners, lower class, ethnic offenders or a combination thereof' (Van Duyne 2011: 2), constitute a demarcation between criminal and non-criminal via the vehicle of 'othering' (Agozino 2000). Through the transgressions of Lithuanian men, these discourses express the identification of aliens as a principal threat to aspects of British society and the subsequent institutionalisation

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of othering on the grounds of transgressive ethnicity, a device that highlights the tainting of the UK by foreign criminality.

Settings and Method

The research described in what follows took place between 2011 and 2013 in the East London Borough of Newham (LBN). Situated north of the River Thames, around five miles from the City of London, Newham is one of the poorest boroughs in the UK (ONS 2011). It is also the second most diverse in terms of the ethnicity of its residents. Unlike in other settings, Lithuanians' whiteness could not be used straightforwardly as a resource to blend in (Daukšas 2013). According to the results of the 2011 Census, 29% of Newham's estimated 307,000 population is White (16.7% White British, 0.7% White Irish, 0.2% Gypsy or Irish Traveller, 11.4% Other White), 4.6% of mixed race (1.3% White and Black Caribbean, 1.1% White and Black African, 0.9% White and Asian, 1.3% Other Mixed), 43.5% Asian (13.8% Indian, 12.21% Bangladeshi, 9.8% Pakistani, 1.3% Chinese, 6.5% Other Asian), 19.6% Black (12.3% African, 4.9% Caribbean, 2.4% Other Black), 1.1% Arab and 2.3% of other ethnic heritage. With the highest fertility rate in the country (LBN 2014), this incredibly diverse populace is set to grow rapidly in coming years. In terms of religion, the population of Newham is 40% Christian, 32% Muslim, 9.3% No religion, 8.8% Hindu, 2.1% Sikh, 0.8% Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish (ibid.), with the borough being home to some 35 mosques, 26 Anglican churches, 16 Baptist churches, 12 Catholic parishes and four synagogues.

An ethnographic approach was adopted, with observation, participant observation and in-depth interviews used in combination (O'Reilly 2011, Venkatesh 2008). Avenues of access were secured via the Metropolitan Police Service as part of a wider ethnographic project that examined the policing implications for the London borough of Newham of being the principal host of Olympic venues for London 2012 (Armstrong et al. 2016). Ethnography is particularly relevant as a methodology to facilitate an understanding of marginalised communities (Kearns and Smith 1994). Others exploring the complex social issues associated with crime have recognised the method's potential to give a voice to society's most peripheral groups (Robinson 2002, Emirbayer and Williams 2005, Bourgois and Schonberg 2007). The ethnographic method is thus both a process and a product (Milgate 2007). Making sense of what is witnessed is thus not a simple task. While there are different definitions of 'ethnography', there is broad consensus that the method requires the researcher to understand and articulate the meanings through which social agents encounter the world (Atkinson et al. 2002). That understood, we now seek to explain why the migrants whose stories appear in this article came to be in London.

Go West

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1989 brought independence the following year to the Baltic state of Lithuania, after 45 years of communist rule. With a population of 3.2 million in 2003, the newly independent state did not deliver economic prosperity to its people. By 2009 the population had shrunk to 2.75 million, as the young and ambitious left their homeland to seek better (i.e. more prosperous) lives most notably in the USA and to a lesser extent Brazil. Following Lithuania's accession to the European Union in May 2004, Norway, Sweden, Spain,

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England and Ireland became destinations of Lithuanian migration. A decade on and some 45,000 Lithuanians in the Republic of Ireland constituted 1% of the total population. Employed in construction work that typified the so-called 'Celtic-Tiger' economic boom of the Republic, the Lithuanians were the hired muscle for members of the Irish-born population fitting the occupational self-description of 'Property Developer'. The celebration of the cheapness of the migrants' labour and their penchant for hard work was slightly off-set by the horror evoked by stories that Lithuanian women were arriving in Dublin — via the budget flights of RyanAir — just days before their expected date of giving birth so as to bear the child in Ireland, register the new-born as 'Irish' and thereby assume for that child a life-long entitlement to state benefits.

In England today, some 140,000 Lithuanians are concentrated in Peterborough (Northants), Boston (Lincolnshire) and Kings Lynn (Norfolk), having been attracted to these towns by the opportunity to work in the laborious and notoriously low-paid and unregulated tasks associated with agricultural harvesting and food processing. Additionally, by 2010 an estimated 25,000 Lithuanians were residing in East London, primarily in the borough of Newham, where they worked (especially in the case of women) in the low-paid and generally under-regulated services sector (in many instances in cleaning jobs) and, in the case of men, in the similarly low-paid and unregulated property construction sector. The choice of Newham, we learned anecdotally, was partly down to the presence of a local church and a perceived absence of 'ownership'. The one Lithuanian church in London was to be found in Bethnal Green a few miles outside Newham. This location was a focus of newly arrived Lithuanian migrants. From here began a search for cheap housing and one district of Newham, Beckton, suited many pockets. The same place was perceived as having no ethnic majority. As one Lithuanian business entrepreneur explained: 'Sri Lankan, Indians, Africans had 'their' areas […] Beckton had no claim, so we moved into places there.'

The People of Providence
As well as the tens of thousands of Lithuanians living exemplary lives there existed individuals who arrived in the UK with the personal demons that in many cases characterised their lives back in Lithuania. Stereotypically, the Lithuanians of East London were characterised by the police as possessing a combination of features, both intellectual and physical: poorly educated, physically tall and strong, God-fearing (that is, church-attending Catholics) but with a penchant for massive consumption of beer and vodka in leisure time. Such consumption was often linked to violence.

One Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Detective Inspector (DI) had dealt with the Lithuanians of Newham by virtue of his inquiries into Violent Crime in the borough. He had first been alerted to the propensity to heavy drinking and consequent violence amongst Lithuanians by the bodies of two dead Lithuanian seamen found on two boats docked in the borough. Deep frozen and partially decomposed, the bodies bore injuries consistent with violent assault but also potentially some form of industrial accident. The remainder of the Lithuanian crew provided no clues as to what had happened. The same DI had spent the best part of the following 15 months talking with the Lithuanians in the borough, both those who had come to the attention of police and one who held positions that defined him as the spokesmen for the

local Lithuanian community by virtue of his membership of the local police Independent Advisory Group (IAG). The DI's profile of Lithuanians was succinct:

> They're a brutalised people historically occupied by Germany and then Russia […] always under the heel of a bigger nation. They work hard for poor wages. And they drink like there's no tomorrow — they don't count beer as 'drink'. Drink for them is Vodka. They drink at home more than in pubs, but that's when trouble starts; they get totally pissed, start getting argumentative, then hit one another. That's when we get to know them.'

For a variety of socio-cultural reasons many Lithuanians carry a variety of personal 'baggage' which outwardly manifest itself in a propensity to addiction of both (or either) alcohol and drugs. For police, one possible reason for this was the decades of repressive Soviet domination. Drawing on what might best be described as political-psycho-analysis, for many Lithuanians this repression was internalized (external dissent would result in arrest and worse), manifesting itself in a collective pessimism and individualised in a mass morbidity characterized by habitual alcohol consumption. When the decades of Soviet rule ended, certain circumstances did not change. Research published in 2010 listed the following statistics for Lithuania:

- It had the lowest levels of residents living a healthy life in the EU.
- It had the highest morbidity rate in the EU. Women lived on average to the age of 77.2 (the fourth shortest life-span in the EU). Men lived on average 65.1 years, which is the lowest male life-span in the EU.
- It was fourth in the EU for death by heart disease.
- 26.5% of the population smoked.
- Lithuanians consume the most alcohol per head of any EU nation. (European Commission 2010).

What did change was that for many Lithuanians their homeland was no longer their future. Over the decade 2000-2010 close to one-third of the population of Lithuania migrated. Some chose to live in East London.

Eastern Promise: Defining the Problem and Formulating Solutions

In 2009-10, one in ten of all recorded crime in LBN was credited to a demographic termed 'Lithuanians'. The clue is in the name; the description was applied to migrants (nearly all male) from the post-1989 Baltic state. But this loose classification did not tell the full story about the perpetrators or their criminal behaviours. The problem at one level was who and what precisely constituted 'Lithuanian', and what criminal acts they committed. As we try to show, police approaches to 'Lithuanian crime' were underpinned by an occupational culture characterised by the counting, auditing and 'problem-solving' of New Public Management (REF). Some remarks from two Newham detectives illustrate this issue. As one Detective Superintendent explained:

Some have been known to sell their Lithuanian passports for £700. We found a web-site offering Lithuanian passports and identity documents to order. The recipient of these then becomes a legal EU citizen capable of working in the UK and drawing UK benefits. It's believed some £26m a week leaves the UK to pay for the upbringing of Lithuanian children.

As little was known about the Lithuanians, one MPS Safer Neighbourhoods Officer suggested a trawling exercise: 'they have a fleet of white vans leaving a supermarket point every Thursday making their way overland to Lithuania. We should be stopping them and shaking down the passengers […] find out who's who and what's in the van […]' This 'supermarket sweep' never happened but the impulse behind it reflected the frustrations some in the MPS felt in attempting to find out more about a group about which they knew so little but who numerically accounted for a significant amount of recorded crime in Newham. What was more 'knowable' was the extent of their violence. This frequently required the attention of uniformed policing. As one Detective explained with regard to the causes of such violence:

'They usually live in overcrowded places — either sharing rooms and communal areas or squatting a premise. They then drink too much and arguments break out and they thump one another when very drunk […] In late January 2011 a 37-year-old Lithuanian male was found dead in the house he shared with six other Lithuanian males. He died as a consequence of a blow to the head. The suspect — also an alcoholic and acquaintance of the deceased — turned himself in to police within 48 hours.'

The police were aware of another form of crime involving Lithuanians. As an officer stated: 'there are adverts on GumTree offering cash for specified cars and car parts with statements such as "no questions asked as to origin"'. These vehicles, whether luxury sports cars or minivans, needed fuel, with fuel theft becoming synonymous with Lithuanians:

'Theft of petrol and diesel is a big thing with them. They drive off from station forecourts and then sell it on GumTree — Diesel 80p a litre, 50p a litre cheaper than the garages. They steal fuel often using "moody" (counterfeit) credit cards. The issue then is "theft" not "Fraud". We had one last year who did £5,500 this way […] How? False tanks in the vehicle — you fill one then it goes through to tanks they've welded on. They have white vans carrying amounts of fuel like mini petrol tankers.'

The police response to the Lithuanians required personnel, money and powers. Enforcement and arrests required uniformed and plain-clothes cops. Enforcement also involved Lithuanian-born officers deployed to Newham to assist in the task. On top of these, personnel were needed for 'payback'; that is, assisting in the return of monies obtained fraudulently. European Union (EU) funding was available for enforcement costs (with a total of £85 million for successful applicants). One just had to find a compelling and urgent problem. The criminal activities of the Lithuanians had seen the DI visit the Lithuanian Embassy in London and receive the head of the Lithuanian police to negotiate a cross-border policy strategy. The latter

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had visited Newham in 2010. The friendship established by the DI with his counterpart was genuine, though it brought the realization that respective resources were not equal; Lithuanian officers earnt around £300 per month. Seeking to formalize the mutual exchange of criminal intelligence, the DI wanted to trace the links between Lithuanian criminal networks in East London and groups and individuals in Lithuania. If the latter were well-known criminals then his hunch that money laundering was occurring on a grand scale and as part of an international monetary fraud was confirmed. According to the DI, the weakest link in the UK was two high street banks. A recent drive to attract new account holders had seen the criteria for opening an account lowered — individuals had only to show one item of identity: 'they know a way around the banking system.'

While such fraud was perceived as a problem, the policing priorities at the time of the research were Olympic-related. As home to the London 2012 Olympic Stadium and Village, the borough's streets had to be safe. Public safety was paramount in the eyes of the council, police and Olympic apparatchiks. The polluting presence of the street-drinker and rough-sleeper was unwelcome, whatever their origins. The local police and dedicated agencies were tasked with addressing these issues and in doing so revealed some telling migratory trajectories. Meanwhile the DI had used sport as a diversion from the lure of crime. He asked the council to fund the rental of a school hall wherein local Lithuanians could meet twice weekly to play basketball, the thinking being that those prone to crime would find good company and an antidote to their criminal energies. One individual notorious for drunken violence was even introduced to the local rugby club in the belief that a penchant for physicality and drink could be channelled into more codified activity.

Two agencies that assisted Lithuanians were to be found in or had their origins in Newham. The first was the Drug and Alcohol Service for London (DASL). The other was the recently established (Autumn 2011) house on a main road a few miles outside of London (in Essex). These premises, and its personnel, are explored in detail later. The DASL premises in Newham welcomed all residents of the borough with drug- and alcohol-misuse problems, even if around 40% of its daily users were Lithuanian-born migrants. Two such individuals, whose life stories follow, were regulars at DASL in 2010-11. These stories underline how very different trajectories can result in shared circumstances and criminal propensities. Ultimately a costly multi-agency response was required to address their needs.

One well-intentioned drug and alcohol treatment programme for Lithuanians in London had an inauspicious beginning. Opening its doors in late November 2011, the idea was that those who entered the house would remain there for 12 months and undergo daily counselling in the 12-step addiction treatment model. After just three weeks most of the former intake had left to return to their former lives in Newham, their places being taken by others from what was sadly a long list of Lithuanian-born addicts residing in Newham.

The conditions to assist those seeking recovery from addiction were idyllic compared to the circumstances some of these men had found themselves in. Their new — if temporary — home was 100 metres from the busy route that linked London with Essex. Set in 1.2 acres the bungalow, built in the 1980s, had six bedrooms and five bathrooms. A sunken Jacuzzi hinted at a once-wealthy owner. The mini-gym and pool table eased the tedium, and the pond might

one day be replenished with fish. The escapades of wild rabbits entertained the bored and the venue was safe. Weekly provisions were paid for by the Lithuanian church in East London; some worshippers who were once consuming too much alcohol themselves. The bungalow owner was a Lithuanian philanthropist and recovering addict. While addicted he lost some of his fortune but kept his property and made it available rent-free to the addiction counsellors.

At any time, those undergoing treatment were under the care and counsel of one — but sometimes two — 'social workers' of Lithuanian background. Both were former alcoholics now employed on a full-time basis to live with and instruct those in the programme. The two call themselves social workers. Their remit is to break the tedium with visitors — both religious and lay — visiting the bungalow to give 'lectures'. The programme demanded total abstinence from drugs and alcohol. As demonstrated in the stories below, this was not always a price residents were willing to pay.

Sol: Degrees of Decline

With his tracksuit displaying the 'Lonsdale of London' East End boxing club logo across his chest the athletic and alert young man with the side parting might be considered, to many an on-looker, the quintessential 'sharp' white working-class young man that once dominated the streets of Newham. This young man, however, was born in Kaunas, the second city of Lithuania. An inquisitive mind, combined with a good education, were the factors that pushed Sol to seek a future in Western Europe. His planned future in business encouraged his enterprise and the degree he sat in Business Administration would — he thought surely — have some value in a mercantile city like London. The cosmopolitanism of London also appealed to the young man bored with the mono-culture of a provincial city in the Baltic. Acting on his ambition Sol arrived in the UK initially in Manchester in 2004 and stayed there for four years before moving to Newham. His point of contact upon landing was his ex-wife who had left Lithuania in 2001. Still on good terms she helped his arrival and assimilation and remembered how some of her family had made the move to the UK in the mid-1990s, told of the good incomes available from farm work and factory employment. The scenario demonstrates how, even after divorce, the trailing (ex) spouse model remains prevalent, with the traditional 'female follows male' pattern having been reversed.

The business degree however proved of little use when Sol's command of English was rudimentary. The human capital represented by his qualifications meant little if not complemented by language proficiency and, despite his attempts to move beyond them, saw Sol fall back on the opportunities provided in his transnational social field. He was to work as a carpenter with men from Lithuania and Poland on a rate of £12.50 an hour. Such a rate was similar to that paid to UK-born carpenters but in the eyes of many customers the latter were not as 'flexible', nor hard-working, as the newly arrived. Money earned through carpentry afforded Sol the opportunity to realise his dream of running his own business. At one point he was the 'gaffer' (boss) to a team of four carpenters and fixed the deals with the British property owners. Unfortunately, one large deal saw a subcontractor renege on an agreement. Receiving none of the thousands of pounds the deal promised, Sol felt it a duty to pay off his workers using his own savings. He also paid the rent on the two homes they were living in. With a large banking

overdraft and no work coming his way, Sol left Manchester in 2009 and sought a new life in London.

There was work in the capital, albeit the pay for a carpenter was as low as £10.00 per hour. A labourer was lucky to receive £6.50. A roof and a bed were provided by a shared house with a tenancy belonging to a former employee in Manchester. Such a living was precarious and meanwhile debts were accumulating. Comfort from such worries came via alcohol. In a sense Sol was, in seeking solace in vodka, returning to the irresponsible youth of his late teens. He married at the age of 18 on discovering his 18-year-old girlfriend was pregnant with their child. Sol explained the oblivion that alcohol offered in those years:

> 'Lithuania was a cold and poor society […] there was never much to do […] Generations don't know a social occasion without alcohol […] binge drinking is a normal part of the growing-up process.'

Never abstaining, Sol drank whilst he worked and earned. His drinking became especially problematic when he no longer had the funds to pay for it. This coincided with his time in Newham. Finding shelter in a shared squatted house with drug-users and alcoholic offered no respite. The beer and spirits he drank daily were obtained illegally but with a self-justifying motivation: '[…] I stole from shops […] I'd never done such a thing before and I felt really bad about it. I. I was thinking, "if I don't get a drink I'll die".'

He was to find himself in a police cell. A theft of four cans of beer and two bottles of wine brought him a fine and criminal record. Released to a shared house for Lithuanians in a similar plight people were drunk all day and frequently fought, Sol had to get out:

> 'I was part of a community of drinkers and with no work and nothing to do all day you slide into that lifestyle […] 20 cans of strong beer was a normal day […] I couldn't carry on. The only chance I had was to go back [to Lithuania] but drinking is everywhere there. Then a friend told me about DASL. I came here and I liked it.'

With the assistance of the workers at DASL Sol was alcohol-free from July 2010 to March 2011. He sought absolute abstinence and newly confident moved to Leicester to begin a business in clothing recycling. At times five people were working for him. Within a year however the business had failed. Seeking to be friendly to those he employed and their families he threw a barbeque and in the middle of it took a beer. Others followed — soon after he was back to problem drinking and back in a squat in East London. To add to his decline, he was sentenced to seven weeks prison for persistent shoplifting.

When he and the others were evicted from their squat Sol slept rough for a month. Drinking non-stop, the alcohol brought depression; relief from black moments was more alcohol. It was while sat on the steps of a bank premises that Sol was approach by outreach workers from a homeless charity. Clear of alcohol and drugs for the past two months Sol occupies the empty hours by middle-distance running and weight-training at a council-operated sports centre. He anticipates that his completion of English and Maths courses will permit him to enter a foundation year programme at university. For the first time in years Sol is in the company of non-drinkers. He sees his former squat-mates and their condition motivated him to

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stay clean. 'There's no other way left for me […] I go to church every Sunday — but I always used to before I started drinking!'

Sol has no shortage of ambition and drive. At times his ideas and ingenuity have brought him to the brink of being successful in his UK life. However, economic downturns have meant a working life of boom and bust. Well-mannered and well-educated he is astute but vulnerable. When things go wrong, he seeks comfort in drugs and drink. The consequences have been addiction, arrest, imprisonment and two failed relationships. One son lives with his mother in Manchester, the other in East London. Estranged from one family he sees the other regularly but meanwhile lives in a small room in a hostel full of people in similar circumstances to his.

Jonas: Liquidity and Assets

The medications dispensed by the staff of Newham General Hospital have for decades comforted and cured tens of thousands of ill and afflicted. In the mid to late 2000s, staff at the hospital were initially unaware of the frequent — Lithuanian — visitors to the toilet area of the reception where they sought the sustenance provided by the liquid hand-wash dispensaries that were located above the five wash-basins. What was intended to prevent the spread of germs in the hospital was being taken away to assist the spread of alcohol addiction. The cleanser, while blue in colour, was 90% ethyl alcohol. Diluted with lemonade, the substance was being drunk in a variety of locations by alcoholics without access to money to buy a drink. One such consumer was a 53-year-old named Jonas.

Older in appearance than his age suggests, the responses of this clear-shaven, well-groomed individual are given without reservation. This is a man used to the company of other men by virtue of the best part of 30 years in a variety of Soviet prisons. The duration of his custody suggests his crimes were serious. Mystery surrounds the full extent of his involvement in professional crime networks. Suffice to say that he was a close associate of some of Lithuanian's biggest mafia names.

Old enough to remember the Cold War, Jonas attributes his life story to the Soviets. Born in the Ukraine to Lithuanian-born parents the family moved to Lithuania so his carpenter father could take employment on a wood-yard in a small town. An unremarkable childhood and school career ended at 16 when seeking a career. He travelled to the capital city of Vilnius some 100 kilometres away. The neighbourhood he lived in was driven by violence and drug-related crime. The police were both ineffective and part of the problem — in Jonas' memory they would demand a percentage of the proceeds of crime, particularly when the goods stolen were from the local meat factory. The poverty of his neighbourhood only confirmed the poverty he had known in the mill-town: 'My parents worked in that factory getting crap incomes, and the factory got the good monies — that was Communism. I wasn't going to do that kind of work.' As well as the emotional baggage represented by the legacies of Soviet rule, the networks of informality that took root during this period continued to form an important part of the transnational social fields that Lithuanian migrants found in London. These networks have been examined in the case of Lithuanians in other contexts, foremost among which is Ciubrinskas' (2018) research in Chicago, where informal ties were used to mitigate the effects of downward mobility and assimilationist processes.

Jonas did not seek to overthrow the system or be part of another system within it. His individual resistance to the dominant system saw him involved in various criminal enterprises and incarcerated throughout his late teens to late forties.

> 'The communists had good schools and hospital […] but my family laboured for little income. I was seeking something I didn't have. For this reason, I was in a youth offenders institute by the age of 11. My mother informed on me as a punishment! There were the 200 boys between the ages of 11 and 15 in that place.'

Operated by former military personnel, the institute was regimented and occasionally brutal. The ideal was not realised:

> 'At 15 I was effectively an adult. I was on my own. I was very fit and strong and disciplined in my ways. I also realised there were easier ways to make a living than working in a factory.'

In the 30 years of his life wherein prison was a feature or threat, Jonas was repeatedly convicted for crimes of, originally burglary, then later violence. Residential burglary was his thing in his late teens. He also robbed people. The two activities impressed some circles he was to enter: 'Crime culture respected what I was doing. It became my way of life. Some of the big men from Russia took an interest in me.' Another group of men who found him interesting were the police and prison authorities. His various criminal activities brought him the trappings of the gangster life in terms of ostentatious jewellery and expensive vehicles as well as the attention of women in bars. The money came from drug distribution and the enforcement such exchanges were underwritten by. At his criminal peak Jonas was one of the top five criminal figures in Lithuania. Such notoriety brought him lengthy jail sentences, the longest being eight years for murder.

Whereas other Lithuanian migrants sought to enhance their prospects through amassing forms of human capital such as formal qualifications, it was Jonas' brute physical capital which afforded him status in the transnational field of Lithuanian migrants. As an enforcer he would hurt those who owed monies to the gangsters he associated with. He would also extort funds from bars and other premises of entertainment. In his recollection violence was rarely required in such a pursuit. He relied on what he calls 'the psychology of fear'. His crime associates had a notoriety that did not provoke too much debate when monies were requested. Some kind of epiphany had occurred just seven years prior to our conversations. A dispute with those he had considered colleagues saw him in a room with 30 of them. Unfortunately, some in this number were seeking to kill Jonas' friend. Requisitioning a meat knife from the kitchen of the restaurant they were gathered in, he repelled assailants with the threat that he would kill as many as possible if they touched his associate.

Violence was his leitmotif but was used instrumentally. Crimes and convictions saw him in prisons in Russia, the Ukraine and Lithuania. The gangster life whilst occasionally rewarding brought a heavy burden: 'Some were out to kill me […] surprisingly this provided less a sense of fear than the stress of always needing to be alert. I had to get out of organised crime...I'd seen the endings of other people and my ending was not looking too good.' What replaced his

life of crime and periods of incarceration were attempts at domesticity. The quiet life Jonas sought however was somewhat ruined by his turning to alcohol and drugs.

His years in prison restricted his access to alcohol. When out of prison, Jonas drank 'socially' and usually just at weekends. He took a variety of drugs when in prison but would never consider himself an addict to the outside world. 'Prison in Lithuania wasn't particularly a deterrent. It was sometimes more comfortable inside than outside. It became my lifestyle.' The home comforts that Jonas enjoyed in some places of correction were afforded him by prison officers and fellow inmates by virtue of Jonas' connections in criminal networks. The availability of a variety of drugs in prison brought him wealth and status by virtue of his being able to supply and distribute the goods. The same drugs, however, also brought him Hepatitis C and HIV via injecting heroin using a shared needle. By 2010 Jonas was living on the streets of Newham with no money to his name and with both an alcohol and drug problem.

This is how he was found by DASL workers. The journey into such decline began when Jonas attempted to change his life after being released in 2006 following a four-year custodial sentence. When in prison some 25 years previously he had married a woman and had a son with her. Both had, in early 2006, moved to London. Two years later Jonas travelled the same route. At the time he admits to be in good physical health and, having learned to read in prison, had discovered spirituality and religion. For the first two months in London he enjoyed his new-found freedom accorded to him by a police force who know nothing about him and neighbours who cared not as to who he once was.

Decline set in. The promised job in laying carpets with one of his wife's relatives did not materialise. The post-2009 construction industry recession meant employment for a man of limited skills was near impossible to find. The accommodation he lived in was overcrowded. 'Four families and their kids — but my wife wouldn't leave it for a new place with me.' Domestic arguments turned violent and came to the attention of the police. Barred by an injunction from going near his wife and the premises, Jonas both breached the restriction and sent threats to kill. Arrested in 2009 he served a six-month custodial sentence in a UK prison. Jonas' wife and son both held down jobs, a fact which illustrates the importance of the intersection between gender and generational differences in this context.

When the latter left the mother's home, however, the newly-lonely former wife and mother allowed Jonas to cohabit. After a month of reconciliation an argument required the attendance of police who took him from the house and after driving him miles away left him in the street. The issue was two-fold: the tedium of cohabiting without employment had seen Jonas start drinking on a daily basis. Drink was his companion and when ordered to leave the house he sought the shelter offered by a squat full of Lithuanian alcoholics and drug addicts. As with many others operating in the transnational field of Lithuanian migrants, it was necessary to occupy the interstices of the host society. The freely-available drugs tempted him on occasion. The consequences were too much to bear, albeit some — professing kindness — attempted to make his problems worse: 'the drugs I began taking took me to a dark place. I was dangerous and knew in my soul I had to get off them […] when I was in prison in the UK they thought I was a heroin addict — I wasn't ever — and they prescribed methadone even though I didn't ask for it!'

Preferring the privacy of park benches and the grounds of churches and even Newham General Hospital, Jonas was not exactly happy but through various practices had access to alcohol, even, at times, the alcohol that was meant to kill germs on hands. His drink of choice was strong cider which was cheap, and funded by money obtained from street-begging which at times afforded five litres of cider a day. Salvation from this situation came in the shape of a nurse at Newham hospital. Seeing the forlorn figure of Jonas on a daily basis in the hospital grounds she suggested he go to the premises of DASL. Acting on this advice he stayed from the minute it opened to the minute it closed. Attending Alcoholics Anonymous meetings Jonas realised that a life without alcohol was both preferable and possible. While making progress Jonas is not yet clear of his addiction:

> 'I'm trying to stop but I occasionally return to it [alcohol]. Two weeks ago, I visited
> a friend who had spent the previous two weeks drunk. I had to leave him after a day
> […] I know that if I drink for say two consecutive days my mental state if affected.
> I become violent and not because I'm being provoked.'

The anger that remains in Jonas is now mainly reserved for the DASL workers that assist him on a daily basis. Institutionalised by virtue of decades in prison and having only a rudimentary command of English, Jonas has occasional difficulties in managing the minutiae of everyday existence. The one-room hostel accommodation he has is no hardship for a former long-term prisoner, but managing a mobile phone bill and balancing a budget that would ideally prioritise rent is challenging. In such scenarios, he rants in anger at his inabilities, his anger ostensibly directed outwards but ultimately internalised. In his mid-fifties and now HIV positive, Jonas will not find the kind of regular employment that will enable him to live independently. The best he can hope for is faith and charity. His new-found Christian faith ('I was never against God […] but I'm getting more inclined that way') has given him access to money via a minister who utilises Jonas' dexterity in a variety of maintenance jobs. The church congregation also call on his industriousness to tend their gardens in return for money. Other money comes from fellow Lithuanians some of whom consider his welfare as a duty on them all. Others, maybe remembering his former capacity in the crime world, reason that their largesse might one day see him look kindly on their problems with other Lithuanians. A word in an ear from Jonas still carries weight in circles even though Lithuania is 1500 miles from Newham. In this sense the caricature of Lithuanian masculinity operationalised by local police was not altogether inaccurate. However, it had unforeseen consequences that in some instances could perpetuate self-destructive cycles of addiction, violence and destitution.

Demetrius: Reflection on Dislocation
The Programme Co-ordinator of the DASL house is Demetrius, aged in his early thirties. Born in a small town in Lithuania, he was drinking alcohol from the age of 13 and by his early twenties was addicted to both heroin and crack cocaine. Good schooling and a middle-class family did not halt his descent into addiction. To fund his intake, he worked as a carpenter and later a bricklayer. His arrival in the UK in 2004 was informed in part by the prospect of easy access to his drugs of choice. That said, he knew he would have to work to pay for what he

craved. He thus worked in the Millennium building boom that typified London. The money he earned was spent on drugs.

Demetrius' addiction trajectory began with strong beer and cheap vodka in his early teens. His relatively privileged background point to what is glossed over in the police's othering of Lithuanian migrants, namely class differences. His drinking led to the consumption of a variety of amphetamines, both in powder-form and in table MDMA form. The Lithuanian university system and condition of the job market combined to saturate the amphetamine market. 'I would say 90% of those who graduate with a chemistry degree in Lithuania move into producing amphetamines. It pays 10 times more than working in industry.' From amphetamines, Demetrius moved on to injecting heroin and smoking crack. He recalled the ease of obtaining both types of drug, primarily from a Roma village outside the capital city of Vilnius. This openly-tolerated drug market produced in his estimation a drug-related fatality a week in the location. For those whose poison was alcohol the chance to drink oneself into a stupor was everywhere, by virtue of illegal 'stills' brewing cheap vodka and other drinks derived from distilling potatoes. Demetrius spoke with regret of what was tolerated and what for many was the norm:

> 'It's expected that you get hopelessly drunk […] every family in life-stage celebration encourages that state of being. You can be drunk and crash your car or smash your place up and beat up your wife […] that's all fine. No one interferes with such behaviour. Violent relationships are normal; around one in three Lithuanian women are victims of domestic violence […] Religious Ministers? They're ceremonial; they exist to celebrate tradition rather than enforce beliefs.'

His comments underline the connection between masculinity and violence that exists in the transnational field of Lithuanian migrants.

In his time in London, Demetrius was drug-dependent for seven years, living in a variety of Newham-based 'crack-houses' and accepting the methadone substitute offered to heroin addicts, only to sell it and use the proceeds to buy the 'real thing'; that is, heroin. Something had to change. The Lithuanian church in Bethnal Green, East London, offered sanctuary for the homeless and a place for the squatters to wash. It established a Day Centre for addicted Lithuanians. In its two years in operation those attending numbered up to 30 daily. Food was provided by church monies and from the charity provided by a nearby supermarket store. Out of this gathering came the inspiration to take matters further; the Day Centre needed to be supplemented by more intense programmes. Eventually the A12 bungalow was obtained and a programme established that combined addiction treatment based on the 12-Steps, Day Top and the Minnesota Programme.

Demetrius bought a one-way ticket to the UK 17 years ago to join his brother. This familial connection provided his initial place to stay in Bedfordshire. Paid work followed quickly: 'Some work is available in kitchens and as waiters. Others go into building trades […] If you don't know the trade, you learn from those who pay you.' Proficiency in the English language was learned on-the-job. What this meant was that the migrant's social life was almost exclusively spent with fellow migrants:

'With money from building and little knowledge of the UK, our social lives are with similar people. We visit each other's homes and we do what we know — we drink too much. Sometimes we go to public bars but we 'pre-load' by drinking excessively at home. We have a saying in Lithuania 'the first bottle is expensive […] then it all seems cheaper because you don't notice what you are spending!'

When employment brings a good income, the drink can flow with minimum consequences — that spent can be earned or the hangover sweated out with hard graft. That said, the lot of the Lithuanian labourer was not glamorous, even to the fit, hard-working and capable individuals like Demetrius. As he explained:

'Lithuanians are generally polite, well-mannered and respectful. We are a people brought up under decades of Communist-style rule which was rigid in what could and could not be done, particularly around public behaviour. Thanks to this and the widespread Christianity of the Catholic Church or the Orthodox version, we are respectful of elders and in my childhood and teens would not dream of swearing in public.'

Here again the role of religion and legacy of Soviet rule in the Lithuanian transnational field are underscored. But reducing Lithuanian migrants to these characteristics via processes of 'othering' re-inscribes the boundaries of the transnational social field, and particularly its more problematic elements, and thereby perpetuates 'the problem'.

As Demetrius notes, the admirable qualities of self-reliance and stoicism make the Lithuanians very employable when in the UK:

'Go to North London, Neasden Junction and I was one of the dozens, sometimes hundreds, of Lithuanian men hanging around early morning hoping for a day's work. Like the rest, I'd claim to be a tradesman even if I had elementary skills. But the people who sought out our labour were mainly Indians who had bought properties only to refurbish them to rent out or sell on. They were not that particular. What attracted them was our willingness to work for £30 a day […] some worked for less than that.'

The day's labour usually resulted in cash payment the same day. Sometimes the money promised was not paid. Their response at such times? 'Nothing […] we could hardly go to the police could we?' At times, those depriving them of their earnings were fellow Lithuanians and Polish-born entrepreneurs.

When he was working, he could service his habit. When laid off from work because he was both drunk and unreliable, he had no money but had to purchase alcohol and drugs. This led to a life of crime and a reflection on the nature of both drugs policing and the judicial system:

'The UK provides for those out of luck. There is JSA [Job Seekers Allowance] and the free-food provided by the various soup kitchens. Then you claim homelessness and get a place in a hostel […] I was a heroin addict so I received free methadone. The result of all this is that many are happy to live with what is provided for them

[…] they are glad they are in Newham. In Lithuania there is no free food and it is minus 17 for the winter months. There are no hostels for addicts — you are forced to go into rehab centres or prison […] even in prison, here life is good; you receive decent food and can use the gym. There is one guy on the streets of Newham who has recently become sober but who has 27 custodial sentences. Your policies are not deterrents.'

In Demetrius' logic the chance of being caught in the UK doing a robbery were low and the possibility of a prison sentence and the unlikelihood of conviction even less so. That said in Demetrius' opinion robberies perpetrated by Lithuanian nationals were rare. What they did do however was steal goods that had value, notably mobile phones, satellite navigation systems and scrap metal.

Those seeking the less-risky acquisitive routes to income sold their identity. This practice of 'kiting' saw Demetrius turn-up with two items of identity and proof of address and open a bank account. One bank was chosen by the Lithuanians for two reasons: one was that the staff in its branches were usually very young and implicitly gullible. They also learned from inside contacts in the banking company that staff were on commission for each new account opened; they did not inquire too hard into the authenticity of prospective new customers. The new customers meanwhile put money into their account and shortly after were offered credit card and overdraft facilities. Selling their new found identity to those who knew their way around the banking system produced £50 cash for the (addicted) reseller and often fraud income to the value of tens of thousands of pounds to the person with the false ID. At the height of such fraud, Demetrious held five bank accounts and credit cards.

The money he received did not go to waste on paying for accommodation. Throughout Newham, properties are squatted or sub-let, sometimes half a dozen times. These are over-crowded with Lithuanians in various states of addiction. Such situations can be a haven to those down on their luck:

'[…] at one time I was friends with a property owner who had around 30 Lithuanians in their houses. He had nothing bad to say about us […] we paid him and didn't damage the place.'

So, why the prevalence of assault in the domestic sphere perpetuated by Newham's Lithuanians?

'A number of factors … overcrowding, drug abuse, drunks arguing […] and maybe the fact that we don't go to the police to settle our arguments. There are many so-called drunken assaults which in truth have their origin in monies owed or not paid for jobs done.'

Conclusion

Police approaches to the definition and solution of the 'Lithuanian crime' problem are certainly consistent with some of the principles of alien conspiracy theory. A strong ordering impulse fuelled by the diktats of New Public Management and their audits and Key Performance

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Indicators (KPIs) sought to reduce Lithuanian male migrants to a set of characteristics which threatened so-called national values. These characteristics were bound up with perceptions of Lithuanian ethnic and lower-class identities and concerned problematic individuals who needed to be contained and their criminogenic impulses dissipated. As shown above, however, the processes of othering that defined Lithuanian criminality not only overlooked intra-group differences but also contributed to the perpetuation of the 'problem'. Solutions which sought to contain Lithuanian migrants and guide them towards collective rehabilitation re-inscribed the boundaries of the Lithuanian transnational field (along with its most troublesome elements), undermining attempts to break self-destructive cycles of addiction, violence and destitution.

For local police, Lithuanian male migrants were a problem, particularly in the context of an occupational culture that judged its efficacy and therefore success by metrics. The deviant pathology of these men was recounted by the police in a simplistic anthropological way as a combination of stoicism, sadness and refuge in alcohol. This was compounded with rather classless penchant for crimes of theft and violence, along with the more instrumental crime of benefit fraud.

In terms of practical outcomes, the suggested joint collaboration with Lithuanian police counterparts never materialised. Benefit fraud was too hard to quantify and the Olympics required the streets to be free of polluting people; drinkers and shoplifters had a greater potential to besmirch the reputation of East London and so the Lithuanian problem was managed at a very low level of policing. After the DI was reassigned to a different task in another borough, the Lithuanian problem was rarely mentioned in local police circles.

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Living in Precariousness: The Minimum Guaranteed Income in Crisis[1]

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Although the precise meaning of precariousness is blurred, it refers, in general, to the creation of insecure and uncertain conditions of existence as the result of remote decisions made at the expense of ordinary people's lives. Therefore, it encompasses not only non-standard employment and bad labour conditions but life itself. It is about a situation of vulnerability where people cannot schedule their future and tend to be socially isolated and materially deprived, doing short and dead-end jobs and being forced to find recourses in social programmes schemes in order to make a living. Far from being a homogeneous category, precarious people on the verge of vulnerability can be seen as 'second class' citizenry since they are denied a range of rights, the main being equal access to forms of protection and equal possibility to live with dignity. Based on ethnographic research in Athens, this article discusses the experience of precarious people who have provisional recourse in the Minimum Guarantee Income established by the Greek authorities during the economic crisis.
Keywords: Precariousness, Minimum Guarantee Income, urban Greece, vulnerability, ethnography.

Introduction

Precarization is currently a term very much heard and theoretically approached (Armano et al. 2017). As argued elsewhere (Spyridakis 2011, 2018), it refers to the creation of insecure and uncertain conditions of existence as the result of remote decisions made at the expense of ordinary people's lives' trajectories. Hence, the term encompasses not only non-standard employment and worse labour conditions but life itself. As Lorey points out, 'Precarization means more than insecure jobs, more than the lack of security given by waged employment. By way of insecurity and danger it embraces the whole of existence, the body, modes of subjectivation' (Lorey 2015: 1). Precarization is strongly connected to a status of vulnerability where people cannot schedule their future lives, they tend to be isolated and socially excluded, doing short and dead-end jobs and mostly they are forced to find recourse on public programs schemes in order to get by. Far from being a homogeneous category, precarious people can be thought of as 'second class' citizens since they are denied a range of rights, the main being equal access to forms of protection and equal possibility to live with dignity. They are the 'product' of a process that owes much to the way the global market works which, backed by political decisions made by neoliberal governments, commodifies fully and intensively every aspect of human life, eroding regulated safety nets and making a norm the reproduction of labour power as pure commodity disconnected from society. In this view, Bauman argues that precarious people are people who are rejected from the process of consumption; they are imperfect consumers and for this reason they are deemed incompetent to meet the perceived as hallmark of contemporary 'freedom' — that is, choice. To the extent that precarious people have no role in contemporary society, they 'serve' as the negative examples of personal failure and of useless, redundant workforce in a very delicate cloaked form (Bauman 1998).

As far as Greece is concerned, precariousness is strongly connected with neoliberally inspired policies which, especially by 2010, took the form of imposed economic austerity, internal devaluation and reductions in public deficit and spending in exchange for financial support from IMF, EC and ECB and lately ESM, which worsened an already problematic economy. For instance, according to Gini's indicator terms, in 2015 the income of the wealthiest 20% of the population is 6.6 larger than that of the poorest 20%. Moreover, according to Eurostat, today Greece has the highest unemployment percentage (18.5% in February 2019) in the Eurozone. Figures apart, the present study is based on a qualitative ethnographic research that was carried out in Athens among forty interlocutors eligible for the Minimum Guaranteed Income during the last year of the Greek version of the so-called 'memorandum of understanding'. The main aspects of the research were concerned with, 1) the agents' relation with remote processes and decision-making; 2) the possible change in their life style as a consequence of material and social deprivation; 3) their perceptions of the unexpected transition to a new living regime and the realization of their social reproduction; 4) their views about whether the new condition would radically change their social and economic orientation; 5) the means at their disposal for starting a new life course; 6) their strategy in dealing with the vibrations of their new condition; 7) their interpretation of their unintentional downward spiral; 8) and the way in which their cultural background informs their possible struggle for a different course of life.

Crisis and Social Reproduction

The narratives of the informants brought to the fore the process of violent and unwitting transition from a relatively safe-living condition to a regime of social uncertainty and employment precariousness, in which the only standards of their social reproduction are the adverse effects that the economic crisis has injected in their lives. One of the most important is the loss of work combined with the extremely unlikely perspective of finding a new one. As shown by the narratives of their working trajectories, they have left behind a period where their life plan used to be more or less specific, their living resources were relatively secure and their future programme was generally seen as feasible. It seems, however, paradoxical that the more they used to struggle to make a living in the period of 'affluence', the more they have to make a dubious (in terms of efficacy) effort to meet their actual needs.

The informants do not belong, in material terms, to any privileged social category of haves, possessing either capital or means of production, so as to be — and stay — unburdened by the daily struggle for survival. On the contrary, they form part of the social category that, for analytical reasons, is identified with the petty bourgeoisie. On the basis of demographic characteristics, this category used to include salaried workers, middle rank executives, self-employed workers, workers in family business or medium sized businesses, 'knowledge' workers; people, that is, who were mainly interested in a dignified survival rather than in the accumulation of capital. It is for this reason that in their narratives they do not blame the market economy system, although they very accurately outline the mechanism of their transition to a

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vulnerable context in material and social terms. This confirms empirically E. P. Thompson's thesis (1978) that, although the class experience seems to be determinant, class consciousness is not; the informants used to belong to the same, more or less, relatively prosperous social class and they have different perceptions both about the trajectories of their lives and their lived experience, though not in terms of class consciousness. According to E. P. Thompson, if one wants to avoid monolithic causal explanations, one needs to enrich the analytical tools of the classical political — such as use value, exchange value, monetary value and surplus value — with another tool; that is, the cultural value. In this light, the interlocutors of the research are agents who experience deterministic conditions and relationships as inalienable needs, interests and antagonisms, and then 'manage' this experience through the context of their consciousness and culture in the most complex way (often but not always through the resulting class structures), acting on the conditions that determine them (Thompson 1978). Hence, as Wright (1982) would put it, they find themselves in a contradictory class position as they are either highly skilled or highly autonomous individuals who have been going through a dynamic trajectory related to the social division of labour. On the one hand, they did not fully belong to the working class at the time of relative prosperity; on the other hand, they are currently being steadily and gradually proletarianized. The volatility of their social status and lifestyle has been increased especially during the current recession, making, as Kalb (2015) has pointed out, ethnographic research the best approach to highlight and trace the dynamic multiplicity of the social class, as opposed its deterministic classifications (Spyridakis 2017).

From this point of view, what was clear from the informants' narratives was the very concept of social reproduction at the core value of the labour power. The agents that participated in the research have been part of a mechanism that annihilates the value of this power and, therefore, they cannot exchange it in the market and be considered as 'perfect consumers'. In fact, they inadvertently move away from the way they have 'learned' to make a living. To this, one should add the specific political and economic conditions that are facilitating a better control of their lives for some while taking it away from others, the majority of whom are differently categorized in the downward spiral caused by the crisis in their social reproduction (Narotzky 2016). As the labour force is devalued, a new reserve labour army is created in a threatening and rigid way, as Marx (2013) would remind us.

It goes almost without saying that the interlocutors of the present study had long ago 'discovered' and experienced in their working lives the dangers and instabilities of the market economy as well as the tragic irony of the negative effects of the current 'flexible' post-industrial period. They have been and continue to be employable, and attempt to enter the labour market through a set of techniques, qualities and work experiences. Having developed the empirical know-how through their daily struggle for survival and for social ascendance, they continue to be adaptable to market shocks and fluctuations, for they simply cannot do otherwise. They have tried to negotiate through an entrepreneurial logic — not in the market sense but in the sense of taking risks to earn their lives — their labour power in an extremely inexorable, inhumane and effort-consuming economic context. They do not face life-critical conditions for

the first-time. As it is clear from their narratives, which tally with other significant ethnographies (Pardo 1996), in an unequal system of social and economic relations they work with imaginative skill, experiential know-how and empirical flexibility to improve the terms and the conditions of reproduction of their own lives. They did so before the economic downturn as well as during it.

At the same time, it seems that their class position does not help them to cope with the crisis. The overwhelming majority of interlocutors, having been exposed to market imbalances before the crisis, had the potential to create the necessary framework to secure, in material terms, the economic choices that would lead to the best possible social reproduction level. This, however, did not by any means mean that they were living in a fully safe context. They had to struggle constantly to avoid the difficulties that most of them experience in the current precarious time. Their vulnerability has always been present because the course of their lives, where the daily micro-level routine is affected by remote decision-making processes in the political and economic sphere at the macro-level, has shown that the market economy is anything but a self-regulating mechanism (De Grauwe 2017), as the dominant perception of the conventional economists would claim. If one takes the view that the market becomes ineffective because of external factors, then one would seem to attribute to the economy theocratic characteristics and, above all, explain this situation by blaming the wrong choices made by its rational players. Several ethnographies (Pardo 1996, Durrenberger 2017), as well as the present one, clearly show that agents think in less paradoxical terms; that they act in a framework of social and cultural rationality rather than in a purely economic one. It is this rationality that helped the informants to stand on their feet and to prosper relatively in a truly timeless economic context — as Sahlins (1976) would put it, people do not just survive; they survive in a certain way.

In this sense, it is of particular importance to approach the current crisis, and any crisis in general, in a diachronic light, as the result of specific processes, decisions and conditions. This is because, as Roitman (2014) indicates, today the word 'crisis' is often heard and analysed in such a way as to gain a self-explanatory meaning: people experience vulnerability because there is a crisis; and, because there is a crisis, there is vulnerability! The present study, though not aiming primarily at producing an economic analysis of the current situation, has shown through the ethnographic testimonies of the unintentional protagonists of precariousness that the 'crisis' is a factor endogenous to the functioning of the capitalist system. Significantly, as shown by relevant studies (Amin 2013), the market economy has been operating in this way since the 17th century.

The Minimum Guaranteed Income Experience
In the early 2000s European countries began to favour programmes like the Minimum Guaranteed Income (M.G.I.), to secure as much as possible the social reproduction process of their vulnerable citizens. According to Pena Casas (2006), the Minimum Guaranteed Income programmes in Europe have the following characteristics:

1. They are guaranteed and non-participatory; they are granted on an overall scale and not according to citizens' contributions to social protection insurance systems;
2. They constitute a 'minimum' income, functioning as a social security net and relating to national and local perceptions of minimum living standards;
3. They are the manifestation of a subjective as well as non-discretionary right to social security which is not automatically granted and needs to be applied for, while the amount of benefit claimable is defined by law or by administrative rules based on equality;
4. An amount of money is granted to beneficiaries according to their income which does not exceed a predefined standard threshold.

In the case of Greece, the main purpose of this programme is to tackle poverty, seen as the last obstacle to dynamic momentum; it is an attempt to enable citizens to participate actively in both society and the labour market. At the level of policy-making, this general direction is clearly guided by positive intentions on behalf of people who, especially in economic terms, have entered the difficult field of vulnerability. On the other hand, it is interesting to consider whether these intentions are in line with their practical application and, above all, whether this programme acts as a mechanism for reintegration into society and the economy.

In general, the informants who are eligible for the Minimum Guaranteed Income do not have a fully negative attitude of this scheme. They believe that despite the organizational shortcomings that until recently had arisen and the low economic value of this scheme, it is a 'better than nothing' benefit, especially in times of crisis. However, this benefit is stigmatizing at the same time that it helps. Vaso, an informant who experienced the effects of the crisis shortly before most people became fully aware of it, received the M.G.I. as a supplement to her husband's disability allowance. She explains:

'It is a peculiar situation because of the crisis we have been experiencing since 2006. What people have experienced since 2010, we felt earlier due to my husband's job. It happened suddenly, overnight, as people say anecdotally. He had his shop; he saw events occurring one after each other. We could pay the basic obligations. I personally […] have my young son who is paraplegic and needs a lot of things which I cannot provide for him. He is too small. For the Social Solidarity Income, the child benefit we receive is income. The amount was removed because we get the bonus. I mean […] Ok. I don't know. Perhaps for some these sums seem high for these days. This solidarity income helped a bit because the child is still using a diaper. Even one euro in the family is very important. We now get 140 euros. 70 on card and 70 on […] It's very important. A package of diapers costs 12 euro, and I always try to get some discount. And not only this. Generally, children need things. Every day they need them. What to say. They are constantly complaining that: "We do not get that, we do not do that". "Up there we can get there. We do not have. We cannot do more". Ok, the truth is, we make great efforts

to get new clothes. As much as I remember, things that stigmatize you but you pass through it and you take power from them. You overcome it'.

Informants do not see the M.G.I. as a starting point for something new but as an aid which simply makes somehow easier the difficult life they live in the context of vulnerability. Once they have entered this context, they see the M.G.I. as economic supplement to what they can derive either from other benefits or from informal employment. On the other hand, as part of a more general, philanthropic rather than purely social policy measure, for the agents this income forms part of an unprecedented culture. Dimitris, an informant who had a taxi business before the crisis, said:

> 'Anyway, I have gone through many such crises but this is the worst. I have not seen it before. I must go now to beg the grocery, to the pharmacy because I do not have money to take my medication at times. The only thing that comforts you, and that's bad, is that you see many people like you when you come to get it. That is, yesterday we went to the Social Grocery store to get some rice, spaghetti and there were many people because I think they were taking goods from a similar program, the one about food assistance. The issue is that […] you feel a bit so, at least I feel a little shame when I go but what else can I do, psychologically I feel what I feel, I never went to get something, I always gave to the church or to a neighbour, but I got to that point, it was not just me, I think I know a lot of people around me, in the neighbourhood that ended up far worse than me. I've seen them looking in the garbage at night. They went out in the evening so I was walking some days late and I watched them looking in the rubbish. People left bread in bags hung in the bins. But of course. I only have it for food. For clothes and the like I borrow from my sons or my brother. I accept it, I accept, I do not say no, since I need it'.

It seems that this income, as the last step before total impoverishment, does not inhibit the momentum of poverty, albeit temporarily, but also the activity of the agents. Agents are constrained to be disciplined to a particular living model, especially under the conditions imposed by this program, as opposed to designing something better for their lives. The 'plans' last as long as the income card. As an informant put it:

> 'Now look dear Manos, you simply cannot manage with this amount. What you can do is so limited. Because cash is one thing. The other is buying. This card, of course, you buy what you want. It's not like the solidarity bonus, and that, like the card they tell us to shop only, you buy what you want, clothes and whatever you want with the card, but […]. It's 400 euros only for me and they finish very soon, in the first five days, it's over. Because when I take it, I owe to the pharmacy at least 60-70 euros, because I have to pay for my and my wife's medicines. I leave the pharmacy and I go to the supermarket for the month's shopping, meat and things like that. With the supermarket shopping you're done and I'm not counting my daughter's

clothing, in case she wants to buy something. She does not work. What to do? I wanted to help my son with his school, I simply couldn't'.

In the context of the vulnerability within which the informants struggle to survive day by day, this income has another one dimension as it reproduces poverty by forcing them to remain in the social place where they have been unwittingly categorized. It makes them entitled to the terms of the conditions of their social reproduction, as it ultimately pushes them in an unintentional condition and traps them there. This happens because, in this completely uncertain context, the M.G.I. is the most certain material element. So, instead of essentially activating the agents, it transforms them into micro-administrators of state policy. Harris, an IT specialist, comments extensively on how this policy, coupled with others designed for the 'poor', ultimately creates disincentives for activation as well as prerequisites for work in the informal sector. This condition is strikingly similar to the Italian situation described by Pardo (2018) on how financial and economic policies which are allegedly intended to help the poor or the unemployed do in fact disincentivize them and push them further in the informal sector. As an informant sad:

> 'Half for supermarket, half cash. The child allowance comes in every three months. The months that we do not get it, we have a small problem (laughs) but, anyway at least it comes in. No other income officially exists. The other economic help we get comes from the grandmother, which is about 110-120 euros per month; so we pay the English lessons for the children. Eh, […] and then we go to the, let's say, grey incomes from jobs like those I had this month. This month I collected 200 euros. The previous month, I raised 500. Next month, I do not know yet. Let's say, in the Summer […] in June and August things are zero. We go to the village (laughs) we stay with the parents there, they feed us and we may get a job; we're lucky to raise, let's say, around 1000 euros so we can say that we made something. This may happen once a year. We may find any work for 6 months to work with 500 euros or 300 euros because, I tell you, 3 jobs I have changed these 5 years, and so on. Oh, and we are in the Minimum Guarantee Income because my wife is unemployed. Due to the crisis, we had to shut down the shop. We simply could not […] cope with it. So, when we had the second child, we closed the shop. Of course, this regulation came in any case but […] at least it does not raise the debt, we do everything we can and cannot get another job. Children are a very serious burden now; we cannot afford to look after them. On the other hand, we are sceptical about getting formal employment because we may lose this Income, according to the law. For the time being, our priority is our children, but this is still difficult'.

Governing the Vulnerable

It is in the context of this adverse economic canvas that, at least in the Greek case, the 'production' of vulnerable people should be seen, for the simple reason that precarization does not emerge out of parthenogenesis. Ironically, the 'rescue' policies that are imposed produce,

as Lorey puts it, the conditions that keep people's life precarious (Lorey 2015). Yet, the question remains, who exactly is the saviour? There are many candidates, the main being the four aforementioned so-called institutions. Keeping in mind the socially deleterious mixture of the policy which they implemented and which their internal 'machine politics' apparatus called necessary sacrifices, it seems that they bring to mind what Hanna Arendt describes as Kafka's castle; a place that is ruled by *Nobody*, but where decisions are made (Arendt 2012). The trick is an old one, as Ulysses taught us, but always works: *Nobody* means that literally no one has a specific responsibility for the decisions made since this entity helps in theory those who need badly to correct their own mistakes. In this light, as Chris Shore claims with reference to the similarly remote, untouchable and in essence undemocratic structure of decision making in the EU, 'with nobody left with who one can argue or to whom one could present one's grievances. This is perhaps the greatest danger of governance without government' (Shore 2006: 721). The degrading acronym, P.I.G.S. is but the relevant exemplary metonymy of a *Triste Tropiques* representing a specific way of governing and signifying a realm of economic and political experiments where governments, as a number of anthropological approaches have shown, succumb to the wills of supranational economic powers (whose members are not elected) organizing capital accumulation on a world scale (Narotzky 2016, Prato 2018, Pardo 2019). In this light, the notion of governing entails a polycentric state and a centreless society which, according to Shore's view resting on Foucault's ideas, is regulated and manipulated by market forces through vague processes of intra-institutional bargaining (Shore 2006), which have the power to impose and implement specific policies.

In addition, the narratives of the interlocutors have shown that this way of approaching inequality and the way it 'regulates' their fate play an important role at a theoretical level. This is connected with the fact that the views and actions of the agents in relation to their placement and their trajectory in the particular socio-economic system are shaped by varied and multi-dimensional social relations mediated, as Pardo (1996) would put it, by a process of constant identification and redefinition of the personal ventures, of the resources available and of the strategies practised. It seems that, here, Goffman's determination of the situation from the point of view of actors is extremely important (Goffman 1959). On the one hand, it shows, as does the ethnographic evidence, that the cumulative effect of personal strategies and experiences — which becomes a timelessly experienced condition — motivates action and social differentiation; on the other hand, it causes significant vibrations in the social system.

In this regard, the people who took part in this research do not opt for collective organized action against the structural mechanism of the market economy in order to cope with the crisis or even to challenge the existing system of power and power relations. At the same time, while sharing common values, such as faith in personal toil, equity, meritocracy and the fair distribution of wealth and even common practices, it seems clear that they are still following pre-crisis strategies based on their personal experience and on the way they have empirically 'learned' to interpret and face their participation in the world as obedient citizens. In addition to the values mentioned earlier, the range of this approach included the view that the difficulties

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may be temporary, provided that one has the predisposition and the courage to confront them. It also included the concepts of trust and reciprocity in what was perceived as an intimate social network comprised of close relatives, friends, colleagues and partners; constant vigilance in order to predict market risks; belief in the value of expert knowledge and education as auxiliary elements for the fulfilment of one's dreams; and taking risks and making decisions in order to maintain and improve one's level of social reproduction.

Therefore, it is more than obvious that the co-dependent relationship between the notions of knowledge and bio-power as dominant political technologies in the modern mode of government shapes and subjectifies the 'active citizen'. At the same time, the power of knowledge creates a normalising imperative which influences the personal judgment and self-disposition of individuals as well as the disposition of social groups and populations based on intellectual technologies like social statistics, census taking, tables and graphs. The power of knowledge produces subjects and manipulated beings — as docile instruments — while it imposes itself as something natural through applied policies and leverage.

Analytical Reflections

So far, anthropology has not systematically engaged with several kinds of vulnerability. Anthropology, however, is in the unique position of analysing the rhetoric and the aims lurking behind policy programs devised by professional policy makers or, to put it differently, by those who have the power to define other people's lives (Pardo 2019, Pardo and Prato 2019). Hence, in line with Shore and Wright (1997), policies and their products, like the M.G.I., or Social Solidarity Income, are inherently and unequivocally *anthropological* phenomena. Not only do policies codify social norms and values, and articulate fundamental organizing principles of society, they also contain implicit (and sometimes explicit) models of society (Pardo 1996, Prato 2011, Pardo and Prato 2019).

Reading the M.G.I. legislation, one gets the impression that it is based on a simple equation: deprived and vulnerable beneficiary people plus assistance mechanism gives us in normative and irrevocable terms a positive result for society's homeostasis. Already a long time ago, however, not a poststructuralist, but Émile Durkheim drew our attention to social facts which, 'place constraints upon us, and yet we find satisfaction in the way they function, in that very constraint' (Durkheim 1982: 16). A social programme of this kind seeks to render vulnerability a natural condition by depoliticizing the changed structural conditions that have led to its increase and by mystifying the mechanism through which this has come into existence. For although it is true that globalisation is used as the aetiology toolkit for every evil in this world, it is also true that this usage obscures the specific responsibilities of a chain of politicians and economic experts who orchestrated the effects of the radical alteration of income distribution (Lyon-Callo and Brin Hyatt 2003).

As the economic account of the present crisis has shown, the production of precarization is not a natural process. It is, in essence, a product of a neoliberal political technology which praises the realm of market rationality where the fittest survive. The next step is to present the

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vulnerable and the 'weak' in a series of censuses, thus creating tangible homogenised entities (Green 2006) who require philanthropic assistance, due to their own 'inability' to enter the culture of competition demanded by the market system. This is the experience of the Social Solidarity/Minimum Guaranteed Income, which has appeared to be based on a process of computation, knowledge and tactics that facilitates and legitimizes the exercise of specific and complex forms of power by attempting to manipulate the behaviour of the subjects (Pardo 2018, Spyridakis 2018). Therefore, a wide range of measurable elements, instructions, decision-making mechanisms, calculated supervision, management techniques, experts, and 'good practices' are mobilized to bring social problems to a neutral tone and to be removed from their political context using the realistic language of the 'common good'. Thus, as the short ethnographic accounts given here have shown, no matter how much the precarious try to face the structural conditions of their existence, they are made invisible to society (Susser 1996); they are turned into a non-anomalous condition, by becoming the 'other', while remaining visible to the state's clinical apparatus through a chain of policy makers who structure themselves by structuring others. In short, understanding the precarious 'other' presupposes understanding the way it is constructed and managed.

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Belfast Corruption 1921-1968 and the Curious Case of Ann Copeland[1]

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The history of Belfast in the mid to late twentieth century is marked by the 'troubles' and the Catholic struggle for civil rights. The descent into retributive violence became the hallmark of a visceral conflict as para-military groups sunk the city into a desperate cycle of violence. It is perhaps less well known that the 'troubles' were preceded by a fierce contest for space and safe havens of residence. This conflict was centred on housing and particularly publicly funded housing managed by Belfast Corporation. The contest for space was fought by the forgotten people of the city: women and men who sought to relocate from front line locations where Protestant and Catholic communities butted-up to one another. From the 1930s until the post war years the contest was fought covertly by means of corruption and sharp practice at elections and also in an endeavour to obtain council houses with people of the 'same persuasion'.
Keywords: Corruption, loyalty, sectarian, identity, gerrymandering, tuberculosis, 'troubles'.

Introduction

Ireland has two principal historic communities. In very general terms they are characterised by religion: Catholics, who compose the vast majority of the Republic of Ireland and around 30% of the province of Northern Ireland (Ulster); and Protestants who make up the balance of the population of Northern Ireland. More than anywhere else in Western Europe, ethnic division in Ireland has given rise to political instability which has continued since at least the middle of the nineteenth century and which is as far from a lasting solution as it has ever been. More, too, than in almost any other area of Western Europe, the people have a heightened sense of the historical roots of their differences. In Ireland, as in the former Yugoslavia, history can cast a murderous shadow (Fernandez-Armesto 1994).[2]

Whilst there is undoubted merit in this claim it would be a mistake to base our understanding of Belfast and Ulster around an exclusively exceptional characterisation. In Germany's industrial region of the Ruhr, for example, religious enmity was powerful in Duisburg, Essen, Bochum and Dortmund. Protestant children fought with Catholic children and Protestant parents referred to Catholics as 'blacks' and in the small town of Witten a Catholic neighbourhood was called the 'nigger village'. Such animosity was a reaction against Polish immigrants who had come to work in the Ruhr coalfields. In France the silk city of Nimes was, like Belfast, riven with sectarian confrontation. In both cities political allegiance was determined by religion; and patronage always had a sectarian character (McLeod 1981). The same can be said of the cities of Liverpool and Glasgow. Nevertheless, there are distinctive features to Ulster's and Belfast's condition: the nature of the Plantation system from the seventeenth century; the Act of Union of 1801; and Ireland's place in English imperial strategic thinking has meant that in some respects Ulster became an English colony where Scottish Protestant settlers acted as the prime agents of the British imperial state. Moreover, since the

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[1] I am grateful to the Editorial Board of *Urbanities* and the Journal's anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments. I would also like to thank the archive staff at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

[2] The author had published prior to the Good Friday Agreement of 1997.

Irish Treaty of 1921, Ulster might be understood as a post-colonial society. Our perception of corruption needs to be seen both as a political activity and as a strategy for survival in everyday life. Additionally, it needs to be viewed against this backdrop of colonisation and religion. Nevertheless, the conceptual tools of corruption theory — self rewarding élites, market intersections private and public, lack of accountability, upward social mobility — remain useful to analysis. However, the spatial arrangements of Belfast were conditioned by the collisions of religious and ethnic identity which ultimately determined political allegiance; and by inherited loyalty which became the basis of social organisation. These circumstances took on a marked intensity consequent upon the twin processes of industrialisation and urbanisation.

Belfast's rapid industrialisation in the second half of the nineteenth century was driven first by linen and textiles but later by shipbuilding and engineering. Its population grew from around 50,000 in 1850 to over 350,000 by 1900 (Evans and Jones 1955). Industrialisation also witnessed the arrival of rural migrants, mostly Catholics, from other parts of Ireland. Thus, the Protestant Plantation of Ulster dating from the early seventeenth century became a religiously divided society. However, the industrial middle classes of Belfast took pride in their economic achievements and regarded the rest of Ireland as trapped in an agrarian past. The vibrancy of Belfast's economy was boosted further by the First World War, the shipyards of Harland and Wolff and Workman Clark building cruisers, destroyers and submarine engines. Belfast, Glasgow and Liverpool constituted an integrated economic triangle based on Britain's primacy in the world economy which served to accentuate Belfast's separateness from the rest of rural Ireland. All three cities experienced anti-Catholic rioting against the perceived threat of immigration. Further, with the growth of a Catholic nationalism in Ireland, British political leaders began to regard Ulster's Protestants as 'a potential garrison against Catholic revolt' (Bew 2007: 369). British liberal reform in the later nineteenth century removed the various disadvantages of Catholics and Protestant dissenters which had the effect of cementing Protestant Ulstermen to Britain. Finally, Belfast quickly displayed features of residential segregation between Protestants and Catholics. These divisions became intensified over time and particularly after the riots of 1935 (Hepburn 1990).

The history of Catholic nationalism is long and turbulent but for Ulster and particularly Belfast the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 represented a pivotal moment. The Treaty granted self-government to Ireland but Ulster remained within the Union but with its own Parliament. From the perspective of high politics, the Treaty has been seen as an elegant expedient concocted by the wizardry of Britain's Prime Minister, Lloyd George — Catholic Ireland became a free state within the Empire and Ulster remained within the Union and with a Protestant majority. The British government made provision in the Treaty to acknowledge the position of the Catholic minority in Ulster and in Belfast in particular. Thus, local government elections were to be conducted using a form of proportional representation. For the Catholics the Treaty lacked legitimacy and when the Northern Ireland Government abolished the proportional representation system in1922 it signified the Protestant majority's intention to deny the political aspirations of the Catholic minority. Within Belfast politics this translated into a self-satisfied complacency on the part of the Protestant majority. The Unionist Party had no interest in reform and sought to consolidate its position still further. It had already reneged on the arrangements

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for proportional representation in local elections in 1922; and in 1929 it went further, introducing legislation to redraw electoral boundaries which particularly affected Londonderry and which the Labour Party of Northern Ireland dubbed a 'corrupt and mischievous scheme' since it amounted to 'barefaced gerrymandering'.[3] When Sir William Turner celebrated his sixth successive year as Lord Mayor of Belfast in 1928 he claimed that the city was 'as well managed as most cities on the other side of the [Irish]Channel, and better than many'.[4] This did not exactly square with the facts but Turner's complacency was indicative of the inertia that would follow during the mayoralty of Sir Crawford McCullagh. It would also mean that the Northern Ireland Government was open to charges of gerrymandering and discrimination against Catholics in every field of public life (Lawrence 1965).

It was in housing that the opportunities for corruption were most apparent. Ulster's record in public sector housing was especially poor. For the whole of the province some 50,000 houses were built between 1919 and 1939 but only 3,839 were built by local authorities. In this sense Belfast was not alone and it was clear that urban authorities had failed conspicuously to tackle housing problems. The reasons for this were complex: first, speculative builders were able to secure exchequer subsidies at the same rate as local authorities.[5] Second, although the housing subsidy had the effect of depressing rent levels Ulster was a low wage economy and rent, as proportion of wages, remained artificially high. Local government's record on planning and slum clearance was also poor and local authorities did not enjoy the same planning powers as those in England and Wales. Belfast itself was also mired in corruption and in 1925 the Northern Ireland Government set-up the Megaw *Inquiry*. Robert Megaw's findings were highly critical of the Corporation asserting negligence and maladministration, poor accounting and the purchase of low-quality building materials. He also concluded that the allocation of contracts had involved collusion between members of the Housing Committee, the City Surveyor and various builders. In conducting the *Inquiry,* he had also faced obstruction, a failure to produce documents, a failure of members to attend interviews; and Megaw also accused the Chairman of the Housing Committee, Sir Crawford McCullagh, of complacency (Budge and O'Leary 1973).

The Second World War, however, was a catalyst for change and the Northern Ireland Government's own survey conducted in 1943 reckoned on a housing stock of 323,000 of which 230,000 needed repairs.[6] It was estimated that 100,000 new houses were also needed. The problems were most acute in Belfast but the Corporation showed little inclination to tackle them. The matter was taken up by Harry Diamond, the member for the Falls Division, who claimed that demand for council houses meant that there were 400 applications a month but the Estates Department was making only 60 allocations per month. Further, the possibility of a boundary extension to make more land available for house building was also blocked by the Unionists. Tommy Henderson, the member for the Shankhill Division, supported Diamond

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[3] *Irish Times* 2 April 1929. See also the Campaign for Social Justice in Northern Ireland (1965)
[4] Sir William Turner quoted in *The Times*, 24 January 1928.
[5] *Housing in Northern Ireland* Cmd. 224 (1944).
[6] *Northern Ireland in the Second World War* (1956).

highlighting conditions in the Millfield Division, Upper Library Street, Shankhill Road, Falls Road and Newtonards Road[7] as 'revolting'. He berated the City's Protestants saying:

> They go to church on Sunday with a Big Bible and with a bit of Orange and purple ribbon hanging out of it but their Christianity ends when they come out of their churches. They object to any extension of the boundary.[8]

Belfast's inertia on the housing question opened- up the possibility of corruption as a way to get to the top of the housing list. It was also an area where women could play the lead role as their casual employment gave them opportunity to tackle the housing department and its officials. These casual patterns of employment, avoiding employment regulations, encouraged evasion in other spheres (Leonard 1992).

The Corrupt Tradition in Ulster and Belfast

The two salient features of Belfast politics were the visceral conflict between the two religious communities and corruption. The Protestant Unionist élite had used patronage and corruption to preserve its hold over Belfast society. Patronage cemented loyalty between the political élite and the Protestant working class. For example, sanitary officials were 'not always selected for their technical competence, but rather because they held a prominent position in church or chapel and had been able to render eminent service at election times' (Baker 1973: 804). After 1921 the range of corrupt practices was writ large across the province of Ulster. It included gerrymandering — the manipulation of electoral boundaries for party advantage — of which the most flagrant example occurred in Londonderry. The broad arrangements of the Treaty of 1921 secured a Protestant majority in both Parliamentary and local elections.

In Parliamentary elections Londonderry had two seats — Foyle which was Catholic and the City which was Protestant. The Stormont Parliament extended the City boundary eastwards deep into the countryside of Lough Nagh to include Protestant loyalist voters. Additionally, there were allegations that Unionist candidates in elections hired motor vehicles and taxis to take voters to the polls (O'Leary 1962).

Further, the shifts in the political environment after 1945 prompted even more audacious changes that effectively rigged elections in the Unionists' favour. The Westminster House of Commons established completely democratic elections in all areas — parliamentary and local government. In Ulster, however, the Unionist Minister for Home Affairs, Edward Warnock, introduced a measure to consolidate Unionist power. Warnock's measures perpetuated the rateable value business vote; and men and women who had served in the armed forces would immediately go on to the local government electoral register. This would favour the Protestant community. A significant side effect of these arrangements was 'personation' whereby voters sought to vote as many times as possible. This was an activity that involved all religious communities and confirming the adage, 'vote early and vote often'. The Northern Ireland MP, William McCullan, had claimed in 1928 there was 'shameful personation' in Belfast elections. In the General Election in 1951 eight women were charged with personation in the West Belfast

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[7] Ann Copeland lived on Newtonards Road.
[8] *Stormont Papers*, 8 October 1952, vol. 36, cc1331-32.

Constituency. They were mill workers and weavers and when charged, Elizabeth Brennan responded saying, 'there are thousands doing it today as well as me'. The Belfast Chamber of Commerce also complained about personation asserting that Belfast's magistrates were too lenient in their response to the problem. The Chamber maintained it was practised by Unionists and Nationalists alike although not by the Irish Labour Party. The issue of personation consumed considerable debating time in the Northern Ireland House of Commons. For example, Robert Getgood of the Northern Ireland Labour Party and MP for Belfast Old Park division, claimed that 'personation' was a 'shameful' practice and he pointed out that second-hand clothes stores near polling stations were particularly convenient in this respect:

> 'I have seen with my own eyes an old woman going to one of these [second hand stores], taking off her hat, taking out her teeth, and going back again to vote…'[9]

In this hot-house environment politicians from the minority parties, principally the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the Independent Labour Party as well as nationalists and independents vociferously rounded on Warnock with endless challenges concerning the security of ballot boxes; falsification of the electoral register; improper conduct by returning officers; the unreliability of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in transporting ballot boxes from polling stations to the venue for the count[10]. But perhaps the gravest problem was intimidation. For example, Jack Beattie brought to the attention of the House that one of his constituents had received a letter from the Duncairn Orange Lodge asking him to attend a meeting at the Lodge where he was warned about his voting intentions. The envelope containing the invitation bore the symbols of a horse, William of Orange and the skull and cross bones.[11]

The Corporation's housing schemes were of special concern to Megaw since it was thought that many houses had been built using poor quality materials. Additionally, there had been irregularities in the tendering processes and payments to contractors. His final report was highly critical of the Corporation's Housing Committee asserting that its members had acted with 'bias and impropriety in dealing with the investigation'.[12] Moreover, the City Surveyor had misled the committee and had shown favour to a particular timber merchant. Alongside particular instances of corruption the Belfast Corporation also exhibited systemic inefficiencies that it failed to remedy. In 1927, Sir William Turner, the Lord Mayor, forced the Corporation to establish a special Economy Committee to investigate wages and salaries with a view to making savings. However, the fact that the electoral ward committees of the Unionist Party were frequently dominated by municipal employees paralysed the Corporation as it sought to implement savings. The Economy Committee then exhorted the spending committees of the council to come forward with their own savings plans but these came to nought because of Unionist filibustering tactics. The savings plan was still being debated two years on in 1929 when the Corporation commissioned Arthur Collins, Financial Controller of the Audit

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[9] *Stormont Papers,* 30, 25 June 1946, cc. 1406-1407.
[10] *Stormont Papers*, 16 October 1945, vol. 29, 1716 -1717.
[11] Jack Beattie MP for Belfast Pottinger, *Stormont Papers*, 16 October 1945, vol. 29, 658-659.
[12] *Stormont Papers*, 31 (1952), 1331-32.

Commission, to investigate. This time Nationalists wrecked the process claiming that the recommendations would act 'unfairly against the nationalist minority' and that they would be 'a charter for corruption'. The Corporation's politics were characterised by much rhetorical flourish but more importantly they were marked not only by Unionist and Nationalist intransigence but also by a dysfunctional equilibrium that produced the conditions of inertia and stasis. Thus, in 1941 the Northern Ireland Government appointed John Dunlop, from the Ministry of Home Affairs, to investigate the matter of Belfast Corporation's administration of the White Abbey sanatorium. Dunlop's inquiry lasted 34 days. He faced constant resistance from councillors but Dunlop found maladministration in the Treasurer's Department and that the Tuberculosis Committee had purchased the White Abbey sanatorium at an exorbitant price. Consequently, Dunlop recommended that the Corporation should be relieved of its responsibilities under the powers of the Tuberculosis Prevention Acts and in 1942 the Northern Ireland Government appointed three Commissioners to take charge of the Corporation's affairs. Dunlop became acting town clerk. The Corporation's reputation was one of 'waste, nepotism and inefficiency'. According to Jack Beattie of the Northern Ireland Labour Party who represented Belfast's Pottinger constituency, the problems at White Abbey had arisen because of 'the cliques and caucuses' of the Unionist Party. The matter polarised with nationalist and Labour politicians endeavouring to expose corruption within the Unionist ranks. The Corporation was defended by William Lowry, the Unionist member for the City of Londonderry. His language is instructive:

> 'There was a Judas among the Twelve Apostles. If there is a coterie of men in the Belfast Corporation who, forgetful of their honour and their duty to those they represent, seek to misbehave themselves for their own profit the entire Corporation should not be judged by its worst members. There are upright, honourable men in the Belfast Corporation who are capable of administering the affairs of the city with distinction to themselves and with benefit to the community. Those men should be given a chance'.[13]

The Dunlop Inquiry into the matter of the White Abbey sanatorium did not, however, confront the issue of corruption and it was left to the Attorney General of Northern Ireland but charges were never made as one of the suspects was out of the country. The issue also revealed the tensions within Unionism and one of the fiercest critics of the Belfast Corporation was John Nixon, an Independent Unionist. Nixon asserted that the Belfast Corporation was 'corrupt and dangerous'. Nixon, a former policeman and hard-line Unionist, had been dismissed from his position for a political speech made at an Orange Lodge in 1924 and he was also suspected of leading a secret section of the Constabulary, known as the Cromwell Club. He typified the uncompromising views and machismo of the extreme Unionist position; and on one occasion he threatened the Minister of Finance, Major Sinclair, bellowing, 'I will go out of my way to lash you'.[14]

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[13] *Stormont Papers* 26, 1943-44, 247, 11 March 1943.

[14] *Ibid.*

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The case of Ann Copeland

It was against this background that the case of Ann Copeland came to the forefront of the corruption agenda that the Labour Party sought to highlight. What follows is a partial vignette of the life and actions of an unmarried woman in a divided city. She was no doubt devious and plausible but her case exemplifies the ethno-nationalist crisis of a segregated city that would eventually descend into sectarian warfare by the end of the 1960s. So, during the election campaign for the Belfast Corporation in May 1953 Timothy O'Sullivan, an Irish Labour candidate, claimed there was widespread corruption in the allocation of council housing by the Corporation. Housing officials were, according to O'Sullivan, providing fake medical certificates denoting tuberculosis to enable would-be applicants to secure council houses. The presentation of such evidence to the Estates Department met the criterion of acute housing need and made an applicant a priority. Belfast Corporation was so concerned by these claims it asked the Royal Ulster Constabulary to investigate the allegations. The police dragged their feet and there was no report forthcoming or prosecutions in late September 1953. Whether this was deliberate to avoid the possibility of charges against Corporation officials is not known. At a public meeting held in St. Mary's Hall and attended by some 2,000 people, O'Sullivan spoke out again asserting that the bogus medical certificates were 'the most blatant instance of unadulterated corruption in a city in Ireland or in Great Britain.' According to O'Sullivan Corporation Officials were charging up to £40 for such certificates; and there were doctors willing to supply certificates without seeing the applicants. Given that there were some 20,000 people in need of council housing it was a 'well thought out scheme by a ring of racketeers — making good at the expense of rate-payers and at the expense of homeless people'.[15] O'Sullivan's estimated 2,000 houses had been allocated by this means and the racket had made £60,000. This was an exaggeration as the subsequent inquiry only identified twenty people who had paid bribes. Nevertheless, the calls for a public inquiry became intense and the Northern Ireland Government Minister for Health and Local Government, Dame Dehra Parker, acceded in October 1953.

The *Inquiry* opened on 23 October 1953 and published its Report on 22 January 1954. It sat in public session for a total of twenty-seven days in the County Court House. The Chairman of the *Inquiry*, Bradley McCall, expressed his concerns: was there corruption or misconduct in the allocation of Corporation houses? Was there misconduct of Corporation officials and was there misconduct among members of the medical profession? He pointed out that between December 1950 and May 1951 there had been 23,000 applications for council houses. Further, the housing shortage had been exacerbated by the German air raid of 1941. The shortage was so acute, he said, that people were prepared to 'lie, to bribe and to cheat' so desperate was the situation.[16] The problem of tuberculosis was especially acute. The incidence of tuberculosis in Northern Ireland was the highest in the British Isles, even higher than in the Republic of Ireland. In 1941 the rate was 175 per 100,000 population compared to 120 for Scotland and 110 for

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[15] *The Irish Times* 2 May 1953.

[16] Ministry of Health and Local Government: *Inspector's Report on Belfast Corporation Housing Allocations Inquiry*, 9, 6-7.

England and Wales. Perhaps more telling was the fact that tuberculosis was shrouded in stigma and silence in Irish society generally. That people were prepared to claim to be suffering from the disease was indeed a desperate measure. Further, the Corporation's points scheme was open to manipulation as applicants could also be approved according to their 'suitability' as well as 'availability' of houses. Bradley McCall accepted that the scheme achieved flexibility but it also gave the housing officials considerable 'discretion'. Additionally, War Service between 3 September 1939 and 14 August 1945 was also treated favourably. Given the structure of Irish regiments this favoured members of the Protestant community. Academic corruption theory would categorise this type of corruption as driven by principal-agent dynamics since the principal (Belfast Corporation) sought to ration public goods — council houses — using culturally defined criteria: namely 'suitability' and 'need'. However, the criteria were interpreted and managed by the Corporation agents: officials in the housing department.

This is far too straight forward. Networks of allegiance, reciprocity and financial payment were the essence of this example of corruption. In many respects the Belfast case of corruption might be better explained as an activity of survival in a divided city. But we should look first at the figure regarded at the time as the ring leader — Miss Ann Copeland — aliases Miss Bruce and Miss Nelson. She could not appear in court, according to her counsel, due to illness. Her absence allowed the solicitor acting for the Belfast Corporation to demonize her as a 'sickly influential spider weaving a poisoned web over the City of Belfast'.[17] She was able, apparently, to wield influence on those 'who were caught up within this web' and also convince them that she had 'influence on City Hall'. The barrister acting for the Attorney General of Northern Ireland described Belfast's acute housing shortage; but he was also concerned to bring to the forefront of people's attention the issues surrounding Belfast Corporation's 'stewardship of public money and resources'. He had previously informed the press that the search for the truth 'would be ruthless, relentless and remorseless'.[18] A principal witness, William Harvey, of the Northern Ireland Tuberculosis Society, revealed that none of the successful applicants using the medical certificates had in fact been treated for tuberculosis within the previous three years. In some senses, perhaps, there was nothing extraordinary in that since those who were desperate to obtain a house were prepared to go to extreme lengths to ensure the success of their application. Indeed, it was not unknown for childless applicants to borrow babies and children from neighbours or friends when attending interviews at the Corporation Estates Department.

Copeland's case highlighted the desperation of those in need and the lengths to which they would go to secure a house. Like Glasgow, there was an extreme housing shortage. Belfast's record during this period was abysmal compared with other cities in the United Kingdom. Further, the intensity of sectarian strife produced a complex set of processes whereby Catholics and Protestants alike sought to escape to new districts to be with their own co-religionists and where the prospect of cultural and religious uniformity would prevail. The segregation of Catholics and Protestants in Belfast had been evident since the nineteenth century and although there were mixed areas it was clear by 1911 that fifty-nine per cent of the

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[17] *The Irish Times*, 23 January 1954.
[18] *The Irish Times* 4 December 1953.

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population were living in segregated streets. The process of segregation intensified after 1920 and it was dramatically manifested by the Shankill-Falls divide which revealed the interface between two working class areas — the Shankill which was Protestant and the Falls area which was Catholic. It had become a frontier environment where the two communities had begun to 'stockade' against their enemies. The process whereby segregation evolved accelerated after the riots of 1935. 'Bombing, shooting, fire-raising, intimidation created a city almost overwhelmed by on-the-street manifestations of ethnonational struggle' (Boal 2002: 689). By 1969, two-thirds of the population lived in entirely segregated areas and by 1972 this had increased to more than three-quarters. The Corporation's housing administration was based upon priority needs — overcrowding, number of children and health requirements. Gaining 'points' could see an applicant rise-up the waiting list and gain a house more quickly than simply waiting one's turn. Ann Copeland had set herself up as someone who could influence city hall. The Q.C. acting for the Attorney General asserted that there were at least 27 prospective tenants who had found their way to Ann Copeland and that 19 of them had paid her between £30 and £36 to secure a medical certificate and an interview at the Estates Department. Copeland was assisted by her niece, Sarah Madden, who acted as a go-between for prospective tenants and Copeland. Timothy O'Sullivan had conducted some of his own investigations and arranged for Leo Presley to visit Copeland in January 1953 when she claimed to have influence in the Estates Department. It does not seem that there was any particular pattern of religious affiliation from whom Copeland was prepared to take money. Sometimes there were payments in kind such as sweets, cigarettes and gloves. The network, with Copeland at its centre, was complex with applicants coming from both Catholic and Protestant communities. Apart from Copeland and Madden there were two other women — Mary Valente and Meta Donnan — who took bribes and passed the money to Copeland. Additionally, Madden (Copeland's niece) and her husband also had a role in introducing applicants to the network. The ramifications of the case were significant. It transpired that there were also three doctors involved: Dr J. H. D. Mahoney, Dr Harvey F. Jackson and Dr Domingo Emanuel. They would later be disciplined by the General Medical Council. The Council admonished Dr Jackson stating that his actions constituted a 'serious breach of trust [that] Parliament had confided in the medical profession'.[19] Nevertheless, he was treated leniently and given a 'year's grace' to demonstrate good behaviour.[20] Further, Robert Young, a housing official in the Estates Department of the Belfast Corporation spent six days in the witness box but no charges were brought against him even though the Chairman stated that Young's answers to questions were sometimes 'unsatisfactory'.[21] Eventually, the Belfast Corporation Estates and Market Committee resolved to evict nineteen tenants who had obtained houses through the assistance of Copeland.[22] Subsequently, the Corporation issued an eviction order against Copeland, in November 1954. Her solicitor claimed that the Corporation's action was vindictive and that it was exceeding its

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[19] *Irish Times* 6 February 1954.
[20] *Belfast Newsletter*, 27 November 1954.
[21] *Inspector's Report,* 47, 24.
[22] *The Times* 22 June 1954.

powers: 'I say it is acting unreasonably and has taken into account extraneous matters which ought not to have been taken into account which are irrelevant and alien to its statutory powers'.[23] She was not in rent arrears and was, herself, suffering from tuberculosis. The Corporation fought back and an official asserted that she was evicted because of 'certain findings in the Housing Inquiry'. Nevertheless, she was evicted on 20 June 1955. Bailiffs arrived and removed her belongings into the street. She sat on a chair in the side entrance 'sobbing' and watched by neighbours and other residents. She was then removed to the City Welfare Hospital.[24] Meta Donnan who according to witnesses had taken bribes went unpunished. She was a member of the Pottinger Women's Unionist Association and her husband was a member of an Orange Lodge. She was jeered outside the courthouse and whilst she gave evidence in the witness box. The Chairman, Bradley McCall concluded that although 'uneducated' she was 'shrewd' and 'intelligent' and involved in 'genuine philanthropic activity' and never charged. On the other hand, he opined that Sarah Madden was a 'foolish and unhappy woman'; and Mary Valente 'was so stupid as to be incapable of appreciating the gravity of the allegations against her'.[25] Neither was charged. Ann Copeland, he said: 'I have no doubt that she is the victim of chronic ill health and that her circumstances generally are pitiable'. He is certain, however, beyond all reasonable doubt, that she did take money and convinced those who paid her that she could influence officials at City Hall. It is not clear how long Ann Copeland remained in the hospital. However, in October 1960 she was charged with obtaining money by false pretences. She was found guilty and bound over.[26]

Conclusions

So what processes were at work that determined the timing of the corruption case involving Ann Copeland? Between 1935 and 1969 Belfast society experienced a fluctuating intensity of sectarian conflict. In 1935 unemployment in Belfast was exceptionally high and tensions had been escalating since 1931, the year of foundation of the Ulster Protestant League (UPL). In 1935 the focus of trouble was in the Dock Ward, a densely populated area of terraced streets populated by millworkers, dock labourers and carters. Protestants and Catholics were still intermixed in this district although there was considerable micro-level segregation. There had already been a sectarian murder in 1933 but the visit of the Duke of Gloucester on the occasion of George V's Silver Jubilee presaged an intense phase of Protestant triumphalism as Orange men marched on the Dock area on 13 July 1935. By the end of the night, four people had been shot dead and nineteen injured. Subsequently fifty-six Catholic houses were burnt out in six streets in the Dock area in what amounted to a *pogrom*. There followed evictions and lootings and on three nights (15, 17 and 18 July) 430 Catholic houses were attacked and in all 2,241were evicted. Of the rioters arrested and charged 41 were Catholic and 125 were Protestant. The charges ranged from murder, arson, assault, riotous behaviour, breach-of-the -peace, possession

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[23]*Northern Whig* 27 November 1954.

[24] *Northern Whig,* 21 June 1955.

[25] *Inspector's Report,* 29, 13.

[26] *Irish Times,* 5 October 1960 and 16 December 1960.

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of firearms, larceny and breaking and entering. The majority were semi-skilled workers and round about a half had previous convictions (Hepburn 1990).

Following the riots, Belfast became temporarily peaceful and indeed there was relative calm. The German air raids may even have created temporary social solidarity (Barton 1997). Indeed, press reporting suggests that the years 1941-45 saw a decline in attention to matters of violence: murder, assault, rioting and arson. However, after 1945 press reports suggest that the incidence of these types of violence began to rise again suggesting a return to sectarian hostility. The riots had amounted to what we might now call ethnic cleansing and after the riots there had undoubtedly been a process of ethnic-religious sorting as families sought to escape to safe areas (Shirlow 2000). Further the house building programme, such as it was, quickened this process which later would make Ann Copeland's schemes a credible solution to avoid a return to the horrors of 1935, suggesting that the labyrinth of psychological fear reverberated within both communities. Those who paid bribes and many who attended the *Inquiry's* public hearings were seeking to escape from mixed areas or frontier areas.[27] Indeed, of those who paid money to Ann Copeland a good number were seeking to escape from frontier areas. In all, 82 witnesses gave evidence. Excluding those with a professional interest — doctors, medics from the University or radiography service, magistrates and policemen — 73 (52. 9%) had addresses in West Belfast along the front line, and 21 (29%) had addresses in East Belfast although not necessarily along frontline locations. Between the riots of 1935 through the War years to the early 1950s it would appear from press reports that murder, assault, riot and suicide had begun to fall after the German air raid of 1941; but with the exception of suicide the other reports of murder and assault had begun to rise again between 1951 and 1955. Moreover, the attendance of the public at the Hearings suggests a widespread interest or even anxiety on the part of Belfast's citizens, both Catholics and Protestants. Ann Copeland's scheme was then an opportunist crime or just one example of the desperate struggle of life on the streets of a divided city?

Importantly, we should consider the demonization of Ann Copeland herself. In all probability she was of Protestant background. She lived on Upper Newtonards Road which was on the frontier of East-West Belfast. Her absence from the hearing enabled wholesale vilification of her character. Indeed, she had assumed a particular notoriety; so much so, that even after she was discharged from hospital, she became the object of anger and even assault. Admittedly, she continued to persist with her claims to influence officials in the Estates' Department. For example, in December 1961 she was assaulted by Victor Webster as she came out of a telephone box. He was arrested and charged and the doctor who examined Copeland said that she had suffered severe bruising to her arms and throat and was also badly shaken. Webster was fined and bound over. He told the court, 'How this woman's mind works I do not know'.[28] Further, that she helped Catholics obtain council houses attracted harsh treatment from the Protestant political establishment of the city. Her case revealed that the politics of patriarchy were also at work. She had in effect broken ranks and she was removed to the Belfast city hospital suffering from tuberculosis. Her lawyer argued that the Corporation's treatment of her

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[27] See Boal and Livingstone (1984) and Boal (1999, 2008). See also Calme and Charlesworth (2009).
[28] *Belfast Telegraph*, 30 May 1961.

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was extreme. Significantly, none of the Corporation's officials in the Estates Department were charged with any offence despite the poor history of local government in Belfast in that respect.

Belfast is not alone as a divided city and others — Nicosia, Mostar, Beirut and Jerusalem — readily come to mind. In these types of environments, corruption needs to be examined around issues of division, front-line lived experience and survival strategies for every-day-life. Ann Copeland's activities were located roughly mid-way between the riots of 1935 and the onset of 'The Troubles' in 1968-69. In terms of communal violence, the War years were relatively quiescent but the newspaper reports for Belfast showed that concerns about violence — murder, assault, riot, suicide — had begun to rise again around 1946-50 after the longer run decline since 1935. The need to escape to a safe area in such a divided city was an imperative exacerbated by institutional failure. At the same time the process of politicizing ethnicity and religion went in fits and starts according to particular events — celebrations of the Battle of the Boyne, George V's Jubilee, the end of World War II — as they provided punctuation marks on a journey toward a state of mutual incompatibility between the two communities. Further, such a journey drew energy, resources and attention away from the deeper crises of institutionalised discrimination. The multiplication of pressures — rioting, war, health crises, homelessness and overcrowding — together with the conditions of political deadlock which had the effect of blocking-off legitimate avenues of redress. This, induced strategies of survival, principally clustering by religion and ethnicity. The housing and estates department almost certainly countenanced this trend. Both communities came to regard themselves as beleaguered and under siege. Confidence in public justice and governance withered and thus working the system to secure survival was a legitimate tactic in the politics of everyday life. Moreover, the dialectic between conflict and uniformity which has been an enduring theme of Irish life — North and South, protestant and catholic — surely alerts the corruption theorists as it brings a new dimension to the standard political science discourses which can go beyond straightforward patronage and favouritism.
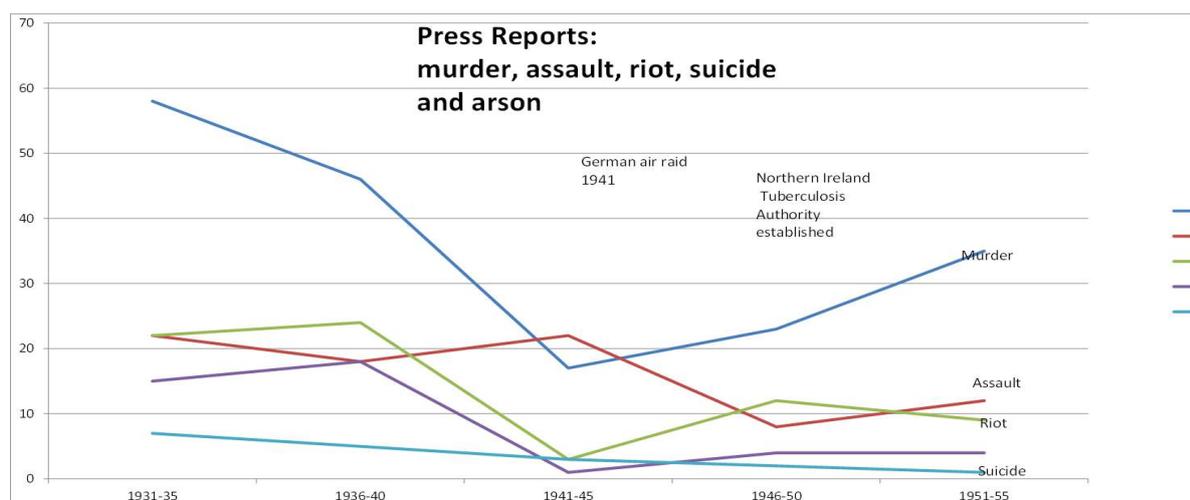
Appendix
The graph above is intended to be indicative of the tensions that prevailed in Belfast suggesting that tensions as marked by the press reportage of murder, assault, riot and suicide were at a

significant high around 1935-36 but then began to fall steadily down to 1946, as the process of sectarian sorting and spatial relocation progressed, before climbing again. This crude tension perception index uses electronic newspapers to measure the frequency of particular words — murder, assault, riot and suicide — and sum the number of hits for each word or category. The sums are then translated into index numbers and then shown in graphical form.[29] The newspapers used were the *Northern Whig* and the *Belfast Telegraph* accessed via the British Newspaper Archive.

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[29] Here, reference is to Durkheim (1897), Jones (2013) and Glaeser and Goldin (2006).

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Cultural Citizenship and the Social Spaces of Contemporary East European Immigrants in Chicago

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Diasporic communities are usually seen as communities of heritage, representing cultural citizenship and a distinct ethnic life. In this article, however, I explore cultural citizenship through the understanding of social remittances brought to host urban settings by East European post-socialist immigrant workers that reflect their lived experiences of former totalitarian regimes. The focus will be placed on East European immigrant inter-ethnic networks of reciprocity in order to answer the question of how new Chicagoans (mainly Lithuanians) are creating social spaces as arenas of 'social culture' and comfort zones. Actually this reciprocity may be related to accumulation generated by the informal economy based on networks of 'friends of friends', which were very well established under the former socialist system in Eastern Europe as a way of establishing interpersonal bonds of trust through which individuals solved their problems in day-to-day life by obtaining resources in the form of reciprocal favours (Russian *blat*). This reciprocity of favours has been documented ethnographically among East-European-Americans in Chicago, where it was found to take the form of social remittances transplanted from overseas (Ciubrinskas 2016) and actually enacted not so much for reasons of economic need but as a cultural habit of acquiring useful contacts to help in skirting red tape and other barriers, as well as for purposes of illegal help or assistance in obtaining a good post or job etc. If the reciprocity of favours stands at the core of social remittances and also becomes a communalizing power for immigrants from Eastern Europe, cultural citizenship implies an understanding of 'culture' as being transmitted from overseas in the form of both social and cultural capital. In this case, therefore, cultural citizenship appears as loyalty to 'one's own people' only involving social culture and social spaces in and of themselves. The question here therefore remains open: who are 'one's own people', and how are their social spaces created? The present discussion is directed towards answering these questions.
Keywords: Cultural citizenship, transnationalism, Eastern Europe, immigration, social spaces, urban Chicago.

Diasporic communities are usually seen as communities of heritage with a distinct ethnic way of life. In urban settings, however, diasporas are undoubtedly places where transnational social experiences and social remittances brought from oversees coexist among diverse immigrant communities and networks that encounter one another through immigrant life-ways and life-styles. Thus 'urbanism' could be seen as an arena in which a plethora of social relations and social ties, including 'citizenship — and, by extension, identity and belonging […] are constantly renegotiated' (Holston 1999 and Prato 2006, from Prato and Pardo 2013: 99).

Traditionally, for a diaspora-related person to become a citizen (besides the formal requirements), this depended on his or her membership in the dominant cultural community, as members of other cultural groups have had to adopt the majoritarian society in order to enjoy full citizenship. The best example of this pressure to assimilate is the American 'melting pot'. Today, however, due to transnationalism and the changing realities of nation-state formation, 'traditional principles of assimilation into dominant cultures are unviable because lifestyles in modern cities have become increasingly transcultural, especially for young people' (Castles and Davidson 2000: 126).

Nevertheless, international mobility and the politics of multiculturalism, despite all their discrepancies, are making the cultural dimensions more and more important, as the cultural rights of minorities and immigrants are becoming an essential part of citizenship. Such rights, according to Castles and Davison, may include 'the right to the maintenance of minority languages and cultures' and also 'the right to different customs and lifestyles' (Castles and

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Davidson 2000: 126). Basically, therefore, they signify a 'right to be different', a reference, according to Rosaldo and Flores, to cultural citizenship (Rosaldo and Flores 1997: 57, in Brettell 2008: 123). This means that the 'differences' among immigrants or ethnic minorities 'start on an individual or family level with what may be termed "home-building" which may be extended into the more collective activity of "place-making"' (Castles and Davidson 2000: 131).

Place-making as the fulfilment or enactment of cultural needs can reshape urban spaces so that they become ethnic enclaves. Thus 'place-making can be seen as a spatial extension of home-building through which ethnic groups partially reshape their neighbourhoods to correspond more closely to their needs and values. It is a collective process that only becomes possible as a result of ethnic clustering. Place-making is a highly visible process through signs on shops and restaurants, ethnic markets and a different use of public space' (Castles and Davidson 2000: 131). 'Ethnic professionals — such as medical practitioners, travel agents, lawyers and estate agents — may provide ethno-specific services, or they may attract co-ethnics through the use of minority languages and sensitivity to cultural needs. In turn, the presence of such business attracts further members of the minority group to settle in the area […] and an enclave economy may develop' (Castles and Davidson 2000: 133).

Thus, the ethnic clustering of immigrants and the implementation of their 'differences' through 'territorialisation' are very well known in migration and diaspora studies. Immigrant ethnicization as a form of the fragmentation of globalisation (Friedman 2002) implies that the cultural embeddedness of immigrants, which often turns into cultural citizenship, is usually seen as a fundamental point of departure for their classification and for treating them as 'radically different culturally' (Olwig 2003: 66). In addition, contemporary transnational migrant agency and activism do address the 'right to be different' translocally by exploring social networks that are not related to place-making but rather are employed translocally as social space-making. Here 'the right to be different' (in terms of race, ethnicity or language) goes along with respect for the norms of the dominant national community without compromising one's right to belong in the sense of participating in the nation state's democratic processes (Rosaldo and Flores 1997: 57, from Brettell 2008: 123).

'Regular' cultural citizenship or culture in relation to citizenship (Craith 2004) means that language, religion and other major resources are employed to support cultural rights, like language rights, and also for the politics of belonging in the sense of being framed by cultural capital, particular dispositions, the values of a moral economy and standards of conduct. In this case, therefore, the approach to citizenship as a prime expression of loyalty could be altered by a concern with the moral and performative dimensions of membership as a model of cultural citizenship that goes beyond the domain of legal rights (Glick-Schiller and Çağlar 2008: 207). For example, this applies well to recent post-socialist East European labour migrants, their moral economy and rules of conduct, which have been transferred overseas as their social capital, along with the whole pattern of practicing 'culture' as a model of festive culture, sports, gastronomy, and so on, eventually to acquire communalizing force among immigrants from the whole post-socialist European region (Ciubrinskas 2018).

In this sense cultural citizenship may be related to moral standards as well as rules of

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conduct, to systems of reciprocity as well as social remittances. Such systems and remittances may be treated as 'avenues of capital' which often go beyond not just the legal but also the economic dimension and 'do not just flow back to the people's country of origin but to and from and throughout the network' (Vertovec 1999: 445) by means of social capital, know-how, the sharing of experiences, volunteering, charity and philanthropy, as well as the moral norms and behavioural standards just mentioned.

In this article, I will therefore explore how social capital and social remittances are renegotiated among urban dwellers in Chicago, not those brought back to the homeland by re-migrants, but those who were brought to host urban environments by post-socialist immigrant workers from eastern Europe as social capital they had acquired through their lived experiences of totalitarian regimes. Social networks and norms of reciprocity were practiced 'at home' (in Eastern Europe) basically to satisfy the economic need to cope with shortages of goods and services. These modes of reciprocity reveal themselves as an ability to have knowledge and experience of 'spinning around' by being involved in extensive use of social networks of 'friends of friends' (Giordano 2003) and co-workers.[1] Since being transplanted to Chicago, they are not any more used so much for economic needs but are still socially important cultural habits (Kopnina 2005: 138), used in bonding and trust-making and to provide a firm background for cultural citizenship.

Furthermore, post-socialist arrivals are not very visible in Chicago's urban ethnic spaces, as they do not create new or very conspicuous 'ethnic' or diaspora places in the same way that older diasporas did, that is, by setting up 'cultural infrastructure': churches, schools, clubs, halls, radio stations, newspapers and restaurants. Instead they create 'irregular' cultural citizenship by creating social spaces.

Thus, I argue, the cultural citizenship of these recent immigrants is a quest not only for the 'right to be different' but also for particular loyalties to the moral economies and rules of conduct that are assumed to be 'our own'. These come to be considered loyalties to 'one's own people' that are capable of creating social spaces of togetherness consisting of:

- rules of social conduct created within the circles of 'one's own' people, a kind of communalizing force in which an East European 'common culture' and loyalties are practiced by being based on social remittances;
- bridging ties of reciprocity and trust expressed in social networks by creating social spaces of togetherness as comfort zones of shared identity.

In both these ways of making social space, social remittances from overseas and social capital are used as resources. These new social spaces created by transnational migration are at

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[1] Here, 'Spinning refers to one's resourcefulness to make do with limited material means like in the command economy of shortage' (Lankauskas 2013: 53), but transplanted to diaspora (Kopnina 2005) it becomes social capital 'inherited' through the manipulation of limited means, which (in the former socialist societies) was of key importance for a successful life. This all fits with the well-known (in migration studies) practices of transnational networking by sending of remittances (Levitt 1998) and enacting philanthropic or potlatch-type practices, which are supposed to bring status through charitable activities and give-aways to fellow countrymen. Thus, joining the circle of 'one's own people' becomes a form of belonging to cultural citizenship.

once situated in a kind of 'urbanism' that constitutes a 'way of life' but also represent the 'city as a fragmenting, rather than unifying place' (Prato and Pardo 2013: 99). They reveal themselves to be different from the reality of ethnic enclaves or Chinatowns and could be seen as accommodating imagined communities of 'own people' with their 'festive culture' (Kopnina 2005) and 'demotic discourses' (Bauman 1997) as distinct features.

I shall explore the social spaces that have been created by the new Eastern European post-socialist immigrant urban dwellers in Chicago. By focusing on a mode of cultural citizenship that is based not on 'culture' as given realities but on social relations enacted in a transnational city where 'urbanism' is 'a way of life' (for a critical analysis see, e.g., Prato and Pardo 2013), we will see how the immigrant 'right to be different' (Rosaldo and Flores 1997: 57 in Bretell 2008: 123) is employed along with patterns of moral economy transplanted from overseas, as well as being learned through the performative dimension of membership in a dominant host society.

In order to provide more detailed examples of transnational belonging, I shall use mainly the case of Lithuanian migration. Being a small country of three million, since the mid-nineteenth century a fourth million have been settled outside the country, mainly in the USA, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. I shall deal with only two waves of out-migration, those who fled communism in the late 1940s, and economic migrants who left after the borders were opened following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

I shall use ethnographic materials obtained from fieldwork conducted in 2006 and 2013 in Chicago among Lithuanian and other Eastern European immigrants. As a field site, Chicago has the highest number of people of Lithuanian background outside Lithuania, as well as a very significant proportion of people with Polish and other Central or Eastern European backgrounds. The research was conducted in different contexts, encountering immigrants in their places of work, ethnic and inter-ethnic sporting activities, schools, restaurants and clubs, as well as in private parties and neighbourhood festivals.

Two Waves of Immigration: Refugees and Post-socialist Immigrants in Chicago
A wave of flight and exile emigration from Eastern Europe occurred at the end of the Second World War, when Eastern European refugees, especially from the Baltic States and Ukraine, fled to the West from the Soviet-supported communist regimes and became concentrated in Displaced Persons (henceforth, DP) camps, mostly in the American and British occupation zones in Western Germany. Many of them were later given permission to move to the USA, Canada, Britain, Australia and other countries. Of about 70,000 Lithuanians from the DP camps (so-called 'DPs'), at least 30,000 settled in the USA, primarily in cities in the East and Midwest, as a result of the Displaced Persons Act passed by Congress in 1948 (Public Law 774) (Kucas 1975: 287). The Act authorised the admission of 205,000 refugees to the USA.

These immigrants included many middle-class professionals who hoped to return to Lithuania at some point in the future and who 'fought hard to advance the Lithuanian cause and established (the) entire nation of Lithuania-in-exile, with its government in Washington, D.C., and all the necessary institutions' (Zemaitis 2015). The fact that the USA never recognised the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States was the major reason for the emergence of an identity

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politics based on 'long-distance nationalism' (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 2001) that was supported by the majority of this wave of emigration.

This homeland nationalism was founded and supported by many public and political organisations, significantly increasing the number of ethnic schools, media and cultural institutions in the diaspora. The Lithuanian World Community (WLC), established by the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania in Hanau, Germany, in 1949, and the Lithuanian-American Community (LAC), founded in 1951 as its US branch, became an umbrella organisation for all Lithuanians in the diaspora, who were urged to follow the principles set out in its 'constitution', principles of 'Lithuanian-ness' inscribed in the *Lithuanian Charter*. The *Lithuanian Charter* served as a kind of moral constitution for those in exile and other members of the diaspora, urging every Lithuanian 'to preserve the existence of the Lithuanian nation' and to promulgate its cultural heritage, language and traditions for future generations (Lithuanian Charter 2014). The Charter generated a nationalist imperative that was enforced as a 'moral duty' on those who 'were lucky in a situation where others were not', as most of these Lithuanian immigrants had lost their relatives and friends in the Soviet deportations to Siberia during the 1940s and early 1950s (Budreckis 1982: 198).

It was the aim of these organisations to create an alternative to the Soviet representation of Lithuanian culture. One such project that was sponsored by the LAC was Danute Brazyte Bindokiene's textbook 'Lithuanian Customs and Traditions' (Brazyte-Bindokiene 1989), which presented an essentialist codification of 'proper Lithuanian-ness'. In fact, such a code had already been forged through the experience of life in the DP camps in post-war Germany. This was an exercise in living in a society without really being part of it, and it served as a model to help immigrants settling in the USA in the late 1940s and early 1950s to cope with the politics of the American 'melting pot' by re-establishing their ethnic (or ethno-nationalist) code of cultural citizenship (Baskauskas 1981, 1985). This code of 'proper Lithuanian-ness' was also used to oppose and ignore Soviet projects purporting to represent Lithuanian culture (Senn 2005).

The more recent wave of economic migration by Eastern European post-socialist immigrants started to arrive in the USA in the late 1980s, right after the fall of the Berlin Wall, of whom it is estimated that 30,000 were Lithuanians, about half of whom settled in Chicago. Here they began to create their own ethnic schools, newspapers (even a TV station), sports clubs (the Lithuanian Basketball League with fifteen teams), ethnic enterprises and even business clubs (Rotary Club of Chicagoland Lithuanians).

Even though recent immigrants draw on the Lithuanian language and the Catholic Church as their main sources of Lithuanian identity and attend ethnic institutions, gatherings and cultural practices, their sense of belonging is full of frustration and uncertainty (Ciubrinskas 2011). In their case attempts to retain their Lithuanian culture and heritage are being undermined by strategies for coping with the risks of marginalisation, and even with their illegal status (Liubiniene 2009: 19), as quite a number overstayed their visas in the late 1980s and early 1990s and eventually had to apply for naturalisation.

It is notable that the post-socialist immigrants used to share experiences of their homelands that are related to their totalitarian (Soviet) past while also being eager to equip their

social capital with learned models of social networking practiced specifically in the informal economy. All this plays a significant role in their distancing themselves from the rest of the East European diaspora, established in the USA as far back as the nineteenth century, and especially from those who belonged to the wave of forced migration as DPs. From the perspective of the conservative DPs, recent immigrants are 'different Lithuanians', sometimes called 'new Lithuanians' who are marked by a 'lack of Lithuanian culture', having been 'contaminated' through exposure to 'communist culture'. In this case their framework of cultural citizenship seems to take the form of social bonds rather than cultural codes.

Thus, the last wave of immigrants differs from earlier ones because of its culturally important strategies of social conduct, which turn into cultural citizenship (Olwig 2003). This goes beyond the usually assumed framework of 'cultural resources' in terms of language, religion, customs and traditions. What are these differences? These might be brought from the homeland, but they also might be constructed in the host society, like the 'moral constitution' of DPs in the *Lithuanian Charter*. What are the markers of 'difference' that distinguish the new Chicagoans from Eastern European from earlier immigrants?

Markers of 'Difference' of the New Chicagoans
Following Rosaldo and Flores (1997), immigrant cultural citizenship can be understood as recognizing the 'right to be different'. In the present case, strategies of 'difference' in social conduct are marked with respect to the exploitation of the moral economy and social capital.

First of all, there is a difference in the ways in which recent immigrants imagine 'home' and construct a 'politics of the homeland' as the empowerment of 'home'. For example, for forced migrants the idea of a 'home' in the diaspora is usually elevated to the status of an ideal place and is enacted as symbolic resource of resistance to assimilation, often forged in diasporic nationalism. For the more recent Lithuanian immigrants, 'home' is constructed as an 'own space' (Liubiniene 2009), which are seen as transnational networks of the circles of 'one's own people' constructed by using kinship, neighbourhood, friendship and co-workers ties. Such social networks are enacted in the everyday lives of migrants by using social bonds, social remittances and social capital remitted from the former socialist Central and East European region, a perfect example of social space.

This serves as a good example of how cultural citizenship is constructed in a host country. For the earlier diaspora, so-called 'refugees from communism', the main strategy was 'to stay Lithuanian everywhere and forever' (Kucas 1975). Already in the DP camps in Germany at the very end of the Second World War, Lithuanians began to forge the moral imagination that would inform the dominant narrative of 'how to be a Lithuanian in the free world' and 'ever ready for homecoming' (Van Rennan 1990: 103). This resistance to assimilation rested on the principles of ethnic endogamy and ethnic enculturation — 'learning to be Lithuanian'. Such identity politics can be understood as providing a 'generic cultural identity' (Friedman 1996: 72-73) based on and fuelled by a transmittable living heritage that includes each person as a 'link in the chain' and in which culture must be learned, retained and transmitted to the next generation.

This generic and 'learned' DP identity has been sustained by homeland nationalism and cultural citizenship in a way that is relatively free from territorial and legal bounded-ness (Levitt

and Glick-Schiller 2004: 1020). It could therefore be compared with the cultural citizenship of the post-socialist wave of economic migration, which is also relatively free from territorial and legal bounded-ness, though nonetheless the differences between these two waves of immigrants are clear. The first wave draws heavily on ethnicity to construct an ethno-cultural citizenship, which the second wave achieves by exploring inter-ethnic ties.

Thus, the second 'difference' concerning the more recent post-socialist immigrants is in the use they make of ethnic boundaries, which they use to transcend ethnic lines much more easily compared with the DPs, who shared their traumatic experiences of exile with the other Baltic refugees from Latvia and Estonia almost alone. Recent Lithuanian immigrants easily join the same networks with the other immigrants from almost the whole of post-socialist Eastern Europe, especially with Russian-speaking former Soviet Union countrymen (for example, Ukrainians), or with Poles by using Russian as a *lingua franca* and/or sharing mutually comprehensible discourses, rules of conduct, moral norms and even senses of humour. Such social networks are created as networks of 'one's own people' on the basis of shared experiences of and statuses in the country of origin. These are used especially by undocumented immigrants (those who overstayed their tourist visas prior to the waiving of visas in 2009), who feel marginalised due to their unskilled jobs and usually very limited command of English. Those who count as 'one's own people' usually have strong ties with friends and relatives left behind in the home country. Many move between Lithuania and the USA, running businesses in both.

The third 'difference' is in how the notion of belonging is constructed. Instead of enacting the usual diasporic forms of ethnic identity and homeland nationalism, recent immigrants construct a new East European togetherness which is their own out of the shared social space they feel they belong to as 'Europeans'. Post-socialist Lithuanian immigrants in most of Chicago's working environments share similar positions with the other immigrants from Eastern Europe. Thus, when they enter into friendships and friendship-based networks, especially with co-workers, they are creating inter-ethnic alliances in local Chicagoan and supra-local transatlantic contexts and environments as 'Europeans', not as Euro-Americans. In responding to the question of who they make friends with in Chicago, my informants mainly answered that they are friends with 'Lithuanians and Europeans but not with Americans'. It is interesting that Euro-Americans and immigrants from Western Europe are not considered 'European', only those from Eastern Europe:

*Friends from Europe, mostly Lithuanians, but there are also Poles, zero American*s. (Simona, 25 years old, studies and works in a Lithuanian-owned company);

Friends — Russians, Lithuanians, Poles, because we are different [to compare with those mentioned], *we dress differently, we eat different food, we talk different, we have different jokes. We used to celebrate birthdays together…and also Christmas.*

Thus, significant numbers of post-socialist Lithuanian labour immigrants in Chicago transcend ethnic boundaries and easily enter social networks with immigrants from other post-socialist Eastern European countries, especially Poles, Ukrainians and Russians. They do this by entering the same 'one's own people' circles, using a mixture of Russian, English and Polish

as a *lingua franca*, sharing work places, and usually having strong relations with their friends and relatives back in their home countries. They share social spaces and a certain 'common culture', leisure time activities (for example, sharing Russian movies on rent in most Lithuanian shops), patterns of consumption (shopping in the same Polish and Lithuanian or Russian shops), festive cultures and even senses of humour. They are also used to advertisements, other information and discourses coming the local Eastern European media (newspapers, radio channels) in all three languages, namely Lithuanian, Polish and Russian. Many visit Russian restaurants in the northern part of Chicago dressed in a white outfit.

As we saw in discussing post-socialist immigrants' images of 'home', their framework of identity compared with that of the earlier wave of immigration is different. This comes especially from practices of moral economy and common culture.

Rules of Conduct as Common Culture and Comfort Zones

The America to which post-socialist Lithuanians migrated was a different America than for the previous wave. It was a multicultural America, where cultural diversity was welcome. In this case, therefore, American multiculturalism, which replaced the 'melting pot' ideology in the late 1960s, could be a good platform for understanding the immigrant politics of culture and changing forms of cultural citizenship.

As discussed already, the cultural citizenship of the new post-socialist wave of immigrants to the USA is different from that of the previous wave of immigration, which was based on their non-assimilationist homeland nationalism and patterns of ethnic culture. The recent wave adheres to ways of social conduct and 'culturalism' inherited from socialism. These take the form of social remittances brought from overseas and ready to be used in the USA as social capital and shared culture in the form of multiculturalist or inter-cultural 'culturalism'.

Let me reiterate that 'New' Chicagoans easily do transcend ethnic boundaries to enter common social networks where Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians and Russians get together in the same 'one's own people' circles, using a mixture of Russian, English and Polish language as a *lingua franca*, sharing work places, and usually having strong relations with their friends and relatives left in their home countries. They also share a certain 'common culture'.

The most resilient ties among these Eastern European immigrants are those established through their work places, usually by being employed in construction, transportation, dispatch, car repair, office cleaning, public food service, cosmetology and care of the elderly. Some of them are even employed in providing legal and medical services or by working in insurance agencies. It is important to note that their work places and positions are often used as social resources by enacting aforementioned social remittances, transplanted from the overseas modes of 'spinning around' as focal rules of conduct. This is evident in the manipulation of employment and incomes (usually both legal and illegal), information about profitable jobs, the provision of work orders and clients, tips on how to organise 'shadow' financial accounting ('black accounting') and so on. Thus workplaces, especially those where many or most employees are of immigrant East-European background, become important arenas for the creation of a new social space. These social spaces are fuelled by the experience and knowledge of practices of informal economy transplanted from the homeland.

The accumulation of such practices of the informal economic sector, based on systems of reciprocity through networking with 'friends of friends', became very well established under the former socialist system as a way of managing the interpersonal bonds of trust through which individuals solved their daily living problems (in particular in these economies of shortage) by obtaining resources in the form of a 'reciprocity of favours' or *blat*.[2]

My fieldwork in Chicago shows that in Chicago such 'bonds of trust' appear to be enacted in the form of social remittances from overseas. This exploits friendships and acquaintances among post-socialist immigrants in order to achieve a public good by prioritizing and privileging 'your own' people; that is, relatives, neighbours, colleagues, friends, and so on. This moral economy is exploited to provide useful contacts to help in skirting red tape and other barriers, as well as in providing illegal help or assistance to obtain a good job. Thus, it is not so much a matter of economic need but of socially important cultural habits (Kopnina 2005: 138). According to Kopnina, this kind of informal economy still exists in post-Soviet Russia, and emigrants are inclined to use it:

> 'When Russians arrive in Britain or the Netherlands, they are initially inclined to use these informal methods for obtaining legal status, education and medical care, or housing and employment. The experience of living in a Western country, however, often proves that these informal methods are ineffective, especially when long-term provisions, like legal status or professional employment are sought. Still, some of these informal methods prove useful in providing the migrants with … benefits like social support, short term housing and employment. […] it may offer emotional support [especially to] senior citizens or spouses of Western nationals. These informal support channels are not necessary exclusively Russian, and also facilitate integration into the receiving country. […] social relations and the informal economy are culturally important to Russian migrants' (ibid.: 130-1).

Thus the 'reciprocity of favours', as a core part of the informal economy and as a common culture, serves as a model of East European friendship and loyalty, which becomes a communalizing force for immigrants from the region. Understanding cultural citizenship implies understanding 'cultural loyalties'. In the present case this means loyalty to rules of conduct transferred from overseas, a common culture and loyalties to 'one's own people's' culture in 'own spaces' created as comfort zones that serve as a substitute for the homeland.

In many ways such loyalties and identities used to extend beyond the homeland or national belonging to the state(s), but also to adhere to the circles of *one's own people* in newly created *own spaces*.

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[2] *Blat* is a moral economy of favours typical for the socialist Eastern Europe which has survived into post-socialism. According to Alena Ledeneva, *'blat* is a reciprocal relationship […] [it] is about using informal contacts, based on mutual sympathy and trust – that is using friends, acquaintances, occasional contacts' (1998: 33-34). It is a particular form of exchange which involves 'relationships and not merely goods. It is as gift exchange, received favour is never equivalent to that which the recipient can provide in return' (ibid.: 35). It is a morally charged exchange of favours, and as Ledeneva puts it, favours are 'perceived as "sharing", "helping out", "friendly support", "mutual care", etc.' (ibid.: 35).

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Social Networking as Social Spaces for 'Own People'

Migration is rarely individual. Although individuals do move, they actually move as members of a family network. Most of my informants who came to the USA actually joined 'their own people' — their circles of family, friends, and so on, which gave them a 'safe vantage point' that served as a background for transnational relationality, for maintaining and prolonging family and kinship networks, and for establishing new social spaces in the form of new families, friendship, and co-workers' networks of 'friends of friends'.

What kinds of trust have East European immigrants built among themselves through these networks, characterised by 'joining their own people'? This is a kind of bonding, but it does not necessarily involve the construction of familial or patrimonial spaces or building ethnic niches for co-ethnics only.

Ties of family and kinship make 'own people' networks the most visible. They are used to produce translocality in the form of translocal networking which binds at least the two locations, in our case Chicago and Lithuania. These networks embrace an extensive field of relations and of moral and cultural values that are significant to those on both sides of the Atlantic, despite their living under rather different social and economic circumstances. This involves maintaining patrimonial properties, running family businesses, bringing up and educating the younger generations and taking care of the elderly. For those who stay in such networks, migration is not usually considered to be a very significant move in their lives as family members. Very few family members who moved abroad describe themselves as migrants per se. Migration is usually considered to be a matter of joining the family (especially among the younger generation), earning a better income or obtaining a better education, and it is generally considered to be a way of helping those left at home. This motivation was the most frequently encountered in my research and is common among those starting a family business in the host country. If this business prospers, family members and relatives from the country of origin will be invited to come and join them. The ethnic Lithuanian catering chain in Chicago, 'Grand Dukes', is the best example of this phenomenon.

Practising social networking through the circles of 'one's own people' apart from ties of family and kinship is no less an important marker of an immigrant life-style trajectory. In our case it means building ties of mutual trust, rules of conduct and friendship, but also of loyalty to the network itself formed of 'one's own people'. Togetherness in the host country is created within a fragmented social space.

'Own people' circles become social spaces that maintain trust beyond patrimonial ties in order to retain patterns of reciprocity and moral economy transplanted from overseas. These social spaces, especially during the first months or year of immigration, also are used as adaptive strategies for the subsistence of newcomers and could be situated as ethnic niches where strategies of the ethnicization of immigrants prevail (Ciubrinskas 2009). Eventually these spaces for networking become primary arenas of social identity used for creating in groups of 'friends of friends', which includes sharing a *lingua franca*, a festive culture, gossip and life-styles. This is a way of winning of social prestige by knowing how to 'spin around' by being involved in extensive and reciprocal use of social networks of 'friends of friends' and co-workers.

Social Spaces as 'Comfort Zones' Against Marginalisation

New social spaces are built using bridging ties as a sort of 'comfort zone' of social security, confronting marginalisation and creating alternatives to the structural and channelled multiculturalism so well described by Gerd Baumann for the South Asian neighbourhood of Southall in London (Baumann 1997).

In our case social spaces of 'own people' are created by using bridging ties on the basis of the shared status of immigrants, who usually find themselves in circumstances of frustration, uncertainty and precarity. In fact, though, the uncertainty is actually pronounced on both sides of the ocean, in their lives, in the USA, and also in the lives of their relatives and friends in Lithuania. Such uncertainty prompts strategies of survival and career-building. These strategies do not necessarily exploit ethnicity, as was the case with the immigrants of earlier periods. The expectations and attitudes of Eastern European immigrants in places of employment in Chicago are not only conditioned by their marginal immigrant status, but also by their social capital and experience of how to manage with limited resources, by their not knowing enough English, and for some of them by their lack of 'fully documented' status; that is, carrying just a USA-issued driving license instead of proper identification papers. Actually my ethnographic research revealed tax evasion and exchanges of services by concealing various infringements of regulations; for example, I was told of a long-haul truck-driver's job that required two drivers, though it was actually done by one driver who worked overtime and used to drive day and night from Chicago to California and back.

Some immigrants are still 'without papers', in particular those who overstayed their tourist visas before 2009, when the visa requirement was waived. In order to make a living they initially settled in ethnic neighbourhoods by staying in the basements of the earlier diaspora Lithuanians' homes, taking any job where a command of Russian was enough if one could use it as *lingua franca* with other co-workers who were immigrants from Eastern Europe, especially with Russian-speakers from the former Soviet Union, but also Poles.

Most of those who enter 'comfort zones' of security against marginalisation end up in a working relationship with employers or managers from ex-socialist Eastern European countries. This marks a new social space, a 'comfort zone' for the new East European job market in Chicago.

These spaces are ones of high expectations on the part of immigrants. They are usually eager to receive abundant, quick and non-taxable incomes by choosing to take work based on the size of the pay packet, not by taking into account whether the income will be earned by paying taxes (as well as providing benefits out of it) or not. As the head of one Lithuanian-owned company in Chicago said:

> 'When an American comes to us looking for a job he asks what benefits he will get;
> when a Lithuanian or a Russian comes, all he wants to know is how much wages
> we will pay.'

In many ways the East European immigrant legacy of the former socialist life-style and life-ways works as an adaptive strategy that confronts the ethnic communalism of the older diaspora through the cross-cutting ties of inter-ethnic networks. This is clearly seen through the

discursive practices or 'demotic discourses' (Baumann 1997) of inter-ethnic networks of Eastern European immigrants in multicultural Chicago. This is how labour migrants (including the 'brain-drain' immigrants who started to come to Chicago slightly later) of Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Russian or Polish backgrounds are recreating the region by using Russian as a *lingua franca* and by sharing work places and media. This also helps to minimise the risks of marginalisation and allows some immigrants to deal more effectively with issues related to their illegal status and/or to become established and create a 'good life' for themselves.

Such social spaces or 'comfort zones' of immigrant social security (if imagined) are producing a particular moral economy-based cultural citizenship by securing the 'right to be different', as well as by employing a type of adaptive strategy and loyalty towards the majoritarian society. However, this moral economy is encountered by another, a moral economy learned in the host society by learning social habits.

Social Habits of 'Giving Back' Learned in Host Society

Social integration into a host society is usually seen as much less problematic for second-generation migrants. In the present case this is true despite the efforts of the DP wave to create a private space (ethnic family life-style) as a counterpart to a public one dominated by majoritarian Americanism. What is gained from the host country mainly comes from a second generation of immigrants socializing with their peers at school or college and learning institutionally promoted social habits. In addition, local codes of reciprocity, moral economy and rules of conduct are learned through interactions in everyday life and public performances of them (Kuznecoviene 2018).

Examples include informants who prove that 'learning' accompanied socialisation into the American middle-class lifestyle, with its norm of 'giving back' to others when you are (more) successful. This was mentioned by some of my informants, including Arunas:

> 'If you're successful in your career and have graduated from Harvard, as I have, you have an obligation to give back, to help, to support others… It is popular in America… alumni give a lot to their universities, for example, Harvard, my university, is a good example of this [...] State officials, even Obama, used to work in the public kitchen during Thanksgiving Day.'

According to my informants, however, the idea of supporting those in need was also part of the 'American way of life' (for example, collecting for people hit by disaster, or personal involvement in the work of charities). They emphasised that the social value of 'charitable work' was internalised through socialisation in secondary schools, through the mass media — in particular TV, and so on.

Cultural capital obtained by living in Chicago consisted of fluency in English, a service mentality, and 'natural' knowledge of the basic principles of democratic rules of conduct, as indicated by second-generation informant Laura: 'It's all there, but it's never been taught to me, it's just in me somehow' (Herloff-Mortenson 1999: 85). Another informant, Ema, said, 'By giving you are getting'. This attitude can be developed in some organisations, including ethnic ones, in particular in the *Rotary Club of Chicagoland Lithuanians*, which helps Lithuanian

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children and hospitals acquire much needed medical equipment and sponsors many other charitable and philanthropic activities.

The idea of social habits being 'learned' in a host country contrasts considerably with the first generation of immigrants' rules of conduct as expressed in the practice of the exchange of favours for private, sometimes illegal gains, being selfish and thirsty for quick incomes, and being keen to form a sort of parallel society oriented towards 'own people' networks and social spaces alone.

Conclusions

New Eastern European urban dwellers in Chicago feel uncomfortable when they are addressed as immigrants. Rather, they prefer to associate themselves with those who 'did not immigrate' to the USA but just joined 'their own people'. Thus, new social spaces in the USA are built on ties of intimacy, and all kinds of bonds used to create 'comfort zones' employ social remittances transplanted from overseas.

Translocally lived immigrant worlds are marked by a continuous quest for the recognition of a collectivity's distinctiveness and difference, which is usually met by the normative legal institutionalisation required to obtain citizenship status. On the other hand, international labour migrants and refugees are highly motivated in getting their cultural distinctiveness recognised and valorised. They therefore claim ownership of their cultural heritage practices and identities by constructing histories of their roots and by shaping their public and political practices of homeland, nationalism and cultural citizenship (Malkki 1992, Olwig and Hastrup 1997, Appadurai 1996, Krohn-Hansen 2003).

My research shows that cultural citizenship is enacted as a framework for recognition extending beyond legal boundaries, as well as through urban social space-making. Cultural citizenship is not a 'culture' of immigrants in the sense of heritage or ethnic culture. It is not even just the 'right to difference'. It consists rather of social habits, rules of conduct, moral norms and loyalties, as well as social capital and social remittances brought from the homeland.

Cultural citizenship appears as a form of transnational belonging, in many ways being seen as de-territorialisation; that is, without formal citizenship agendas, and even without a definite urban setting in which to locate it.

In the present case post-socialist Eastern Europe immigrants' ways of constructing their togetherness by creating social spaces is a good example of this transnational belonging. New immigrants used to create compartmentalised 'life-style' arenas that differed from ethnic enclaves and were open to inter-ethnic networking with other immigrants from the Eastern European region. In particular they create social spaces by sharing workplaces, being involved in inter-ethnic networking and creating their 'own spaces' as homes and as 'comfort zones' of security against marginalisation based on common socialist experiences, sensibilities and social remittances transplanted from overseas. Conversely, second-generation immigrants, those born in the USA who lack inherited social capital, are acquiring it by learning social habits through socialisation, life-styles and participation in American society. Eventually this creates the basis for the social culture of the first generation to be contested.

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Civility, Locality and Loyalty:
Football and Croatian Identity in Bosnia-Herzegovina[1]

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In what follows the trilogy of People, Place, and Performance in the contemporary post-conflict milieu of Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) is considered. The nation of BiH began in the mid-1990s arising out of the ruins of the Yugoslav War (1991-95). The conflict officially ended with the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) of November 1995. The DPA divided a specific region of the former Yugoslavia (BiH) into two Entities; the Serb Republika Srpska — where Orthodox Serbs constitute the majority of the population — and the BiH Federation — an uneasy co-existence of 10 cantons, three of them with a clear Croat majority, five with a Bosniak (Muslim Bosnians) majority, and two ethnically mixed. Political power is concentrated at this level, each group is ― ideally ― governed by their own ethnicity. Sports play a major socio-political role in post-conflict BiH. The specific case analysed here is the link between the practice of football to political identity processes and to how they develop in a given urban context; specifically, an urban context that in itself is a symbol of national and ethnic identity. Central to the ethnographic narrative that follows is a group of football fans who support a club founded in 1948 named NK Široki Brijeg Nogometni klub (SBNK)[2] that represents the 29,000 strong Herzegovinian-Croat town of Široki Brijeg (Wide Hills; SB) which is the cultural and administrative headquarters of the Western-Herzegovina Canton. The football club acts as a vehicle for and offers narratives around Croatian ethno-political nationalism. The club and its fans are the most publicly articulate citizens of a town long considered a bulwark of a national identity; some 99% of its citizens claim Croat-Catholic citizenship. An emic narrative informs this analysis which examines that we might best term the 'Croat Question' in post-conflict BiH. Issues of Croat-perceived injustice, discrimination, and political autonomy dominate the political narratives of contemporary Herzegovinian-Croat identity. How this came to be is presented and how such a situation is sustained and considered. The notion of cultural and social borders and the trust that may be placed in football for state formation are issues integral to the analysis.
Keywords: Post-Conflict, politics, urbanity, Široki Brijeg, football.

The Dividends of Peace

The fall of East European Communism in the late 1980s early 1990s brought new state formations and political challenges. Within a year of the Communist regime that had sustained it for some 45 years collapsing Yugoslavia descended into civil war. Four years of conflict followed before Bosnia-Herzegovina (henceforth, BiH) was established as an independent political entity. This new entity not only faced economic challenges with the passage from socialism to capitalism but had also to face the further challenge of developing a democracy that went beyond the historical ethnic divides of the region and embraced a common sense of citizenship (see contributions in Pardo and Prato eds 2011). Today BiH is sustained by a complex state system based on power-sharing between the country's three constituent people: Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats (on power-sharing, see, e.g., Weingrod 2011). In this arrangement there are *de facto* three separate armies, police forces, postal services and a national government defined by an eight monthly rotating Presidential council. Such a political structure attempts to provide for stability and equality. Despite its best intentions, the Dayton Peace Agreement (henceforth, DPA) inadvertently reinforced a sense of ethno-nationalism and clan loyalties with

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[1] The authors are indebted to the people of Široki Brijeg and especially the Škripari for their willingness to accommodate the research questions. Our thanks are due also to Italo Pardo and Giuliana B. Prato for their invitation to publish and ever helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article.
[2] *Nogometni klub* stands for Football Club.

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citizens persisting, then and now, to define their co-national neighbour of different ethnicities as 'others' and in some cases enemies.

The citizens of Široki Brijeg (henceforth, SB) did not receive the post-conflict political solution they sought and have lived with resentment ever since. Most hoped that in the immediate post-war years the town would be annexed within the borders of neighbouring Croatia. Others agitated for an Independent Croatia-Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia (HRHB) wherein either the town of SB or the city of Mostar some 30 km away would be the capital. A minority wanted to remain inside the borders of BiH but in their own Croat political entity in areas where Croatians were the majority. There was no pleasing everyone. In the 25 years of existence since the DPA, citizens of SB have articulated their resentments but also got on with their lives. Some have prospered and some have accommodated. Such that by 2019 the scale of desire for political change had altered; most would prefer to remain in BiH but under their own political entity. Such a solution seemed more feasible through international agreements (Grbavac 2015). Few of the constituent people of BiH consider the political system they live under effective in providing for any sense of ethnic-related equality. How the DPA might be revised to produce ethno-political stability and governmental efficiency remains a big question amongst many others.

Questions and Debates
In newly formed post-Yugoslav states civil rights, political structures, and school curriculums are still negotiated in multi-ethnic regions (Sedmak 2011). What is known as the Croat Question defines this analysis. Simplified, a debate has been smouldering for decades in BiH as to whether BiH Croats have been short-changed of power as both of the country's two governmental entities is dominated by Serbs or Bosniaks (KAS 2014). Being the smallest of the three principal ethnic groups, Croats are out-voted in parliament and at Federation level. A further sense of Croat injustice occurs when Croat Children who attend school in Eastern or Central BiH are forced to study the curriculum of the dominant majority — usually Bosniak — and in their language (Lanhan 2016). In response Bosniak nationalists argue that the Croats have sufficient representation in parliament for a Croat demographic of about 550,000 (BHAS 2013). Serbs do not see the Croat Question as their problem but are willing to form party coalition with Croat politicians to obstruct what they both commonly refer to as Bosnian-Muslim political hegemony. Amongst the major concern for Croats is that they believe they are being — subtlety — assimilated into Bosniak culture. They thus seek to have their voice heard — literally. The DPA guaranteed freedom of the press and political expression but critics argue that this right is not always respected (CPJ 1997). Whilst the Western-Herzegovina canton has their own tabloids and media, Croats who live there feel they are left without a state media outlet unlike Serbs and Bosniaks. Not allowed their own language state-owned TV station, Bosnian-Herzegovinian Croats consider this as an attempt to eliminate the Croatian language (Hromadžic 2015).[3]

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[3] A privately-run TV station named Radiotelevision of Herzeg-Bosnia was launched in July 2019. This is a newly established Croat-language TV station in Bosnia-Herzegovina, funded also with money from

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The Croat Question therefore causes endless debates about governmental (il)legitimacy and provides for a concomitant sense of grievance (Pardo and Prato 2019, Pardo 2000). Political status is thus not just 'political' but is linked to notions of both sustenance and existence. This produces rhetoric around simple solutions from those Croats who consider political autonomy as the only way to boost their economy and reduce unemployment. The issue also has repercussions for debates around football. Incidents of both crowd disorder and disputed penalty kicks are mediated primarily via the voice of a Bosniak dominated sport media and in the eyes of the SB citizens Bosniak (and Serbian) opinions prevail over that of the Croats. Vehemence towards such grievances has gradations; some are more Croat than others. The citizens of SB consider themselves exemplars of their people.

Siege and Resistance

Historical antecedents make the citizens of SB consider themselves Quintessential Croats. This is collectively defined via public celebrations of Catholicism and ethno-political nationalism and by the more individualised celebration of being considered a capable and self-sufficient people. Catholicism was formally established among Croats in 925 under the Papacy of John X who conferred the title of King on the Croat Tomislav. Believing they are a people derived from modern-day Poland who migrated to the Adriatic coast and merged with the Illyrians, the Croats are in their own estimation Slavs but Westernized Catholic ones who work with the Latin *Gaj* alphabet and thus different from Orthodox Serbs with their Eastern Cyrillic alphabet.

Croat populations have long evidenced resistance to the perceived other. Before the foundation of SB and following their arrival in the 15th century the Ottomans attempted to convert locals of the region to Islam usually with violence but also utilising economic sanctions via tax on farms and restrictions on property ownership. Some Croat-Catholics revolted with weapons; others preferred peaceful disobedience. By the end of the Ottoman epoch, which lasted from the 15th to the 19th century, most inhabitants of the region had retained their Catholic faith (Anscombe 2014). Such resistance was accelerated in 1846 when members of the Franciscan Order placed the first stone for the construction of the town's Monastery. Since this epoch, the town has become an important regional centre for the Catholic Church and a site of pilgrimage for Catholics world-wide. During the times of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks kept a small garrison in the area and allowed the churches to function — but often prevented the construction of bell towers in order to limit the literal and audible appeal of Christianity. The Ottoman governance left the area in and around contemporary SB in grinding poverty, famine and misery. This made for a tough — if resentful — people.

In the late 19th century the town fell under the administration of the Habsburgs Austro-Hungarian Empire. This regime helped promote the building of churches and other infrastructure. Despite this and in order to combat insurrections of Croat nationalists, the Empire tried in various ways to convince the Croats that they were part of a broad provincial Slavic-*bošnjaštvo* identity. The pursuit of ethnic homogeneity was attempted in part by the

the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The TV station is designed to broadcast news focused on Croat interests and it attempts to reach all the areas where ethnic Croats are the majority.

organization of cultural events funded by Vienna. These, however, only resulted in an accentuation of Croat traditions around food, clothing, language, music and religious practices. Nothing changed the Croats.

The early 20th Century saw a progressive increase in the sense of Croatian nationalism. The aspiration of many was to include SB in the borders of a Croatian Independent State with Zagreb as the capital. Further political turmoil confirmed this resolve. The collapse of the Hapsburgs Empire in 1918 saw the town of Široki Brijeg come under the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In 1939, the Croats attained some independence with the autonomous Banovina of Croatia. In 1941 the Independent State of Croatia appeared a *de facto* puppet state of the Nazis. It was in this time that the original Škripari (Cave Dwellers) collective came to prominence (see later).

The town continued to resist various enemies in the 20th century, notably the Communists in the 1940s and both the Serbian and Bosniaks armies in the Yugoslav conflict. During the latter conflict, SB saw little violence; the most traumatic event was an aerial bombing in 1992 from the Serbian-led Yugoslav Air force. Shortly after this event the HVO (Croatian Defence Council) militia was founded to defend the Croatian demographics in BiH. The militia was funded with the monies provided mostly by the Croat political party known as the HDZ-BiH (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina) to protect Croats in BiH. SB supporters celebrate the actions of the HVO when displaying its flags during football fixtures against clubs considered Bosniaks. The SBNK club President and some of the Board were once part of the HVO.

Embodied Symbolism

Local urban architecture, religious symbols, monuments and art serve to stress the Croat identity of SB. Despite an absence of real walls, the town of SB corresponds to the notion of Medieval Citadel. The borders of the town are symbolized by Catholic Churches and statues of the Virgin Mary. The castle-shaped National Public Library is a multi-purpose space for learning built with the funds from the Croatian Government. The flags of the Croatian Republic of Herzegovina-Bosnia adorn administrative buildings. A Croatian Coat of Arms is painted on the rocks on a nearby hill to visibly symbolize Croatian heritage. Catholic crosses are positioned on top of some of the hills that overlook the town. Such symbols, whilst sacred to the Croats, act also as a reminder to the ethnic other. A Christian cross located in the town's main square commemorates the victims of both the Second World War and the 1991-1995 'Homeland War'. In another nearby square there are statues of Croatian heroes, including that of Franjo Tudjman, the first post-conflict President of Croatia.

A Herzegovinian-Croat identifies with historical symbols. The most significant is the *Šahovnica* — a checkerboard consisting of a shield shape populated with alternate white and red squares. It is the national symbol of Croatia and displayed everywhere Croats are found. The design informs the national flag and the shirt of the national football team. A Croatian also respects the *Ganga* musical genre defined by a lone singer articulating lyrics which listening others later accompany. Traditional Croatian clothing is worn during festivals, celebrations and

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holidays. For women this consists generally of a long white gown with black or red waistcoats, jewellery-stones and a red head cover and cotton clothing.

Croats vote for Croat politicians. The town of SB is a fortress of the HDZ-BiH political party. Their elected members carry the grievances of Croatian nationalist rhetoric and has accomplished many practical works around pensions, sport and tourist infrastructures, enterprise investments and the promotion of Croat cultural activities. Since the end of hostilities in 1992 the project of re-creating a third Croat Political entity or a HRHB independent state has been supported most notably by nationalist politicians such as Dragan Čović, the HDZ-BiH leader who fights to give political equality to Croatians (Rolandi 2018).

In the absence of independence, SB citizens enjoy a parochial pride in their post-(Yugoslav) war economic and sporting achievements. A form of both resistance and what we might best term cultural salvation is available for Croat populations via pride around income generation and sport. Football put SB back on the map. The SB citizens celebrate the fact that their club is one of the most successful in BiH, having won two national championships and three national cup finals (against Serb and Bosniak teams), and has several times participated in the UEFA Europa League. Such achievements symbolize a sporting re-birth from the times of communism. The club meanwhile celebrated its Catholic-Croat identity and for 20 years only selected players of Croat ethnicity. Some players from Africa, Eastern Europe and South America were to join later its ranks; Bosnian Muslims were never signed by the club, neither were ethnic Serbs. SB-based sports clubs have also attained international success in Basketball, Cheer-Leading, Chess and Karate (SB 2019). Masculinity is a dominant *motif* in the tasks required of football and basketball and is inseparable from wider notions of masculine credibility. The SB citizens articulate how the ideal Croat adult male is characterised by a willingness to stand up for himself, his family and the people in defence of borders. Physical strength and an industrious mentality are appreciated. Such attributes are believed to be the basis of SB being one of the Balkans most economically successful town with thriving industries in meat-packing, quarrying, metal work and aluminium production (Galić 2015).

Resistance is thus ever-available in both sporting and cultural chauvinisms. The Croatian political leadership fights to avoid any real or perceived assimilations processes by organizing Croat cultural events in central or eastern BiH (mostly music festivals) or by encouraging Croatian football clubs such as Široki Brijeg NK, Dinamo Zagreb, or Hajduk Split (the footballing vanguards of Croat identity) to organize coaching on the school campuses of central or Eastern parts of BiH. In this way children — and the adults who accompany them — are reminded of their Croat symbols, language and cultural traditions. The converse to this pride and achievement is that its citizens do not want to share the fruits of their labours with the out of town ethno-political 'others' ever perceived as lazy and dependent. Neither do they wish to share their passions. The practice of endogamy defines the town. Marriages and relationships are invariably intra-Catholics. Marriages between those — nominally — sharing the same

religious credentials are crucial to notions of succession[4]. The Croatian body politic is thus realised in no small degree in bodily practices.

The Cave Dwellers

The first BiH football programme was launched around 2000 albeit the leagues were initially mono-ethnic. Such a schedule signified a return of civil society. The same programme however also facilitated the hatreds of the conflict. Antagonism was manifest towards (*in absentia*) football rivals via ethnic-insults and a willingness for physical violence when those same rivals were inadvertently met on transport routes on their way to their respective fixtures (Katana and Sito-Sucic 2011). The foundation of a nationwide BiH football system whilst meant to facilitate a sense of national unity proved contentious; endless supporter conflicts and board room allegations of ethno-political-inspired corruption and match-fixing have typified the game ever since. There was some comfort to be drawn from the game. Football proved to be a functional outlet for much resentment. The time and place for such displays were scheduled; police knew when and where to be present.

In the years immediately after the conflict, the NK Široki Brijeg football club attracted a hard-core fan gathering who named themselves the Škripari (Cave Dwellers).These football terrace combatants were originally a combination of former Croat combatants 'war veterans' of both the regular and irregular military units and young Croat men in their late teens who had missed front-line military action. The post-war Škripari saw in football rivalries their chance to perform the violent rituals of ethno-political conflict albeit on a lesser scale than in wartime. Congregating on match days up to 300 in number at the clubs *Pecara* stadium, the Škripari are an agglomeration (99% male) drawn at any one time from the town, the region and the Croatian diasporas of Western Europe. They have a few nominal named positions but are essentially an ego-centred quasi group rather than as a quasi-military entity. The gathering celebrates historical antecedents of both People and Place.

In such performances, the Škripari self-nominate itself and the town as *Antemurale Christianitatis* (Bastion of Christianity). This title draws on that of the same name awarded by Popes to Eastern European Nations who defended the Christian faith in the face of Islamic invaders. The Heroic is a constant theme of the Škripari; a sense of duty is integral to the political narratives. The purpose of the Škripari and their tales reflects that of the wider Croatian political project. Stories of heroic Croatian knights and the unfavourable economic position of Christians during Ottoman rule were used by Croatian nationalist political rhetoric in the 1990s to elevate the historical status of Herzegovinian-Croats and to mobilize them to fight for independence. Such a strategy was implemented most notably by Franjo Tuđman (the first President of Croatia from 1991 to 1999) and the HDZ-BiH (Saric et al. 2010). The contemporary *Škripari* also celebrate via banners Croatian nationalism and the anti-communist

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[4] The SB citizens compared themselves to Hindu groups that marry exclusively between their own groups arguing this help the town to remain "united" and trusting (Geetha, 2015). The urban identity is thus symbolized in a sense of "symbolically closed" urban community.

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sentiments of the town minus — for the most part in the past decade — any displays of fascist sympathies. Their football choreographies could be seen as new forms of urban symbolism together with being a symbol of the resurgent ethno-political identity.

Naming Rights

The Škripari nomenclature is a deliberate reference to the town's one-time association with the *Ustaše* — a Croatian fascist separatist guerrilla-warfare militia consisting of volunteers that resisted the communist forces of General Josip Tito. During the Second World War years, SB was one of the headquarters of the *Ustaše* a nd SB a protectorate of the Axis forces of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany — forts built by the Italian Army during the war years are still evident on the hills above the town. The wartime Škripari frequently hid in the caves in the hills above SB, sporadically attacking both the Red Army forces and later Allied armed forces — hence the name. When SB became part of the Communist entity of Yugoslavia in 1946, the SB citizens paid for such actions.

When the Red Army of Tito arrived in town, some 12% of SB citizens were murdered by firing squad for their rejection of communist ideology. In subsequent decades, SB saw poor investment from the Communists. Under the regime, all displays of ethno-political nationalism and Croat Catholic identity was deliberately frustrated. At the sporting level the SB workers were forced to devolve part of their taxes to fund the Velež FK football club based in the city of Mostar some 30km away, which Tito favoured because of its Communist and multi-culturalist ethos (the club included footballers from across Yugoslavia, unlike SBNK which was composed exclusively of Croat-Catholics). In the decades of Communism, the SBNK club (in that era named FC «Mladost» *Youth,*) laboured in the lower leagues of the country's football pyramid. When the Communist regime was overthrown in the early 1990s, the nation that once was Yugoslavia reverted to the regional celebrations of ethno-political nationalism. In their new-found freedom the citizens of SB re-named their football club after the town and invested heavily in its stadium infrastructure and the coaching and playing personnel.

The military and political resistance of both Croats in general, and the role of the town in such practice, remains a source of huge pride for the contemporary Škripari. They believe they constitute the *Agora* of the town. Over the past two decades, they and other like-minded mainstream supporters in and around football fixtures have vocalized ideologies of self-determinations and resentment against both the State of BiH and the various senses of the ethnic 'other'. They believe that they are emulating the past defence of the Croats from the Ottomans when confronting Bosniak Ultras. Their banners contain displays of Medieval Knights and the symbol of the crusades and Christianity; they dismiss Bosniak Muslim rivals with the terms 'Turks'. Collectively their words and deeds remind those listening and watching that the contemporary football-related antagonism has centuries-old antecedents.

The Statue of Limitations

One fixture witnessed by one of the authors in 2014 provides an ethnographic insight into these various processes and performances. The BiH Premier League fixture and the regional derby between the NK Široki Brijeg and FK Velež in September of that year epitomizes the cultural,

ideological and religious schisms present in both the BiH football and political landscapes. The SBNK fans and club were — as ever — celebrating their Croatian-Catholic identity and the pursuit of the creation of a Croat independent state or entity inside BiH. The Velez FK club are mainly supported by Bosniaks living in the East (Bosniak dominated) side of the city of Mostar. On top of this, they were emblematic of what the Škripari considered the moribund philosophy of Socialism. The Velež *FK ultras* gather under the nomenclature of the Red Army in honour of the Yugoslav Partisans who supported Socialism and opposed the Fascist Independent State of Croatia established during World War II. By the early 21st century, this one-time multi-ethnic *ultras* group contained a Bosniak majority. These supporters sought for a Bosnia-Herzegovina under the principles of socialism. Some amongst their ranks sought to extend Bosniak political influence and destroy any ethno-political borders inside their nation.

This fixture had an added resonance. The month of the game corresponded with the 18th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the *Škripari*. The wider citizenship of SB also celebrated the event including the town's Mayor who, via the municipality website, congratulated the group for their anniversary. Mayor since 2008 and also President of SBNK since 2017, the man represented the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ-BiH) — a centre-right Croatian nationalist party that has held power in SB since the end of the hostilities and the beginning of elections in 1995. The Škripari appreciated the Mayor's words whilst concomitantly expressing political agnosticism. Such a philosophy is integral to all reputable *ultras* groups. Such gathering is never short of proclamations as to how society should be, but at the same time refuse to be subordinate to any political party (Testa and Armstrong 2010). Politics of a different sort were at play on the day of the fixture.

Before the match, the *Škripari* gathered in the town centre around the statue of Gojko Šušak (1945-1998) and adorned it with flags and scarves of the SBNK football club. The town people funded the building of monuments for nationalist fighters who fought for Croatian independence during the 1990s conflict; the Škripari and indeed other football supporters celebrate those they consider Croatian heroes. This SB born Croatian nationalist politician and one-time Minister of the Defence was also a stalwart of the short-lived Croatian Republic of Herzegovina-Bosnia (HRHB) established during the years of 1992-1995. This political entity, which existed with its own army and governmental structure, included areas with a Croatian majority; notably, Central Bosnia and Herzegovina. The entity was unrecognized internationally. In 2019 the re-creation of such an entity within the borders of contemporary BiH is an aspiration of many SB citizens.

There were other political moans to be had. Some younger Škripari surrounding the statue articulated their hatred of Velež FK with reference to their link to the Red Army; they regarded its supporters as a more reprehensible football gathering than other Bosniak nationalist equivalents because they sought to impose not only Bosniak culture but also communism. Similar sentiments existed in the mind of some SB citizens at the political-administrative level albeit the majority consider the Sarajevo-based conservative Bosniak Nationalist Socialist Democratic Party (henceforth, SDP) to be more extreme than the Sarajevo-based Party of Democratic Action (henceforth, SDA). One particular concern of the SB citizens is that, if repetitively elected, the SDP would eradicate Croatian nationalists from Herzegovinian governmental institutions and impose their way of life — both cultural and economic — on

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Croats. This would force Herzegovinian-Croats to migrate. The football fixture, whilst a sporting occasion, represented also an act of resistance towards any assimilation processes and was symbolic of the on-going Croatian processes of political resistance.

Articulations and Formations

Some 200 SBNK fans walked from the statue to the stadium singing songs proclaiming the club and the town. The articulations changed dimension when the visiting fans were seen in the stadium. The Red Army insulted the incoming SBNK fans by chants that sought to remind them of their towns-folks notorious past. Chants of '*Kill the Ustaše*' reminded all within ear-shot of their political antipathy. Other chants reminded the Croatian listener of their precarious political position: '*You are part of Bosnia-Herzegovina*'. Responses were required. The Škripari collectively accused their detractors of being *'Cigani'* (Gypsies who live dishonest lives in wretched conditions) asking further, '*How much does the wood cost this year?*' — an articulation loaded with the sense of economic superiority around the entrepreneurial-capitalist ability that defines the citizens of SB and implicitly ridicules the SB stereotype of unemployed or low paid and lazy wood-gathering East Mostar Bosniaks. Proud of the large number of employed citizens in their town, they are contemptuous of the less enterprising. Collective sentiment was not able to curtail individual-inspired outrage. One young Škripari gave a Roman-Fascist salute towards the Red Army. Velež fans were now accusing SB citizens via their chants of the town's residual fascist sympathies. The core *Škripari* in recent years has encouraged their fellows to ignore such accusations from football rivals — but exceptions always exist — hence the lone fascist salute.

On the 18th minute of the match, the *Škripari* unfurled a banner to represent symbolically their 18th anniversary. The dull game ended in a 2-0 victory for the hosts. The departing bus carrying the Red Army was struck by bottles thrown by younger Škripari. Afterwards fans, players and citizens gathered once again in front of the statue to drink beer and later the Škripari hanged a flag on it displaying the Croatian Coat of Arms along the World War 2 Škripari's motto reading '*Under this Holy flag until Victory*'. The evening continued with songs exalting their football club and the Croat identity.

Image 1.   Image 2.

The *Gojko Šušak* statue is located in the town centre. On top (image 1) the statue is decorated with a Škripari scarf and an SBNK flag. After the match (image 2) to celebrate the victory the same statue was decorated by the supporters with the flag of the Croatian Repulbic of Herzeg-Bosnia bearing the Škripari's motto (Fieldwork photos by Max Maidano).

Politics, the Law and Football Violence

Ideally the post-conflict milieu would not evidence such behaviours and attitudes. Football — like sport generally — is naively meant to transcend politics. To this end both FIFA and UEFA donated monies for football programmers to help build a new civil society (Armstrong and Maidano 2019).[5]

But we might ask who, in this fragile political context, is to police such events (however well-meaning) and via what legal processes when things go wrong? History can help us here. When football fully resumed across BiH in the 1995-1996 season, the Yugoslav political system had not left a police legacy designed to deal efficiently with riotous football fans in a democratic regime. The hard-core fans of the post-DPA were thus little concerned about exhibiting controversial nationalist sentiment due to less harsh legal consequences they knew they faced than their counterparts in Western Europe. In this milieu, in the mid-1990s Italian Military Police better known as the Carabinieri — acting, whilst in BiH, as peacekeeping forces — were actually employed across BiH in order to secure civic order when instructing the newly formed Bosnian-Herzegovinian Police on how to police football supporters.

The BiH police had their hands full. Even when played in ethnic isolation, football violence could occur. Until 2000 BiH football was divided in several mono-ethnic leagues. Each canton had their own police forces to deal with the violence. The police were believed to favour the local ethnicity (the one they were usually drawn from) when disorder with outsiders occurred. When football became a national entity with the creation of a multi-ethnic national league around 2000, inter-ethnic violent incidents increased. The policing of fan gatherings varied with the sense the police held of Us and Them. Disorder was endemic and displays of ethno-political nationalist sentiment prevalent and at times gratuitously offensive. Some of the immediate post-war hatred has dissipated and displays of nationalist sentiment are less frequent but have not entirely disappeared from the stadiums.

Football disorder thus became a national issue in the new millennium which, ideally, required a co-ordinate national intervention. One initiative came for the BiH Football Federation known colloquially as Savez (the Federation). In 2012, to alleviate football disorder, Savez declared henceforth that the number of those travelling must be announced to the hosting clubs at least 5 days before the fixture. Furthermore, one of those travelling was to act as the dedicated representative reachable by the police. Other initiatives implemented more frequent and more thorough body searches of fans, zero tolerance for fans under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances and demanded fans to travel with personal documentation. The first Savez regulation dedicated to addressing such behaviour also occurred in 2012 and saw fines imposed on clubs if their fans were found guilty of throwing pyrotechnics in the stadium, or if the banners and choreographs the clubs' *ultras* displayed contained controversial political content. This

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[5] See Collison et al. (2018) for debates around the delivery and efficacy of sport as a tool for processes for peace and development. See also the case of the 1995 South African National Rugby team in post-apartheid South Africa, which was depicted as force for inter-ethnic unification in the film *Invictus* (2009).

became a contested and politicized arena. What was considered acceptable or hate speech was often at the discretion of Savez, which in the eyes of the Croats was not politically neutral.

Democracy and the Wrong Vote

In BiH, politics is football and vice versa. The Mayor of SB supports the club with his presence in the stadium during home fixtures. However, he has little say when it comes to fixture-scheduling and match security. Neither he nor the Board of Directors has any voice on police deployment. The police work independently and for high-risk fixtures decide what numbers of personnel to deploy. Law enforcement agencies present the police bill to the club. The former SB President Z.M Jelić has been publicly critical of policing procedures, arguing that in Sarajevo the football clubs paid the police only for their policing of international fixtures. In his argument, the predominantly Bosniak city of Sarajevo thus receives de facto free policing for their clubs' Premier League fixtures. Football in its many forms thus perpetuates the sense of Croat grievance. In the eyes of the Croats, Savez mirrors the body politic of BiH. Croatians are a minority in the various Savez committees, and have less representation in Savez decision-making. Croats argue that ethnic representation to be effective and free of grievances has to be visible; crucially the national team needs to be more inclusive of Croat players.

According to SB Croats, the judiciary and the football authorities are biased. We can add to this the Presidential electoral system. The BiH Presidency serves as the head of state and is constituted by three presidents: one Bosniak, one Croat elected by the Federation and one Serb elected by Republika Srpska (Serbian Republic). The three serve a 4-year term and every 8 months the chair of Presidency rotates. The Croatian candidates — all under the flag of the HDZ-BiH — have won their seat in all Presidential Election since 1995 except in 2006, 2010 and 2018. In these three years, large numbers of Bosniaks in the Federation have casted their vote for the Croatian presidency seat. In doing so they allowed Bosniaks or non-Croats to win seats (Lakic 2018a). Presently Željko Komšić, a Bosnian-Muslim standing for the Democratic Front, is the current president for the Croat Presidency. This outcome infuriated the BiH Croat electorate who considered Komšić to be unrepresentative of Croats interests, supported as was in the main by Muslim voters. In theory the Democratic Front is supposed to be a neutral party but is regarded by the majority of Croats as pursing Bosniaks socio-economic interests.

Street protest ensued. In October 2018, in the city of Mostar, SB citizens marched with Mostar-Croats to protest against the outcome. Their banners read 'Not My President' and proclaimed the end of democracy. That a Bosnian-Muslim president had been elected was seen by Herzegovinian-Croats as paving the way for Bosniaks to decide the Croats future. The situation escalated ethno-political tension. The HDZ-BiH representative, Dragan Čović, demanded BiH Croats secede from the union with the Bosniaks and called for the establishment for a third Croat political entity. In response, Bakir Izetbegovic (of the SDA party) — the Bosniak member of the tripartite presidency — warned that this course of action could provoke a return to armed conflict and cautioned Croatian nationalists not to cross the line (Lakic 2018b). Komšić meanwhile promised he would work for a civic Bosnia-Herzegovina that thought beyond ethnic lines.

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Loyalty is Local

Croats look to state agencies, the judiciary, the police and the football authorities are considered with degrees of contempt, whereby 'the local' takes precedence. In this context homogeneity is not guaranteed and some people are more listened than others. The Škripari are one such voice but there are competing others. The town's 'tribal leaders' are enabled in a sense to influence policy and ideology. Such *tajkuni* (tycoons) are the business men who with their possessions, employment opportunities and income can determine the towns' economic choices (Granditis 2007). Others are the former senior military figures who in the post-conflict acquired senior positions in local government. The men of such categories are quintessential Croats in serving and protecting their people. Equally revered are the town's Franciscans who seek to project their spirituality and indeed morality on citizens. The Franciscans also — discreetly — encourage voting for the HDZ-BiH in presidential elections for the defense of Croat-ness and implicitly family values and Catholicism.

The citadel has internal borders whilst its people exhibit common cultural traits (see contributions in Barth ed. 1969). Political views in SB are often class-bound. Individuals in the Škripari and indeed SB citizens argue that the middle-class (those who owns the mean of productions, wealthy entrepreneurs, and those who earn over 1.000 BAM — Bosnia-Herzegovina Convertible Mark: about 460 British Pounds) tend to favour remaining in the state of BiH but with a yet to be defined Croat Federal entity. By contrast, the working-class (those who work for public or private company) tend to prefer the creation of a third Croat political entity and the formation of HRHB. The low-waged, parts of the working-class, the unemployed, and those who profess populist ideologies such as the war veterans and elders born before the 1970s tend to wish to be part of Croatia.

Isolation is not pursued and to this end several cultural activities are annually organized by the City Fathers — sometimes with the help of some Škripari — with the aim of attracting people from across the former Yugoslavia; such activities include running half-marathons, art expositions, music concerts and street food festivals. Implicitly, such initiatives attempt to promote cross-cultural tolerance and reflect a town attempting to promote a wider sense of civil society. Such occasions bring welcome incomes from visitors and sponsors. Episodes of ethnic violence have never been recorded around such events. The town whilst thus claiming to be a Croat fortress also opens its walls to outsiders. Money talks in such processes; the 'others' might not be loved or respected but they might spend much needed monies. The tolerance evident on these occasions offers some general reflection on the purpose of the Škripari.

The town representatives occasionally condemn the Škripari. When controversial banners are displayed during SBNK football matches, the Franciscan clerics have asked football club officials to prevent such behaviours — not least because the messages are not very Christian in sentiment. For some citizens, the Škripari gathering manifests gangster/mobster mentality organized around a tenuous sense of ethnic cause. Certainly, some of the business owners consider the Škripari as bad civic ambassadors. In their opinion, the insults around the SBNK fixtures and other such antagonisms cause cross-ethnic embarrassment, diminish trust between SB and entrepreneurs from elsewhere and indeed diminish business opportunities. Others know that the Škripari have the best interests of the town in their heart. Such sentiments were evident

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after a 2017 incident involving the alphabet. In 2017, the Tourist Office of the SB Municipal Council decided to display street signs in the Cyrillic Alphabet to assist Serbian business visitors. Some young Škripari — and non Škripari ultra-nationalist — decided to obscure the Cyrillic lettering considering it both intrusive and synonymous with the signs displayed by the JNA (Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija, the Yugoslav Army) in this area some 25 years previously. The population was divided as to the efficacy of this action. For some, the defacing was hooliganism; others had more sympathy for 'the boys of the town', seeing them as a *Vox Populi* and indeed the flame carriers for Croat defence against assimilations processes.

Place and People
Place is often revealing but more frequently is obscuring. Any place is essentially unknowable or never capable of being fully comprehended. The people that populate a place change; the deepest nature of any place is not always transparent (Lopez 2019). Analysis is thus always a one moment in time photography. For the place that is SB we can state this: at this moment the central state is seen as unfair, austere and hostile and ever-ready to take what Croats built with their own hands. The state structure is questionable and democracy is perceived as limited. Governance comes to be seen as unreliable and untrustworthy and makes SB citizens prioritize the defence of their own cultural traditions and the local social structures over the national (Pardo and Prato 2011, Prato 2011).

The local informs the national but the national has bigger issues than the parochial. The violence and ethno-political banners evident during matches of the Premier League were — and remain — reflective of the highly turbulent BiH situation. The country is suspended (potentially indefinitely) in a status 'betwixt and between' of democracy, forms of authoritarianism, and ethno-political violence. The Liberal Democracy and socio-economic revolution are forestalled. In this epoch, liminality is instrumentalized to justify ethno-nationalist parties (Van Gennep, 1960). The SB citizens feel that liberation from economic stagnation is continuously under threat by a coterie of malevolent forces, which the ethno-political political party are mandated to identify and oppose (Beresford et al. 2018).

Football as an avenue of peace-building is not trusted. Sociologist, anthropologists and political scientists who have done research in the Balkans have recognized the connection between the football ultras groups and the machinations of politicians. Aware of this, the Škripari criticize politicians for their willingness to exploit liminal situation using football disorder if needs be. In this situation, the trickster (Machiavellian politicians) enters the 'game'. Intelligent and deceptive the trickster attempts to guide the assumed post-liminal state but their real interests is to perpetuate de facto liminal chaos and remain in power (Horvath and Thomassen 2008).Violence generated around football fixtures may at times have been generated by such 'tricksters', engaging criminals to inflame football disorders or by corrupting the police tasked to deal with such disorder. Football disorders creates fears. Arising out of such fears, ethno-political enclaves are reinforced; this can become a vote winner for the Machiavellian nationalist politician. Thus, in several situations ultras become pawns of the process. The Škripari recognise however that, despite their occasional public utterances of

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disdain, the politicians seek them when they need electoral approval and in the event of any ethno-political insurgence consider them as one of the town's first line of defence.

Football in its Place

In the post-conflict milieu football can both mirror disenchantment and in some ways offer a way out; football appeals to the everyday citizen and provides a metaphor for a peaceful society inclusive of all shapes, sizes and mentalities. The game narrates ideas of class, nation, citizenship, gender, commerce; it facilitates networks and conviviality and establishes a sense of *communitas* (Turner 2018). It invites inquiry as to how a society can present and see itself. It is also available to celebrate some for 40 weeks a year. Whilst never innocent of political schemes, the game provides a zone in which the formal political system cannot easily permeate. It can provide a way of coping with tensions — as it mediates via its permitting of celebrations of the past — and is implicitly an arena to negotiate the present and the future. Political leaders, both local and national, cannot ignore it.

The fights and insults evident at football, whilst in part integral to football traditions the world over, are also a symbolic continuation of Yugoslav conflict. Articulations and celebrations reflect the determination of Croats to both defend and celebrate their right to exist. The club and the stadium facilitate performances of the celebration of self, resistance towards the ethnic other and *communitas* with the deceased — the stadium being the one public theatre where the dead are celebrated with noise in the chants praising their role in conflict. Football is thus Janus faced in that it can facilitate and at times places boundaries on emotion. It can by its proxy role minimize political antagonism and offer avenues for the diplomat. We might argue that football in post-conflict BiH, even with its endemic hatreds, carries the function of shock-absorber; and by its existence it might be argued to have prevented the creation of ethno-nationalist Para-militaries. For all their professed hatred articulated on match day ethnographic research reveals that individuals in the Škripari have friends in the East Side of Mostar. Some work there, others do business with Bosniaks. This indicates that the antagonism evident in football is in part banal. Other factors that create football fan resentment are beyond ethno-political strictures. The sluggish economy, long-term unemployment in several sectors has in recent years brought widespread youthful discontent. Add to this a weak state failing to exert its authority in many aspects of social life (Keil and Perry 2015) and the result has been many young men collectively creating an environment around football which is transgressive. This routinely manifests itself in what might best be termed as banal nationalism (Billing 1995) alongside episodes of what we will term recreational violence.

Revealing of the fault-lines of BiH, the game of football and the Škripari serve to reinforce urban and extra-local identities which induct debates around class, masculinity, legitimacy and ethnicity (Giulianotti 1999, Hong and Lu 2016, Pardo and Prato 2019). The game facilitates memory and senses of injustice to the extent that analysis might, following Rieff (2016), ask whether the post-conflict would benefit from less memory whatever the source. As Assmann (2019) asks, who informs as to what we are? Her answer in part relies on the standard trilogy of national narratives; that is, victim, victor and resistance fighter. But does the ensuing sense of cultural memory prioritize a People or a Place? (Sant-Cassia 2000). And,

if we cannot answer that, can we ever explain how we conceptualize memory and remembering and thus relate to others? When a people's identity — as it is with the Croats — consists of dimensions both material and transcendent might we, to follow Althusser (Poster 1974), asks whether history creates a people rather than the other way around? History and memory can be haunting; events, acts and places provide the texture and interiors for a sense of the eternal return. When meaning and memory bring with them a sense of duty (in this case resist with violence) problems occur. Does football, we need ask, exacerbate or facilitate the post-conflict healing? An enthusiasm for Football is what the constituent people of BiH shares; the game carries many seductions, but to put faith in it is risky.

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Remembering and Belonging:
Jewish Heritage and Civic Agency in Poland's Haunted Urban Spaces[1]

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In the context of Poland's recent illiberal turn, large cities have been important stages where the fault lines of the national imaginary that run through Polish society have become apparent. In this article, based on ethnographic research in the Polish city of Wroclaw, we focus on individual cultural agents who have engaged with the marginalised Jewish heritage of the city in constructing diverse imaginaries of urban belonging. Their work, carried out against the backdrop of exclusionary nationalist agenda of the Polish state, illuminates the power of human agency to harness cultural heritage as a social and political resource for the present. We show how through their urban-based practices, these cultural agents challenge the Polish hegemonic heritage discourses that exclude the Other from the national imaginary.
Keywords: Jewish heritage, urban space, identity, belonging, civic agency, Breslau, Wroclaw, Poland.

Introduction

In this article, we focus on civic agency of individuals in contemporary urban Poland, who through their practices engage in the production of diverse urban imaginaries. Our ethnographic study draws on interviews and observations of people and institutions that specifically build their activity on sites of or in reference to the Jewish heritage of the city of Wroclaw. Their work in education, the arts and historic preservation is deeply embedded in the post-Holocaust urban spaces of a Central European city largely devoid of Jewish residents. We are interested in how through their heritage practices they have counteracted the reactive historical policies of the Polish state, which have suppressed and silenced social, political and cultural diversity (Cervinkova 2016, Snyder 2016).

Politics of Historical Memory in Poland

It is important to underscore that in centring Jewish urban heritage, our actors are transgressing the very sensitive terrain of Poland's national imaginary, in which Jews have always occupied the position of the 'threatening Other' (Michlic 2006). Anti-Jewish prejudices which have permeated most of the Polish state-building project since 1880, surface with increased intensity in critical turning points in Polish history, such as the reemergence of the independent Polish state after 1918, in the interwar period, during the Nazi Occupation post-1939, and in the postwar communist era (post-1945), culminating in the expulsion of the remaining Polish

citizens of Jewish origin in 1968. Currently, Poland is experiencing a political turn toward populist nationalism, a project, which again hinges on particular interpretations of the past of the Polish nation (Bucholc and Komornik 2019, Hinsey 2016, Michlic and Melchior 2013, Piotrowski 2016). Since the populist Law and Justice party won the parliamentary elections in 2015, the Polish state has institutionalised, through legislation and cultural policies, historical denialism (Bucholc and Komornik 2019, Grabowski 2016, Snyder 2016), bringing to a halt the process of national soul-searching over the past that had gathered momentum in the early 2000s following the publication of *Neighbors* by Jan Tomasz Gross (Gross 2001, Michlic 2006). Gross's probing study shed light on the mass murder of the Jews of Jedwabne at the hands of Polish compatriots during the Nazi-occupation (Michlic and Melchior 2013, Gross 2001, Zubrzycki 2016). Under Law and Justice party rule, museum projects, such as the sophisticatedly conceived WWII Museum in Gdansk are being remodeled to 'enshrine Polish innocence' and fit 'the Polish point of view' (Snyder 2016). Polin, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which was awarded with the title of the European Museum of the Year in 2016, has also been under pressure for its critical examination of recent Polish past. Most recently, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage refused to fund a temporary exhibition and affiliated events devoted to the 50th anniversary of the 1968 anti-Semitic campaigns (Cohen 2019).

The centrality of suppressing the memory of the Holocaust and Polish participation in the destruction of the Polish Jewish community came to full force when legislators voted in a law that would impose sanctions of up to three years of imprisonment onto anyone who attributed 'responsibility or co-responsibility to the Polish nation or state for crimes committed by the German Third Reich' (Belavusau and Wójcik 2018). This law was a direct attempt at legalizing Holocaust denial and resulted in diplomatic conflicts with Poland's international allies, finally forcing the Polish authorities to withdraw criminal penalisation from the amendment (Polish Press Agency 2018). Nevertheless, the historical policies continue to figure prominently in the authoritarian agenda of the Polish state. Through the legislature, and state-controlled media and public schools, it focuses on mobilizing nationalist sentiments by means of historical revisionism, which stresses Polish victimhood and courageous resistance, erasing the pertinence of considering the historical suffering of ethnic and religious minorities in the hands of occupiers and Polish compatriots.

In the context of this authoritarian and nationalist turn fueled by official historical narratives, large cities play an important and complex role. On the one hand, in 2018 elections for local and regional offices, residents of large urban agglomerations voted overwhelmingly for pro-democratic and pro-EU local government leaders (Berendt 2018). At the same time, it was Polish cities that saw some of the most spectacular explosions of nationalist sentiments in which the historical hatred toward Jews and other minorities intertwined with anti-immigrant rhetoric aimed at contemporary populations of Others. In Wroclaw, for example, in November 2015, a radical Polish nationalist, Piotr Rybak led an anti-immigrant demonstration that culminated in the burning of an effigy of an Hasidic Jew bearing a European Union flag in the historic centre of the city (Haaretz 2016a, 2016b; Harulkowicz 2015, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). While independent Polish and international journalists reported widely on the rising number of

racist and anti-semitic incidents in Polish cities, the official state-controlled media purposely ignored the spillover of hate and violence onto the streets and in fact continue to fuel right-wing nationalist rhetoric. It is in this context, that we consider practices of historical memory of urban agents in today's Polish Wroclaw. In the following sections, we briefly introduce the specific urban context of our research and comment on our methodology. Then, we present concrete examples from our ethnographic research followed by a discussion.

Jewish Absences in Wroclaw

After WWII, approximately 100,000 Polish Jews, survivors of concentration camps or wartime exile in the Soviet Union, settled in Wroclaw or the surrounding region of Lower Silesia (Ziątkowski 2000). The region and the city belonged to Germany up until the end of WWII, after which they were transferred to Polish administration. For some of the Holocaust survivors, the region served only as a transit point before departing for Israel, the United States, or other locations. For some Polish Jews, these Recovered Territories, the lands Poland gained after WWII, became important centres for the rebuilding of Jewish life after the Holocaust. At the end of 1946, an estimated 15,000 Jews resided in Wroclaw, making up 7.4% of the population (Ziątkowski 2000). The anti-Semitic campaigns of 1968 brought to a close this post-Holocaust rebirth of Jewish life, with the majority of Polish Jews departing the country. In its aftermath, buildings that had been the centre of both pre-war German-Jewish and postwar Polish-Jewish life in the city, were no longer tied to a vital Jewish community. This specific urban context is important for how individuals who participated in our research conceptualised their work in which they have interacted with Jewish material heritage.

Methodology

Our methodology is inspired by the tradition of urban ethnography, which draws attention to the prominence of cities as anthropological research sites (Pardo and Prato 2013, 2018). Of particular interest to us is ethnographic research, which treats urban areas as spaces in which citizenship and identity are produced through the agency and practices of urban residents (Appadurai 2001, Pardo 1996).

This research grows out of our long-term study of Jewish heritage and memory practices in Wroclaw. We are foreign researchers and educators who lived in Wroclaw for 16 and 25 years. This article is based on participant observation and the study of heritage-related activities and policies, as well as on our personal engagement in preservation and educational efforts related to Jewish and German material heritage. For the purposes of this article, we selected four individuals with whom we conducted in-depth interviews on the genesis of their engagement with Jewish heritage in Wroclaw's urban spaces. The next sections are organized in a chronological order as case-studies focused on the work of these cultural agents spanning the period from 1981 to the present.

From Solidarity to 'Hyde Park'

The birth of the Solidarity movement in Poland is the backdrop for Tadeusz Wlodarczak's (age 67) involvement in saving the Jewish Cemetery on Wroclaw's Slezna Street known as the Old

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Jewish Cemetery, the main burial grounds of the Breslau Jewish community from 1856-1903. Filled with exquisitely carved gravestones and monumental architecture including mausoleums funded by Breslau's wealthiest families, the cemetery — a city within a city — serves as a pantheon to illustrious Jewish citizens and patrons of 19th- and 20th-century Breslau. Growing up in a Polish-Catholic, working-class family in post-WWII Wroclaw, Tadeusz was fascinated by the ruins of the German city, especially its cemeteries:

> 'I knew all the cemeteries in Wroclaw in the 1960s, I visited all of them by the time I was in high school. I walked across the whole city, because I was in no hurry. I knew the city inside out, all the stones, all the houses, all the details were etched in my memory and on Sundays, I would go look for all the hidden places […] I had to explore every nook and cranny, because when I found out that mine is a city which is so foreign to Polish culture and that culture is riding on its coattails, I felt like everyone around me was being deceptive.'[2]

Image 1. Tadeusz Wlodarczak at the Old Jewish Cemetery, mid-1990s. Source: Personal archive T. Wlodarczak.

The deception Tadeusz refers to stems from the propaganda of the post-WWII Polish state set on erasing the German past of the city and rewriting its history as exclusively Polish. It is important to point out that at the time of his wanderings in the 1960s, large swathes of Wroclaw were still in ruins due to wartime battles; postwar Polish inventories of the destruction indicated that 60% of the building stock had been irreversibly damaged (Thum 2011). While a push was made to reconstruct the historic heart of the city in the 1950s (Thum 2011), a decade would pass before the ruins outside the city centre would start to be replaced, often with highly standardised residential housing blocs built hastily to satisfy chronic housing shortages (Thum 2011). In the propaganda of the time, the government touted these mass-produced estates as being superior to the surviving architecture left behind by the Germans. Because of his deep and embodied knowledge of the city spaces, Tadeusz did not accept the official propaganda about the city's past or the communist-era investments. 'I had an emotional connection to the

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[2] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, in November 2016.

city. Wherever I went, there was a big difference in quality and aesthetics between what was built before the war and after […] My rational mind did not want to accept what the Poles were adding to the city was better.'[3]

During the Solidarity years (1980-1989), he established an underground newspaper titled *Wyboje*, which devoted a section to untold histories of the city. Tadeusz explains in somewhat ironic terms the significance of the underground newspaper's name: 'The word 'wyboje' means potholes, the annoying holes in the road that are in people's way to a bright future.'[4] In the fall of 1981, on the eve of the All Saints Day, when Poles commemorate their dead, Tadeusz suggested to the editor of a local paper that he would like to write a piece on the lost German cemeteries in the city (Łagiewski 1981). Because the only remaining German-era necropoles were the former Jewish burial grounds (other Germany cemeteries were levelled by the Polish state in the early 1970s), they decided to visit the Old Jewish Cemetery to take representative photographs to illustrate the article. For Tadeusz, the article was meant to prompt current Wroclavians to consider the heritage of the city they lived in. 'This was an important topic so that local Poles could know that they are living on German bones and in the houses of the Germans, who they had driven out, and that they were often downing Vodka from their glasses and shitting in their toilets.'[5] When entering the grounds to take the photographs, they found the cemetery to be in a deplorable state: 'Everything in Field One was lying flat, no gravestones were visible. Along the walls the ivy was growing so densely that nothing was visible. No one can imagine how it looked.'[6] Following this initial visit, the two men met with historical and preservation authorities to discuss steps to halt the continued devastation. Thus began their engagement in the intense revitalisation of the Old Jewish Cemetery, which coincided with the last years of communist rule in Poland (1983-1989). During this time, with a small team, they eventually reassembled and raised at least four thousand gravestones, and repaired and stabilised numerous mausoleums. They also cleared away over 700 tons of urban and industrial waste and recuperated dismantled stone funerary pieces that had been dumped into vandalised tombs. Another challenge was the taming of the greenery that had flourished unrestrained in the postwar years. In our interviews, Tadeusz stressed the crucial importance of these arduous tasks for the preservation of the cemetery, which was destroyed in the last days of war in the clashes between the Soviet and the German armies and uncontrolled vandalism by Poles since the end of WWII.

To lead the stone restoration work, Tadeusz received master stone carver certification and held the position of the official cemetery caretaker for thirteen years. Through physical labour and attentive craftsmanship, he and the small team working under him at the cemetery created the conditions of possibility for the recognition of the Old Jewish Cemetery as a heritage site in the eyes and imagination of the non-Jewish population of Wroclaw and of Poland more broadly. In the latter half of the 1980s a public exhibition as well as a guidebook were created

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[3] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 24 March 2019.
[4] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 21 November 2016.
[5] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 21 November 2016.
[6] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 21 November 2016.

(Łagiewski 1984), and residents were permitted to visit the cemetery in groups led by guides. This marked the reentry of the cemetery into the world of the collective memory of the Polish city. Under the political conditions of the still lasting communist rule, the Old Jewish Cemetery in Wroclaw became a place of open deliberation for diverse audiences. Each public tour, which normally drew between sixty to one hundred people and lasted between two to four hours, became an occasion for critical historical discussion and exchange, impossible in the official space outside of the Cemetery walls due to communist censorship. In this way, the Old Jewish Cemetery in Wroclaw functioned as a public space for what Elzbieta Matynia refers to as the performing of democracy, a crucial element of the process of the building of civil societies and democratic citizenship in Poland (Matynia 2009). Tadeusz remembers:

> Topics not presented publicly due to censorship were discussed [at the Jewish Cemetery] freely. It was Wroclaw's Hyde Park. For the several thousands of people who visited the cemetery in the 1980s, thirsty to fill in the gaps in their knowledge about the city they lived in, it was Hyde Park and a university in one, a place to impart unknown knowledge to Wroclavians about the city they lived in and about the people who built the city before 1945. It was a time of extraordinarily intense, romantic work and adventure. The very search for information that interested visitors coming to the cemetery was inspiring for a wide range of professionals tied to the history and material heritage of the residents of the city of Wroclaw.[7]

Image 2. Tadeusz Wlodarczak giving a public tour of the Old Jewish Cemetery for citizens of Wroclaw, late 1980s. Source: Personal Archive T. Wlodarczak.

It is important to point out that Tadeusz's work in the cemetery fits into the larger landscape of Polish explorations of silenced pasts in the final years of communist rule. These

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[7] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 15 November 2016.

served to counter the homogeneity inherent to the *'pamiec narodu'* or 'national memory', a heritage policy formulated by the regime, which in effect, censored historiography and publications on the German heritage of the Recovered Territories (Thum 2011). Through their work at the cemetery, these amateur preservation activists created a space in the city's landscape — a pothole — which raised questions about the city's past and disrupted the official state historical narrative. Through their work, Wroclaw's Jewish heritage spoke to contemporary Polish residents about the actual historical cultural pluralism of their city's past.

Animator of European Jewish Spaces of Memory

Following the anti-Semitic campaigns of 1968, Wroclaw's Jewish population dwindled as a result of mass emigration of Polish Jews. The White Stork Synagogue, one of the centres of Jewish life in Breslau and later Polish Wroclaw, which had suffered little damage during the war, became the property of the state treasury in 1974. By the mid-1990s, after changing ownership multiple times, and subject to ill-conceived and unfinished adaptation projects, the synagogue, once the architectural vision of Carl Ferdinand Langhans, the son of the designer of the Brandenburg Gate, was in ruins, a roofless, vacuous cavern and endangered historic monument, whose fate would be determined in a new post-communist order.

In 2005, Bente Kahan (age 61), a cosmopolitan Jewish-Norwegian performance artist settled in her husband's native Wroclaw, thinking originally that it would be just a base to continue her international artistic career. At the time, the Jewish community was struggling to complete restoration efforts at the White Stork Synagogue since the building had been returned to the community as a part of communal restitution laws of the late 1990s. Since the 1980s, Bente Kahan was performing in Yiddish, focusing her work on Jewish heritage. When she was asked by the Wroclaw Jewish community to lead the restoration efforts at the White Stork Synagogue, she says she approached it in the same way as her art — 'working through my life'.[8] She set up the Bente Kahan Foundation through which she ran the Center for Jewish Culture and Education, organizing cultural events in the synagogue and raising money for the building's restoration.[9]

For Bente, her work in Wroclaw is tied to her identity as a European Jew and as an artist: 'My agenda is my heritage, and it's always been.'[10] In conceiving programs in Wroclaw's urban spaces, Bente stresses the European dimension of her approach: 'My heritage is part of the European narration, which in many places has been erased for so many years because the people disappeared.'[11] For Bente, the continuation of this narration is through the restoration of Jewish spaces in Wroclaw and through her artistic endeavors. 'There are two things driving me: it is my Jewish heritage, being a European Jew after the Holocaust; second being an artist, a creative artist.'[12] For Bente, the Jewish space in the centre of Wroclaw mirrored similar heritage sites

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[8] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.
[9] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.
[10] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.
[11] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.
[12] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

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across Europe — voids cut off due to the Holocaust from historic continuity and the people who had constructed them over the centuries. She speaks of her approach to the restoration of the White Stork Synagogue as a project that 'grew while I was working'.[13] The level of devastation meant that when conceiving of how to bring life into the space, she was confronted with fundamental questions about its meaning upon completion: 'This building could actually be anything; all Europe has this Jewish history. Does it deserve to be remembered? And how [should it] be remembered?'.[14] She did not want to confine the building's function to a religious temple, while at the same time insisting on keeping its ties to Jewish heritage. As a result, the synagogue maintains architectural features of its religious function (including a beautifully restored ritual bath — mikvah), but it serves primarily as an exhibition and cultural performance centre inviting citizens of all faiths and backgrounds.

Image 3. Bente Kahan in the restored White Stork Synagogue, 2015. Author: Maciej Kulczynski.

Bente envisions the synagogue as an inclusive space that provides a unique vantage point to confront the challenges of today's Europe: 'I think we have big problems with ethnic minorities in Europe, and the Jewish experience is an important example of an ethnic experience in Europe.'[15] The open nature of the synagogue as a cultural venue clearly marked by its Jewish provenance makes Jewish heritage important in efforts at building pluralistic democracies in post-Holocaust Europe at a time when few Holocaust survivors remain and Holocaust denial is on the rise: 'There is definitely a lot to learn if you want to build an open society in Europe, tolerance in society and so on. We can't go forward if we are stuck. And that is why the building is so important because it is itself a monument of a very vital [urban] Jewish community.'[16]

The Memory Keeper of the New Jewish Cemetery

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[13] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[14] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[15] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[16] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

Piotr Gotowicki (age 52) is the caretaker of the second Jewish cemetery in Wroclaw on Lotnicza Street. Known as the New Jewish cemetery, this burial ground was established in the early 20th century when the other necropoles had reached full capacity. Today, the cemetery is used by Wroclaw's small Jewish community. Its large grounds contain both German-Jewish and Polish-Jewish graves, as well as a unique memorial to German-Jewish soldiers who died fighting for Germany in WWI. For visitors to the cemetery, one senses the totality of the abandonment and devastation wrought by the Holocaust and postwar neglect and vandalism. Today, approaching the historic entrance gate, one is met by barbed wire. Due to Piotr's efforts, the peripheral fence has been sealed, allowing for large sections of the cemetery to be restored, including the clearing of pathways and raising of tombstones. Many of the stones are still marked with anti-Semitic graffiti. Piotr works out of a poorly heated trailer, and spends most of his time caring for the grounds alone. If the budget permits, he hires a helper to raise stones or do other necessary upkeep of the grounds. Piotr also protects the cemetery from intruders and provides assistance to those caring for family graves in the Polish section of the cemetery, and helps families from around the world find burial plots of their loved ones.

Image 4. Piotr Gotowicki (left) at the menorah lighting ceremony during 2016 Hanukkah celebrations organized by the Szalom Alejchem elementary school. Photo by Karol Krukowski for the Szalom Alejchem elementary school archive.

Piotr was born in Wroclaw and became aware of his Jewish lineage as a young man in the early 1990s. Throughout the communist era (1945-1989), like in many Polish-Jewish families after WWII and then in particular after the Polish anti-Semitic campaign of 1968, ties to Jewish heritage became well-guarded family secrets not always shared with the younger generations. Piotr's coming out as a Jew and the deepening of his Jewish identity coincided with a thaw that began just prior to the fall of communism in 1989. Prior, the exploration of Jewish identity had been difficult:

'In the 1970s there still existed the Front of National Unity, which meant that if you had a Polish identity card, you were Polish. Nowhere was it indicated if you were a Gypsy, a Jew or a Muslim or anyone else. So at that time, you did not feel these things. In fact, very few people knew that Wroclaw had been a German city,

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because it was not talked about. It was sometime in the early 1990s when all of these things started to come alive, it was a rise in consciousness. The older you were, the more aware you became. And it was easier to get involved in this history.'[17]

At first, Piotr's Jewish identity became entwined with religious practice. In the 1990s, he went to Warsaw to join other young Polish men in courses designed to train them about Jewish life and traditions under the guidance of today's Chief Rabbi of Poland, the American-born Michael Schudrich. In 1998, at the suggestion of Schudrich, Piotr moved to Israel to continue his studies in an orthodox Yeshiva for emigrants from the former USSR. He lived in Israel for nine years, initially supporting himself with odd jobs and later becoming a jewelry maker for a gallery in Jerusalem, utilizing his previous academic training in the fine arts. While in Israel, he moved away from strict religious practices and in 2007, he returned to Wroclaw where his career at the New Jewish cemetery began. At that time, the cemetery was in a poor state. Postwar accounts penned by German Jews who visited the city in the 1950s indicate that the cemetery, while having sustained some damage due to ground battles, was largely intact. In his book on his travels east of the Oder-Neisse line in the 1950s, Breslau-born Holocaust survivor Ervin Hirschberg reported finding the graves of both his parents and other family members when visiting the New Jewish Cemetery (Hirschberg 1955). In subsequent postwar years, not only was the cemetery repeatedly vandalised, by the early 2000s large sections of the grounds were devoid of markers due to decades of exploitation of the site by gravestone producers and builders looking for raw material that could be repurposed. Piotr recalls his first encounter with a local who came to the cemetery in search for stone:

'At the start of my brilliant career here, the gate was wide open with people coming in and out. I remember some guy in a small *Cinquecento* or *Seicento* coming and asking if he could enter? I invited him in. After a half an hour he came back carrying a measuring tape. He asked me if I could help him load a stone he found with the exact measurements he needed into his car, because he couldn't carry it alone.' [18]

Piotr added: 'This story is not a joke. If things continued that way, in a short time, the cemetery would have ceased to exist.'[19] Piotr stresses that he likes his work in which he does not find spiritual or religious meaning. Instead, he is passionate about the history of the city and is motivated by trying to save Jewish material heritage from disappearance due to vandalism and decay. When asked to define his job description, he replies that his responsibilities are: 'To work so that this place functions well; that there are no night time parties here; that I don't have to collect empty bottles in the morning as I did 8-10 years ago; that people don't light campfires here. Simply put, to introduce civilisation here so that I will not have to be ashamed for how things look — that's my job description.'[20]

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[17] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[18] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[19] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

[20] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

Image 5. Children walking through a section of the New Jewish Cemetery largely devoid of markers due to postwar vandalism and thievery. Summer 2017. Source: Szalom Alejchem elementary school archive.

What Piotr finds most satisfying is the ability to uncover hidden history of the city and tie people to their missing heritage. He notes his email box is full of thousands of correspondences with people searching for their relatives and their family pasts for whom he is the only link. He reads Hebrew and Yiddish, and like an urban memory detective, links the names of those buried at the cemetery with former family addresses on German streets and the location of their burial plots: 'For the majority who come here because they have family members [buried here], this is the last physical memory of the pre-war Breslau Jewish community. I get a great deal of satisfaction when I find someone, and I am able to send a photo that they are here. For me that's very important.'[21]

Piotr's work at the cemetery is the fruition of his deep personal searches for his own identity and his attempts to understand his Jewish heritage in its religious and cultural aspects. The ties to this heritage are forged today not through religious practice, but through his connections to Jews who have family ties to the city and the burial ground. Piotr meticulously traces the fates of German and Polish Jews largely forgotten by today's citizens of Wroclaw. For the descendents of these former residents of Breslau and Wroclaw, Piotr is a memory keeper, the vital link to their past, to the dwellings their families once inhabited, and their loved ones' final resting places.

Children Reclaiming the City: Arts, Identity, Education
Agata Ganiebna's (age 45) deep involvement in German-Jewish and Polish-Jewish heritage grew out of the challenges she faced as a single mother seeking educational opportunities for her child. In addition, she was inspired by her professional experience as a cultural manager working in the theatrical arts, where themes of Jewish life and identity emerged in the works of

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[21] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 19 December 2018.

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Bruno Schultz and Tadeusz Kantor — Polish-Jewish writers and thespians. Between 2012-2019 Agata headed the Szalom Alejchem independent elementary school in Wroclaw. The school's innovative curriculum allowed students to explore their own identities in dialogue with the urban spaces that hold the history and memory of the once vibrant German-Jewish community of Breslau and the Polish-Jewish community of Wroclaw — both long marginalised in Polish historiography and local civic life.

Agata's journey to minority education began as a parent trying to secure a secular education for her daughter. Opposed to Catholicism's pervasiveness in Polish education, in the public school, her daughter faced ostracism and peer scrutiny as the only child in her class not to attend religion courses. When Agata realised that her daughter would continue to face these pressures throughout her primary education, she sought alternatives: 'I came to the conclusion that I would have to fight a losing battle in every public school and I decided it just didn't make sense at all.'[22] That is when Agata moved her daughter to an independent Jewish school located one street away.

Image 6. Agata Ganiebna (right) with her daughter Zuzanna Malinowska on the grounds of the Szalom Alejchem elementary school on the occasion of a Fall family and neighbourhood picnic in 2014. Source: The Szalom Alejchem elementary school archive.

In 2012, Agata decided to establish her own Jewish school in which she could build on her nuanced and hybrid understanding of Jewish culture and identity. At Szalom Alejchem, a school named after the Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem, children of diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds as well as those with a range of disabilities were immersed in an inclusive learning environment, which instilled capacities for tolerance and mutual understanding, civic responsibility and social engagement. Szalom Alejchem was at the time one of three Jewish schools in the city, which all functioned under the Polish legislation on minority rights education and received state subsidies. Students' education, while grounded in a rigorous adherence to the fundamental pillars of the compulsory Polish curriculum, was enriched by the study of Jewish history, culture and traditions. The school adhered to the Jewish calendar and the children celebrated Jewish holidays, which changed their sense of time and

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[22] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.

communal belonging. They learned to see the city through a hybrid lens, as a cosmopolitan composition of not only Catholic and Jewish practices and identities, but also those of multiple Others. The diverse composition of the student body and the complex historical backdrop of the city in which the school was located, forced Agata to practice the Jewishness of the school in a processual and dynamic framework, which accommodated fluid and porous identities:

> 'That's how life functions in Poland after the Holocaust and after 1968 and everything else, that you can come to a school which is in some ways Jewish and in some ways not Jewish, but you can in your own way practice your Jewish identity without having to explain yourself. School allows for the building of identity in different ways, even if someone only has one great grandfather who was Jewish - not even a great grandmother - and wants to relate to that and build their Jewish identity.'[23]

In spite of this fluidity in accommodating different ways of understanding and relating to Jewishness, Agata, who is herself not Jewish, was deeply aware of the precariousness of Jewish presence in today's Poland and her responsibility toward the heritage:

> 'I must protect the Jewishness and Jews in this school, because at a point in time you must stand up for something that is not mine, but that I intuitively know is being threatened, even if it is not a direct attack, but you must stand up against appropriation — it is a vigilance, which is very difficult to practice in a Jewish school when you are not a Jew.'[24]

Agata's cultural and educational project was deeply entwined with the school's location — the grand family villa of Richard and Paul Ehrlich, the well-known Jewish architects (both murdered in Theresienstadt in 1942), who were the authors of many Jewish and secular public buildings in Breslau, including the New Jewish Cemetery. Szalom Alejchem stood out due to its openness to the city. The school organized festivals — Jewish and secular — and events that were free of charge and that welcomed the surrounding urban community to come visit. In May 2018, for example, Szalom Alejchem opened the villa for a day-long 'House Festival', which engaged NGOs, social activists and scholars from Wroclaw and from around the world. It is important to underscore that prior to the school's existence at this location, the Erlich Villa did not occupy a visible position in the city's memoryscape. As a part of the House Festival, visitors toured the Ehrlich family home and learned about other landmarks in the city designed by the brothers. Agata's project went beyond the *genius loci* of the Jewish villa to claim Wroclaw's urban space through concrete public actions. These included the children's annual drawing of daffodils in front of the Warsaw Uprising memorial in the centre of the city, the painting of the Marek Edelman mural in the courtyard leading to the old Jewish theater as well as the organization of the Flashmob to the music of the Israeli performance artist Matisyahu: 'We at Szalom Alejchem have been, and I use this word very purposefully, audacious in public space,

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[23] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.
[24] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.

we simply walk into public space, taking that space without asking anybody for permission, because we regard this space as ours.'[25]

Image 7. Agata Ganiebna with children of the Szalom Alejchem elementary school visiting the memorial marking the site of the Breslau synagogue destroyed by the Nazis in November 1938. June 2017. Source The Szalom Alejchem elementary school archive.

Situated as actors in the city spaces, the pupils discovered their own agency and developed tools for practicing civic engagement at the local level. Agata also helped students tie into an identity of the city that was emerging, not one that had passed, one in which history and the present were interwoven explicitly.

Urban Heritage and Identity

Wroclaw and Poland remain highly contested spaces of memory, history and identity. Since 2015, Wroclaw's cityscape has been a stage for explosive displays of exclusionary notions of nationhood, belonging and interpretations of the country's past. In Wroclaw as well as other large Polish cities, Polish Independence Day has been tainted by evening mass marches by so-called patriots — right-wing nationalists and white supremacists, who have appropriated this day of national celebration with violent demonstrations of hatred (*Gf* 2018, *Koz* 2016, *Gf* 2018, Owens 2015). The Jewish heritage sites to which the work of our interlocutors is tied are frequently targets of anti-Semitic attacks. Most recently, the elegant red-brick walls of Ehrlich's New Jewish Cemetery were defaced with large white-painted graffiti: 'Jesus is the King' (*Kaki* 2019a). Spontaneously formed groups of citizens and youth gathered to remove the paint, however, with only limited success. The shadows of the text are still visible from the street (*Kaki* 2019b and 2019c, Kijek 2019). Based on the history of hate posted on its online forum, when articles about Bente Kahan are published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the newspaper staff block readers' abilities to comment. Children from the Jewish school paint daffodils on the streets of Wroclaw as a part of a national memory project commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, in the same spaces occupied in the night by extremist marchers threatening 'death to the

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[25] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.

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enemies of the nation' (*Koz* 2016). Exposed and vulnerable in the city spaces, these open society projects taking place against a backdrop of pervasive anti-Semitic and racist agendas, testify to the tenacity of this heritage work led by individuals and small groups of activists.

But there are other encounters that should also be noted that pierce the binary. In the same month that Piotr Rybak burnt the effigy in the market square of Wroclaw in 2015, children from the Jewish school planted daffodil bulbs around the memorial to the fallen in WWI on the grounds of the New Jewish Cemetery. While there, they met a group of 'Breslauers' — German Jewish Holocaust survivors living in diaspora — gathered in the city to commemorate the 77th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, the night in November 1938 when the main synagogue of Breslau was set alight and destroyed, launching the destruction of European Jews. Agata describes this powerful encounter of school children and Holocaust survivors as the 'meeting of two worlds outside of history and beyond time.'[26] In this space of absence and death, the Breslauers encountered life: 'They came to a place where they no longer had family, and if their family members survived, they were for sure not buried there. They came with an awareness that no one here remembers them and that no one cares, and that in no way does that history have a bearing on the lives of the residents of this city, most certainly not in any school or in the lives of any children.'[27] It is important to stress that what became a deeply resonating encounter was the outcome of Bente's, Agata's and Piotr's heritage work. Without Bente who organized the anniversary events, the Breslauers would not come to Wroclaw. Without Piotr's protection of the cemetery, neither the Breslauers nor the children would have been able to interact in this pocket of memory on the margins of Wroclaw's urban imaginary. Without Agata and her audacious educational vision, there would be no children visiting and caring for the memory of the Breslau Jews.

Conclusion

Our ethnographic case studies speak to the relationship between heritage and identity as ongoing and dynamic processes of adaptation and production of belonging and being in the world. The heritage work of the four actors that we portrayed in this article is tied to concrete physical spaces of the city through which they are making possible alternative conceptions of history, memory and identity. Tadeusz Wlodarczak transformed his political opposition work of the Solidarity Era into a restoration project that saved one of the few remaining relics of the Jewish-German past of Wroclaw for posterity. For him, saving this past was a way of creating an urban space for critical civic inquiry and exchange at a time when public deliberations were restrained by communist censorship and ideology. Bente Kahan translated her sense of identity as a European Jew into the restoration project of the only surviving synagogue in the city, which became an open cultural space through which Jewish heritage speaks to issues critical for diversity and pluralism of contemporary Europe. The inspiration for Piotr Gotowicki's work also derived from his Jewish identity. His heritage work, like Bente's, has an international dimension. Through his preservation work and research, he helps connect Jews from around

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[26] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.
[27] Interview conducted in Wroclaw, Poland, on 28 February 2019.

the world to their heritage in Wroclaw. Agata Ganiebna nurtured a cosmopolitan spirit in her pupils when Poland started closing its doors to Europe. Her pedagogy, emerging from her work in the Polish theater, explicitly built connections to urban Jewish heritage, which was given meaning through the engagement of children, parents, teachers and activists. Through the work of these cultural agents, which spans the communist era to the Polish present, Jewish heritage in urban Poland has become a gateway for the building of open society and inspiring civic engagement in both the late-Communist era and today.

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No more Arabian Nights at the Yellow River: The End of Yinchuan's Image-Building Strategy as China's Flagship Muslim City[1]

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China has been experiencing an unprecedented urbanisation wave over the last few decades, which has also led to so-called lower-tier cities in inland regions undergoing rapid development and competing for recognition. The city of Yinchuan, capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in the country's north-western periphery and home to the Hui people, a minority distinguishable from the Han majority only by their Islamic faith, had increasingly been developed as China's 'flagship Muslim city' in recent years. Arabian-style architecture, road signs in Arabic script and a 'Hui Culture Park' were constructed to display state-sanctioned Islamic imagery, foster tourism and attract trade with Middle Eastern countries. Although considered much less politically sensitive than the far-western Xinjiang region with its Turkic Uyghur minority and close transnational links to Central Asia, in the context of China's recent strategy to 'sinicise religions', Yinchuan's conspicuous Islamic imagery has largely been removed from urban space. Drawing on observations from three field visits to the city in January 2017, October 2018 and March 2019, this article traces Yinchuan's Islamic image-building strategy as well as its abrupt end, as reflected by transformations of urban space and changes in official narratives.
Keywords: China, Yinchuan, Islam, minorities, image-building, theme park.

Introduction

China has been experiencing an unprecedented urbanisation wave over the last few decades, which has barely left any part of the country untouched. Away from the well-known coastal metropolises, so-called 3rd and lower tier cities in inland regions are also undergoing rapid development and competing for domestic and international recognition.

One such city is Yinchuan, capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, one of China's smallest provincial-level units. Ningxia is situated in the country's north-western periphery, an area which has traditionally been perceived as a poor, underdeveloped and desolate frontier space. The region around Yinchuan has however long been an agricultural oasis sustained by the Yellow River, itself a mythological source of Chinese identity. Since 1958, Ningxia has been officially designated as the home of the Hui people, a minority distinguishable from the Han majority only by their Islamic faith. Although the Hui make up just over one third of Ningxia's population, the region has a special political significance to the Chinese state both with regard to domestic stability and international trade.

Considered much less politically sensitive than the far-western Xinjiang region with its Turkic Uyghur minority and close transnational links to Central Asia, Yinchuan had increasingly been developed as China's flagship Muslim city in recent years. Arabian-style architecture, road signs in Arabic script and a 'Hui Culture Park' were constructed to display state-sanctioned Islamic imagery, foster tourism and attract trade with Middle Eastern countries.

This strategy had however become increasingly at odds with negative portrayals of Islam in both international and Chinese domestic discourses. In the context of China's recent crackdown on Muslim minorities and Islamic identity in Xinjiang, Yinchuan's conspicuous

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[1] I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for *Urbanities* for their constructive feedback and criticism.

Arabian-style imagery has largely been removed from urban space since late 2017. Drawing on observations from three field visits to the city and its 'Hui Culture Park' in January 2017, October 2018 and March 2019, this article traces Yinchuan's image-building strategy as China's 'flagship Muslim city' as well as its abrupt end, as reflected by transformations of urban space and official narratives.

Geographical Setting and Historical Background

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, situated in China's semi-arid Northwest, was historically long part of a contact zone between agrarian civilisation and nomadic tribal land. Ningxia's economic and cultural centre is the area around its capital Yinchuan in the North of the region. The Yinchuan plain is an oasis sustained by the Yellow River to its East and the Helan mountains to its North, which protect it from desertification. Military forts and defence structures against nomadic tribes were built in Ningxia as early as China's first imperial dynasty, the Qin (221-206 BC). Irrigation canals were dug to cultivate agriculture and sustain these forts. Today, Yinchuan is one of the few Chinese cities still using its ancient irrigation system, and the city has become known under the slogan 'lake city on the frontier' (Xu 2015: 2; 9; 18).

The region's culturally most distinct period came between 1038 and 1227 AD when it was under the rule of the Tangut Western Xia *Xixia* dynasty, one of several regional powers competing with the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD) in China's heartland. Present-day Yinchuan used to be the site of the Xixia capital Xingqing. A massive complex of imperial Xixia tombs located to its West in the eastern slopes of the Helan mountains remain one of Yinchuan's major cultural relics up to this day, and local museums proudly display texts written in Xixia characters, unintelligible to anyone but a few specialists. The Tanguts were defeated by the Mongols in 1227 AD, and after several name changes, the region became known as the 'pacified' or 'tranquil' *Xia* (Ningxia's literal name) (Xu 2015: 13). Today, two urban districts of Yinchuan are named Xingqing and Xixia respectively — the once independent Xixia empire has long been incorporated into Chinese historiography and Yinchuan's spatial identity. During subsequent centuries, Ningxia, now again largely peripheral to Chinese history, was settled by descendants of Arab and Persian traders who introduced Islam to the region.

The Hui Minority

Ningxia has been labelled an 'autonomous region' for the Hui minority since 1958, forming the smallest of five such provincial-level units for ethnic minorities in China today. As a result of an ethnic classification project conducted in the 1950s, the Hui are one of 56 state-recognised ethnic groups *minzu* 民族 in the People's Republic of China today (Zang 2015: 11). The Han majority (making up ca. 92% of the population) and the 55 minority groups are officially equal by law, although the government's conception of the Chinese nation is driven by the Confucian notion of *ronghe* 融合, which assumes the eventual acculturation and assimilation of minority groups into Han society (Zang 2015: 28). While the Chinese state is sponsoring the preservation of minority cultures, this only applies to certain apolitical and non-threatening forms of culture,

such as song and dance, which are often used as a way to display unity and present the image of China as a 'harmonious society' (Zang 2015: 66ff.).

The Hui are one of ten recognised Muslim minorities, and the only one who speak Chinese as their mother tongue. The Hui descend from Arab and Persian immigrants of the Tang (618-907 AD) and Yuan (1279-1368 AD) dynasties who intermarried with Chinese women. Hui people, who are phenotypically not distinguishable from the majority Han, can be found virtually everywhere in the country. In fact, the term *Hui* used to denote *all* Muslims, including Han converts to Islam, before the People's Republic's *minzu* classification system was established (Gladney 1996: 27; Lipman 1997: xxii-xxiii). As such, Hui as a *minzu* category is an umbrella term for a large variety of sinicised Muslim communities rather than a denotation of one homogeneous group — in fact even secular Hui communities exist in some parts of the country (Gladney 1996: 262ff.).

Religion does however play a defining part for Hui communities in Ningxia: 'Hui identity in the northwest is inseparably identified with an Islamic tradition handed down to them by their Muslim ancestors. It is more than an ethnic identity; it is ethnoreligious, in that Islam is intimately tied to the northwest Hui's self-understanding' (Gladney 1996: 118). Indeed, in a study by Gustafsson and Ding (2014), almost all 2,289 Hui respondents from various regions in Ningxia stated that they were religious — with just 239 individuals not answering the question, but nobody declaring themselves to be non-religious (2014: 974). As a Hui Communist Party member (whose party affiliation prevents him from attending mosque) told me, even Hui not practicing Islam generally abstain from eating pork. This is reflected in the ubiquitous green and white 'halal' *qingzhen* 清真 label[2] found on front doors of the majority of Yinchuan's restaurants, as well as on many products in supermarkets. Indeed, being Muslim and belonging to the Hui *minzu* is often not distinguished in everyday conceptualisations. In a conversation with acquaintances (all Han) over the Spring Festival in 2017, it was explained to me that because of their Islamic faith, Hui people do not celebrate the Chinese New Year. When I told them that one of my Yinchuan friends, a Hui, was currently at his grandfather's house performing traditional Confucian New Year rituals, I was met with reactions ranging from scepticism to complete disbelief. Later this friend of mine explained to me that his father was a Ningxia Han, and his mother a secular Hui from Shanghai — which meant that although he grew up in Yinchuan as a Hui, nobody in his family was Muslim, making his identity a rare exception in Ningxia.[3] Stroup (2017: 205) notes, however, that Hui communities who have recently migrated to Yinchuan are increasingly starting to celebrate Chinese New Year,

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[2] In the context of food, the Arabic word 'halal' can be used as a translation of the Chinese term *qingzhen*. However, as Gladney argues, the concept of *qingzhen* actually goes beyond the meaning of the term 'halal'. Its notions of 'purity' *qing* and 'truth' *zhen* are not only related to ritually prepared food, but more generally to moral purity and 'the authenticity of ethnic ancestry, lifestyle, and heritage'. As such, the concept is central to the Hui's ethnoreligious identity (Gladney 1996: 13ff.)

[3] In inter-ethnic marriages, parents can decide the ethnicity of their children (Zang 2015: 18). In the case of my friend, it is slightly unusual that he received the *minzu* status of his mother.

suggesting that these clear-cut assumptions on group behaviour are becoming blurred in the context of urbanisation.

In the mid-19th century the Northwest of China saw several violent conflicts, often only appearing in history books under the label 'Muslim rebellions'. These conflicts rarely had clear-cut front lines, as Islam in Northwest China existed in many forms, ranging from various fundamentalist teachings to very sinicised and assimilated factions (Gladney 1996: 61). As Lipman argues, Han and other outside observers often falsely perceived Muslims as being unified, leading to stereotypical conceptions such as the image of the 'violent Muslim' which suggest a homogeneity that never existed (1997: 215).

Religious practices were stifled during Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976), with mosques in the whole country largely closed down or destroyed. But China's reform era initiated in December 1978 quickly led to a revival of religious life in the 1980s: Hui Muslims were allowed to rebuild mosques, print Islamic publications, organise *hajj* pilgrimages to Mecca and reinstate Islamic education (Dillon 1999: 167ff.).

Yinchuan's Urbanisation Development and City Image-Building Strategies
The reform and opening up period did not only lead to a new religious revival in Ningxia, but also to an unprecedented surge in urbanisation in the region. Yinchuan was showcased in a 1984 article of the Chinese Communist Party's official German language publication *Beijing Rundschau* as a rapidly modernizing and industrializing city of 400,000 inhabitants, which was completely unrecognizable to an 86-year old Muslim returnee who reportedly had left it 35 years earlier, just before the Communist victory in 1949, when Yinchuan had only 27,000 residents (Cui 1984: 28). It has been another 35 years since the publication of this article, and according to official statistics Yinchuan's population has meanwhile risen to 1.4 million inhabitants in its three urban districts, and to a total of 2.2 million inhabitants within its total administrative area (Chen et al. eds 2017: 102). The enlarging of Yinchuan's urban jurisdiction to include rural counties is a result of the 'Large Yinchuan' strategy in 2002, a reaction to the 'Western Development Strategy' fostered by the Central Government since the year 2000 in order to combat growing regional disparities between China's heartland and its western peripheries (Wang et al. 2017: 88). Urbanisation has been viewed as the solution to the problem of unequal development throughout the country, and Yinchuan's spatial expansion and attempts to rapidly urbanise even small county towns by resettling peasants into high-rise buildings are manifestations of this approach. Yinchuan is also no exception to China's nationwide trend of so-called third- and lower-tier cities emulating spatial forms and international appearances of flourishing coastal metropolises such as Shanghai and Guangzhou by building skyscrapers, monumental government buildings and oversized 'Central Business Districts' (CBDs) (Shepard 2015: 134f.). Under market conditions, cities in China are increasingly employing 'image engineering' strategies as attempts to 'attract domestic and international capital, bolster the loyalty and civic pride of their residents, and promote their relatively leading roles in national economic development' (Cartier and Tomba 2012: 33; see also Grazer-Bideau 2018: 261).

Yinchuan, trying to shake off widely held stereotypes of poverty and backwardness, has also been using such image-building strategies in an attempt to find its modern identity.

In fact, the city has long been suffering from an image problem — stereotypes about its lack of development and backwardness compared to the eastern part of the nation are abundant, and Yinchuan residents are very much aware of them. For instance, one of the respondents of a non-representative online survey (n=30) I conducted in 2017 among Yinchuan residents claimed that outsiders considered Yinchuan people to be 'extremely poor, living in the desert and riding camels'. Others stressed negative connotations connected to the presence of the Muslim Hui minority.

As the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Hui culture would seem to be an obvious element within the local image-building process of Yinchuan. However, as the following quote aptly demonstrates, the Hui constitute somewhat of a problem for Chinese minority policies:

> 'The Hui are a *minzu* which is good at doing business, over the long flow of history they have gradually lost the cultural characteristics of the Arabian lands, the assimilation to Han culture got gradually stronger. Especially compared to those ethnic minorities of Inner Mongolia, Tibet and so on who are good at singing and dancing, the Hui lack the rich historical sediment in terms of music, song and dance, the development of the Hui's music, dances etc. is lagging quite far behind' (Duan 2011: 118).

Since the 1980s, the image of minorities as objects of admiration has been fostered by the state, and ethnic tourism has been identified as a means to boost local economies as well as strengthen China's image as a multicultural society (Zang 2015: 37). Cultural consumption and commodification went along with an 'exoticisation and sexualisation of minority representations' (Zang 2015: 38). For the latter, the term 'internal orientalism' has been coined in a study by Louisa Schein (1997) on ethnic tourism to minority areas in southwestern Yunnan province. Schein's argument is based on Edward Said's 1978 well-known concept of 'orientalism.' Said's *Orientalism* describes the discursive process within the Western world of constructing the image of the so-called Orient as an inherently different and inferior *Other*, which stands in contrast to Western rationality, and which used to implicitly legitimise Western imperialism.[4] Schein then adds the adjective 'internal' in order to apply it to the domestic Chinese context and thus 'describe a relation between imaging and cultural/political domination that takes place inter-ethnically within China' (Schein 1997: 73). Similar practices of internal orientalism have also been identified within Europe, where Mediterranean societies in particular have been essentialised within anthropological works (for a critical analysis, see, e.g., Pardo and Prato 2011: 4ff.).

However, marketable items such as songs, dances and colourful clothing are at best secondary features of Hui identity, which is after all defined by their Islamic faith. Yang (2008)

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[4] For a more in-depth discussion on legitimacy, particularly regarding policies affecting minority cultures, see e.g. Pardo and Prato 2019.

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views Hui culture as a 'brand', which he criticises as not being well marketed, lacking for instance 'premium leisure tourism goods'. He advocates for marketing slogans that describe Yinchuan as a 'mysterious Muslim metropolis' (Yang 2008: 129) — an attempt which could be considered exoticisation and *Othering* — though it is interesting to take into account that the author is of Hui ethnicity himself.

When I asked about the relation between the Hui and Islam, I did not get a uniform response in my 2017 survey; some respondents stressed the difference between Hui culture and Islam as an international religion, others highlighted that the Hui had assimilated to Chinese culture, while others still argued that the Hui are not able to represent all of Islam, as they are not the only Muslim minority in China. Some respondents also distinguished the Hui from Islamic terrorism, with one respondent suggesting the city of Yinchuan should stress the ethnic aspect of the Hui more than Islam as a religion, which he viewed negatively. On the other end of the spectrum, another (Han!) respondent disagreed with the term 'Hui culture' and advocated for an emphasis of Islam, despite that being 'a bit sensitive as a result of the problem of extremist groups'. These ambivalent views ended up being reflected in Yinchuan's adoption and subsequent rejection of using Islam as an image-building strategy. The city branded itself as China's 'flagship Muslim city' in order to foster trade with Islamic countries, but this policy was abandoned around a decade later in 2018, when national policies to 'sinicise religions', first conceptualised by Xi Jinping in 2015, were starting to be implemented (Gan 2018: n.p.).

Yinchuan's Islam Strategy until 2018
This change in strategy was reflected by the fate of the nation's only 'China Hui Culture Park *Zhonghua Huixiang wenhua yuan* 中华回乡文化园', situated in fast urbanizing Yongning county, a forty minutes-drive from Yinchuan's centre but still within the city's administrative boundaries. The park, a mixture between theme park and museum, featured a distinct entrance gate modelled after India's Taj Mahal. When I first arrived there over the Spring Festival in 2017, hundreds of red lanterns celebrating the (Han Chinese) New Year were placed on the entrance building just as everywhere else in the park. An oddly shaped sculpture in the form of an oversized rooster, as well as two hands forming a handshake accompanied by the inscription 'Hui and Han are one family *Hui Han yi jiaqin* 回汉一家亲' greeted the New Year on the large empty square before the entrance. The entrance was free during the holiday as long as one subscribed to the park's official WeChat social media account.[5] Once inside the park, the group I was with made our way through a tunnel of even more red lanterns until we arrived at the temporary Hui museum. Unlike the more comprehensive *Ningxia Museum* in Yinchuan's civic centre which featured a large exhibition on Hui Muslim culture including dioramas with life-sized puppets, this temporary exhibition was mostly displaying maps detailing the migration routes of the Hui people's ancestors from the Middle East as well as information on Hui customs and Islamic practices. A new museum, which just like the *Ningxia Museum* had been shaped to

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[5] This WeChat media feed provided me with frequent updates on activities in the park over the following two years, which reflected the changing political climate this locality was soon to be affected by.

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look like the character *Hui* 回 from a bird's eye perspective, was still undergoing renovations.[6] Nearby, dozens of small vending stalls formed a food street decorated with various flags of the world and offering specialties from all around the country. Our group made its way through the dense holiday crowd towards a temporary stage hosting New Year performances, which was located next to a large building featuring the English words 'Arabian Nights' and the Chinese inscription 'Dream of the Hui — One Thousand and One Nights *menghui·yi qian ling yi ye* 梦回·一千零一夜', with the first stroke of the character *ye* 夜 for 'night' taking the shape of a crescent. In a bizarre way this inscription combines Luisa Schein's 'internal orientalism' with Edward Said's original concept of orientalism, as it manages to relate both to the Hui and an imagined mystical Arabia at the same time. In fact, the whole park's underlying imagery appeared to be a mixture between undistinguished Indian, Arabian and Turkic elements forming a diffuse notion of the Middle East,[7] all blended into the omnipresent Chinese roosters and red lanterns, while international flags and assorted cuisines set a carnivalesque backdrop. Meanwhile we had removed our shoes and joined other tourists happily taking pictures inside the largest structure of the park, an Arabian-style mosque. Virtually everyone in the mosque seemed to be of Han ethnicity, with just the attendants at the entrance wearing the white cap typical for Hui men. I may have been the only one among my group (a foreigner among young middle class Yinchuaners) who felt slightly uneasy with this spectacle, as it lacked any religious atmosphere and appeared to disregard the people whose culture was supposedly on display. Haddad-Fonda (2016), who had visited the park in August 2015, reports an experience similar to mine, except that he apparently visited on a less crowded day than I did:

> 'In the corner is a panel explaining how Muslims pray, but one gets the sense that no Muslim has ever actually prayed inside. Instead, the only thing happening during my visit was an animated contest to see which of three tourists could best photograph the tiled dome with a selfie stick. It was a sterile, empty building, and no tourist spent more than a few minutes inside before wandering back into the courtyard' (Haddad-Fonda 2016: n.p.).

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[6] These renovations had been going on since 2015 (Haddad-Fonda 2016: n.p.), and were eventually never completed.

[7] The concept of the Middle East is also used in the Chinese language (*zhongdong* 中东), even though from the Chinese geographical point of view it should technically be the 'Middle West' — an example of the dominant influence of Eurocentric conceptions of space.

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Figure 1: The Hui Culture Park decorated for Spring Festival 2017 — by M. Malzer

Two years later, when the park was facing imminent closure, one of the Hui attendants confirmed to me that the mosque had indeed never been used for prayer.

After exiting the park, we turned South towards what was supposed to be China's 'First Hui Street'. With the exception of one lonely shop selling Hui clothing at its southern end, the whole street, which takes around 15 minutes to walk through, was composed of empty buildings, with no trace of activity.[8] At the southern end of the street lies the historic *Na jiahu* 纳家户 mosque, built in 1524 and architecturally so firmly Chinese that its function is not easily recognisable to an outsider. Hardly any of the Hui Park's visitors had made it to this historically much more significant building. Gladney (1996: 117ff.) visited *Na* Homestead several times from 1983 onwards, and reports religious revitalisation and even a potential 'fundamentalist revival' at the locality. He describes a closed community — most villagers share the surname *Na* — with flourishing religious life, local identity, increasing conservatism and isolationist tendencies. This was in the 1980s, at a time when the village was recovering from the Cultural Revolution, during which the famous mosque had been turned into a ball-bearing factory and some villagers had been forced to raise pigs (Gladney 1996: 136). It is hard to imagine that this location could be the site of any kind of fundamentalist revival today. While Gladney described Na Homestead as somewhat isolated, reachable only via a dirt road three kilometres off the highway (1996: 199), it had meanwhile been 'gifted' with a large tourism site right outside its doors, which opened this locality up to the world. Of course, the Hui Culture Park was a colourful, disneyfied space (compare also Krase 2009: 32), in which religious activities were

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[8] Haddad-Fonda (2016: n.p.) reports it to have been abandoned in August 2015 as well. According to him, the street used to house 179 shops and restaurants. A conversation with a local resident in March 2019 confirmed that the planners of the street had overestimated tourist numbers, and it had never been successful even when the park was still regularly visited.

conspicuously absent. The park seemed to have been constructed to showcase a government-sponsored version of domesticated Islam, while at the same time being part of China's wider strategy to play the 'Islamic card' (Drewes 2013: 65) and brand Yinchuan as a 'flagship' Muslim city in order to reach out to the Arab world and strengthen economic trade links.

When I first arrived in Yinchuan in January 2017, all street signs throughout the city had recently been altered to feature Arabic script next to the Chinese characters, even though the potential audience was limited; while some Hui Muslims learn Arabic, none of them speak it as their mother tongue. The city had however been hosting large China-Arab Expos in 2013 and 2015 and would host another one in September 2017. These economic trade fairs were direct attempts at attracting foreign investment, and urban infrastructure had accordingly been ornamented with cultural markers branding the city as a gateway to the Middle East.

Yinchuan's China-Arab Axis *Zhong-A zhi zhou* 中阿之轴 used to be the most direct attempt aimed at symbolizing these transnational relations with the Arab world. Built in 2016, the axis is 2.1 km long and 90 meters wide, situated in Yinchuan's yet-to-be completed Central Business District north of its administrative centre and surrounded by wide and mostly empty streets with barely any people to be seen. Until early 2018, various Chinese and Islamic architectural elements used to be symmetrically arranged along its broad passage, the latter including crescents and poles in the style of minarets. Both Chinese and Arabic styles were presented on a level playing field, symbolizing how the foundation for Chinese and Arab relations were officially supposed to be structured. Similar to the conflated styles in the Hui Culture Park, the vagueness of architectural forms indicated an openness to the Islamic world beyond specific nation states. The axis was displaying national flags of a broad variety of Muslim majority countries. A few years earlier, Duan (2011) had indeed listed not only the Arab league, but also culturally very dissimilar countries like Turkey, Iran and Malaysia as potential targets of Ningxia's Opening Up strategy (2011: 134f.). This leaves the axis to be best interpreted as the spatial manifestation of an open declaration of intent to get closer to an imagined Arabia, and not a reflection of any existing or historical relations.

The above mentioned 'Ningxia Inland Opening Up and Economic Development Strategy', which includes strengthening relations with the Islamic world, can be traced back to a State Council decision from 2008 (Duan 2011: 101). Ho (2013) sees this to a reaction to the 2008 global financial crisis, which saw China's trade with developed countries fall and therefore led it to reach out to new markets (2013b: 214). However, while the more recent developments in this regard may have started in 2008, Yinchuan's role in being a gateway to Arab countries can be traced back to the very early days of China's reform and opening up policy.

Drewes (2013) outlines the history of China-Arab relations since the 1980s, recording instances of China playing what she calls the 'Islamic card' by conducting 'Islamic diplomacy' via official *haji* pilgrimages for Hui Muslims, inviting tourism to Chinese Islamic sights for foreign official delegations, providing official support for Islamic studies and of course initiating trade conferences to improve economic ties with Middle Eastern countries (2013: 65ff.). Gladney links the reconstruction of Yinchuan's Nanguan 南关 Mosque in 1981, the first to use Arabian architectural elements, to the same strategy (1996: 167). In 1988, even plans for

Yinchuan becoming the country's first Islamic Special Economic Zone (SEZ) were proposed, but never carried out (Drewes 2013: 72).

Earlier strategies for Sino-Arab relations not only included Ningxia, but also the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in the Far West of China, home to more than half of China's Muslim population, who are culturally and ethnically much further distinct than the Hui (Drewes 2013: 70). However, with Xinjiang having long been politically less stable and constituting a more sensitive case for the Chinese government, Ningxia was perceived as a safer choice. Duan (2011) makes the same argument, seeing Xinjiang's 'stability problems' as negatively influencing its development, which left the door open for Ningxia being at the 'forefront' of opening up to the Islamic world (2011: 356).

Within the larger framework of revitalizing the historic Silk Road under China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, Yinchuan was thus supposed to become the centre for trade with the Middle East, specifically catering to a market for Muslim products (Ho 2013a: 101). In 2012, a four km² 'comprehensive bonded zone' was established in Yinchuan, a trade area which was framed towards facilitating relations with the Arab world (Drewes 2016: 327). The centre of 'halal' *qingzhen* 清真 food and other Muslim products was suggested to be situated in Yinchuan, along with creative industry, Islamic publications, Arabic language software, etc. (Duan 2011: 115). A *qingzhen* food industrial zone had indeed already been established in Yinchuan in 2003 (Erie 2014: 549), and cooperation with halal certification organisations in Malaysia and Thailand were established to guarantee proper supervision of food production (Ho 2013a: 102). Moreover, Sino-Arab student exchanges and cultural projects were rapidly expanded (Armijo 2013: 233ff.), and in early 2016 U.A.E. airline *Emirates* started to connect regularly Dubai and Yinchuan with direct flights (Haddad-Fonda 2016: n.p.).[9]

Despite all the rhetoric surrounding business, Ningxia's actual trade with Arab countries never seemed to have taken off. Consulting import/export figures taken from the 2017 *Ningxia Statistical Yearbook* show the strongest trade relations in 2016 to have been with the United States, Korea and Japan — the table only lists two predominantly Muslim countries (Malaysia and Indonesia, both with comparatively low numbers) and does not provide data for any Middle Eastern Country (Jia et al. 2017: 480). Data regarding foreign investments appears to be incomplete but, in any case, does not show significant funds from Arab countries (Jia et al. 2017: 481), suggesting that at least the economic part of the strategy cannot have been particularly successful. Drewes (2013) finds some limited Arab investment, though she reports substantial donations by Arab sponsors specifically to religious projects, such as renovating mosques and Islamic schools (2013: 71). In fact, religious life of Ningxia Hui was seen to be increasingly influenced by contact with the outside Islamic world in recent years, with some groups showing interest in more conservative teachings (Drewes 2016: 326). These trends were clearly not the original intentions of the Chinese government.

Even before the worldwide discourse on Islam changed with September 11th 2001, and well before unrests in Xinjiang in 2009 changed perceptions on Islam within China, Dillon

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[9] According to the website flightmapper.net these Emirates flights stopped operating in November 2018. As of March 2019, Sichuan Airlines is still operating some flights between Dubai and Yinchuan.

(1999) saw China's playing the 'Islamic card' as an 'Islamic Gamble', and argued that Chinese leaders needed to find a balance between 'exploit[ing] Islamic sentiment for trade and investment' and not 'encouraging Uyghur and Hui identity to the point at which they will have to concede genuine political autonomy' (Dillon 1999: 180). The latter part of Dillon's statement seems somewhat far-fetched in the case of Ningxia. Situations in Xinjiang and Ningxia are vastly different and, unlike Uyghurs, Hui Muslims are, as Lipman (1997: 226) stresses on multiple occasions, inherently Chinese in their identity and generally not connected to any secessionist movements.

Still, given that Islam serves as the common denominator for constructing ethnoreligious identities, any state policy towards Islam in Ningxia was likely to have spill-over effects going beyond the region, and vice versa. Erie (2014) argues that although 'turmoil in Xinjiang had long predated the People's Republic of China or the 9/11 conception of 'terrorism', changing state policy towards Islam following 2001 has also been impacting Hui in Ningxia (2014: 555).

From the Chinese government's point of view, any state policy towards Islam thus would have to balance constantly between domestic stability (downplay religion) and international image-building (display religion), to avoid domestic power challenges on the one hand, and negative images abroad on the other.

The End of Yinchuan's Islam Strategy in 2018
Starting in summer 2017, reports of large-scale internments of Muslims (mostly Uyghur, but also Kazaks and other Central Asian minorities) in China's far western Xinjiang region have been emerging, and evidence of 'the country's most intense campaign of coercive social re-engineering since the Cultural Revolution' has since been collected (Zenz 2018: 23). Surveillance and policing of urban spaces in Xinjiang have become virtually universal in the region. Despite international protests, the 'sinicisation of religions' strategy has been continued and is affecting both Christian and Muslim communities in other parts of China as well (Gan 2019: n.p.). Even though Ningxia signed an 'anti-terrorism cooperation' with Xinjiang in late 2018 in order to learn from Xinjiang's 'experiences in promoting social stability' (Ji 2018: n.p.), Ningxia Hui have not faced similar repressions as Xinjiang Uyghurs as of early 2019. Yinchuan's image-building strategy as China's 'flagship Muslim city' has, however, been abruptly ended, as the following ethnographic report illustrates.

In late 2017, all street signs in Yinchuan were replaced by versions without Arabic script and Arabian-style architecture was seldomly shown on official media. Fears of 'Islamization' tendencies, for instance through the alleged spread of halal *qingzhen* food, were increasingly discussed online, as an article by the CCP's English language publication *Global Times* reported (Liu Xin 2017). In March 2018, the Arabic script was removed from all *qingzhen* food labels (Cao 2019: n.p.), Middle Eastern-style architectural ornaments were removed from public space and no more new Arabian-style mosques were approved by the urban planning bureau (though existing ones are as of yet still untouched). The China-Arab Axis replaced its large crescents with Chinese jade discs, removed all foreign national flags, and left only the Chinese pavilions unaltered (Gan 2018: n.p.). The space, which had never had a function beyond the

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representational aspect, lost its initial symbolic function and has become a decontextualised and essentially meaningless.

Figure 2: The remains of the China-Arab Axis in Yinchuan's Central Business District, October 2018 — this oversized Chinese jade coin used to be an Islamic crescent — by M. Malzer

The WeChat social media account of the Hui Culture park, which had regularly been advertising events with colourful pictures of its mosque and Arabic ornamentations, slowly started to post different content after the Spring Festival celebrations in 2018, which also appears to be last time a major event was held at the park. Content posted after March 2018 largely avoids showing any of the parks Arabian-style buildings, and focuses on different tourism aspects of Ningxia instead. On 17th August 2018, the park was silently renamed 'Ningxia Folk Customs Park *Ningxia chuan minsu yuan* 宁夏川民俗园' on its Wechat feed, dropping references to both the Hui minority and to the Chinese nation *zhonghua* 中华[10] from its official name. While the old name had featured the Chinese nation right next to the Hui culture, the new name is nondescript and reduces the park to a local attraction. In the following, the park's Wechat feed only sporadically continued posting local news items, for instance regarding the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. A visit to the park in late October 2018 revealed that the park was barely being maintained anymore. Hardly any people were to be seen, the food street was gone, all but one shop (whose owner announced he would leave the next day) and all buildings except the mosque and the museum were closed. Most strikingly, all Arabic script and most references to the park's previous name had been covered with tape, though this was done hastily and sometimes neglected in corners not easily visible to visitors. One building was used as storage for old event decorations (including the large rooster from the Spring Festival 2017), and nobody was around to prevent us from entering this backstage space. The (officially still 'temporary') Hui museum had seen

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[10] *Zhonghua* is a term referring to China in the sense of a nation, it was coined in the early 20th century to construct a larger Chinese identity beyond ethnic (Han, Hui, Manchu) categories (Zang 2015: 20).

what can only be described as a storm of iconoclasm, with large parts of the exhibition torn down or taped over. The story of the Hui minority's origins as well as all references to Islam were now removed, and some texts had even single words or phrases individually plastered over with paper. The exhibition only left a few items unaltered, which did not reference anything related to religion or the Hui's origins.

A follow up visit to the park in March 2019 saw little further change, except that some buildings had started to fall into dereliction — while an entrance fee was still charged, the visit felt like an exploration of an abandoned place. The park was basically no longer advertised and hardly received any visitors. An elderly park employee at the mosque admitted to me that the park faced imminent closure as it had stopped receiving government funding in early 2018. By March 2019, wages for park employees had not been paid for months, and visitor numbers were so low that entrance fee revenues no longer covered the electricity bills. Another informant at nearby historic *Na jiahu* mosque — which unlike the mosque in the park is actually frequented for prayer — complained about the waste of money which had been invested into the now largely abandoned park, and the misunderstandings within society with which his religion was currently confronted.

The *Ningxia Museum* in Yinchuan's centre temporarily closed in October 2018 until further notice, officially for maintenance work on fire safety and protection of cultural artefacts. This closure happened just nine days before the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Autonomous Region, which was celebrated on red propaganda posters everywhere in the city (though official ceremonies had already been held in advance). Since such an anniversary would presumably be an occasion when the largest museum in the region could be expected to be hosting special events rather than facing maintenance work, the reason for closure did not seem convincing. It was thus of little surprise that, when I visited the reopened museum in March 2019, the exhibition on Hui culture and Islam had been fully removed. Unlike the Hui park, the museum had seen a full restructuring of its exhibitions, the most prominent one now depicting Ningxia's role during the Communist Revolution. The Hui were only referenced briefly towards the end of the remodelled exhibition on the historic *Xixia* culture. A model of the Chinese-style *Najia hu* mosque is accompanied by a brief description of its architectural history. Another text under the title *minzu ronghe* 民族融合 (translated as 'national unity'[11] by the curators, though the term *ronghe* carries the Confucian notion of assimilation, as described above) mentions the Hui as just one *minzu* group which had developed the region alongside Han, Manchu and Mongolian people. Given that just 0.84% of Ningxia's population is of neither Han nor Hui ethnicity (Jia et al. 2017: 103), the sudden inclusion of previously rarely mentioned Manchu and Mongol groups as equal partners within the region's history, appears to be an obvious attempt at reframing the identity of the Hui Autonomous Region. This is also highlighted by a name change for one of Yinchuan's rivers, *Aiyi* 艾依, which was deemed to sound too similar

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[11] The term *minzu* has been variously translated as 'nation' or 'ethnic group'. In older official Chinese English-language publications the 55 minorities would usually be called 'national minorities', while more recently the term 'ethnic' has become more common — presumably because it has been realized that 'nation' carries implicit connotations of statehood.

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to the Arabic female name *Ayishah*. The river is now named *Diannong* 典农, an ancient Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD) name for Yinchuan, in order to 'better reflect Chinese culture' (Liu Caiyu 2018).

'Halal Food and Wine': The Remains of Yinchuan's Muslim Identity
While Yinchuan had been connected to the idea of a 'showcase Muslim city' since the 1980s, this concept had never been uncontroversial even before the strategy was cancelled. Wu (2016) argues that Middle Eastern elements within architecture in Yinchuan's public space were disregarding local conditions: while Hui culture could be considered the 'leading culture' in Yinchuan, Han residents make up the majority of the population after all. She argues that 'Yellow River culture' and Western Xia culture constitute Yinchuan's local characteristics, whereas Islamic culture is an 'outside culture' (Wu 2016: 66). In response to this point one might argue that the Tangut Xixia dynasty could also be considered an 'outside' influence, but this fallen kingdom has long found its place within Chinese historiography, and — in an act of retroactive incorporation into the Chinese nation — the historical Tanguts are today even described as an 'ethnic minority'. In contrast, Islam is still perceived as a foreign culture, even though by the time of the Song dynasty — which partly overlapped with the Xixia rule — some Muslims had already been living in China for generations (Lipman 1997: 29). Hui of course did assimilate to Chinese culture, and Islamic architecture — such as *Na jiahu* mosque — did adopt Chinese architectural styles, though many of these mosques were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (Gan 2018: n.p.). How far the Arabic elements introduced since the 1980s when many mosques were rebuilt are welcomed by Hui themselves is a different question. A study by Fan (2013) on Arabian-style buildings in the eastern Chinese city of Quanzhou, which also had been built to attract foreign capital, finds that locals did not feel these styles had anything to do with them, and did not wish to be represented by 'other people' (2013: 346f.). Gladney (1996: 167) also reports that *Na jiahu* villagers saw Yinchuan's centrally located Nanguan mosque, which at the time had been reconstructed in Arabian style, in a critical light. A Hui Park employee I asked about whether he approved of the style of the park's mosque evaded the question by commenting the building produced a 'nice echo'. But Hui in Ningxia are not a homogeneous group, and according to Stroup (cited in Gan 2018), certain reformist schools do not intend to go back to Chinese-style mosques, seeing Arabian styles as a way to connect to the larger Islamic world. It is of course exactly these transnational religious connections which are perceived as a threat to CCP rule.

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Figure 3: Impressions from the Hui Park, now no longer maintained. Arabic script and references to Islam are taped over or removed (October 2018 and March 2019) — by M.Malzer

Yinchuan has recently been fostering the development of wineries and wine tourism in the Helan mountains — there were 390 km² of vineyards as of late 2014, and a Ningxia wine has even won the renowned international Decanter award in 2011 (Zhang / Thach 2016: 43). Wine may not fit the image of a Muslim city, but is seen as part of a modern, high-quality, urban lifestyle. Asked which local characteristics the city of Yinchuan should stress more for their image-branding, one respondent to my survey cited '*halal* food and wine' as local specialties in the same sentence. This suggestion reveals the way the 'Muslim city' was always really conceptualised: in a secular, commodifiable manner, in which 'ethnic food' could serve as a local specialty without needing to evoke religion at all. It may therefore be not that surprising that even after the urban iconoclasm against Islamic imagery, the green and white *qingzhen* food labels — in new versions without Arabic script — continue to be ubiquitous in the city.

Conclusion
In an attempt to catch up with developments in the eastern part of the country, the city of Yinchuan in China's long-neglected Northwest had been trying to make use of its local Hui Muslim minority in order to brand itself as China's 'flagship Muslim city' and set up economic

relations with the Middle East. While the origins of this strategy reach back to China's early reform years in the 1980s, its most visible and active phase lasted roughly a decade after 2008. Yinchuan's urban space was adorned with Arabian-style ornaments, and a 'Hui Culture Park' was displaying a colourful theme-park version of state-sanctioned Islam. The strategy, controversial among residents and not particularly effective in reaching its intended goals to attract more international trade with the Islamic world, was eventually deemed to be at odds with Xi Jinping's national policies to 'sinicise religions' that have been increasingly implemented since 2017. While far-western Xinjiang region has seen a massive crackdown on religious and ethnic identities, much more assimilated Ningxia has (so far) been less radically affected. Nevertheless, the city of Yinchuan has experienced a large-scale iconoclasm which removed or altered unwanted ornaments, imagery and narratives throughout urban space. The history of the capital of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region has been rewritten in its museums and spatial monuments at the expense of the Hui minority, whose culture may previously have been instrumentalised in 'orientalist' manner, but who are now increasingly removed from the region's official narrative.

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The Formal, the Semi Formal and the Informal: The Case of Dortmund[1]

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In the spring of 2016, I was asked to participate on a research programme concerning the implementing procedures of a public 'Living Room' for the City of Dortmund in Germany. The project lies on the rehabilitation of vacant buildings within the Nordstadt area, a district with long history of serious space issues and integration matters. As the project itself is inspired by informal procedures of planning, it becomes essential to approach urban planning as a both Top Down and Bottom Up process and to try to comprehend and evaluate the ways formal, semi-formal and informal actors are bounded together through the processes of planning and implementing.
Key words: Informal, formal, urban planning, participation, citizens.

Introduction

A joint seminar on informal Urbanism, between architects and urban planners, initiated by the Goethe Institute and funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, involved two consecutive workshops concerning the city of Dortmund in Germany and the city Athens in Greece.[2] The workshops took place respectively in September and in November of 2015. During these workshops, students from two universities, TU Dortmund and NTU Athens, were asked to reflect on the implications of the informal urban development on both cities and to propose projects inspired by informal procedures of planning. During the discussions that took place, both parties reached this conclusion: Northern and Southern European countries share a different notion of what 'Informal' means when referring to urban space development. Furthermore, several topics and questions were brought to light. Which of the ideas deriving from a project of Informal Urbanism can actually be integrated into the city's plans and what are the difficulties regarding the existing legislative system? Moreover, is it possible to physically plan informality?

The student projects focused mainly on alternative types of living space, emphasizing the need to share, connect and interact through public space. The results of the workshop were

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[1] An earlier version of this article under the title 'The Informal Aspects of the Formal Urban Planning System' was presented during the International Conference 'The Informal and the Formal in Times of Crisis: Ethnographic Insights' that took place in Corinth, Greece, in 2017. The Conference was held by the Department of Social and Educational Policy of the University of the Peloponnese under the aegis of the IUAES Commission on Urban Anthropology, the International Urban Symposium-IUS and the University of the Peloponnese. A later version, under the present title, was discussed at the Seminar on Cities in Flux held in 2018 at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. The present version has been revised and updated by the author, based on the research related to her on-going theoretical thesis.

[2] Both workshops were conducted under the supervision of Constantinos Moraitis and Penny Koutrolikou on behalf of NTUA, of Christa Reicher and Dipl.-Ing. Päivi Kataikko-Grigoleit on behalf of TU Dortmund and of Juliane Stegner and Iris Asimakopoulou on behalf of the Athens Goethe Institute.

followed by further evaluation and additional research on the implementation of the proposals at subsequent stages.

During a second visit to the city of Dortmund in Germany, in 2016, we were asked to research on the implementing procedures of the Living Room Project — one of the 4 student projects that was originally presented during the workshop in September of 2015. A feasibility study of the workshop's proposal was required. Working under real life conditions, it was necessary to re-evaluate the 'informal' and 'formal' urban development as complementary procedures. At the same time, it was important for this research to re-define informal space and its multiple meanings.

Shifting from the Role of the Single Planner towards a Participatory Process of Design

> 'The recognition of the collective right to take part in public life is not
> only a vital human need, but a sine qua non step for the integration of
> national and ethnic minorities in multicultural states.'
>
> (Nimni 2008: 7)

Urbanization has been one of the most striking developments of the 20th century.[3] As contemporary cities transform rapidly into multi-cultural and multi-national spaces of interchange, the urban landscape becomes more and more challenging and controversial. The traditional urban planning system and its inadequate response towards the urban conflict between the homogenous physical space and the heterogeneous non-material space of socio-economic, religious and cultural difference, often leads to unresolved issues of urban growth and development. Large-scale movements of refugees and migrants affect decisively the configuration of the city's landscape, especially during times of political crisis and economic depression. The forced displacement of populations is often associated with phenomena of informal urban development.

Nevertheless spatial 'informality' bears a controversial meaning, depending on the historical and geographical diversity of the places in question. In Southern European countries for example informal processes often provide eligible solutions to unresolved spatial issues that formal planning seems unable to handle. 'Informal' space becomes distinctive of an unsatisfactory legal planning system that fails to arrange suitably the urban environment. But heading towards the North of Europe, informality seems to determine different concepts of

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[3] According to data provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, the urban population of the world has grown rapidly since 1950, having increased from 751 million to 4.2 billion in 2018. Asia, despite being less urbanized than most other regions today, is home to 54% of the world's urban population, followed by Europe and Africa (13% each). Growth in the urban population is driven by overall population increase and by the upward shift in the percentage living in urban areas. Together, these two factors are projected to add 2.5 billion to the world's urban population by 2050, with almost 90% of this growth happening in Asia and Africa. (https://population.un.org/wup/Publications/Files/WUP2018-KeyFacts.pdf, p.2).

space development, mostly associated with both visible and invisible spatial barriers, regarding social isolation, lack of communication and language issues. In these particular cases, formal procedures of planning use the term 'informal' in order to emphasise the need for space to become more creative, by bringing together the different community groups, allowing them to interact and connect culturally through a variety of common activities. Accordingly, a regulatory system that needs to become more 'informal' as in more 'flexible' is indicated, emphasizing the need to include more community groups within its planning procedures.

As urban planner Benjamin Davy (Davy 2012) points out, when it comes to projects of urban renewal, the rearrangement of urban space often has a decisive impact on the economic, social and cultural aspects of the city, by bringing forward policies of inclusion and exclusion. Elaborating on the concept of Western ownership and developing his theory based on the poly-rational approach of planning Davy (2014) suggests that Property Law often picks up different rationalities and different voices. The theory of poly-rational property (Davy 2012) introduces a balance between, on the one hand, a simple dichotomy of private and common property and, on the other hand, a multitude of singular arrangements no one can understand or map (Davy 2014).

With regard to Davy's theory, 'informality' is not necessarily the counterpart of 'formality' but more or less *its emphatic variation.*[4] As previously mentioned, informal space meets a variety of concepts as well as a 'multitude of singular spatial arrangements'. In addition, informal urbanism delineates a state of transition from a previous spatial condition towards a future one, as the city tries to re-define itself through constant change.

Shifting from the role of the single planner towards a participatory design procedure, also engages the need for long term vision projects as well as a broad long-term vision of the planning process itself, as the connecting thread towards any future development.

The Bottom-up Approach

Davy states, 'Planners and other policy makers have to understand the multitude of causes of diverse uses and have to know how policy interventions, in the face of plural rationalities, improve the land' (2012: 59). In facing general phenomena such us globalization and multinationalism, one needs to re-examine the overall impact of formal urban design policies on the rapid transformation of the urban landscape. Especially when it comes to urban matters of such complexity, formal structures initiate a bottom up approach within the planning and implementing process, by engaging citizens to participate actively in the decision making.

German Cities have long history of incorporating the bottom-up approach to the formal planning. The cities of Berlin and Hanover in the context of the drafting of 'Strategic Plans 2030' (Stadtentwicklungskonzept 2030) have structured a system of 'Dialogue' between

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[4]As Pardo eloquently suggests when referring to the informal sector of the economy in Naples, 'it would be inexcusably reductive to view local entrepreneurialism in terms of the official dichotomy between the formal and the informal, leading to conceptual oxymoron, like black economy or, even, "dual economy"' (Pardo 2018: 64).

citizens, politicians and administrators, with the aim of formulating goals and strategies for their future development **(**Serraos et al. 2017: 10).

Several projects such as the communal urban garden Prinzessinnengärten in Kreuzberg and the reusing of the old airport Tempelhofer in Berlin, as well as the projects of Park Fiction and Plan Bude (https://planbude.de/planbude-planning-shack-english-summary/) and the PLATZ project in the city of Hamburg,[5] emphasise the informal, self-managed participatory character of planning and implementation.

These initiatives have emerged directly from citizens' claim for their 'right to the city'. Fully or partially supported by the formal administration, they seem to have developed successfully, offering a wide range of planning and design tools so that all residents and neighbours can get involved in the planning process (Serraos et al. 2017).

The Case of Dortmund

Dortmund, a former industrial German city, is the administrative, commercial and cultural centre of the eastern Ruhr, currently classified as an important node regarding innovation. The city reflects a well-organized and fully operational planning system provided with a coherent network of public spaces and well-designed building blocks. Nevertheless, heading towards the Nordstadt area, we come across a district with a long history of serious spatial issues and integration matters. The cultural heterogeneity in this particular area seems to generate an apparent conflict between the different community groups, enhancing phenomena such as social isolation, criminality and religious discrimination.

Newcomers as well as the existing minority groups often feel unwelcome because of their different cultural background. At the same time the new inhabitants are reluctant to connect with other community groups, avoiding any kind of interaction with the locals.

In 2015, the City of Dortmund initiated the Projekt 'nordwärts' (https://www.dortmund.de/de/leben_in_dortmund/nordwaerts/start_nordwaerts/index.html), which translates as The 'Northbound' Project. The programme comprises a strategic plan concerning the future development of the City until the year 2025. The plan proposed by the city incorporates an informal approach towards urban space, engaging citizens' participation in various activities. Northbound means 'heading towards the North', so the project itself also involves regenerating the Nordstadt by reconnecting the isolated urban area with the rest of the city.

The Northbound Project was presented to us during the joint seminar in September of 2015. In 2016, I was asked to research on the implementing procedures of the 'Living Room' Project —one of the four student projects that was originally proposed during the joint seminar.

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[5] The four projects situated in Berlin and in Hanover were presented during a Conference on Changing Cities III: Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-economic Dimensions that was held in the island of Syros, in Greece during a special session bearing the title 'Bottom up Planning Initiatives in the Urban Space. A Vehicle for a further Democratization of the Urban Planning Procedure?' organized and chaired by: K. Serraos NTUA.

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The Living Room Project is inspired by informal procedures of planning. Its purpose is to provide citizens and newcomers with the necessary resources by helping them adjust and connect. Its concept lies on the rehabilitation of vacant buildings existing in the contested area of Norstadt, by creating an 'indoor public space' of cultural interchange. The Living Room Project, advocates the creative and spontaneous use of space, supported by informal processes of planning through the assistance of formal structures. Working alongside the Municipality and different Organizations the need to approach urban planning as a both Top Down and Bottom Up process, has become essential to this project. Thus, further evaluation was required regarding the ways formal, semi-formal and informal actors are bounded together through the processes of planning and implementing.

Image 1. The Projekt nordwärts: The plan proposed by the city incorporates an informal approach towards urban space, engaging citizens' participation in various activities (photos by the author, May - June2016)

The Formal, the Semi Formal and the Informal
In this section I discuss various steps in the implementation of projects like the 'Living Room' (Moretti 2017). I have used a present tense narrative to describe some of the 'formal' processes involved. Addressing the need to include more citizens within the planning and the decision-making processes, formal actors 'inform' the citizens and let themselves be 'informed' by them. The Municipality runs an open call for citizens by organizing public and cultural events, participatory design workshops and open discussions about the major topics concerning the City and the future projects.

International Week (28.05 – 05.06.2016) is an important public event that brings together the different minority groups residing in the Nordstadt area; it is organised and funded by the

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City of Dortmund. Emphasizing its informal character, through activities that embrace innovative thinking and the creative use of public space, the festival brings together citizens from all over the city, addressing the need to share and connect. The event takes place alongside NGOs, different associations and local initiatives, who put on display their ongoing projects concerning the City, supporting a variety of concepts related with social welfare issues, cultural issues and integration matters, and so on.

Image 2. International Week (28.05 – 05.06.2016) is an important public event that brings together the different minority groups residing in the Nordstadt area (photo by the author, May 2016).

A participatory workshop is held on 3rd July 2016 by the City of Dortmund regarding the upgrading of Bornstraße avenue, one of the city's most important gateways. The City engages experts and young professionals from different scientific fields, asking them to give their insights on important urban matters. Significant information is gathered very quickly, about the particular area of intervention and new ideas and concepts are proposed. Sharing scientific expertise is also very important to the design process. Important feedback is provided on similar interventions in other cities. During these events the presence of stakeholders and active members of the surrounding neighbourhoods is noticeable. Nevertheless, many community groups who are the actual residents of the areas in question, are excluded.

First, the citizens' feedback for the city of Dortmund takes place on 1st June of 2016. The citizens are given the opportunity for the first time to address their concerns and thoughts directly to the City's representatives. The meeting is held in a Mosque and the projects presented concern future interventions within the Nordstadt area. Although all citizens' groups are included, not many citizens are present upon the City's first call. Very few citizens show up, primarily the ones who have been established within the city for several years. Citizens are reluctant themselves to reach out to formal structures. They do not feel confident enough to come in direct contact with the local authorities and address their problems.

Most frequently many of the minority groups are actually represented by NGOs, by Associations, by different types of organizations, and private Companies, who act as

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intermediaries and become the connecting thread between formal structures and citizens. These organisations act as Semi-formal institutions and actively participate in the planning and implementing process of the different projects occurring throughout the city. Their interventions are short term, or even have a long-term impact on the urban environment. In many cases they affect directly the urban fabric and can determine the new urban features of a city area.

Let us look at the case of the Grünbau, a non-profit organisation and a GmbH company. Andreas Köch originally started this initiative in the 1990s. Being unemployed, he created a concept of work alongside a group of friends. They organised a restoration project of the old Gardens in the city of Dortmund (this is from where the name Grünbau derives). The organization's main purpose is to establish programs that employ citizens with poor or no education. The organization runs many different projects — based on different concepts. The necessary funding often comes either from the City (of Dortmund) or from other Social funding Programs and public Institutions such as the ESF (European Social Fund).

'The Social city program' is one of these funding projects. Its concept is similar to the Living Room Project that was proposed during our workshop and involves the rehabilitation of vacant buildings within the Nordstadt area. In 2016 there were approximately 40 vacant buildings in the district. The program is funded by the City of Dortmund and involves different steps and procedures, such as the *Tracing and Contacting of* the actual owners of the houses in question,[6] as well as fixing up the apartments on behalf of the City once the building is acquired. 'The Social city program' is a long-term project due to expropriation procedures. Once the project is accomplished, housing opportunities are provided, aiming different target groups such as students and artists. This affects strongly the character of the city. The decisions taken regarding the readjustment of urban space and bringing new community groups into the area are part of the collaboration between the Grünbau and the City of Dortmund.

Especially when it comes to dealing with integration matters, intermediaries are very active. Many of the projects they propose, are related to social and welfare issues that involve integration policies, concerning dwelling and housing projects, educational, health care and language matters, family issues, and so on.

All these organizations already operating in Dortmund as independent initiatives, provide their assistance to citizens. But in most cases the intermediaries become antagonistic with each other because of the funding they pursue for their activities. Presenting a strong concept to the funding committees, can provide them with better funding conditions. As a result, their initiatives are not coordinated into a city network, easily traceable and accessible to newcomers.

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[6] House owners are not easy to trace, as they may not reside in Germany. They often rent their apartments of poor condition, for criminal activities such as drugs, prostitution and mafia. For example, a single apartment could be rented to 40 people at the same time at a very high price (*the price can actually reach the cost of €200 for renting just a single bed*). In such cases, the City undertakes the task to put pressure on the owners in order to sell, by threatening to expose their illegal activities. At the same time the City tries to deal with high rates of criminality within the Nordstadt area.

Additionally, citizens' representation seems to be only partially sufficient by these organizations and, as it happens in many cases, the actual residents of the troubled neighbourhoods are not included in many aspects of the planning process itself.
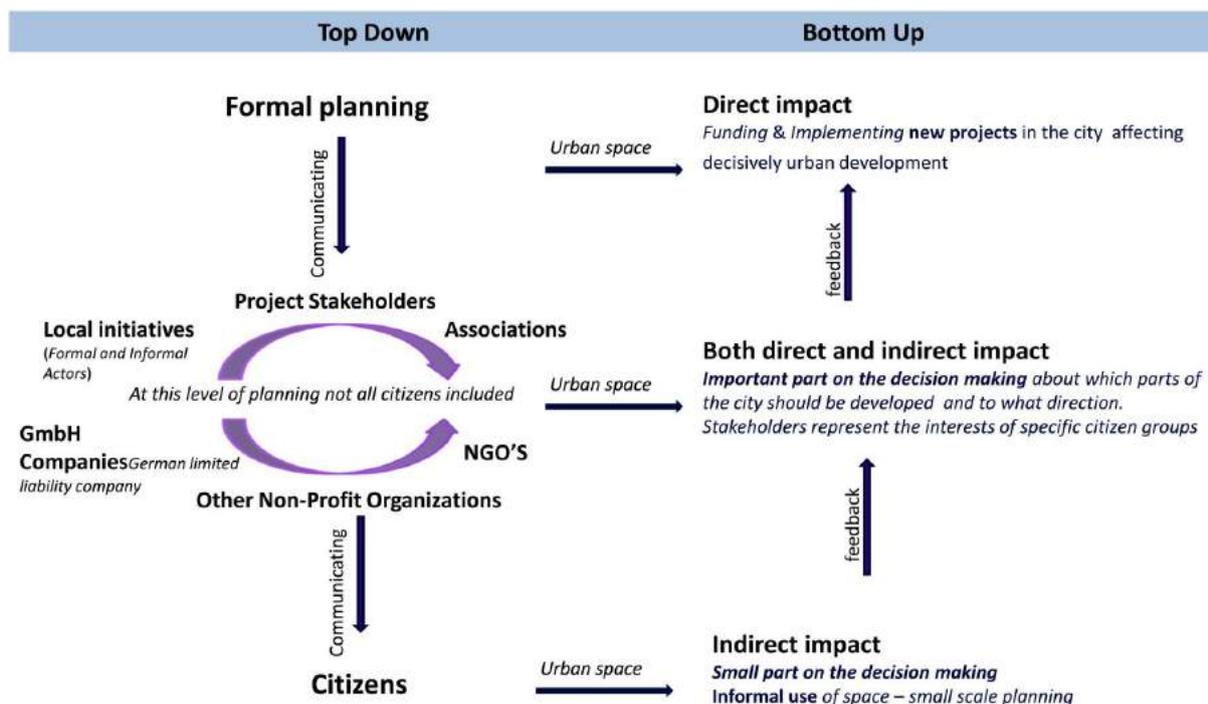

Figure 3 Proposed schema of the Top Down and Bottom Up processes of the urban planning system and the ways they affect the transformation of the urban environment (developed by the author).

Implementing the Living Room Project — Emphasizing the Project's Informal Character
As the Living Room Project is originally set as an example of Informal Urbanism, one would ask, what would the notion of 'planning' the informal imply? Once formal procedures step in, wouldn't that automatically mean that the whole project ceases to be informal and becomes formal?

A similar project such as the Living Room in Dortmund is already operating in the neighbouring city of Bochum. It becomes essential to this research to understand fully the reasons that initiated a project of informal urbanism in the first place. The original concept of the project emerged in 2013 from a group of citizens who failed to organize a second similar public event within the same year. Encountering several obstacles along the way, it seemed to be an extremely complicated procedure to acquire the necessary permits and organize a festival and a flea market inside a courtyard. So, they came up with the idea of a 'public living room', a project that allowed them to organise public events, as frequently as they please, without having to go through formal procedures each time. They became self-organized, formed an NGO for tax free purposes and permanently rented their own place at the end of Alsenstrasse St.

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The Living Room in Bochum is purely intended for public activities and not for any other kind of private use, supporting the idea of an open community project in which all citizens are included. The financing which sustains the project comes directly from the citizens themselves, through an annual flea market and a festival, through membership dues, by producing and commercializing on a regular basis their own products from various activities, such as urban gardening, by commercializing products coming from other community groups who wish to support them. The Bochum Living Room project is 'self-organised' and self-funded providing citizens with the opportunity of remaining independent from any kind of formal planning procedures as well as any kind of state funding. It is also linked with the desire, as genuinely expressed by the citizens themselves, to share, bond and connect. In addition, the 'Self-funding' allows the project to preserve its autonomy, by accepting everyone from all parts of the Community without any kind of discrimination.

Being both inspired and informed by the Bochum Project, the Living Room in Dortmund was likewise initially conceived as an Informal project. The research that was finally submitted to the Municipality stressed the need for the project to develop on its own, as if it were a work in progress. Once the necessary space was provided, the implementing steps of the Living Room project emphasised its 'informal' character, resulting as the need to connect and communicate, expressed genuinely by the citizens themselves and addressed to the entire community. It was also important for the project to become self-organised and self-funded, thus providing its future sustainability.

The research on this project relates the time with each step of the implementing process into short term, midterm and long-term procedures. Each step of the implementing process involves a number of different initiatives (communicating, visualizing and motivating, self-organizing, interacting and implementing) and actions occurring either in successive or simultaneous order. The progress of the project can only prove itself in time. The possible outcomes of the process itself can be unpredictable in many ways. We could only set a possible framework and try to visualise its possible future realities, but it would be rather complicated to try and predict its actual outcome.
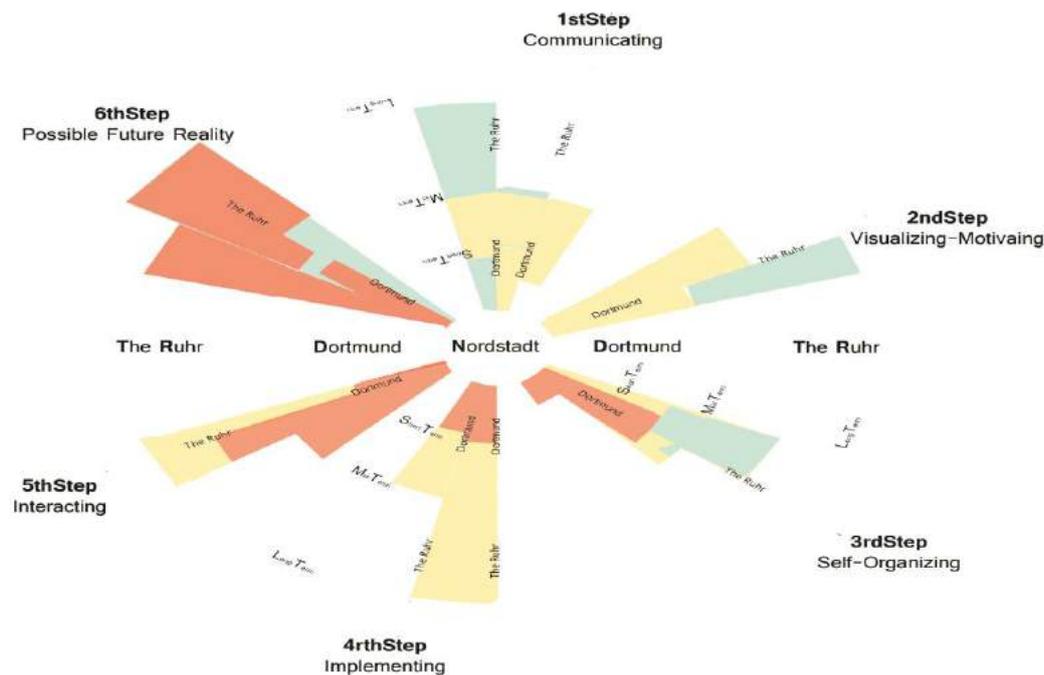
Figure 2 The research relates time with each step of the implementing process into short term, midterm and long-term procedures (Scheme developed by the author).

Conclusions

Interdisciplinary collaboration between formal and informal actors highlights new aspects of what is actually needed for future spatial development.

The Formal planning seeks to find ways to communicate directly with the citizens, engaging them in a mutual dialogue about important spatial issues. It turns out, though, this can be a difficult task as well as a long-term process. Bottom Up and Top Down procedures are equally important in contemporary planning because of the 'feedback' they provide to city planners. It emphasises the importance of a feasibility study that will set the framework upon which the actual planning will begin. But in many cases the incoming information concerning important spatial matters is limited. In the case of Dortmund, the informal approach of the formal planning is less 'informa'' than expected. Participatory meetings and open discussions seem fully structured.

Participatory planning in its most idealised form provides city planners with modified knowledge about new models of living. Grasping images of future possibilities, it enables both citizens and formal structures to 'visualise' what could actually be implemented in terms of use and existing infrastructure and what could possibly be achieved in terms of future urban transformation and adjustment.

Within this context, 'informality' in its pure unmediated condition seems to result as the outcome of an emerging need for change towards urban space, reflecting the degree of 'flexibility' or 'rigidity' towards urban transformation. It is also 'informative' not only to the formal planning but as well on itself, by processing the incoming information, reacting to it and absorbing it, incorporating and finally reflecting it on the future reconfiguration of the urban landscape.

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Additional Material

Proceedings of the International Conference on Changing Cities III: Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-economic Dimensions Organized and chaired by: K. Serraos Bottom up Planning Initiatives in the Urban Space. A Vehicle for a further Democratization of the Urban Planning Procedure?

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Fuzzy Existences and In-betweenness:
Place and Practices of the Idol-making Industry of Kolkata[1]

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The Kumartuli neighbourhood has been at the centre of the idol-making industry in Kolkata (India) for decades; however, it is situated within a larger network of allied practices that form part of the grand Durga Puja celebration. The meaning and significance of the idol is changing based on the technical know-how, changing consumer pattern and branding potential as a subsequent promotion due to the local government tourism policy. The annual Durga Puja celebration in Kolkata in recent years involves spectacular idols, pavilions and generates a havoc economic turnover with the promotion and patronage from the local government. This has resulted in a steady transformation in the everyday practices of the residents of this neighbourhood. This article investigates the changing social, cultural and the built landscape of the idol-making neighbourhood recorded through a visual ethnographic fieldwork studying everyday practices of the residents in their living and working spaces. The results indicate four different types of production units that have emerged from the growth of businesses in Kumartuli. These emergent typologies not only illustrate transformation of a homogenous residential neighbourhood to a commercial centre but also question the changing landscape of the neighbourhood.
Keywords: Transformation, slum-neighbourhood, cultural industry, gentrification, urban ethnography.

Background and the Context of this Research

The idol-making industry in the Kumartuli neighbourhood of Kolkata, India, is an important cultural industry which attracts increasing employment within the city and its rural hinterland, directly and indirectly. As well as being an important element of the Hindu-religious rituals and festivals in Kolkata, idol-making in Kumartuli is associated with the grand festival of Durga Puja, which attracts large numbers of people and has a growing international following in terms of tourism with a positive boost by the current local government. Currently, the Government tourism department of West Bengal, the Indian state (province) of which Kolkata is the capital, has stated a policy for promoting 'tourism through the creative cultural industries and handicrafts' like weaving, local textiles and more importantly clay-idols, which are traditional to Bengal. For this, they have secured international partnerships, like the British Council to promote exhibitions and funding (Basu et al. 2013, British Council 2018). Besides the related economic activities such as trading and tourism, this festival alone supports seasonal employment of thousands of skilled and semi-skilled work-force for building, organising and managing the festival.

The location of the potters' cluster played an important role in the development of the cultural quarter in Kumartuli. The proximity to the river has played a role in the procurement of raw material and transport. Studies suggest that the close-knit community helped as a nurturing place to foster talent and build a social cohesion due to the caste-based[2] homogeneity

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[1] I wish to thank the anonymous reviewers for *Urbanities* and the editors whose suggestions helped improve and clarify this article.

[2] *Jati* (caste) within the Hindu practices is traditionally based on the occupation of a person and inherited through the generations. Anthropological studies reflect the complexity of the caste system in India

(Abraham 2018b), hence leading to collective actions.[3] In addition to the locational advantage, a number of cultural factors and notable events in the history of Kolkata have led to the success of the idol-making cluster of Kumartuli as a whole. This section contextualises and elaborates on the development of the largest and the most prominent of the caste-based potters' neighbourhoods that has thrived in the northern fringe of Kolkata bordered by the river Hooghly to the West.

Layers of traditional ritualistic and modern arts are associated with the idol-making practice within the contested spaces of this congested *bustee* (slum neighbourhood) of Kumartuli situated at a well-connected, river front location in North Kolkata. The emergence and development of the place (neighbourhood) as the singular site and an international brand for a thriving cultural industry shape this study. Despite being in an informal setting and densely-built in a rather small area, the industry has grown from its humble beginning in the early 19th century to become one of continuing economic and cultural significance to the city more widely, with afore-mentioned effects of state-led economic regeneration and the subsequent displacement pressures still little noticed. This article will elaborate on the effects of this shift, by studying the spaces used for cultural-production while unpacking the complex layers of interwoven practices of idol-making including assembling, sculpting and distribution of idols. The spaces of production and the everyday struggles of the workers in order to prepare the idols are generally determined by the size, scale and popularity of the idol-maker and their branding potential. Individual units of idol-production, storage and residences of the *kumars* (potters) as well as the spaces outside the neighbourhood which form part of the wider network have been discussed. The present discussion also introduces the precarious nature of land and building tenure and the (non)existence of infrastructure in *bustee*-areas of Kolkata and the implications of these in the production and distribution of idols. However, these challenges, often overlooked, continue to pose hindrance in the vital transformation of this neighbourhood from a predominantly residential to a more commercialised one.

Evidences from the ethnographic fieldwork in Kumartuli particularly and elsewhere across the southern Bengal, show the industry is connected to a wider network and caters to larger communities worldwide. Kumartuli perhaps started as the idol-making hub of Kolkata because of patronage from the local *babu* (Bengali aristocrats) families, but the locational advantage of the neighbourhood played an important role in establishing the practices of and allied to idol-making here. Kumartuli has been able to thrive as a brand in itself, which is largely due to the inner-city location and a more demanding clientele enabling coordination, competition and constant evolution of the practices based in Kumartuli. Also, there remains a Kumartuli-based connection that governs the various practices of idol-making in Kolkata and places nearby, as most of them have emerged from here. The analysis unravels these place-

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(Parry 2013, Heierstad 2017). Idol-makers belong to potters-caste, called *kumar* which is part of a wider caste-system, based on professions of families.

[3] A spatial relocation and redevelopment project initiative by the then local government, which did not take into account the everyday practices, was collectively resisted by the residents in the year 2011 (Heierstad 2017).

based connections to the idol-making practices that are currently a booming market in Kolkata and Bengal's tourism industry. This research offers an understanding of the spatial practices and places of production of this community amidst the rapidly transforming practices and the emergence of contemporary consumerism of idols both in Kolkata and globally.

Theoretical and Methodological perspectives

Provision of territorial space is a pressing challenge currently faced by the cities of the global South. Spaces are negotiated and speculated due to the real estate pressures. Inner-city areas, mainly densely-populated 'slums' have a growing demand for spaces, which threatens existing practices and the everyday lives of residents. Informal settlements, mainly slum dwelling, has been through a process of legalising the oppression, poverty and hence policing. In his study of inner-city residents in Naples, Italy, Pardo (1996) analyses the complex ways in which the so-called poor (*popolino*) manage their existence cutting through the blurred boundaries between the formal and the informal, the legal and the illegal, the material and the non-material aspects of local life. This approach can be relevant to the study of Kumartuli.

This study broadly seeks to understand the practices of the idol-making industry based in predominantly a local government registered 'slum' in Kumartuli neighbourhood and its rapidly changing spatial, economic and political character. The literature review looks at the intersection of the everyday practices and the place-based processes of the household industry of the idol-making cluster of Kumartuli in light of social practice theories and the informality of inner-city slum-areas of India. This paper engages with theories of practice in combination with place-based theories, because practices cannot be performed in isolation or away from its surroundings. The theoretical understanding of practices and the places that they are performed in, lead to the questions of human actions being direct consequences of the material, environmental or social configurations (Pink 2012).

Theories of Practice and its relevance in the global South

The theoretical and practical implications of conceptualising change in the everyday practice of a community relies on the distinct understanding of social theories developed by twentieth century theorists, Bourdieu (1977), Giddens, (1979, 1984) and de Certeau, (1984), now regarded widely as practice theory. Also, the accounts of Schatzki (1996), Pardo (1996) and Reckwitz (2002) have further developed the social theory of practice. With reference to the allegedly poor of Naples, Pardo has shown the influence that over time individual action informed by strong continuous interaction between the material and the non-material has on the structure. Reckwitz (2002) has explained that practices are routine behaviour and not habits of individuals. Theories of practice provide a platform to incorporate challenges faced in everyday life and in a way to amalgamate the contestation, coordination and competitions within practices.

To conceptualize social change from the practice theory perspective, it is important to study the empirics of the emergence, stability and transformation of practices as developed as the 'Dynamics of Social Practice' (DSP) (Shove, Pantzar and Watson 2012). Using the illustration of evolution of the practice of driving, snowboarding and Nordic walking and

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simultaneous abstraction from these, Shove, Pantzar and Watson, (2012) establish practice as an 'entity' that shapes the life of human and non-human carriers or a 'performance', carried out routinely. Practices constitute 'elements' which are connected during the enactment of practices (ibid.). Moreover, practice theory addresses the elements and conditions leading to the process of social change and/or stability. Elements of practice include the tangible 'materials', the skills or 'competencies' and finally the 'meanings' expressed through ideas and aspirations (ibid.). These elements form the core of the evolution or transformation of practices. Practices emerge, shift and disappear when connections are made between the three elements. The emergence and continuously shifting nature of practices is expressed through three circuits of reproduction; one through the elements and their relations, the next through the combination of co-existing practices and finally through interwoven complexities of larger practices.

DSP looks at practices as fundamental entities of social life. Practices are essentially a part of evolutionary process which encompasses continuous connection between the elements of practice (Shove et al. 2012). The evolution of coexisting practices, the changing materiality of 'doing' is important for understanding the flow of goods within and between societies. Competences are recorded or narrated and as part of the evolution of the practice certain know-hows are altered and/or adopted for the changed nature of the requirement for doing. Shove, Pantzar and Watson, (2012) elaborate on the diverse elements that comprises of a 'connective tissue' which holds social and cultural exchanges in place. Practices are essentially place-based and often embedded within the cultural landscape of a place where the necessary elements of practice coexist. Also, the sites of production of commodities through practices are as important as the mode of transportation for distributions for these items (ibid.). In other words, the history of evolution, geographies of production and distribution, are integral components that shape the elements of practice.

In light of practice theory, the central unit of enquiry is the idol making practice and the idol as a cultural item. The meaning and significance of the idol is steadily changing based on the technical know-how of idol making required for selling and branding to reach a wider clientele. The evolving practices that have shaped the working and the living condition of this idol-makers' cluster in Kumartuli neighbourhood in for generations is the focus of this study. The everyday social and cultural practices of a community overlap with the idol-making practice within similar spatial and temporal frames. The community which contributes to the majority of idols produced and worshipped in Kolkata and beyond; operates from different smaller units of production which have historically been the living and working spaces for families of idol-makers. The dynamics of operation of the industry in the place with regards to the natural and the built environment and the constant competition and cooperation shapes this study. The particularities of the production through assembling the raw and ancillary materials within the place and the disbursal of the idol after production are aspects to look at. The precarious modes of transport or the existence (or non-existence) of infrastructure to carry out the huge exchanges that take place during one particular season is interesting and these aspects qualify the place.

Spaces are defined by practices and communities of practice where boundaries are interwoven and often blur. Not a very straightforward approach is taken to address the spatial

and temporal aspects of practices. In addressing some aspects, spaces are 'resources' for practice, whereas in others space is a 'geographical location' and an 'outcome of practice' (Shove et al. 2012: 130). Time is a competitive resource for a practitioner. But it is consequently mentioned that these aspects are not equivalent to those of materiality, meaning and competence. Shove argues that, spatial and temporal coordinates do not merely define the settings and scenes in which practices are performed. Moreover, practice theory in a way acknowledges that practices are place-based but somehow the aspect of space is not well established and somewhat ambivalent.

The inner-city areas of the global South are characterised by informal settlements often referred to as 'slums'[4] and 'squatters'.[5] This poses a challenge to constrained spaces of practice within slums and constant negotiations are required. Although practice theory addresses spatial and temporal aspects, but in a way, fails to address how spaces are negotiated with the posing challenges and the practicalities of living in slums of densely-populated cities. Although DSP theorises the idea of individuals as carriers of practice who locally adapt and adopt to the locally changing social meanings of practices, but social inequalities, geographical constraints or cultural diversity of the empirical examples of practices are not mentioned. In a way, those empirics do not cross the geographical and historical boundary of the recent past of the developed West.

Cities of the global South account for the majority of the urban world in recent times. Also, informal settlements account for a vast section of the cities of the global South as a resultant of rapid urbanisation and constant migration from the rural hinterland. Although informality cannot be denied in the urban context, urban theory often fails to address informality in mainstream literature (Lombard 2014). Considering the informal dwellings, outside the 'normal' urban governance and policy formulation criteria, results in discrimination of the informality. Informal settlements are areas characterised by self-built housing, low income households with substandard services and a low level of social and physical infrastructure in the cities of developing world (Roy 2011). Although slum population forms a striking one-third of the urban world, informal sectors are still marginalized and continue to be considered as social and economic outgrowths.

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[4] A Slum, for the purpose of Census, has been defined as residential areas where dwellings are unfit for human habitation by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of street, lack of ventilation, light, or sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to the safety and health (primary Census Abstract for Slum; Government of India 2013). The word 'slum' could be crudely defined as a compact settlement with a collection of poorly-built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate basic services and subject to unhygienic conditions. Various agencies including international organizations like UNHABITAT have defined 'slum' in different ways, depending on the purpose and issues under consideration. However, there are certain broad similarities in definitions adopted by countries across the world: Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, National Building Organisation, Government of India.
[5] Squatter housing was defined as housing illegally established and roughly constructed (Gedik 1993).

Although the word slum has a certain derogatory connotation to it, in case of India, some of them have been notified and officially recognised as 'registered slums' to get certain legalisation and advantages from the local government (Kundu 2003). This recognised status enables 'networks of neighbourhood organisations' to get registered land tenure and other infrastructure facilities and services for the urban poor (Satterthwaite and Bartlett 2017). Kundu (2003) documents the different categories of informal settlements of Kolkata into two broad types; authorized slums or '*bustees*' and unauthorized squatter settlements. Further, the authorized settlements are subdivided into four categories. The first category is the oldest settlement that existed during the British colonial period and was formed by the patronage of local middlemen, who took land from rich land owners and help migrants to build houses and settle on them. The second types are tenancies where the residents have rented properties at nominal rents and built houses for themselves. The third category involves the local land lords building houses for the migrants to settle in them in order to keep the land holding to themselves. The tenants pay nominal rent for these houses. The last category of authorised slums are the refugee resettlement colonies formed as a result of partition of India, where the government has leased out the land to migrants for a longer term of 99 years. The word slum is used in this study not in a derogatory sense, but in accordance with the status of the neighbourhood in question. The word *bustee* is an acceptable alternative to the word slum. Slum living is characterised by unauthorised building extension, poor drainage and sanitation and public health concerns etc. in the cities of the global South. The inexpensive and frugal means do not however fail to provide a sense of security and place identity. People seldom choose to move away from the places they were born in (Tuan 1990). The neighbourhood they live in accounts largely for their everyday choices and social relations (Abraham 2018a). Likewise, do people residing in informal housing somehow learn to adjust with the reality of the struggles with the non-existent infrastructure? Roy (2009) argues that planning cannot solve the crisis of Indian informality but is the reason to produce the crisis of the informality. In other words, informality is 'not a set of unregulated activities' but somehow legitimising slums causes the problem.[6]

A significant set of literature suggests that the informal settlements within urban areas are not simply perceived as an image of poverty and deprivation, but a site of creativity and entrepreneurship, with underlying concepts of frugal economies and *jugaad* (Birtchnell 2011, Bhatti 2013). Urban informal settlements have been widely discussed by postcolonial theorists, but the everyday practices and networks within these informal settlements; their place-relationships and the factors affecting the development of their multi-layered networks is under-discussed. The question remains to be answered through further empirical research as to how spaces are affected through the continuous process of legalising informal areas by the government and how these spaces are evolved with the evolving practices performed in them. Also, why the resultant places remain the centres of rich/ dense spaces of spatial and economic

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[6] For detailed discussion on processes and tools of legitimacy see Pardo (2000, 2018); Pardo and Prato (2018).

practices continue to thrive, despite being outside the mainstream economy and neglect from policy-makers.

Fieldwork

Ethnographic fieldwork has been the basis of this research, to engage critically with the production and analysis of the empirical material (Pardo and Prato eds 2016). Pardo and Prato (2018) have debated the importance of ethnographical studies as a powerful tool for understanding changing cities through innovative frameworks. Urban anthropologists stress the importance of the empirical fieldwork-based research to study and theorise modern cities (Pardo 2000, Prato and Pardo 2013, Pardo and Prato 2016). A series of qualitative techniques ranging from ethnographic approaches of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and visual documentation are broadly the core of this research. The fieldwork involved detailed ethnographic study of the neighbourhood, mapping and visual documentation of the field through photography, interviews and participant observation.

The Kumartuli neighbourhood originally consisted of 522 households, out of which 135 families are idol-makers and 42 families are involved in other allied productions. The area of the land is approximately 3.73 acres (KMDA 2009). To document the seasonal variation of the practices in Kumartuli, the ethnographic fieldwork was documented in two phases; I selected the busiest season of the year to start the participant observation or 'being there' (Marcus 1995; Hannerz 2003). During the Durga Puja season and Kumartuli is overcrowded with the people directly and indirectly engaged in the idol-making industry. This phase was used to document the agents, the networks and the challenges faced due to the infrastructure. In the second phase of fieldwork conducted in the slightly 'relaxed' season of summer, I documented the buildings-workshops, residences and amenities within the neighbourhood with the aid of photographs and sketches. The reasons behind the two-tier fieldwork were to document the seasonality of the practices as well as taking all pictures and not selective ones to avoid 'sampling bias' in a visual ethnography (Krase 2016).

The changing pattern of everyday practices on the streets
and workshop-residences of Kumartuli

Kumartuli neighbourhood perhaps started as the idol-making hub of Kolkata because of patronage from the local *babu* families, but the locational advantage of the neighbourhood played an important role in establishing the practices of and allied to idol-making here. The layers of traditional and modern arts are associated with the idol-making practice within the contested spaces of this *bustee* of Kolkata (Map 1).

> Heierstad writes, '…in Kolkata's Kumartuli the stories of indigenous modernity seems to be concealed behind tradition. Among the potters inhabiting the shanty-like, earth-floored workshops of the caste-based neighbourhood, the history of a modern and economically neoliberal-minded India unfolds.' (Heierstad 2017: 6).

Historically, Kumartuli has been a homogenous, caste-based neighbourhood; however, the neoliberal policy pressures resulted in increased organic gentrification to provide for the

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steadily rising demands of the idol-making industry, where the space is a premium. Kumartuli is currently under a transition between becoming a commercial and production only neighbourhood. A wave of gentrification, mostly organic in nature has resulted in changes in the use of the houses in Kumartuli. A number of older buildings have been demolished and rebuilt to suit the purpose of workshop spaces. Some dwelling spaces have been rebuilt to suit multiple family-homes on multiple floors behind the workshops. Some families have outgrown the spaces, some have been able to afford a better living condition elsewhere and some have been rehoused in the nearby warehouse, modified to suit the purpose of the temporary needs of the Kumartuli rehabilitation project of the state government and KMDA. What used to be a homogenous neighbourhood of potters' families living and working in cramped conditions, is now transforming into an area of primarily productive and commercial functions driven by the local tourism and cultural economy.

Kumartuli is situated in the northern most part of inner Kolkata, in between the north-south spine Jatindra Mohan Avenue (popularly, Central Avenue) and the river Hooghly. The area lies within wards 8 and 9 of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC). The four roads bordering Kumartuli are Rabindra Sarani (main road) on the east, Durga Charan Banerjee Street to the north (main road), Strand Road (main road on the River bank) on the west and Abhay Mitra Street on the south (8 feet wide; Map 1). The eight-foot wide road parallel to the Durga Charan Banerjee Street is Kumartuli Street. A Street of similar width, known as the Bonomali Sarkar Street runs almost perpendicularly to the Rabindra Sarani for the entire width of the

Map 1: Schematic map of transport network and densely built inner-core area in and around Kuamartuli

neighbourhood (Map 1). Most of vehicular traffic is restricted to these streets and the narrow inner lanes are usually pedestrian-only due to spatial constraints. Bicycles and motorbikes owned by local residents ply through the inner streets during the off-seasons. The inner alleys

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and lanes are 4 feet to 8 feet wide with workshops on both sides; during the preparation seasons from April to October, the awnings and overhangs of the workshops made of polythene sheets encroach upon the paths leaving around two and three-foot space for people to pass through.

The roads are black topped and concrete from the wider and narrower respectively. The conditions of the roads are important to smoothly pull and distribute the idols. Adding to the already dingy and crowded conditions of the roads, there are drains with broken openings and potholes in the alleys. Both sides of the internal alleys are lined with workshops; some have attached residential units at the back accessed through the workshops and some residences have separate entrances through narrower alleys off the streets. Additionally, the streets are used for an array of works related to idol-making like clay-mixing, bamboo and straw-cutting and even sun-drying of idols or parts of it after clay-application.

The practices based in Kumartuli are connected to a wider network and caters to a larger community for locational as well as demographic reasons. The inner-city location and the connectivity to the transport infrastructure facilitated Kumartuli to thrive as a brand while the constant development of a steady clientele in and around Kolkata as well as the Bengali diaspora around the world in the age of globalisation nurtured the coordination and competition among the *kumars* who have emerged as a caste-based, family-name carrying brands (Heierstad 2017).

Traditionally, idol-making started in monsoon during the festival of Rathyatra. Growing demand for idols globally and increasing spectacle of the festival, however are slowly altering the seasonal practices in Kumartuli. The new seasonal pattern of idol-making practices start in late April and May (*Boisakh* the first and auspicious month in the Bengali calendar), followed by the busiest work in monsoon and the winter months of December and January (*Poush*, an inauspicious month) are the slowest in terms of business (Interview K6, K7, K8, K12). Although idol-making and allied practices are governed generally by the now tourism-economy driven festival in Kolkata and beyond, interestingly the idol-makers and their clients still follow traditional beliefs of religious auspices. Even the busiest workshops only build the *kathamo* (wooden frameworks) and carry on repair works in the inauspicious months. Factors like availability of seasonal help or lack of funds to start off preparation could also be responsible for such a pattern of seasonal practices.

The potters' humble residence (*kumor-bari*) used to be the centre of the idol-making practices. The potters balanced their everyday family lives as well as constructed pots and idols within the constrained spaces of the idol-makers quarters in Kolkata. Over the years, idol-making practices have transformed. Also, the spaces used for performing these practices have adapted, grown and evolved. The average day in a workshop-cum-residence is an overlap of the practices related to the production of idols and everyday practices of living in a densely-built *bustee*-neighbourhood of Kolkata. The streets serve as an additional space and serve many purposes: it is essentially an integral part of the everyday activities of the residents and sometimes acts as an extension of the workshop itself. These streets are frequented by curious visitors like tourists, photographers and researchers allowing little or no- privacy to the residents. The largest of the workshops are at street crossings or on the wider roads. The workshops accommodate the idols being constructed, raw materials and tools as well as all the everyday items required for housing

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and dining the idol-maker and his assistants during working hours. Additionally, most workshops have a *macha* (loft) or mezzanine level made of wooden slats to provide for accommodation of men and finished idols. This arrangement perhaps is important to accommodate the seasonal workers in the workshop during the day to avoid delay in work. Very simple and affordable methods of construction have been used to construct the self-built houses. The design principles are always need-based. Most houses in this neighbourhood have brick walls, plastered with cement concrete and roofs of temporary materials. The roofs resemble 'factory sheds' made from galvanised steel, tin, asbestos or PVC sheets (Interview K9). The houses are between 18 to 20 feet high, with internally constructed mezzanine levels made from wooden or bamboo slats extending from the front to the rear of the houses. A ladder is generally used to access the *macha*, in order to save floor space and additional cost of staircase construction. In order to ascertain smooth running of idol-making and other related everyday practices in Kumartuli, the streets and open areas are covered with plastic sheets, temporary bamboo sheds and awnings during the prolonged monsoon season. Therefore, during this time the workshops encroach upon a considerable amount of space from the streets and common areas adjacent to it to accommodate all idol-making activities (See Figure 1(d)).
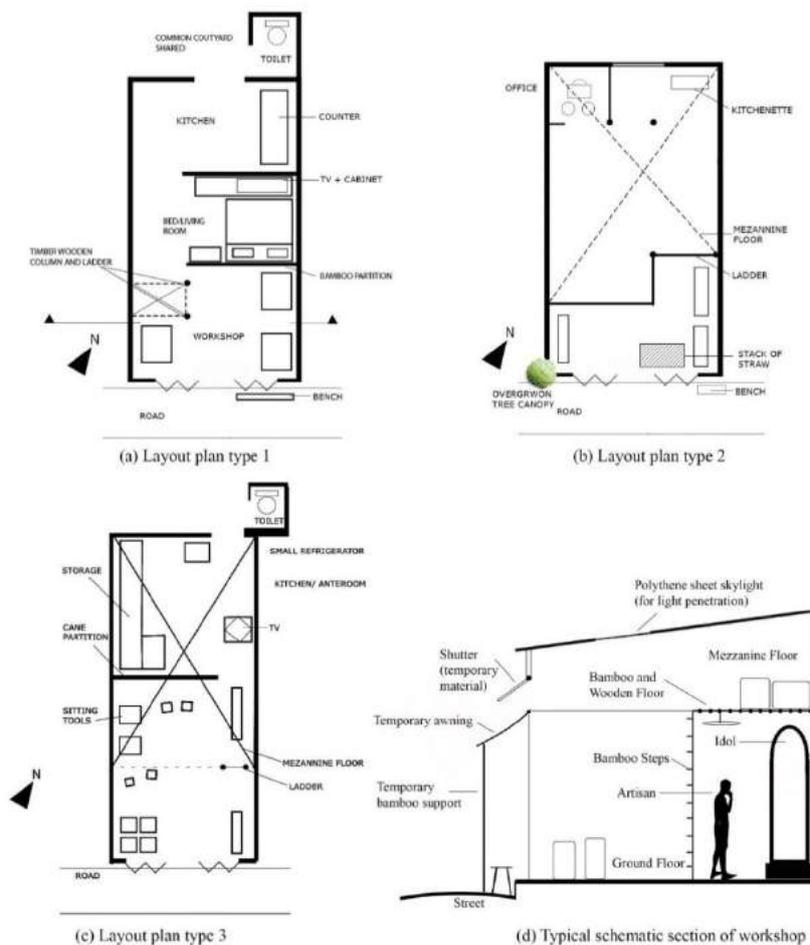

Figure 1: Layout plans and typical section of workshop types.

Based on my observation on the layout of the workshop-residences of Kumartuli, three distinctly different types of spatial configuration were identified. The following sections narrate the transformation trajectory of the workshop spaces in Kumartuli through the study of the different prevalent types- the old, the evolving and the new. Also, parallel to the details of the spaces individual sections will relate to the everyday practices performed in them.

The first type was the older workshop-residence (type1) built for the use of a single family of idol-makers. Quite a few of this type of layout still survives in the inner alleys of Kumartuli. The second type of workshop looks like a 'factory shed' (type 2); purpose-built to accommodate idols (and seasonal workers). These are situated around the outer areas of the neighbourhood and are comparatively larger in size. A third and possibly the more common type of workshop are the converted or transitioning houses (type 3). These serve the purpose of a shop, workshop and accommodation, only used during the working hours. Currently in Kumartuli, due the recent confusion and ultimately failure of a state-led redevelopment project (KMDA 2009), a fourth type of workshops is emerging. This type represents the new-built or temporary sheds (type 4), constructed after the demolition of a few workshops by KMDA and solely for the purpose of retaining a space in the Kumartuli. The following sections detail out the different types of the working and living spaces in Kumartuli.

Type 1: The traditional workshop-residence

A typical workshop-cum residence has the front room, which is usually a third of the entire length of the house dedicated to idol-making and day-time activities of the residents. This front room has foldable wooden-framed tin shutters along the entire front wall which can be opened completely to allow light, ventilation and movement of finished idols (Figure 1 (a)). The back rooms are usually for the family to perform the everyday practices of cooking, cleaning and sleeping. This part of the house has one bedroom and a kitchen and dining space. The separate toilet and washing facilities at the back of the house are shared by a few families. This style of workshop-residences is situated primarily on both sides of the *Majhergoli* (the middle alley of the central core or the *Thakurpotti* of the neighbourhood).

The floors of most houses are made from cement concrete or rammed earth. Constant use and storage of the raw materials during the production accumulates clay, making the floors appear earthen and damp. Differing views have emerged from interviews on the type of flooring ideal for idol-making. Some older artists say the floor should be as 'plain' (level) and hard as achievable with their limited means (Interview K11). However, famous contemporary artists have said that they require soft earthen floors, mainly to avoid cracks and breakages of freshly sculpted parts of idols with soft clay (Interview K8). Although this argument considers the fragile nature of the faces and fingers of the idols during preparation, but most of the floors that I have observed were somewhat flat, levelled and made of cement concrete cast in-situ. During early April, just before the annual preparatory phase starts, most workshops undergo repairs. The broken floors of a few workshops I came across were being patched to have an even surface, otherwise, 'the faces of the idols would be tilted' (interview K11).

The walls of the both the houses are built to support the roof and the bamboo-framed *macha*. The houses, being mostly built with a mix of vernacular and contemporary building techniques prevalent in India, have brick and cement mortar plastered walls and a pitched tile or tin roof. The roofs are supported by a framework of timber columns based on the floors. According to the Census of India, these structures having *pukka* or permanent walls and *kutcha* or temporary roofs, fall under the semi-pukka category. This is a structural duality and use of building material affects the relevant property taxation criteria. Several significant factors like, road width, type and age of the buildings, building materials and nature of the built structure (*kutcha/ pukka*) and location of the property are considered in order to calculate the annual property taxes (KMC website). Therefore, residents in poorer *bustee* neighbourhoods benefit from lower taxes due to contributing factors like, narrow road, old and dilapidating buildings, semi-*pukka* houses and a designated slum location.

Image 1: Workshop-residence type 1 in April 2018, and a view of street lined with workshops

Type 2: The 'factory-shed' workshop

In late April, 2018, I studied the standalone workshops on the wider streets of Kumartuli. This style of workshops is situated around the periphery of the core *Thakurpotti* or on the Banamali Sarkar Street. These are not connected to the residences and are quite large in comparison to the front-room workshops. The length and breadth of this space is almost double the size of the front-room workshop-residences. The *macha* is built higher than the smaller workshops and provides higher headroom at the top. The total height of the workshops ranges from 20 to 25 feet (Interview K9). However, the basic spatial organisation within the workshop is somewhat similar. The building has a rectangular plan with openings at the front and the back only; the front door is fitted with foldable shutters which open up completely to allow light and ventilation (Figure 1(b)). There is small window at the back. The length of the workshop is more than 40-feet; hence the sunlight does not penetrate to illuminate the middle portion of the workshop and requires artificial lighting throughout the day. Lighting is simple - incandescent bulbs hang from holders connected through wires temporarily tied to the beams. Most wiring are not concealed, providing scope for moving light fixtures around, as and when required. The roof is supported by a timber and bamboo framework, with timber columns. The *macha* is also

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made of bamboo slats and plywood boards. Unlike the smaller houses, the *macha* in this building does not run the entire length of the ceiling; it ends about halfway through starting at the back, so that there is a higher ceiling at the front of the house to accommodate taller idols. The ceiling fans are hung from the beams.

In an interview a respondent explained with mixed emotions about their building requirements and how it affects their everyday lives:

'… for idol-making, if you give me a pukka-structure, the condition will be damped. We need openness. If it is too damp, the straw will be rotten. The clay will not dry on the idol after the application. The tin-shed, what is called a 'factory-shed', is what we need for idol-making… Then the heat (and light is required) […] rain is our main enemy. Sunlight is our main energy. We will feel the heat, we will be uncomfortable, we will sweat, we will switch on the fans; only then our work will progress. If it rains, our work is hindered. This is the problem. Not a lot of people understand why we use tin-shed. Tin-shed is not for show, it is for wind and air. This is our workplace… this is for our work, this is what is required.' (Interview K8).

The cramped spaces and frugal building constructions illustrate the everyday challenges faced by the families involved with idol-making in Kumartuli. However, the residents believe that,

'This is my 'motherland'. I was born here. Other people might not like it, they might think this is congested, but I have grown up here. This place… I like very much. Now, you all might think it is broken.' (Interview K8).

The workshops are the spaces where the artists and the seasonal workers spend most of their daytime. During the peak working seasons, the artists eat and rest in the workshops, or sometimes work overnight (Interview K19). The standalone workshops are not attached to residences, although most artists live within walking distance from their workshops. Interestingly, there is a small room at the corner of this workshop. The room remains locked during major part of the day; that is, whenever not in use. The room contains a desk, a few chairs and usually serves as an office space for the main artist. The wall of the room is decorated with pictures of idols made in the past, a calendar and small wooden shrine containing figurines of Gods, regularly worshipped. A fan, an incandescent light hanging from the ceiling and a few papers and stationery completes the list of items in the room. The wooden partition wall used to build the wall is a later addition and is visible from the age of the building. The office is significant not only due to the fact that the idol-making practices have transformed from a

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family affair based in the residence to standalone workshops, but also shows the requirement of client meetings and record keeping for a professional practice.

Image 2: Two larger workshops showing (a) internal layout during afternoon break and bamboo-slat roof with polythene insulation and (b) workshop frontage with half- folded shutters, wooden ramp and materials on the street.

Type 3: Repurposed Workshops

A new type of workshop is emerging in the existing buildings on the *Majhergoli* and similar narrow lanes in the core area of Kumartuli. These buildings are being modified and transformed internally to serve as workshops instead of its original purpose as residence-workshops. The owners or the main artists, who lived in these houses while also using the front rooms as workshops, are moving their families in nearby places and using these building as workshop-cum-storage-cum-accommodation for the seasonal labourers. Although the size and condition of these buildings remain like the original workshop residences, but these now serve as standalone workshops.

The plan of the workshop is similar to the type 1 with a front room, half partition, a back room and a *macha*. A toilet, also shared by other families, is accessed through the back door of the house. The particular workshop, I studied in details was part of a family-run business. The three artists; a woman, her husband, her brother, continued their father's business from this house. A few years ago, they moved out when they could finally afford to buy an apartment for themselves just outside Kumartuli. Her brother however, still continues to live in a rented room just behind the house. During, the interview, all three of them were sitting close to the sidewall with their backs at the wall and had rows of small idols, mostly unfinished, in front of them. On the opposite sidewall, a couple of small footstools were kept where customers can come and sit while their idols were being finished. This is an arrangement that is followed during the months following Durga Puja, when the business is slow and smaller idols for household festivals are

in demand. However, for the larger idols to be sculpted, a different spatial configuration is set up within these workshops, where the idols are arranged against the walls (Figure 1 (d)).

The size and height of the repurposed workshops are not as big as the type 2 workshops. Therefore, the artists have to rent storage spaces outside Kumartuli to accommodate larger idols after construction. Idols are moved outside the workshop to the storage spaces nearby and brought back for selling. This process reflects the changing needs and demands of the consumers. As the space requirement for the idol-making industry grew, slowly the workshops broke away from the residences. Holding on to the smaller workshop spaces for the purpose of doing business from Kumartuli raises questions of place-based connections, ease of business and the significance of the Kumartuli-brand name. The emergence of this new type of the workshops shows an emerging pattern of practices deeply embedded in place.

Type 4: Purpose-built temporary or permanent workshop spaces

During the preparation phase (April, 2018), through my daily visits I was able to witness the permanent rebuilding of one workshop after demolition of old buildings. Interestingly even in 2018, they chose to build the workshop with the simple traditional layout – a small room at the back and a bigger room in front. The walls were 20-feet high with a timber and plywood *macha* at the 12-feet level along the entire length of the building. The *macha* would be accessed by a bamboo ladder and the roof was being made of tin-corrugated sheets. Their families live in a rented accommodation just outside the neighbourhood. The type 3 and type 4 workshops are examples of how the Kumartuli neighbourhood is slowly transforming into units of idol-making workshop only from the traditional type 1 houses. Most importantly, the changing typologies of the workshop indicate that the brand of Kumartuli is much sought-after and retaining a 'place' here for business is key. However, unless triggered by an external cause, there is no significant change in the building types of Kumartuli. The front facades of all the houses are same- irrespective of old or new, contain foldable wooden framed tin/aluminium doors, plastic sheets serve as awnings supported by bamboos during the monsoon months. Precariously built benches are work surfaces and all the main artists follow traditional everyday rituals related to their idol-making practices irrespective of their type of workshop. Also, even if the workshops are newly-built, they retain the vernacular characters that have existed historically in a typical works-residence of Kumartuli.

Discussion and Conclusions

The study of the building types in Kumartuli raises questions of not only the capacity of the idol-maker to build his workshop, but certain ownership dualities that restricts new buildings. Whether the small plots of land and the buildings on them (shown in map 1) that have resulted through years of fragmentation would have provision of new building with modern building regulations is a question. The new building regulations require certain norms and setbacks guided by the plot-size and zone-location to be followed. These restrictions perhaps would negate any sizable building. Also, inner-city location raises questions on land prices, speculations and propriety. It is therefore important to understand the ownership issues, the

colonial tenancy types in place and certain slum legislations in order to analyse the built nature and transformation of the neighbourhood.

The building legislation is not very strict and the local government permits building extension without a formal planning. The land and building taxes by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation affects people's choices of building materials and the type of finished surfaces like walls, floors etc. used in the building. As much as they want to live and work in better houses and have better roads for smooth running of their business, they would also need to finance these developments.

However, any legislation does not answer issues of the changing landscape of the neighbourhood in terms of the change in the seasonality and the practices within the workshops. A growing clientele and growth of businesses and as a result the commercialisation of the neighbourhood would call for further investigation to understand the implications of this change on the area as a whole, from an initial homogeneous residential neighbourhood to a commercial business centre with allied industries. Questions of whether or not this is another case of gentrification, state-led evictions due to unaffordability or a case of successful regeneration of a cultural industry calls for further research.

Appendix

List of interviewees

Code	Interviewee occupation	Date Interview
K1	Male, middle aged, average artist	03.10.17
K2	Male, middle aged, average artist	03.10.17
K3	Female, middle aged, well-known artist	03.10.17
K4	Male, Young, well-known trained artist at Baranagar	13.10.17
K5	Male, Young, average artist	22.10.17
K6	Male, middle aged, average artist	22.10.17
K7	Male, young, struggling artist	25.10.17
K8	Male, middle aged, famous artist	28.10.17
K9	Male, old, famous artist, Bangladeshi origin	09.11.17
K10	Male, Young, average artist	11.11.17
K11	Male, very old, waning fame	20.11.17
K12	Male, Young, struggling artist, politically motivated	20.11.17

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