Integration Reconsidered: A Study of Multi-ethnic Lives in Two Post-Integration Cities

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Contents

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Abstract

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This thesis sets out to critically interrogate the contemporary relevance of integration and, in turn, develops a more useful theoretical framing for understanding the experiences of ethnic minorities in Stockholm and London. I argue that the concept of integration remains so normatively loaded that it obscures its advocates' *own* stated ideal – the fluent sharing of lives on a daily, mundane basis. I also argue that processes of integration are the self-same processes that produce and reaffirm racialised differentiation. My analysis is empirically situated in interviews with 23 young research participants from Stockholm and London, as well as observations from shared time – at sites ranging from commercial high streets to the squares of council estates.

Much of my critique targets the tendency of sociological commentary to trade in a series of analytic reductions, whereby: a) ethnic identification is too heavily tied to expectations about culture and value-orientations; b) identity performance is too often read as denoting a subjective internalisation of that particular identity position, whereby the subject is seemingly *of* the identity she refers to; and c) close social ties are seen as more meaningful to people's experiences than the negotiation of fleeting urban encounters. The recurring emphasis of this critique is that routines of fluent multi-ethnic cohabitation rest on an ability to disturb the idea of space, culture and solidarity as *ethno-communal* properties. The idea of conviviality, borrowed from Paul Gilroy, is developed here as a more accurate heuristic via which one can understand these alternative interactive fields; where markers of difference are neither actively elided (i.e. denied or absorbed into a larger field of community) nor rendered obstructive. Going against a resurgent 'sociology of ties', my empirical attention centres here on those myriad and irregular encounters *outside* of one's immediate kin and peer networks (what I call 'second-order' interaction). I also evidence the ways in which the participants are *often* involved in an intricate game of 'identity citation'; wherein, they consent to a sense of their own difference primarily in order to remain *intelligible* to the dominant social gaze and its normative racial orders. This alternative reading of identity difference, where identity is consented to, but not necessarily internalised, triggers in turn a different kind of lived multicultural politics; a multicultural politics which is more about anti-racism than it is about the ontology of communal difference.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to critically counter certain received understandings surrounding the issue of 'second-generation' integration. In rethinking specific modes (interactive, cultural and communicative) by which ethnic difference is entangled in contemporary routines of urban life, I argue that integration as a concept remains so poorly configured vis-à-vis contemporary social complexity that it obscures its own stated ideal – the fluent sharing of lives on a daily, mundane basis. Similarly, I argue that key processes constitutive of integration are the self-same processes which bring about racialised differentiation. Attention is reserved here for the racisms which are coded into any process of integration. This aim of a critique of integration from 'within' is realised through the use of material from research conducted in both Stockholm and London. Drawing upon the field-material generated, I propose ways in which an anti-racist understanding of mundane integration processes might allow the sociology of race and ethnicity to better chronicle the emergent 'convivial' (Gilroy 2004) interactive fields and cultures which abound in contemporary urban spaces.

As signalled in the ubiquity of the term *second-generation*[1] – a term which is freighted by a distinction between the normative citizen and the ethnic outsider whose status is under review – the demand for integration has become a key discursive move by which minorities in the Global North are re-racialised and re-pathologised (McGhee 2008). Integration is presented in various political homilies as the corrective means by which minority inadequacy is to be checked. That the minority subject is by default culturally deviant is a propositional given underpinning this political dramaturgy of renewed European nationalisms. The deviant minority subject is the received 'truth' from which the entire political posture follows.

This emergence of integration discourses as the site for the airing of rehabilitated xenoracisms has become a feature common to all Western Europe, regardless of the respective regions' divergent twentieth-century histories. Its traction ranges from the Scandinavian countries which still bear, though fast receding, strong traces of a social democratic legacy (Larsson et al. 2012), to the United Kingdom which is distinguished

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[1] Though freighted, 'second-generation' minority is a term which I will continue to use. It is hoped that the critique of integration actualised throughout the thesis will sufficiently delink the term from its normative loading.

by its pronounced imperial legacy as well as a more prolonged incorporation of neoliberal, 'anti-welfarism' (Bhattacharya 2013).

Two recent moves by self-styled centrist leaders in Sweden and the United Kingdom reveal this political sway secured by pro-integration agendas. In the wake of the 2013 rioting which swept across the impoverished and minority-peopled suburbs of Stockholm, the Swedish Prime Minister came under criticism for his reluctance to issue any noteworthy analysis. Predictably, wishing to exercise some semblance of statesmanship, Fredrik Reinfeldt found his footing in the safe, cost-free political space of integration. For Reinfeldt, the rioting simply reinforced the public's conviction that 'immigrants' remained inadequately integrated into the Swedish 'way of life'. He drew attention to the 'cultural thresholds' (read 'Swedish values') which 'angry' minority youth were yet to overcome. Intimating a minority attachment to a culture of dysfunction – 'angry young men who believe in violence' – Reinfeldt's only attempt at an explanation of the riots retreated into the logic of culture-clashes and incomplete integration (*Aftonbladet* 2013). Integration into Swedish culture was posited as the basis upon which the well-curated image of the Swedish egalitarian ideal would be restored.

Speaking from the post-imperial context of the United Kingdom, the centre-left leader of the Labour Party, Ed Miliband, announced in December 2012 his party's commitment to the 'integration' of minority communities into British society: 'We are one of the few countries in Europe without a comprehensive strategy for integration. We must put that right' (*New Statesman* 2012). The calculated speech was Labour's attempt to cleave the firm claim to 'integrationism' (Kundnani 2007) that had proved so successful for the Conservative Party, consolidated when David Cameron pontificated that 'multiculturalism has failed' (*New Statesman* 2011a). The recent emergence of the Blue Labour movement, which recommends that Labour be bolder in assuming a communitarian (read 'integrationist') agenda if it is to remain electable, is another indication, though not an uncomplicated one, of how readily contemporary political sloganeering draws itself towards the rhetoric of integration. I do appreciate, as Michael Keith (2013: 29-30) observes, that the manner in which the integrationist posture manifests can carry various 'contradictions', 'complexities' and 'uneven surfaces'. Populist integrationism comes in different shades, at times reluctantly and almost apologetically (see Gordon Brown and, in all likelihood, Miliband) and elsewhere with a gung-ho, jingoistic enthusiasm (see Tebbit and the infamous 'cricket test'). But the

shared constant in both examples – in the scramble to outdo each other in demonstrative genuflection to integration – is the simple fact that minority immigrants and their descendants serve as fodder for the capturing of the middle-ground, white voter's support.

But if this is how integration has been afforded a central role in today's Europe, it suggests that there is little reason to engage it as an empirical process to be sociologically appraised. If the very axiomatic grounding of integration can appear a priori *racist* (reliant on representational regimes which render the minority figure deviant) it suggests that there is little to salvage by way of meaningful sociological illustration. It would also occur to most readers that much ink has already been spilt on this matter by sociologists of various persuasions. What more is to be had?

The unique entry point of this thesis is its immanent re-purposing of integration in line with the 'drift' of multiculture (Hall 2000). Whilst I dismiss the political, ethical and analytic validity of integration, I do so from a position *within* the framework of integration *outcomes*. Specifically, I posit that the ends to which many integration scholars aspire are already empirically apparent, yet these ends manifest without actualising the key proposition contained in the concept of integration: the dissipation of 'salient' (Alba 2009: 57) cultural and identity difference (Gordon 1964, Waters and Jimenez 2005). I suggest that the worthwhile ends concerning shared life which responsible proponents of integration would welcome are already available. But recognition of already actualised integration in Stockholm and London necessitates a careful rethinking of how markers of ethnic difference and circuits of culture operate during contemporary urban interaction.

My specific engagement of integration outcomes is three fold: i) integration into shared fields of *interaction*; ii) integration into shared fields and sub-fields of *cultural activity*; and iii) integration into shared descriptive taxonomies which foster intelligible *communication*. Each analysis chapter, of which there are three, addresses the contemporary significance of ethnic difference in Stockholm and London for the realisation of these three respective ends. In turn, the chapters demonstrate the interactive frameworks by which ordinary performances of ethnic difference, as opposed to hindering or complicating these outcomes, become integral to their realisation. Crucially, this acknowledgement also rests on an analytic awareness of the spaces and cultural practices shared as being *remade* in ways such that they are no longer susceptible to the logic and symbolism of

ethno-national property. It is not that minorities are incorporated into a more accommodating sense of the national self (e.g. a more accommodating English-ness, Swedish-ness, or American-ness), as follows the 'new assimilation theory' laid out in the pivotal American work of Alba and Nee (2003: 14). But rather, that these spaces and practices cease to be the preserve of a symbolic mapping that trades in notions of communal territory, authenticity, and ethnically construed civilizational exclusivity.

The thesis is hereby best understood as an 'upside-down' engagement of integration. In the course of critiquing certain key propositions internal to the concept, I suggest that the outcomes associated with integration are already apparent in the routines of the minority participants who partook in this research. This specific focus on integration-oriented understandings of how lives and spaces are shared does mean, however, that my analysis will not endow the reader with a panoramic view of the lives led by the participants from London and Stockholm. Nor will it allow for an extended reflection upon the multiple structural arrangements (e.g. class and gender) which both 'constrain and enable the life-chances' (Alba 2005: 23) of these participants. Whilst intersecting lines of class and gender will show themselves to be relevant to *particular* analytic interpretations of the scenes witnessed and the interviews conducted, these important axes for understanding the structuring of social opportunities will not be pursued systematically. In other words, features of class positioning and gendered meanings are certainly vital to many analytic moments, but they are never the *object* of my discussion. The critical focus throughout this thesis settles on the specific question of integration vis-à-vis patterns of everyday urban interaction across markers of ethnic difference. By employing participant observation and interview research methods, and involving 23 second-generation research participants spread across four field sites in Stockholm and London, I look to propose alternative ways by which we might understand what constitutes integration in today's European cities, where it is made apparent, and how racialised difference is negotiated by members of multi-ethnic interactive fields.

Much of this critique is mobilised by delinking markers of ethnic difference from strong corollary expectations concerning cultural activity and/or communal membership. In other words, my critique of integration aims to complicate a number of associations which continue to trouble understandings of how difference circulates within routines of urban interaction. I target here the tendency of much public and academic commentary to trade in a series of analytic reductions, whereby: i) ethnic identification is

too heavily tied to expectations about culture and value-orientations; ii) identity performance is too often read as denoting a subjective internalisation of that particular identity position, whereby the subject is seemingly *of* the identity she refers to; and finally, iii) close social ties are too often seen as more meaningful and determinant of people's experiences than the negotiation of fleeting, irregular urban encounters. The last point of close versus fleeting ties is less of a reductionist problem, but retains a problematic bias weakening our sociological ability to locate what might constitute integration in today's European cities. The analytic purpose here is to move the performance of racialised ethnic difference within contemporary hubs of multiculture away from presumptive understandings of what that identificatory difference implies in terms of culture, interactive fluencies, and public encounters, however fleeting, with other social identities. Collectively, these anti-reductionist concerns amount to a critical rethinking of the status and meaning of racialised ethnic difference during urban interactive undertakings. Only through nuancing the situated *significance* of identificatory appeals to racialised ethnic difference is it possible to establish that difference is of itself rarely a hindrance to these outcomes being realised. It is this reconsideration of how racialised ethnic difference is understood by the participants involved that allows for a complementary reading of integration outcomes on the one hand and multi-ethnic multiculture on the other.

There is an instructive affinity between what I propose here in the form of a critical integration-multiculture complement and the analytic trajectory charted by Michael Keith over a number of recent works. Specifically, in the *diagnosing* of my initial socio-theoretical problematic – regarding an integration-multiculture compatibility – I find Keith's work to be a particularly helpful point of departure. Consequently, whilst I will be periodically returning to the work of Keith as this thesis unfolds, I wish to briefly emphasise at this early juncture one broad feature of his work which I transpose for my own introductory purposes. In *After the Cosmopolitan*, Keith (2005: 13) formulates a set of responses to the 'problems of living together in conditions of multicultural urbanism.' What is attractive in Keith's treatment of these challenges is that he refrains from taking the multiculture of ordinary civic life to be entirely self-sufficient (outside of governance or local, municipal politics) or removed from the more mundane activities and ideals constitutive of shared life. In other words, he does not reject outright nor take for granted the social *outcomes* often associated with the ideal of integration (though there is nothing to say that it must always remain the preserve of integration). This disposition

regarding a messy and necessarily tentative engagement of the outcomes often associated with integration is elegantly captured in Keith's (2007) defence of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion of which he was one of the 14 commissioners: '[The Commission] is not evangelising for a naive cosmopolitanism nor for a sub-national parochialism.' I too am intrigued by this navigation which retains a cosmopolitan multicultural spirit but roots it in the localised and situated social goods traditionally claimed by the term integration. But in so doing, Keith suggests that we must be able to stretch, rupture and remodel an idea of integration in line with the realities, both practical and ethical, of increased ethnic and other diversities alongside accelerating patterns of migrant movement (both domestic and global). This challenge could be pitched as an *engagement of integration outcomes in the context of post-integration circumstances*. By post-integration, I mean simply certain prosaic realities involving the proliferation in multiple ethnic diversities and flows of migration, alongside the different contemporary resonances by which racialised ethnicity circulates and/or can circulate. These features collectively ensure that integration, as traditionally construed, is no longer feasible or desirable. It is in many instances this general post-integration problematic, which I read Keith's work as also gesturing towards, that I try to address in this thesis: by using conviviality as a basis to critically remodel certain integration outcomes in a manner responsive to multiculture.

1.1. Conviviality and the Status of Racialised Ethnic Difference

The following sections will outline the shape of these three substantive chapters, chapters which attempt an immanent critique of integration and, by implication, a critique of how claims to ethnic difference are best understood. Though I defer the bulk of my theoretical engagement to the analysis chapters themselves – which also entails that a separate literature review chapter will not be provided in this thesis – I will in these sections briefly sketch the different theoretical concerns which shape each analysis chapter.

My analysis opens with the concept of conviviality, which was proposed by Paul Gilroy (2004) in *After Empire* to capture the quotidian routines of multi-ethnic multiculture apparent across various metropolitan hubs. Given that I have a particular reading of conviviality and establish a scheme by which I could empirically harness the concept, the term shadows much of the analysis of integration and multiculture as detailed in the remaining two chapters. Conviviality as theorised by Gilroy is particularly helpful, as it

offers three mutually supportive understandings of identity difference which figure prominently in the casual multi-ethnic collaboration that I witnessed in Stockholm and London. Ethnic difference is not a hindrance to interaction; ethnic difference does not denote cultural disposition – markers of ethnic difference do not by default promote in their bearers a logic of cultural authenticity as appropriate/inappropriate to the respective markings; and ethnic difference need not exercise an ontological hold on the imagination of those who identify with that difference in a given situational context.

The specific appeal of Gilroy's argument lies in his departure from principles of 'respect' and 'recognition' when theorising multi-ethnic cohabitation. These principles presume the difference of others to be both ontologically authentic and hermetically sealed: i.e. orthodox multiculturalism and the Orientalist politics of 'recognition and reconciliation' (Amin 2012: 7) that undergird it. Moving away from notions of difference hungry for respect and self-containment involves for Gilroy (2004: 105) a deconstructive practice of interaction where identity difference is rendered politically 'unremarkable'. If difference itself is no longer a socially policed phenomenon, no longer a set of signs which carries with it a fixed set of behavioural instructions, it is more easily circumvented and/or absorbed during the course of habitual, daily engagements. It is not that the cityscape is stripped of cultural difference. It is only that cultural difference is no longer tied to suitably inscribed subject positions. There is no longer a socially monitored correspondence between cultural difference and accordingly marked subjects of difference. As such, though ethnic difference is not of its own accord a hindrance to interaction, there are particular symbolic, normative goods (alongside an only partially monetised spatial infrastructure) which allow for fluent interaction across putative lines of difference. Ultimately, the attraction of Gilroy's conviviality in relation to integration debates lies in the observation that the emergence in certain spaces of a normative multiculture renders fluent interaction across markers of differences commonplace and unremarkable. A practice of multiculture where difference is neither elided nor fetishized/obstructive is what I understand to be the 'convivial culture' of emergent postcolonial cities that Gilroy characterises. The particular empirical emphasis of this chapter lies, therefore, in an exploration of how racialised ethnic difference is habitually worked across without it being actively effaced or dissuaded.

The use of conviviality as an analytic concept also allows my research to suggest that it is not regularised *contact* and shared *ties* (Putnam 2007: 143-144) themselves that presages

a fluent basis for multi-ethnic interaction. An emphasis on 'contact', posited as a valuable social good in its own right (Castles 2001), has increasingly skewed the imagination of scholars interested in integration and more recent notions of 'community cohesion'. I conclude that the tendency of this approach to render any claim to difference subsidiary to a shared collective affiliation – what Ash Amin (2012: 18) deplores as the tired yet troublingly resilient 'sociology of ties' – is both a dangerous misnomer and pragmatically quixotic. My analysis suggests that contact in itself is of no great consequence. Instead, what is apparent during habitual public interaction – interaction where conflict is either minimal or is addressed through particular techniques (what I call in this chapter an 'ability to pause' when invited to racialise an instance of conflict) – is the operationalisation of a cluster of norms which *neutralises difference as a legitimate interface for interrogation*. This rendering of ethnic difference as 'unremarkable', as unworthy of casual assessment, allows for multiple forms of mundane interaction across and through boundaries of difference. Though Gilroy's (2004: x) stress on an 'unruly' multiculture suggests an interactive field largely unconcerned with a dispositional framework, the research material presented here argues that conviviality does itself constitute a 'thin' normative code of sorts: a normative multiculture, so to speak. As much as racism can be seen as a result of habituation into racist normative structures, it can be supposed that the emergence of a multicultural 'indifference to difference', a sensibility which allows for a fluent and unspectacular breaching of racial and ethnic boundaries, is also a result of alternative 'habits' and 'habituations' (Neal et al. 2013, Noble 2013: 162). It is such habituation into multiculture that I seek to unpack in this chapter, and indeed in the thesis as a whole.

1.2. Integration, Culture and the Consumerist Capture

Having undertaken in the previous chapter an extensive development of conviviality as a valid concept for tracking the ordinary encounters relevant to these second-generation participants, I turn here to an analysis of the actual cultural routines which underpin convivial as well as *non-* or *less* convivial encounters and spaces. In conducting this analysis, the chapter will comment on the *status* of the cultural customs and habits pursued by the participants. I will contest here a popular mode of ethnic reductivism prevalent in the literature on integration (even in the more sensitive approaches of Alba (2005), Gans (1997) Jimenez (2010), Morawska (2003) and Waters [1990]) which sees the signification of ethnicity as denoting, *ipso facto*, a particular set of unique, hermetically

sealed cultural values and dispositions. In the course of complicating this association, it will be proposed *that integration itself is a key process through which identity differentiation manifests in the first place*. Consequently, I am keen to frame integration as a term which might consider compatible, even mutually constitutive, the processes of entry into mainstream economic and cultural arenas and the assertion of racialised ethnic difference. The intention here is to critically interrogate the *zero-sum game* between integration and differentiated ethnic identity so prevalent in both academic and popular discourse.

Expanding on this theme of compatibility, or more properly put, *simultaneity,* the second half of this chapter moves into a discussion of consumerism. I comment on the intense figuring of consumerist routines in the lifestyles of my participants. In locating the pronounced profile of consumerist conceptions of assertion, value and dignity, this chapter situates the performance of ethnic identity within the broader cultural ethos of late-capitalist, metropolitan living. By situating the routines of these individuals within consumerist circuits of self-affirmation, morality and urban experience, I am able to disrupt the dichotomous framing of Western acculturation contra the 'retention' (Gans 1997: 875) of ethnic identity particularity. This discussion point also allows me to consider more concertedly *new* registers of *material inequality*, drawing attention to how incorporation into the consumerist imagination triggers according forms of humiliation and felt exclusion. In drawing out this more explicit discussion of inequality vis-à-vis consumerism, I will briefly route my discussion through the 2011 riots in England. (These riots are rendered particularly relevant due to two of the research participants being residents of one of the estates central to the rioting as it transpired in Clapham Junction.)

Somewhat surprisingly, the analytic models assumed by integration theorists seem uninterested by the question of consumerism. Consequently, by demonstrating the centrality of consumerist modes of interaction to the lives of my participants, I argue that academic commentary on integration remains woefully unaware of a central register concerning contemporary Western life. Moreover, in documenting the consumerist figurations in the lives of the participants, this chapter opens up another angle of critique concerning the concept of integration – a concept whose endgame is the consolidation of a shared and overarching national identity. Namely, if consumerism is embryonically tied to broader regimes of individualisation (Bauman 2005, Giddens

1991) – whereby individuals are increasingly 'responsibilised' as discrete, atomic entities only accountable to themselves – then the consenting of an individual to the consumerist imagination significantly forecloses the very standing of any shared collective ethos. Put simply, integration into consumerism runs counter to integration into a collective identity. The two are in conflict.

It would be right to argue, however, that narrations of nation in the Western world, and elsewhere too, given the very European origins of the formation and its export, crystallised, necessarily, in line with the modern reconstitution of the social along capitalist paradigms (Bhabha 1990, Chatterjee 1996). This socio-economic context entails that the nation-form has *always* held central a bourgeois subject who is pictured as discrete, independent and self-reliant. The narrative forces which thus bring about the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) have always struck a delicate harmonisation between the individualised capitalist subject and an affective investment in the national collective. But it might be argued that the advent of the consumerist economy has substantively intensified this latent tension, rupturing the post-war, welfare state consensus which traversed a more effective capitalist equilibrium between collective attachment and individualised self-reliance. As such, it is argued during this phase of the chapter that a consumerist constitution of the citizen-subject brings under considerable stress all ideas of the social, when collectively construed. Seen in this manner, the very notion of identificatory integration can seem anachronistic. It is this anachronism that I will draw forth in the second half of this chapter.

1.3. Practices of Identity Citation and Everyday Communication

Having suggested that ethnic difference is neither a hindrance to interaction ('conviviality'), nor independent to processes of acculturation ('simultaneity'), this chapter ventures to suggest that ethnic difference can often be seen in even weaker terms. Implicitly drawing upon a philosophy of ordinary language tradition, I argue that claims to difference are perhaps best read as primarily localised and situated 'citation' practices which are only actualised in the interests of *intelligible* communication. Namely, second-generation individuals, acutely aware of a prevailing nomenclature concerning the symbolic ordering of a national polity and its relevant other figures, often subscribe to this nomenclature only as a means of remaining intelligible to the dominant social gaze and certain second-order interlocutors.

Whilst many of the participants both recognise and observe the prevailing mapping of ethnic difference, this practice does not *ipso facto* denote an affective and/or communal investment in that marking of difference. It is not clear that the 'citation' practices that these participants marshal must lead to a communal understanding of their cultural and political selves. Instead, what lingers when those relevant participants engage such 'naming codes' is merely an understanding of themselves as social agents partaking in shared conversations. Hereby, these agents can be seen to exercise a certain *distance* from the marker of difference which they attribute to themselves and others attribute to them.

This reading marks a significant reworking of the orthodox treatment of integration as it posits the *assent* to a certain differential identity – the significance of which lies in its status as outsider/non-normative – as testimony to incorporation into a *shared* societal language. Making and recognising oneself as significantly different in a coherent and intelligible fashion is an integral stage in the rendering of oneself an able participatory member of a particular society. I argue that integration scholars, and indeed scholars of race and difference too, might do better to understand that difference is often only made apparent due to the very *integration* of the respective individual into the prevailing taxonomy of difference. Consequently, integration is again inverted as being the very process which allows for difference to circulate – as the basis for difference being actualised within a certain intelligible, sense-making scheme that precedes the individual in question. Whilst alarms about inadequate integration often stoke fears about 'discontinuous experience and problems of insuperable communication' (Gilroy 2006: 40), this chapter suggests that it is in fact an integration *into* difference that makes passing communication possible in the first place.

Helpfully, one prominent thread of recent integration theory, the segmented assimilation approach, does seem better attuned to some of the argument fashioned here. This primarily U.S. school of thought constitutes the most significant attempt at a more complex and multi-vectored understanding of contemporary integration processes. Through critical engagement of this response to the linear assimilation model, I will look to nuance my presentation of integration theory as relevant to the participants' lives. It will be maintained, however, that even this approach remains insufficiently flexible to analytically process the different resonances of ethnic

identification practices. This one outstanding reservation will inform the second half of this chapter.

If identity claims are, as I will initially suggest, often mere cognizant citations as befitting an appropriate behavioural code, a question then arises about the supposed affective commitment to an idea of discrete and self-contained community which a claim to ethnic difference is presumptively said to entail. This localised texturing of what does *not* inferentially follow from ordinary affirmations of ethnic difference leads to a broader critique concerning the relationship of ethnic identity to more diffuse political programmes vis-à-vis the reception of difference. This chapter's coda feeds into a development of a multicultural ethos as relevant to the lives of the participants.

1.4. Multiculturalism, and why?

In the context of my gradual thinning of the purchase that markers of ethnic difference actualise upon the cultural undertakings of the participants, the thesis moves towards a concluding engagement of the specifically political implications of any such 'thinning'. It is the contested terrain of multiculturalism that is best suited to host this broader deliberation.

My attempt at a defence of multiculturalism is important to this thesis at three levels. First, the manner in which I execute this discussion draws in a number of themes covered previously: a critique of ethnic absolutism; the fluidity and situated character of racialised ethnic identifications; a mapping of everyday interactive conviviality; a participant-led critique of 'multicultural-crises' discourses; and the felt, assertive difference resulting from encounters with racialised interrogation. Second, my particular defence of multiculturalism serves as a primer for the thesis's conclusion where I briefly articulate a decidedly utopian appeal towards a cosmopolitan ethical future. Though multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism are two separate terms around which different types of work are done (the former primarily descriptive, the latter ethical), I believe the two to be pragmatically entwined. I argue that participation in convivial cultural practices cultivates some of the preparatory, practical work which might allow for imaginings of a cosmopolitan-minded ethical relationship to others – be they the strangers in our immediate midst or victims of violence and capital extraction in lands

seemingly distant. Put simply, out of a multiculturalism that is allied to the conviviality of contemporary urban culture, there *might* emerge cosmopolitanism.

There is, however, another perhaps more pressing reason as to why multiculturalism must feature in this thesis. The touchstone for my argument here is *Multiculturalism without Culture*, the important work of Anne Phillips (2007). Phillips isolates at one stage a few observations when justifying her need to defend multiculturalism (70-72). It is her third argument, a 'directly political' (72) one, which is particularly strong. To retreat from multiculturalism, she intimates, shows a certain political naïveté and intellectual resignation. When multiculturalism is caricatured in the course of a broader 'return to narrower and more exclusionary notions of national identity' (72), it is imprudent to defer to the legitimacy of the very caricature. She argues that given how much multiculturalism is already with us, 'this is not the moment for sounding the retreat from everything that multiculturalism implies' (72). To pursue this route amounts to an unwitting form of quietism. Not least, I might contend, because the darker denizens of contemporary Europe themselves recognise that at stake in the struggle to define multiculturalism is the legitimacy of their own lives as denizens of multiculture – as denizens of those multi-ethnic spaces which resist any attempt at an uncomplicated, efficient narration of national identity. It is in this context, that a more able, politically competent multiculturalism is to be formulated.

1.5. Multicultural 'failures' and the return of integration

As a way of concluding this introductory discussion, I wish to address in further depth this question of multiculturalism and its oft-trumpeted failure. Involving myself in this foetid terrain allows me to better draw out the historico-political conjuncture within which this thesis finds its topical bearing. Through a parsing of contemporary representations of multiculturalism, I place the discursive coordinates within which integration has become so favourably central to contemporary political discussion. Adopting a loosely dialectical approach, it is via a grasping of the populist hostility to *multiculturalism* that the increased appeal of *integration* (Back et al. 2002, Brubaker 2001) begins to make discursive sense.

And as a perhaps entertaining entry into this discussion, I wish to briefly touch upon a recent exchange between Slavoj Žižek and Sara Ahmed. Taking issue with Žižek's claim that multiculturalism is today's hegemony, I argue that it is the logic of integration which

is hegemonic – but integration *does* rely on a particular straw-man representation of 'multiculturalism-as-tolerance' to orient its hegemonic legitimacy. I explore here the manner in which a conception of multiculturalism-as-tolerance can seem to paradoxically further a pro-integration consensus. The case to be answered here is: how can such thin versions of the multicultural imperative lead to any conclusion other than the declaration of its own impossibility? After all, the multicultural call to tolerance – if only that – is evidently not about tolerance of others, for it only recognises such figures in the form that they are already intelligible: as members of dysfunctional foreign cultures which are, quite simply, intolerable.

1.5.1. Are we all multiculturalists now?

Attention to Žižek – a figurehead voice of contemporary critical theory – and his reading of multiculturalism's ideological status signals the manner in which a wilful mischaracterisation of multiculturalism underpins even the better of publically prominent theoretical undertakings. The revealing discussion around the status of the term was prompted by Žižek's charge during a plenary talk that 'Multiculturalism is hegemonic. It is an empirical fact.' Though he declined to expand on the claim during the talk itself, he has maintained in a number of pieces elsewhere (1997, 2011) that he reads a multiculturalist consensus – wherein the political centre adopts a platform which is tolerant of the other's difference (Žižek 2010) – as already operational and serving a hegemonic function.

In contrast, Ahmed (2008) considers Žižek's sweeping read of multiculturalism's political status entirely misplaced: as it is, in actuality, '[t]he speech act that declares liberal multiculturalism hegemonic which is hegemonic.' The two positions can hereby be summarised in the following way. Multiculturalism as tolerance is indeed an ideological ruse, just not in the manner in which Žižek deems it to be. For Žižek, tolerance is hegemonic, as it is an ideologically centred co-option of minority dissent and undermines a Universalist resistance amongst the exploited, whilst for Ahmed, it is the *illusion* that we are tolerant that is hegemonic. Ahmed sees little empirical grounds to conclude that multiculturalism is in any way pervasive or politically centrist. Thus, in terms of reading the ideological moment, she thinks it of greater relevance to show who has most to gain when multiculturalism is popularly evoked as *somehow* enjoying the

consensus of the establishment. Incorporating her idea of the 'non-performative',[2] she concludes that it is through constructing an enemy daunting in its magnitude (i.e. consensus of the centre) that it is possible to endow one's own position (i.e. integrationism), which is the actual populist position, with a sense of righteous urgency.

What I take from this is that at stake in the ritual denunciations of multiculturalism and its excesses is not some robust pro-difference ideological package which enjoys state patronage. Rather, the multicultural crisis framing hinges on a set of anxieties triggered by the increased visibility of *multiculture* itself – an irreducible, lived multiculture which is described by Lentin and Titley (2011: 17), in a strong nod to Gilroy's notion of conviviality, as 'unromantic, everyday cohabitation [where] banal intermixture and interaction are routine.' More to the point, a dismissal of multiculturalism becomes a key discursive space where racism is 'laundered' (16). The inflated belief in multiculturalism's hold upon government policy, a multiculturalism which reads as the unhinged tolerance of minority 'ways', allows for a whole variety of social problems to be explained away as the minority communities' doing: as an inevitable outcome of minority 'cultures' being tolerated. The minority presence, *precisely* due to its excessive attachment to an illiberal group 'culture', is ably situated at the explanatory centre of any number of social ills: be it security and crime (Bawer 2010), fiscal imbalances, unemployment and welfare-dependency (Sarrazin 2010) or even democratic deficits, the collapse of the welfare state, and the alleged erosion of civic trust (Goodhart 2004, 2005, Putnam 2007). In short, multiculturalism is rallied as a sign by a varied cast of voices to mark a distinct and diffuse sense of societal crisis; and inversely, integration obtains a panacean quality in the public imagination.

1.5.2. To tolerate the intolerable?

Žižek issued a rejoinder, later reproduced in his *Living in End Times* (2011), clarifying the nature of his antipathy for multicultural politics (39-48). In doing so, he draws our attention to a Slovenian example (45-46), wherein he cites sympathetically the *fear* articulated by the Slovene residents of a small town concerning a wave of criminal activity attributed to various local Roma from a nearby settlement. Though part of Žižek's point, with justification, is to draw attention to the liberal pretence of the

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[2] The action of a 'non-performative' lies in the persuasive declaration of a certain situation as such (e.g. multiculturalist or anti-racist), whilst no material change in the state-of-affairs transpires (Ahmed 2005: 3).

urbanites, his critique continues to operate within the rhetorical terrain already occupied by the xenoracist Cassandras of civilizational demise.

> 'Predictably, Slovenian liberals condemned them as racists. [...] When the TV reporters interviewed the 'racists' from the town, they were clearly seen to be a group of people frightened by the constant fighting and shooting in the Roma camp, by the constant theft of animals from their farms, and by other forms of small harassments from the Roma.[3] It is all too easy to say (as the liberals did) that the Roma way of life is (also) a consequence of the centuries of their exclusion and mistreatment, that the people in the nearby town should also open themselves more to the Roma, etc. – nobody clearly answered the local 'racists' what they should concretely do to solve the very real problems the Roma camp evidently was for them' (46).

Žižek seems to suggest here that the entire community of Roma be held responsible for this 'harassment'. The Roma camp is without hesitation marked as a *problematic* space (as is so often the case when spaces with a sizeable minority presence are discussed), posing a threat to the wronged farmer community. Why is Žižek so quick to adopt this conflict frame, why is the 'them' and 'us', the culprits and the frightened, so uncritically assumed as self-explanatory? Why are the townspeople's grievances accorded the emphasis of being *very* real? After all, it could equally be asked: 'what should be done to concretely solve the very real problems the Slovene town evidently was for *them* [the Roma].' The repetition of the adjective 'constant' further reveals his sense that the troubles of the townspeople are more immediate, requiring a response which multiculturalism cannot handle. Indeed, there is a strange intimation here that the problem is itself caused or exacerbated by the 'liberal multiculturalists' supposed support for the Roma 'way of life' (2011: 39, 46). Equally, it is misleading of Žižek to imply that 'multiculturalists' believe that the police should not take action. The conflation of multiculturalism with an element of lawlessness is baffling, yet all too familiar to those versed in anti-multiculturalism homilies. Ultimately, the same reasoning which allows for Sarkozy's posturing – during his move to evict *en masse* Roma camps in France (*Guardian* 2010) – is latent in Žižek's dismissal.

This straw-man multiculturalism is the same conception favoured by a commentariat who stylise themselves as brave guardians of liberal and integrationist values. Bruce

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[3]This extended response to Ahmed, 'Appendix: 'Multiculturalism, the Reality of an Illusion'', appeared originally in 2008 on: http://www.lacan.com/essays/?page_id=454. The text is reproduced, nearly verbatim, in *Living in End Times*. There are however occasional alterations. Tellingly, concerning the quote above, the book version drops the concluding phrase: 'from the Roma'. I believe the original phrasing to be in the spirit of the broader argument being made and thus, chose to retain it. It is only right however to make this minor revision from the earlier manuscript known to the reader.

Bawer (2010: 5), a self-declared 'centrist' essayist who authored a well-received call to arms concerning the increased profile of Islam in the West, makes a typically unsubtle claim in *Surrender*: '[T]he pernicious doctrine of multiculturalism which has asked free people to sacrifice their own liberties, while bending their knees to tyrants, has proven so useful to the new breed of cultural jihadists that it might have been invented by Osama bin Laden himself.' Not much is left to the imagination. We witness here the customary proximate fixing of an inherent, dysfunctional violence (i.e. bin Laden) onto the bearer of difference. Multiculturalism, as a broader political programme, is seen in turn as the sponsor of such pathology, automatically deferring to the authority of ethno-cultural difference. For Žižek – despite his writing from the other end of the ideological spectrum – the political objective of multiculturalism is seemingly little different.

Žižek (2011: 45) is of course right to suggest, in agreement with Ahmed, that 'general 'civil racism' is rendered invisible' when sentiments of tolerance are appealed to in the act of demonstratively rejecting a vulgar racism (e.g. Front National). The spectacle of nominal anti-racism allows for the understated routines of racial vilification practiced in everyday representations to obtain a further layer of obfuscation. This 'multiculturalism as tolerance' – where racism is individualised or re-narrated as only relevant to a fringe sub-culture (Gilroy 2013a) – absolves what Anne-Marie Fortier (2008: 31) sardonically dubs the 'decent majority' of any complicity in racist discourses.

However, this rendition of multiculturalism is, in the final reckoning, uninterested even in a nominal tolerance but rather can aspire only for integration. I believe the distinction to be crucial. To put it boldly, does the term tolerate remain even intelligible if it concerns only the special interests of those subjects whose representational cues as fundamentalists, criminals and welfare dependents endure? Does the term remain applicable if multiculturalism comes to be framed as the accommodation of *illiberal* peoples and thereupon, necessitates the loss of 'our' most cherished political norms? Multicultural tolerance, if that alone, is evidently not about a reversing of integrationist paradigms, as it only recognises the minority figures in the form that they are already intelligible: as racialised others and the dysfunctional attributes this status invokes.

In turn, it is worth restating here how this thesis works against the above 'impossible' framing of multiculturalism. Put simply, practices of conviviality and its habituation, which are at the centre of my analysis, demonstrate that a critique of existing

representational regimes is an a priori in the realisation of fluent everyday interaction. In the absence of such a critique, nothing else can follow. It is not that the participants seek out tolerance or acceptance within the terms of the representational regimes already in place. On the contrary, these agents of conviviality demonstrate that an inclusive public sphere rests on the very critique of such (racist) representations of difference. In turn, it is the very need for *tolerance* and *acceptance* which is upended in the convivial undertakings of these subjects.

1.5.3. Integration: the only reasonable response for reasonable people

If multiculturalism is to be peddled only in its thin, tolerance form, it is nothing but a convenient foil for what Back et al. identified in 2002 as the New Labour retreat to integrationism. It is this *instrumental* value of such a narration of multiculturalism for a nationalist cause, intensified by the fallout of 9/11, which Žižek, in a manner I consider symptomatic of the broader discursive moment, seems unable to recognise. Pathik Pathak's (2007) critique of the resurgent fashion for Left communitarianism – which he addresses through the writings of David Goodhart – is particularly instructive in unpacking the service this distorted multiculturalism does in supporting an end which is, in the final instance, integrationist. Pathak suggests that there is little in *principle* to distinguish the liberal communitarians from the hollow multiculturalism which they denounce. Positing Bikhu Parekh as the foremost 'grandmaster' of an insular and unimaginative multiculturalism, Pathak argues that Parekh's 'community of communities' vision is merely a synonym for 'plural monocultures' (2007: 263-264). By the same token, David Goodhart – despite having garnered great acclaim among a left fatigued by multiculturalism – is himself seduced by the promise of monoculture, but as a *unitary, national* monoculture (264). The intimation of this Left-communitarian argument is that monoculture, and its unapologetic policing (Goodhart: 2004, 2005), is the very basis for the affective solidarity needed for a coherent redistributive welfare state to function. What Pathak neatly reveals here is that the communitarians who read integration as a cure-all take their conceptual cue from the same master-frame within which crude representations of multiculturalism are articulated.

This is well-observed. But I contend that the symbiosis of integration and multiculturalism is even more insidious than Pathak accounts for. Multiculturalism, portrayed as a programme to facilitate the tolerance of ethnically other 'monocultures',

can be read as a *necessary* discursive prop to advance a rehabilitated integrationist narrative. It acts as the obverse side of the integrationist coin. While eschewing the overt summons to a homogenous ethnic polity (i.e. traditional assimilation), it suffices to engineer the same end by maintaining that racialised ethnic groups, unless reconstituted, pose a threat to the *democratic* conversation by virtue of the negative features which their 'cultures' espouse. The homogenous and hermetically sealed minority monoculture, when appraised by an unsympathetic symbolic standard, can only be deemed as being incompatible with the civilizational, civic values that the majority nation monopolistically appropriates for itself (e.g. freedom, civility, liberalism, decency, enterprising [McGhee 2008, 2009]). Hereby, when multiculturalism is presented as the tolerance of such other monocultures, it is pitched as so dramatic an imposition that at stake in any significant concession to it is the irretrievable erosion of our prized liberal core and capitalist work ethic. All that is left for 'reasonable people to do' is to demand the integration of ethnic minorities into a unitary identity field. And indeed, this call for integration has become increasingly 'common-sensical' across Europe – including Sweden and the United Kingdom. It is presented as something which 'reasonable' people (e.g. the much touted 'Middle' or 'Deep' England) would be mad not to endorse.

It is consequently this untenable characterisation of multiculturalism – a characterisation which dances to the tune of integrationism – which this thesis confronts. In many ways, the argumentative structure I assume could be read as inverting what is the parasitic reliance of integrationism upon a repudiated multiculturalism. Whilst integration ridicules multiculturalism for its own ends, I work against integration in order to posit a lived and more hopeful multiculturalism. In stronger terms, the racist discourses which undergird integrationism are only effectively combatted when multiculturalism is articulated outside of its caricature. Working within the dominant picturing of multiculturalism is already to wage a losing battle as it can only operate within the remit of racism.

1.6. Conclusion

This extended discussion has looked at the ways in which integrationist narratives are licensed by a thinning of what multiculturalism is said to stand for. Through attention to the discursive coordinates which frame the issue of multiculturalism, I provided a better feel for how and why the clarion call of integration has become increasingly shrill –

arguing that the multicultural mischaracterisation has become central to the revival of integration imperatives. Consequently, it is amidst this specific discursive context that my following critique of integration – an analytic critique which centres on a re-evaluation of how racialised ethnic difference operates during contemporary urban interaction – obtains its sociological and political salience. In parsing interrelated themes such as conviviality, second-order interaction, and the connections (or lack thereof) of culture and communal membership to markers of ethnic difference; the three empirical chapters of the thesis suggest that the outcomes concerning collaborative civic life are realised not because of, but in spite of how integration is commonly understood. With regard to the rhythms of the second-generation participants from Stockholm and London who featured in this research, the same integration *outcomes* are actualised, but only through the convivial interactive fields of urban multiculture. It is in this light that my thesis moves, during the latter half of my final analysis chapter, towards a qualified defence of multiculturalism. And in doing I so, I look to harness the pragmatic politics of an 'indifference to difference' which already underpin the multi-ethnic interactive routines articulated by these research participants.

But prior to embarking on my presentation of firstly, the methodological approach employed, and secondly, an analysis of the field-material generated, there is one terminological clarification important to how the reader approaches the rest of this thesis. This clarification concerns my regular use of the term '*racialised ethnicity*'. I position this clarification vis-à-vis Gilroy's own complicated anti-race position. Working from Gilroy's critique of race satisfies two purposes. First, Gilroy can be considered the sociologist most influential in commanding a need to think creatively against the hold of racial ontologies ('raciology') upon our social imagination. Hereby, my own thinning of race finds an instructive affinity with his work. Second, Gilroy's recurring prominence throughout this thesis requires a terminology of difference which can remain commensurable to his.

This thesis will use race and ethnicity interchangeably; though, properly put, the phrase I work around is 'racialised ethnicity'. My basic understanding is that whilst Gilroy reserves special opprobrium for the category of race, due to its overtly biological conceits, it is in practice *any* 'pre-political' (2000) communal identity – racial, ethnic and national – which Gilroy finds problematic. Admittedly, certain lines such as the

following, in a 'Response' article to Robert Sampson, suggest that such a conflation is inadmissible:

> Common inattention to the history of US racism and racial hierarchy promotes *cultural* divisions as the privileged explanation of local, national and indeed geo-political conflicts. This is something that haunts all those who, like Sampson, slip into using race and ethnicity interchangeably (Gilroy 2009: 35, original emphasis).

Gilroy is of course right. In the context of European discussions on minority social mobility, or lack thereof, there is often a cultural 'slip' in trying to ascertain the notable causes. This slip comes at the expense of attention to the structural and civic forms of exclusion which are of greater efficacious import. But despite Gilroy suggesting that race is being conflated for ethnicity, his broader thesis seems opposed to the cultural reductivism tied to *any* form of communal identification. As he has written elsewhere, '[t]he especially crude and reductive notions of culture are clearly associated with an older discourse of racial and ethnic difference which is entangled with the history of the idea of culture in the modern West' (1993: 7). Apparent here is a hostility to reductionisms which read culture off communal identification – racial *and/or* ethnic. My consequent understanding is that Gilroy's broader politico-theoretical critique, most overt in his post-*Black Atlantic* (1993) works, is applicable to both categorical sets: both race and ethnicity. For example, in *After Empire* (2004: 39), he deplores in equal measure the 'variety of depressing options in the unwholesome cornucopia of absolutist thinking about 'race' and ethnicity.' Here, ethnicity is merely a continuation of race, and vice-versa.

It is of course so that race might be distinguished from ethnicity and nation as being *the* 'pre-political' category (Gilroy 2000); it is modernity's attempt to give the 'imagined community' its most definitive definition. Race, with its pretence of biological scientism and supposed visual immediacy, strikes a particularly stubborn ontology, making communal difference appear all the more real and intractable. There is great truth in this. But I would add that contemporary discourses around communal difference are sufficiently unique that it is unlikely that anyone uses race in a manner divorced of ethnic connotations. A number of recent works (Meer 2012, Rattansi 2007) have stressed that racial signs are always denoting a set of characteristics which is seen to constitute some form of *cultural* disposition and incompatibility. Hegemonic racism is

never discrimination on account of race in itself. I see no theory of racism, even an unsophisticated one, that could ever be a theory of biology only, for the point of 'race-thinking' is that biology has social effects. Racism always mobilises a rationale, in a manner germane to what Gilroy states above, which can excuse and legitimate certain inequities as well as engage in forms of scapegoating on account of the cultural tendencies attributed to the group in question. In other words, race is invested with cultural (ethnic) assignations. Similarly, in the context of *contemporary* European discourses, ethnicity is seen as the preserve of those who are *racialised* as non-European (Bhabha 1996). Bearing an ethnicity is itself the racialised burden. It is the racialised foreigner and her descendants who are most often the bearers of ethnicity. Ethnicity and race end up doing much of the same descriptive and explanatory work.

The argument of Lentin and Titley (2011) is again particularly apt here for its ability to facilitate a more cautious historical take on the now common distinction between the sociology of race concerning biological and cultural racism respectively. Drawing upon commentaries on the Jewish threat to the nation as imagined throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the authors stress how it was, in the final reckoning, the *cultural* cues tied to a Jewish 'race apart' (53) which animated the 'problem posed by Otherness' (62). The authors could however have been even bolder in their complication of the sociological periodisation of racism as once biological and now cultural. Namely, if the discursive scripts informing today's 'cultural racism' are to be seen as 'palimpsests' (122) of the past, the authors might have more purposefully elaborated upon the question they themselves open: to what extent does 'this essential semantic shift' (68) remain analytically helpful for the sociology of racism if the 'two [ethnicity/culture and race] have never been easily distinguishable' (68)? I do not wish nor am I able to settle this historical debate. I only suggest that race and ethnicity have always enjoyed some degree of mutual dependence, and this interdependence can seem more pronounced today than ever before. Much of the sociological theorisation of today's racism, theorised under the terms 'new', 'cultural' and 'post-racial' (Balibar 1993, Barker 1981, Goldberg 2009, Taguieff 1990, Winant 2004), all attempt to locate how ethnicity, as a form of ascribed cultural identity, is semiotically funnelled through race in the course of legitimating everyday structural exclusions and in legitimating different governmental, securitising practices (i.e. hegemony). Herein, I conclude that when speaking of markers of

communal difference as they circulate across contemporary Europe, we are indeed speaking of a 'racialised ethnicity'.

In conclusion, I believe racialised ethnicity is the preferred and more accurate term to discuss the identities of difference ascribed and the exclusions rationalised. I believe this reading allows me to engage Gilroy and the broader anti-race position in a manner sufficiently consistent with the historical present characterising Europe. My use of this term recognises that race is particularly invidious – by its intimations of bodily permanence and by its seemingly indelible visual resonance. But my reading also works from the basis that contemporary evocations of ethnic culture are fundamentally tied to race. They act in tandem.

It remains a given of course that processes of racialisation are always about the projection of power and exploitation/oppression. Through racialisation, appropriately marked subjects are compelled to contend with a broad assemblage of material and symbolic violence. It is only racism which stands to earn when individuals who are positioned along different social locations are bundled together into generic, unitary and often pathological stereotypes. But it is not self-explanatory that being racialised strips the relevant subject of responses which might work around these inscriptions in a manner which lessens its communalist purchase during their own everyday interaction. The responses to these representational regimes on the part of the participants are of a different order; they are not limited to the structures of identity production which privilege notions of a racial ontology. Racialisation does not limit the life of race or 'race is more than [just] racism' (Omi and Winant 2012: 970). This basic premise figures prominently when I unpack the misreadings of racialised identity which much of the scholarship around integration is susceptible to. I argue that racialised subjects can take certain aspects of their attributed locations and render them positive markers of identity which are non-foundationalist, non-prepolitical and open to contamination. Put differently, this thesis in no way underplays the sustained iterations of racism which affect the lives of these participants; indeed, its prevalence is presented as central to the grievances and political positions concerning difference and its everyday reception which the participants advance. But what I do argue is that the participants do exercise patterns of urban engagement which render racism and the exclusionary sense of space and culture it invites less practicable and less sustainable.

This attempt to think around racialised ethnic difference – whereby its hold upon the participants' daily undertakings is lifted outside of racism and its absolutist logic – will initiate the next methodological chapter. Namely, my attempt to think about how racialised ethnicity is in various iterations of urban multiculture rendered politically unimportant – rendered unworthy of normative interrogation – figures centrally in the drafting of my research design and also in the temperament with which I approach the field material gathered.

2. Methodology

2.1. Introduction

Having outlined the broader discursive terrain within which this thesis's critique of integration is situated, this chapter addresses some of the methodological features relevant to my research. In the main, this chapter addresses the practical details concerning the field sites researched. It also outlines the specific ways in which my approach *borrows,* through its use of participant observation and interview methods, from an ethnographic research tradition. But the manner of this description also necessitates an engagement with certain theoretical concepts such as: social constructionism, post-racial and/or cultural racism, super-diversity and methodological nationalism.

The discussion hereby opens with a theoretical debate which addresses certain shortcomings associated with social constructionism and its influence upon the study of urban ethnic difference. Addressing some key issues with constructionism allows me to outline a methodological position which is better suited to the 'thinning' of identity that my critique of integration necessitates. The chapter then proceeds to lay out some historical features relevant to the field sites observed in London and Stockholm, with emphasis on the latter. Initially detailing the historical context by which these two cities have become both (re)racialised and 'super-diverse', this phase of the chapter also establishes some key exclusionary realities concerning multi-ethnic life in the two cities. In doing so, the discussion is threaded through descriptions of the four field sites researched: Upplands Väsby and Sundbyberg in Stockholm, and Harrow and Clapham Junction in London. The chapter concludes with a few comments justifying the benefits of a research approach which combines interviews and participant observation and also outlines the specific sequence of my research activities.

2.2. Qualitative research and social constructionism

The aim of critiquing how integration manifests and where it is apparent is realised through the use of both participant observation and semi-structured interviews. But prior to detailing the specific benefits of this approach, and the practical shape it assumes, it is important to place the core methodological debate regarding the *study* of racialised difference within which this research is articulated. In doing so, my approach looks to meet an important charge levelled against the inability of much qualitative

research-design to properly follow through with a social constructionist epistemology (Brubaker 2004, Nayak 2006, St Louis 2002). Specifically, constructionism and other non-reductionist approaches to the study of ethnicity, in spite of their own professed critiques, can at times duplicate foundationalist precepts – such as the understanding that there are group entities outside of localised practice and situated meaning. It is this slippage into the problematic terrain of masked foundationalism which my study of difference and its standing vis-à-vis urban interactional fields looks to avoid.

Much of the critical work of this thesis can be grouped under the overarching argument that consenting to a communal position of difference does not of its own accord invite the secondary inferences which are often taken for granted. For instance, an understanding of self as black does not commit the agent to a 'black' cultural repertoire. Or, an understanding of self as *Invandrare*[4] does not require a commitment to an ontological sense of that difference. Or, for an individual's immediate peer networks to be principally comprised of persons who share the same identity does not render the individual illiterate in regular engagement with other social identities present in different domains of public interaction.

At first glance, the well-established tradition of social constructionism would seem ideal for any such attempt to unpack some of the certainties associated with claims to racial and ethnic difference. And contemporary studies of race and ethnicity do, in the main, happily adhere to a social constructionist epistemology (Rattansi 2007). This anti-positivist school allows for understandings of all categorical distinctions – and the 'ideas' which frame these distinctions – as discursively ordered schemas contingent to history and culture. It concedes that orders of difference such as race do not exist of themselves – are not verifications of a reality already apparent – but are brought about through certain representational fields and the performances ensconced within such rich signifying networks.

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[4] 'Invandrare' (which translates as immigrant) is a term used in Sweden to describe those who are not of Western European origin/appearance – including those who are *born* in Sweden. It is not, in popular usage, a term which can be applied to anybody who is immigrant but rather, is principally a matter of being non-white/non-Western European (see pp. 157-158 for a participant-led discussion of this term). There is hereby an ideologically revealing semantic absurdity to how this term is configured. I note, *however,* that I do often use the term during this thesis. Despite this stated 'semantic absurdity', the term does enjoy a well-established vernacular as well as official currency in contemporary Sweden, making it largely unavoidable. For instance, it is equally common and uncontroversial for the iconic Swedish footballer, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, to be described as Invandrare as it is to say that the former English footballer, Paul Ince, is black. I add that I too identify as Invandrare in many instances when in Sweden. But in the same manner as I continue to use the highly problematic term, 'second-generation', I believe the analytic content of this thesis will ably reveal that I reject the patently exclusive distinction of coding some people as always 'natives'(Swedes) and others as 'permanent outsiders'(Invandrare).

However, important recent criticisms accuse constructionist research output of not satisfactorily un-thinking racial and ethnic identities and the essentialisms such categorisations invite. They argue that constructionists overstate the efficacy of these discursive 'ideas' in exercising 'groupist' holds on the imagination of the appropriately marked subjects. In other words, social constructionism *does not* make use of the uncertainty (race is not real) sprung by its own critique of foundationalism. Instead, as Nayak (2006: 416) argues, the actualisation and 'repetition' in everyday life of the signs which putatively demarcate a communal identity (e.g. racial difference) 'appear [to constructionists] as-if-real'. Or as Keith notes, the researcher's deference to already existing '[e]thnic categories can conceal the nature of their fabrication' (Keith 2005: 6). And alas, these two modes of accounting for communal difference, one foundational and the other constructed, are often interpreted by researchers as doing a similar type of structuring work.

Attention to some limitations of the theoretical canon shaped by both Foucault and Althusser might help us account for this occasional slippage of constructionism into foundational reification. Though Foucault methodically reveals the interplay between multiple discourses – their overlap, and at times, contradictory directives – there lingers an unsubstantiated understanding in his broader thesis of how and why individuals *invest* in certain discursively arranged subject positions, and *internalise*, through confessional acts, the specific behavioural-codes and dispositions as appropriate. In the seeming absence of a robust account of this transmission phase, the subject is seemingly whole and *ready* to perform in accordance with certain knowledge regimes ('epistemes').

Stuart Hall's (1996) 'Who Needs 'Identity'?' gives the above a precise distillation. Hall finds that Foucault's later works move him away from a reading of discourse as engendering a perfect regimentation of subject positions. But it remains the case that most constructionists draw from the more problematic early version of Foucault's theorisation of lived subjectivity.

> Powerfully compelling and original as these works are, [t]hey offer a formal account of the construction of subject positions within discourse, [but] his archaeology provides a […] one dimensional account of the subject of discourse. Discursive subject positions become a priori categories which individuals seem to occupy in an unproblematic fashion (1996: 11).

Foucault alerts us to how the subject-individual is made to orient herself in line with a set of schematised subject positions. For Foucault, multiple discourses particular to our

time and space collectively work to produce the veritable individual and the associated identity positions she is to assume. His extensive theorisation of disciplinarity, bio-power and govermentality all point to broad and efficient techniques of power which regulate the subject into compliance vis-à-vis the inscribed identity location. But it is not clear, especially in Foucault's earlier works such as *Discipline and Punish* (Hall 1996: 11), why the subject position is ever to *feel* 'their own'.

Similarly, in Althusser (1971), it is unclear why processes of identity regimentation ('interpellation') are as efficient as his work suggests. Whilst for Foucault discourse summons and regiments the subject, for Althusser it is ideology and its various state apparatus (e.g. law, family, media, nation, and education) which, in a similar fashion, interpellate (call) the individual into a specific subject position. Although Althusser's concept is important for constructionist ideas of how the subject is 'made', as is his stress on the ideological ends such making-processes serve, it is not convincingly stated how and to what extent the subject actively invests in this position and how she becomes competently compelled to perform the given subjectivity.

Judith Butler (1997:12), who does lean heavily on the concept of interpellation when drafting her notion of 'performativity', critically examines this gap which is left unaccounted for. Butler calls for a sharper attunement to the field of everyday encounters during which the subject is asked to actualise the relevant identity position(s). And in traversing the discursive and the material, Butler suggests that an ideological 'vulnerability' – a 'discontinuity' between discourse and lived moment – inevitably arises.

> What does it mean for the agency of a subject to presuppose its own subordination [to give internalised expression to an ideologically arraigned subject position]? Is the act of presupposing the same as the act of reinstating, or is there a discontinuity between the power presupposed and the power reinstated? Consider that in the very act by which the subject reproduces the conditions of its own subordination, the subject exemplifies a temporally based vulnerability that belongs to those conditions.

The above captures a productive distance between the subject and the summoning discursive regime. For instance, there is a distance between the discursively entrenched 'master distinction' of Swede and Invandrare and the subsequent localised references to an Invandrare affiliation by subjects who are marked as such. In those methodological approaches which seem to collapse this distance, discourse and the subject seem to be one and the same thing. They do the same work and as such, positions of difference are

made into the thing (the sign) that produces it. Put differently, the lives of difference are merely the representational regimes which precede them.

2.2.1. Designing a participant-led critique of communal identity

Constructionists are of course right to maintain that even though a made communal category is historically contingent, it does not discredit the ordering hold of the 'idea'. That is to say, ideas constitute social reality. Socially constructed ideas (such as the idea of race) posit a social ontology, a way of scripting the world by reference to certain entities, which are then rendered real in the lives of society's members. To evoke the well-known 'Thomas theorem': 'If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.' To recognise an identity as a social construct, as pivoting off an 'idea', is not much of a theoretical critique by the final reckoning (Gilroy 2000: 57-58). And constructionists would be right to argue that the importance of an 'idea' should not be weighed by its ability to accurately 'reflect' reality, but that its traction lies in the very constituting of a social reality itself.

Whilst this is an important acknowledgment, there is still scope to further a constructionist orientation which is more forceful in critiquing any discursive 'fiction' (Nayak 2006: 411) made 'real'. This scope might lie in better allowing research participants to reveal their *own* techniques and dispositions by which they themselves only *partially* enact the discursive 'idea' to which they are privy. Greater attention might be directed towards the 'complexity of *lives* instead of the complexity of *discourse* and *representation*' (Knowles 2010: 28, original emphasis). Doing so might offer researchers the sensibility as well as the empirical material to recognise that signifiers at the level of the discursive and ideational are not perfectly reproduced by the 'interpellated' agents at the level of material, inter-personal socialities. Methodologically speaking, this requires a commitment on my part to interpret any claim to difference as *a situated practice* which attests to the active negotiation of shifting interactive codes and shifting structures of power.[5]

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[5] In order to guard social constructionism against some of its foundationalist pitfalls, I indirectly channel some important analytic notions associated with more avowedly post-structuralist branches of social constructionism. Consider for instance: the emphasis on imperfect performances of an ascribed location (Judith Butler); the frequent 'misreadings' of a discursive instruction-cum-signifier (Jacques Derrida); the flux and reinvention which emerge from the active process of harmonising different and multiple communal identities (Stuart Hall); and the irresolvable ambivalence which arises when a subject is either unclassified or only partially classified and/or occupies the *margins* of multiple subject positions (Zygmunt Bauman and Homi Bhabha).

One vignette from my research exemplifies some of these theoretical concerns. During the course of one single day, with a male participant called Maziar from Stockholm, three different evocations of the 'I-We' were cited. First, during a friendly argument prompted by the news that was being aired on the television at a local pizzeria, Maziar admonished Iranians (the background of his friend) for their 'retarded' (sic) war-mongering, not least with regard to their 'oppression of Kurds.' Here the participant with a becoming casualness said, 'we Kurds have to put up with lots of shit, every day.' Later on, in the same pizzeria, the conversation drifted into a discussion about Swedish night-life, whereupon Maziar lamented that 'we have no idea how to party, […] Sweden is so far behind.' This portrayal of his Swedish cultural sphere was unfavourably contrasted to the 'brutally good' nights he had had in Las Vegas. 'It was the high-life, like out of TV.' Later on, as the summer evening unfolded, we were seated with a friend of his at a cafe in one of the main Stockholm districts. The conversation meandered into the recent onset of 'relationship' difficulties with his 'Swedish' girlfriend. In this instance, Maziar plaintively stated 'I am just a Svartskalle,[6] that's all it is, and right, I still have jealous ways right, it feels that's just inside me.' 'Svartskalle', being a particularly charged but by now common appropriation of a derogatory term for those of migrant origin, puts Maziar in a loud and distinct identity location. But that this multiple shifting (into seemingly contradictory communal locations) would materialise in three different conversational contexts within one and the same day is indicative of a point which will be replayed throughout this thesis. Difference and its attachments are often merely ways of *talking* (jealousy and *Svartskalle*, antagonistic global politics and Middle-eastern histories, dullness and Sweden) in intelligible, purposeful, localised and communicatively rich forms. More provocatively, I maintain that this conversational and interactive literacy is a key indicator of successful incorporation into the complex tapestry of multiple conversations, multiple cultural spaces, which many, if not most, urban inhabitants of a 'super-diverse' city are compelled to juggle.

This short example attests to the strengths of a research-design where participants can both initiate and reflect upon their *own* processes of play and shifting identity locations vis-à-vis the interactional situation. It allows participants to see communal identity as a

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[6] 'Svartskalle' (literally black skulls, but meaning those with black hair) and 'Blatte' are highly derogatory terms identifying those of non-Nordic, non-European appearance. However, as is often the case in the complex life of appropriative identity politics, both have become assertive terms for self-identification used by many of migrant origin.

reference in their situated activities which need not be reductively tied to closed conceptions of culture and need not carry the assumption of an ontological investment in the identity cited. (With regard to culture, it is worth noting that whilst Maziar was shuffling through these multiple evocations of community the cultural undertakings which underpinned our interactions can only be seen as firmly rooted in the experiential circuits of contemporary metropolitan consumerism: a session at a pizzeria, the reference to night-clubbing and its quality, or lack of, and an evening stint at a fashionable Stockholm cafe.)

To paraphrase Gooding-Williams (1998), just because someone might refer to himself or somebody else at any given moment as black, does not mean that they 'are' black, and it certainly does not imply *ipso facto* an investment by the subject in a broader circuit of affect (sensations of community and communal futures) and/or culture (behavioural repertoires). Instead, in accordance with the aims of this thesis, the simple question asked is: in those select cases/spaces marked by an absence of racist scrutiny and other exclusions premised on the marking of the individual as communally different, to what degree does racialised communal identity remain relevant to the doings of the different individuals? But to empirically harness this critical disposition requires a methodological intuition that communally-construed difference, when evoked in everyday life, must first and foremost be apprehended as a referential practice, from which other investments might follow, but do not automatically do so. This is a critical constructionist position which is not merely a rehashing of anti-essentialism – not simply against the fixing of all members of the same seeming community to the same cultural stereotypes. But more significantly, this position guards against a reading of communal identity when ascribed to individuals *as itself* of significant sociological import. Instead, the importance lies in ascribed communal identity serving as either the object of exclusionary practices, and thereby triggering deep sensations of felt exclusion, or as a referencing practice rooted in certain modes of social engagement which need not carry much inferential connotation (e.g. concerning culture) for the suitably fluent members of multiculture.

This attempt to think more problematically about communal difference links well to the following post-race methodological position articulated by Nayak (2006: 425):

> The deconstruction of race amounts to much more than fluency in the academic grammar of social constructionism: it involves a desire to re-write race in

ethnography using new hieroglyphics. In this respect, post-race ideas offer an opportunity to experiment, to re-imagine and to think outside the category of race.

Embarking on this challenge, my research approach attempts to facilitate a relationship where the participants themselves are given an expressive space to offer identity critiques which might problematise received conceptions of ethno-cultural wholes and internalised identity positions. To methodologically capture such a conceptual framing requires a preliminary decision to interpret identity as situated practice which cannot and does not perfectly reproduce the discursive representation of the relevant identity. What manifests here is a conceptual assumption that, during the course of public encounter and engagement, ethnicity is always *on the move and far less knowable* than often supposed. To evoke a recurring motif of Stuart Hall's (1993: 394) work in the 1990s, ethnicity is, as opposed to a matter of *being*, primarily a matter of *becoming*.

This conceptual orientation, alongside my empirical focus on public encounters and interaction, does of course result in certain analytic exclusions which require brief acknowledgement. These exclusions, which are inevitable to any project owing to the distinctive epistemic lens it adopts, are particularly apparent at two important levels. First, my conceptual and empirical focus does not allow for a study of how both institutions (e.g. national parties, census categories and school curricula) and civic organisations/community groups might often press, for a variety of reasons, a ready-at-hand groupist and culturalist logic regarding ethnic identity. Similarly, my emphasis on public encounters and urban forms of public exchange precludes attention to interaction and communication through other channels: e.g. within the family and/or the confines of home-life and via the medium of digital technologies. This decision does result in the omission of certain other domains of experience where ethnicity might – *or might not* – take on different and possibly more groupist inclinations. For instance, my research approach is not in a position to appraise the possibilities of a stronger reinforcement of transnational ethnic ties and cultural literacies (e.g. with the 'country of origin') which might be cultivated through family links and other channels of communication, travel and story-telling apparent within that more intimate domain. In sum, my reading of racialised ethnicity's 'thinness' and contingency is conducted via the types of exchange which manifest in everyday urban life. It does not hereby draw any sustained inferences as regarding other significant domains (e.g. institutional and private) of meaning making and self-presentation.

2.3. Stockholm and London

Having outlined the theoretical context which informs my research-design, the following sections foreground the structural and historical context relevant to the experience of ethnic difference in the two cities researched. Given that this thesis is targeted at the field of British sociology, it is presumed that most prospective readers will be rather more familiar with the history of race and urban change applicable to the UK and London than they are with the story of Sweden and Stockholm. As such, priority in this discussion is given to Stockholm and Sweden. This might appear a glib imbalance, particularly in light of the contemporary sociological emphasis on localised context and specificity (Solomos 2013, Yuval-Davis 2006). Allow me to suggest in turn a few lines of appropriate response.

First, as will be further clarified later in this chapter, this thesis is not anthropological in ambition, in that it does not sketch the complexity of life and power as it plays out within a particular set of spatial or institutional settings. My purpose is instead geared towards the use of co-produced (researcher and participants) research material as exacting ways of critically *commenting upon the field of integration and multiculturalism*. In other words, the different participants and spaces presented here are targeted as instructive empirical instances by which to problematise existing theoretical orientations driving the study of integration and multiculture. Of course, the particular historical, spatial and experiential details particular to the participant discussed is at times highly relevant to the manner in which the critical discussion unfolds. But such specificity is primarily engaged as relevant to the relationship between the *individual's or set of individuals'* experience/testimony and the theoretical object being problematised. Consequently, my extended take on Stockholm in the following section is only intended to offer the reader a *reasonable* sense of socio-economic context through which to read the substantive chapters – a contextual sense that she will, in all likelihood, already have of Britain.

However, and more significantly, a detailing of the structural features concerning the configurations of racialised ethnicity in Stockholm, alongside overarching themes of inequality and social mobility, *does* indeed capture much of the political economy and forms of racialised exclusion already well-rehearsed in the UK. For instance, the broader drift towards a weaker welfare state, the privatisation of formerly public provisions, the restructuring of the economy away from an industrial base, and the recourse to hegemonic discourses of racialised pathology to support this reconfiguration of the

social contract were already well-advanced in the UK by the mid-1980s: a conjunctural shift which was captured by Stuart Hall as 'Thatcherism'. Later on, these same transitions gained purchase in Sweden, commencing in earnest during the mid-1990s. First initiated by the 'reformist' Social Democratic governments of the 1990s, this 'neoliberalising' of the Swedish economy was intensified and consolidated during the two terms of the current centre-right 'Bourgeoisie' government (Larsson et al. 2012). There is considerable convergence as a result between the broader political economies governing both countries. As such, by attending to the neoliberalisation of Sweden and the ways in which this process impacts upon the exclusion suffered by those of immigrant origin, the discussion also serves as an implicit commentary on the British situation, becoming explicit towards the end of this section, where I draw out certain details concerning the state of race and inequality particular to Britain. Having done so, a fuller picture of the sites researched in London will be provided.

And, in some ways, this ability of my detailed discussion of Stockholm to capture indirectly the context of London and the UK attests to an important substantive feature of this project and its specific scope. Namely, despite its basis in two different countries and cities, this thesis does not press a comparative ambition; instead, the discussion will alternate freely between references to Stockholm and London. There are two interrelated reasons which justify this use, which at first glance might appear unhelpful.

First, the sites chosen across the two countries are intended to constitute a counter-point to sociological approaches which continue to pivot off the nation-state as its basic analytic unit. This continued fealty to nation-states as the sociological unit *par excellence* has been met with considerable recent criticism, with Beck (2002) and Wimmer and Glick-Schiller (2002) dubbing this the problematic outlook of 'methodological nationalism'. Keith (2005: 11) observes that '[w]hat is undisputable is that we are confronted by a situation in which the certainties of academic disciplines, which take (often implicitly) the nation state as the principal building block of 'sociologies' or histories or politics or cultural anthropologies, are challenged by the messiness of the contemporary city.' He suggests here that at the nexus of different times and different social phenomena, particular non-national registers of governed space become more relevant – his own emphasis lying in how the city often circumvents the explanatory efficacy of the nation-state, though never entirely. By basing my own research in both Stockholm and London, but using these sites interchangeably, it is this important issue

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of methodological nationalism which I wish to bring into play. Namely, all the individuals present in this research are able to complicate through their personal doings many of the core propositions that uphold the sociology of integration. That they come from Stockholm or London, or the specific sites within it, does not impede this ability. Each *individual*, as specific to their socio-economic location as well as the surrounding spaces which they engage, offers tailored forms of theoretical critique.

This largely interchangeable character is driven by an important contemporary development concerning the emergence of a broader Western European discursive framework which positions and problematises its minority population along similar scripts – and these scripts circulate along a transnational circuit of exchange. The work which has most forcefully detailed this transnational harmonisation is Lentin and Titley's *The Crises of Multiculturalism* (2011). The authors methodically locate here how a variety of Northern European countries (the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Ireland) are trending towards the same integration-multiculture Manichaeanism; these trends reinforce each other across national boundaries. Balibar (2004) and Bauman (2004) too argue that a European polity *sui generis* is being remade along these troubling transnational terms, whereby a normative European 'people' is rendered tangible only through 'civilizational' and semiotic contrast to the various migrant, minority contingents dotted across its metropolitan centres (e.g. Amsterdam, Stockholm, Berlin). Of course, this seeming confluence concerning the discursive ordering of ethnic difference cannot hold across all nation-states; Stockholm and Johannesburg cannot be rendered interchangeable, and nor could Rome and London. But it is my claim in line with recent readings of the historical present that both Sweden and the UK, as part of a broader Northern European alignment, are gradually becoming subject to the vicissitudes of the same socio-historical conjuncture. Owing to these converging contexts (both in terms of nation-state narratives and economic shifts) the type of interactions, grievances and cultural orientations brought forward by the minority subjects of Stockholm do not seem out of place in London – and vice-versa.

In some ways, what I do is akin to a vitalisation of an older point made by Robert Miles regarding his influential attempts to historicise the racialisation of British society. Miles, whilst at times susceptible to a rigidly materialist account of racism and of class-based resistance, makes an interesting point regarding the UK's geo-political location.

Reflecting upon the motivations of his work, Miles (quoted in Ashe and McGeever 2011: 2016) comments:

> A lot of what I was trying to do was to re-situate what was happening in the United Kingdom in a European context as opposed to what I was arguing against, which was a 'race relations' paradigm that was to a large extent, although not exclusively, drawn from the United States. I wanted to redress that by saying that the United Kingdom is part of Europe, not just geographically, but much more importantly in terms of the processes that were in play.

In a similar vein, this thesis indirectly argues that Britain too is couched within a quintessentially Northern European retreat towards fortified (cultural and material) brands of nationalism which locate along similar scripts the minority 'immigrant', in its various guises, as its internal negation (its 'inside-outsider' [Balibar 2004]). As such, by holding London as a placeholder for Britain, and Stockholm as a placeholder for a Germanic Northern Europe (Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark), but by collapsing the two into an interchangeable whole, this thesis furthers an important anti-comparative notion that *Britain too is Europe.*

But equally so, in light of my broader intuition that the UK is increasingly situated within the broader fold of Northern Europe, the idea of cities as 'place-holders' for the countries they are located within is itself also troubled by the particular emphasis of my analysis. A key aspect of critical work on methodological nationalism is the observation that certain cities located across various countries, by virtue of their specific cultural and economic locations, often resemble *each other* in more meaningful ways than they do other cities within the same respective country (Beck 2002: 23, Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002). Indeed, as Keith (2013: 27) again provocatively comments, there might be reason to consider the 'mega' and other globally positioned cities *across the planet* (collapsing distinctions of the Global North and Global South) as rather more similar than different – in terms of the 'pirate modernities' and 'generative diversities' where habits of living messily together amongst strangers are cultivated in ways which escape, to some extent, structures of governance and their tendency towards 'new enclosures' and 'intolerances'.

> Indeed, the hyper rapid transition of the mega cities of the south might speak to the experience of the cities of the north. For it is at the scale [and location in the circuits of capital accumulation and exchange] of the city as much as that of the nation that these dynamics occur (29).

Whilst I refrain from appraising this claim regarding the radical realignment of the globe's human geography, I am interested in some of the other contiguous implications of this reading. For instance, it might be only certain cities (such as Berlin, Hong Kong, and New York) and their privileged positioning as centres of flows, of 'culture, capital and population' (Keith 2005: 11), as well as in terms of scale vis-à-vis other cities in the same country, that seem conducive to certain forms of cosmopolitan mix.

And both Stockholm and London are indeed aligned in similar ways vis-à-vis Britain and Sweden respectively. Being imagined within the nation as the pre-eminent city, as centres of global capital and acting as the major gateway for migrant (both foreign and internal) settlement, collectively exercises more relevance in terms of these two cities' character vis-à-vis difference than the actual country within which it is respectively situated. This claim of convergence and similarity concerning the two cities' standing shadows much of the analytic presentation to follow. Put differently, if wishing to undertake a strongly comparative discussion, it would have been more meaningful to compare London to Newcastle or Stockholm to Malmö. Instead, by choosing these two cities, my methodological stress is on furthering an understanding of the similarities of the two cities which, though situated across national boundaries, are both similarly located within the same larger regional and capitalist framework (Northern Europe).

In sum, whilst the discussion to follow focuses predominantly on recent Swedish history vis-à-vis Stockholm, it also indirectly captures many of the significant social processes relevant to the UK vis-à-vis London. The discussion does however isolate, during its discussion of the London field sites, certain features distinctive to the story of race and nationalism in the UK. Regarding, for instance, the role played by Britain's colonial history in shaping the types of post-war settlement and more overt forms of *differentiated* racialisation (see 'divide and rule') that are apparent in British and London life.

2.3.1. Sweden, immigration and post-racial racism

Sweden, as most countries throughout history, has been alive to multiple sources of migrant settlement. It is however the case that till the Cold-War era, much of recent Swedish history was marked by its status as a country of emigration. Throughout the period from 1800 to 1930, approximately 1.3 million Swedes left the still largely agrarian and indigent circumstances of Sweden in search of better prospects in the United States (Gustafson 2013). Much of the American North/Mid-West still bear strong traces of

this Swedish settlement. However, as the era of imperial capitalism and early modernity came to a close – the transitional inter-war period which saw the dissolution of the European imperial powers (the Hapsburg, the Weimarian, the Russian, the Ottoman and latterly the British and French) – Sweden consolidated itself as a lately industrialising country poised advantageously to capitalise on the disruption afflicting the 'Great Powers' around them. By the 1970s, Sweden, via its shepherding of a mixed-market, corporatist economy as well as its privileged geographical position in the world-system of capitalist exchange, had emerged as the world's best performing economy. Strong economic output, alongside well-cemented standards of social mobility, inevitably necessitated cheap labour replenishment from poorer parts of the world (Ring 1995). Apart from the steady twentieth-century stream of migrants from Finland – 15 per cent of the foreign-born population in Sweden are Finns (Nekby 2012: 176), which is the highest rate for any one single country – this reliance on incoming labour was primarily sourced from the Mediterranean Basin. Greece and Turkey being the most notable origin countries. But from the late 1970s onwards, immigration shifted towards the de-colonised Global South. Whilst many of these migrants gained entry as refugees, they did serve the purpose of a support labour force central to the workings of the urban economy (Ring 1995: 162-164). Entering the 1980s and 1990s, Sweden was in synch with its European neighbours. Incoming migration centred on a variety of non-Western countries, e.g. Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Chile and then into the 1990s, the fast dissolving Balkan countries, an assortment of West African countries (e.g. Nigeria and Gambia), Somalia and more recent refugee intakes from Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In short, the recent patterns of migration to Sweden mirror the developments in Western Europe as a whole, whereby its population is being remade with significant, postcolonial implications.

A telling remark, from the perspective of Britain, which destabilises the widely held impression of Sweden as relatively untouched by the broader reconfiguration of the European ethno-scape, is David Goodhart's (2004: 33) pained claim that *even in* Sweden 'it is expected that by 2015 about 25% of under-18s will be either foreign-born or the children of the foreign-born.' Within the context of a shift to postcolonial forms of immigration – with Stockholm, the economic and geographic hub of Sweden, serving as the principle gateway for these forms of migrant settlement (SCB 2008) – these decades have seen a marked spike in the percentage of those denizens who are positioned as non-white (Nekby 2012: 162). In the consolidation of these postcolonial migratory

patterns, issues of racialisation – where racial identities are assigned to certain sets of individuals – come to the fore (Hübinette and Tigervall 2009, Keskinen et al. 2009, Molina 2005, Runfors 2007). The semantic contradiction of the term 'Invandrare' (immigrants), a ubiquitous term which groups all those who are seen to be non-white together as 'immigrants', including those who are *born* in Sweden, lays bare the racialised texture of contemporary discussions around diversity, migration and Swedish governance. The absurdity of the term is typified by the fact that actual immigrants from other Western European countries (e.g. Germany, France or Finland) would not be considered Invandrare. This point was expressed well by two of the research participants (see p.157). Using this racialised immigrant distinction as the master-frame of ordering the national polity is not in any way unique to Sweden, with fitting analogues apparent across Western Europe: for instance, the 'Autochtoon-Allochtoon' dichotomy common in the Netherlands (Essed and Trienekens 2008). These common schemes rest on intertwining issues of migration and racialisation, whereby a significant portion of the country's population are rendered outsiders.

Moreover, the racialisation of the 'immigrant' should not be seen as an entirely novel addition to Swedish govermentality. The influential insights of Allan Pred (2000) and Stefan Jonsson (2010) are particularly helpful in tracking some of the historical continuities informing the discursive tropes of today's racialised exclusion. Both argue that the subjection of recent migrant-origin communities to inscriptions of an incompatible and/or pathologised racialised cultural identity is certainly situated within a *broader European* discourse of contemporary nation-making and political populism. But Jonsson and Pred do also stress that Sweden taps into already settled *internal* discursive co-ordinates dating to the early nineteenth century concerning whiteness and a civilizational purity based around that whiteness.

This historical premium on whiteness was partly accrued by accident, whereby the nineteenth- century European desire to establish a biologically construed sense of an Ur-race found most fertile symbolic expression in the supposedly Germanic demographics of Scandinavia. This convenience became central to the imagining of a Swedish polity which was ushered in during the Romantic Era. Jonsson (2010: 15-42), in his commentary on the nineteenth-century re-remembering of a 'Viking' past, notes that the past was reimaged around an idea of an Aryan Scandinavia in reference to which the modern Swedish nation would orient itself. This story looked to clump together what

were otherwise disparate bands of opportunistic families who, capitalising on local advances made in navigational and ship-building techniques, sought to plunder and/or settle nearby lands. That they were to consider themselves part of a broader collective is considered unlikely, but this notion of collective civilizational purpose and shared cultural disposition was attractive to the Romantic spirit desperate to contrive a sense of the 'volk' mapped along a decorated historical continuum – a continuum of splendid conquest.

The imbrication of early narrations of Swedish nationalism with ideas of a racial hierarchy carried over into the founding of the Social Democratic welfare State. Historians of twentieth-century Sweden (Jonsson 2010, Molina 2000) argue that the much celebrated solidarity ethos of the early welfare state, an ethos commonly known by the phrase 'the people's home' (folkhem), was tied all too heavily to the symbolism of a common ethnic lineage and future. This wedding of solidarity to ethnic community was bound to render the later reliance on postcolonial immigration problematic. This Social Democratic emphasis on communal purity is most egregiously evidenced in the only recently exposed policy of Swedish governments from the 1930s to the 1960s to intern and sterilise individuals of minority background (principally Swedish Travellers) as well as those who were disabled. Such policies, as steered by the State Institute for Racial Biology (the first of its kind in the world) which was founded in 1921, was directly rooted in Fascism's accent on the racial science of eugenics and purity (Spektorowski and Mizrachi 2004).

It is however so that these antecedents of race-thinking in Swedish life find their most extensive application in the present postcolonial era, wherein a *substantial* internal population is rendered symbolically marginal by the basis of the non-white status ascribed to them. Consequently, in accordance with its contemporary actualisation, current practices of racism are couched within a broader *global present* concerning racial exclusion. Jonsson (2010: 48-63) argues that, in synch with much of the 'new', 'cultural' and 'post-racial' racism (Taguieff 1990) operating across the Global North, Swedish articulations of racism rest on the wilful misunderstanding that race is of *no* relevance in contemporary Swedish society. What is often bracketed out as a colour-blind ethos opts instead to distinguish immigrant origin persons from 'native' Swedes through reference to putatively *cultural* distinctions. These distinctions are 'verbalised more readily in terms of ethnicity, citizenship, national identity or western superiority and civilization' (Essed

and Trienekens 2008: 52). Whilst direct references to race are rendered verboten and are commonly denied, the cultural scheme deployed maps neatly onto this unsaid racial ontology. As detailed in the previous chapter, this speak of cultural incompatibility situates the white citizen as communally neutral, without cultural encumbrance, whilst the racialised are ascribed an ethnic history which renders them problematic and culturally deficient. In short, race is said to be of no relevance despite it undergirding the discursively pervasive binary of the immigrant subject's cultural deviancy contra the European subject's normative, transcendent status. This same discursive script was meticulously archived previously in Allan Pred's celebrated 2000 work *Even in Sweden*. Through extensive excerpting of public debates, Pred establishes how the 'posting' of racism (the belief that we inhabit a 'post-racist' society) is iterated *ad nausea* by both the political and cultural commentariat, despite many of these same articulations resting on a normatively loaded 'native' Swede-Invandrare distinction.[7]

2.3.2. Invandrare disadvantage

The entrenchment of a colour-blind post-racialism (Goldberg 2009, Winant 2004), a discourse which refuses to name, let alone work against, the remade forms of racism suffered by minorities, is particularly invidious when we consider key deprivation indices: e.g. labour market performance, residential segregation, educational attainment, and health outcomes. These measures reveal the problematic correlation of ethnic identity to inequality. Recent reports by the EU and the OECD (Hübinette 2012) as well as research led by newly founded academic institutes – specifically concerned with issues of migration, ethnicity, integration and exclusion[8]– have highlighted the worrying correlation between Invandrare social status and stunted social mobility.

In some senses however, the international impression of Sweden as being uniquely progressive in its reception of immigrant communities is not wholly unfounded, when considering for instance Sweden's relatively high recognition rate of asylum seeker claims. This is perhaps most striking in Sweden's recognition of refugees resulting from the US-led war in Iraq. That Sweden itself was not a participant in the war coalition

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[7] It is noteworthy that even the avowedly Neo-Nazi mobilisations which abounded during the 1990s, which has obtained a new found legitimacy through the Swedish Democrats capture of a parliamentary presence in 2010, are unlikely to overtly reference a logic of race. As is so characteristic of the 'new right' fascisms across Europe, the Swedish far-right opts instead for the proxy logic of cultural and civilizational difference.

[8] Best exemplified in the prolific work done by the Stockholm University Linnaeus Center for Integration Studies and the Linköping University based REMESO: Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society.

(MNF-I) did not prevent it from noting in 2011 the highest recognition rate of Iraqi asylum claims (ESR 2012). The experiences however of recent immigrants and their children – upon either settling in Sweden or being born into it as a person of minority status – tell a less accommodating story. For instance, the educational attainment (OECD 2012: 5-6) and labour market gap (OECD 2012, Rooth and Ekberg 2003) between white and non-white has widened considerably in recent years. Similarly, Sweden has, amongst OECD countries, the highest disparity in foreign born citizens' unemployment as proportionate to their overall labour share (OECD 2006: 68).

Interestingly, though Frederick Reinfeldt, the Swedish Prime Minister, was considered alarmist, and perhaps even racist, when suggesting in 2012 that long-term and youth unemployment is principally a question of 'non-white' unemployment (*SvD* 2012), he did bring attention to a long tabooed subject in discussions of race in Swedish public deliberation. Reinfeldt's emphasis signalled an easy recourse to racialised pathology, but what his observation made explicit is the structural process where those who are positioned as non-white find themselves subject to a variety of exclusionary conditions. These realities were given desperate expression in the 2013 riots staged across various immigrant-concentrated suburbs of Stockholm.

Multiple structural factors contribute to this racially manifest inequality. Most overt of course is the commonplace issue of racism, which leads to discrimination in the labour market and other areas of social provisioning (Bursell 2007, 2012). There are however other factors which, whilst not explicitly reliant on race and racism, contribute to this racially charged disadvantage. And though these factors are well understood in the sociological literature of class stratification, I believe it worthwhile to briefly re-sketch the terrain of neoliberal inequality as felt in Sweden.

First, the labour market has been subject to epochal structural changes arising from the transition from a production-oriented, late industrial model to a consumption, service-primed economy (Larsson et al. 2012). The negative effects of such a shift are disproportionally felt by those of minority origin, since their incorporation into the labour market is relatively recent and concentrated at the bottom end of the employment ladder. Perhaps most influential here is the sociological mapping of what is known as the emergent 'hourglass' labour market, the metaphor picturing the stunted social mobility which this reconfigured political economy implies.

The already settled middle class – owing to their access to the type of knowledge rewarded by the market – are able to access secure, salaried labour which broadly resembles previous platforms of career advancement through the life-course. Fortunes are less promising for those from the working class, to which most immigrants and their descendants belong:

> [Economic restructuring implies that] children of immigrants must cross a narrow bottleneck to occupations requiring advanced training if their careers are to keep pace with their [Western] acquired aspirations. […]Otherwise, assimilation may not be into mainstream values and expectations but into the adversarial stance of impoverished groups confined to the bottom of the new economic hourglass (Portes and Zhou 1993: 83-85).

The employment security of the working class is rendered unstable and they are increasingly unlikely to graduate into the middle and upper income domains. At best, they might access reasonably secure *public sector* service jobs – transport and public sector administration being noteworthy sectors in Sweden. Or, as is more common, their employment is restricted to a series of private, service-sector jobs which are often part-time and/or contracted. In other words, they assume the role of 'standby' (Bengtsson and Berglund 2012: 102) labour, whereby individuals bump along from one low-paying service sector job to another.

It is this more hostile and disjointed front of the economy's restructuring that many people of migrant origin find themselves exposed to. And indeed, as Sven Lindqvist (2012) recently wrote in a poignant essay that ties the Swedish predicament to that of East London, many of these often young individuals cannot even be classed as 'standby' labour, but worse, are often rendered entirely *superfluous*.

> We have created a world […] with very little need for the Eastenders of the world. Tell me what will happen when the majority of mankind has become technologically superfluous. At the same time rebellious with hunger and economically unimportant. […] In *People of the Abyss* the Eastenders already saw it coming. They are, Jack London wrote, 'encumbrances', of no use to anyone, not even to themselves. 'They clutter the earth with their presence and are better out of the way.'

Again, the fact that Sweden has the highest rate of youth unemployment[9] proportionate to general unemployment amongst OECD countries (UNRIC 2012) bears witness to the disjointed Swedish political economy. The unfortunate truth that Sweden is

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[9] At 24.1% in 2012, youth unemployment was three times the national rate of 8.1%.

witnessing the 'fastest growth in inequality of any advanced OECD economy' (*Guardian* 2013) further compounds this imbalance. Those at the bottom end of the social ladder, especially minority youth, find themselves facing a radically uncertain future. That the rioting of 2013 found expression in the impoverished areas of Stockholm, home to a considerable youth population of migrant origin who are without permanent employment, speaks to this general climate of uneven economic restructuring.

Similarly, the descendants of immigrants also contend with the only recently understood ramifications of the housing policies drafted in the 1960s and 1970s. These policies have contributed to high levels of urban segregation between poorer migrant-origin people and those metropolitan white Swedes who are generally in middle-income households. The policy most often commented upon in this context is the flagship 'Million Programme', an attempt by the Social Democratic governments of the 1960s and 1970s to build a million new residences for the influx of service-sector workers who were to support the expanding economy in major Swedish cities. That much of the growing labour force were recent migrants and their children led to a situation where the proliferation of high-rise blocks dotted around the city's suburbs produced a marked geographic segregation (Khakee and Kullander 2003, Molina 2000). This process of urban segregation, with an affluent and mobile core ringed in by poorer residential clusters resembles the structuring of French cities and their notorious centre-*banlieue* cleavage which has received much academic and cultural attention. Comparable regions in Stockholm include Rinkeby, Tensta, Husby (all in Northern Stockholm and the initial sites of the recent rioting) and Botkyrka. But such projects also crept into even more peripheral suburbs such as Hässelby, Sollentuna, Södertälje and Upplands Väsby; leading to pockets of high-rise, low-quality housing being situated in the middle of otherwise fairly low-density suburban spaces attractive to emergent middle-income families.

2.3.3. Stockholm field sites

Six of the eleven research participants from Stockholm were residents of the aforementioned Upplands Väsby. I sourced participants from two locations in each city and Upplands Väsby was one of these Stockholm locations, the other being Sundbyberg. Väsby, as it is colloquially known, is a fairly isolated suburb situated to the north of Stockholm, located along the major E4 motorway. The motorway cuts vertically across Sweden, leading through the suburb en route to the international

airport and the nearby university city of Uppsala. As a result, the suburb is principally a residential commuting centre, though it does host a few large food-processing factories (most notably, the production and sales premises for Mondelez International – formerly Kraft Foods) and has recently seen the introduction of a high-profile business hub, called Infra City. Demographically, Väsby hosts an extensive working class Invandrare presence. This Invandrare population accounts for nearly 35% of the population, whilst the rest are primarily Swedish, the majority of whom belong to middle-income households (SCB 2013a). Most Invandrare live in the complexes built as part of the Million Programme, many of which, whilst recently renovated, still constitute the only affordable and/or subsidised housing available in the suburb.

Four of the participants from Väsby met the general profile of those second-generation immigrants who find themselves in, or in-between, low-paying service-sector jobs. The fifth participant was employed as a station attendant and though relatively low paying, it constituted a secure public-sector job. The final participant, after stringing together a number of retail-sector jobs, recently enrolled onto a university programme in Gender and Politics. Collectively, they were broadly reflective of the types of socio-economic status most migrant origin residents in Väsby are likely to assume at the stage of early adulthood which my research centred upon.

Sundbyberg, my second Stockholm field-site, was chosen out of the need to distinguish it in terms of analytic interest from Väsby. Sundbyberg is a mixed-income municipality which is located just north of the city centre. Though also a suburb, it is far closer to Stockholm city proper, sharing a border with Kungsholmen, one of the five central islands which constitute the inner core of Stockholm. This attractive location renders the municipality popular for young professionals and their families. Sundbyberg's location is however Janus-faced, whereby many of its other contiguous borders look on a number of disadvantaged boroughs which have become iconic in the popular geography of Stockholm's (Tensta, Husby and Rinkeby). These areas colloquially epitomise the concentration of Invandrare in those suburbs historically linked to the Million Programme. One of these suburbs, Husby, was the focal point of the previously discussed rioting.

Sundbyberg is in turn a particularly useful place for picturing how those second-generation Invandrare who have realised some upward mobility navigate the city around them. Indeed, Sundbyberg, the smallest but most densely populated municipal area of

Stockholm, has an Invandrare population which is also above 30% (SCB 2013b). This is mostly because Invandrare who are initially from areas such as Husby often envisage Sundbyberg as a familiar and proximate residential area into which they might move. During my research in Sundbyberg, I was able to secure the participation of five second-generation Invandrare. Whilst none of them were in professions which guaranteed long-term middle class prosperity, they had all been in stable employment for many years, allowing them to realise a few aspirational ambitions concerning, for instance, residential choice. Herein, through sourcing both Väsby and Sundbyberg, I was able to capture a reasonably accurate spectrum of the socio-economic locations with which the majority of second-generation Invandrare contend. They range from those trapped in a cycle of insecure labour and restricted to the distant suburbs to those who actualise some degree of upward movement, even though these movements do not offer guarantees of middle-income household stability.

2.3.4. London field sites

The same intention to capture a reasonably indicative socio-economic range guided the selection of field sites in London. But before transitioning into a brief commentary on the field sites used in London, it is important to establish one key clarification. It need be noted that when speaking of immigrant-dense residential areas (wards within Väsby and Husby for instance), these are not spaces of ethnic homogeneity. Residential areas, even when containing extensive immigrant, minority populations, are characterised by extensive intra-minority diversity. As both Ålund (1991) and Lacatus (2007) argue, with regard to the Swedish cities reconstituted by migration, the diversity within suburban spaces manifest along multiple measures: country of origin, religious affiliation, racial identity, languages spoken, and even in terms of legal status. Consequently, *multiple* 'transnational' (Ålund 1991) ethnic communities, with all the diversity this implies, congregate and tangle on a daily basis within the interactive routes of these suburbs they call home. Similarly, Ulf Hannerz chronicles the extensive intra-minority practices of cohabitation when he distinguishes between the two forms of cosmopolitan politics apparent in Swedish cities. First, he identifies the mobile elites and aspirational groups who wear cosmopolitanism as a potent badge of social privilege, advertising their ability to navigate across multiple cultural repertoires and boundaries. Here, proficiency in English as a *lingua franca* of sorts alongside a variety of 'cultured' references to various European pastimes becomes central to this form of privileged cosmopolitan

performance (Hannerz 1992). These nominally cosmopolitan individuals participate in the reproduction of a Eurocentric, homogenising project, which rests on multiple privileges of economic and cultural capital. In other words, Eurocentric, middle class consumption cultures are universalised as the basis for cosmopolitanism. In contrast, Hannerz identifies a cosmopolitanism (what he initially termed transnationalism) *from below*, which is orchestrated in the low-income suburbs of Stockholm which house multiple and varied migrant backgrounds. Here, the second-generation subjects, in tandem with their first-generation predecessors, as well as white Swedish peers, pursue according to Hannerz an insurgent and more accurately cosmopolitan performance (Hannerz 1996).

In other words, the Invandrare subjects clustered together in these suburban spaces bear radically different histories and cultural inheritances, and this recognition repudiates any simplistic reading of minority-heavy residential areas as constituting mono-ethnic segregation – an alarmism most famously advanced, in a British context, in Trevor Phillip's 2005 Manchester speech 'Sleepwalking into Segregation'. The need to complicate simplistic accounts of segregation borrows from the conceptualisation of urban heterogeneity steered by Stephen Vertovec (2007a) under the umbrella term, 'super-diversity'. Super-diversity, despite its pervasive use in the academic literature on race and ethnicity, is sometimes confused for a term which also denotes a set of socio-political sensibilities which arise when engaging difference. Instead, it is perhaps best understood in more modest *descriptive* sociological terms. Super-diversity merely captures the multiple dimensions of difference which, whilst initially premised on the range in ethnic identifications apparent within a common locale, expand to include other distinctions within this tapestry of ethnic diversity: e.g. religion, race, class, language, and citizenship status.

Väsby is one such municipal space. For instance, apart from the multiple ethnic backgrounds, including the normatively white Swede who is well-represented within its contours, it comprises a significant diversity in terms of its inhabitants' citizenship status. This range in citizenship status (e.g. citizen, permanent resident, asylum seeker, foreign student, and 'undocumented'/'paperless') is intensified by the municipality having a prominent asylum-seeker temporary housing complex (Carlslund) situated in close proximity to the central shopping and administrative areas as well as the high-rise housing estates. Amidst the context of such multiple differences acting in tandem with

an already apparent ethnic diversity, interactive spaces in Väsby can be read as super-diverse, whereby many of its interactive public expanses and the resulting everyday social encounters cut across a number of categorical nodes.

This understanding of super-diversity and its implications lead me to distinguish between first-order and second-order interaction, a distinction which is of central importance to my substantiation of urban conviviality. In approaching my field sites, I consider everyday public encounters outside of one's private or more intimate settings as the more telling sites of research with regard to multi-ethnic cohabitation. At this public level of experience, the super-diversity which characterises the broader area is most apparent and in need of negotiation. Herein, a methodological decision is made to move away from the emphasis on intimate and close ties (first-order) which figure prominently in much of the positivist literature around integration and ethnic diversity. The prevalence of 'intermarriage', the quality of relationships with immediate neighbours, the language(s) spoken at the home, and the ethnic backgrounds of an individual's *closest* friends are all common variables which many sociologists read as revealing proxies of integration (Waters and Jimenez 2005, Waters et al. 2010). I argue that this orientation toward *close ties* cuts itself off from important considerations of urban public encounters, which is after all, the main interface at which super-diversity plays itself out.

The attempt to move away from such a 'sociology of ties' (Amin 2012) – via my emphasis on second-order interaction – will be more robustly considered in the following chapter. I only reiterate here that there are increasingly few urban areas in either Stockholm or London which can be considered as segregated along mono-ethnic lines, excepting for certain highly affluent, predominantly white areas (e.g. the exclusive Stockholm suburb, Lidingö). Influential works on segregation in the UK, most notably the work of Finney and Simpson (2009), alongside more recent briefings by the Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity based on findings from the 2011 Census for England and Wales (Catney 2013, Simpson 2013), demonstrate that nearly all municipalities in England are seeing increased 'mixing' and cohabitation. These trends run counter to the ropey yet common claims of ethnic 'ghettoisation'. Whilst the influential 2009 work of Finney and Simpson suggested that there was never much evidence of trends towards urban segregation along ethnic lines (both at a municipal and ward level), early

conclusions from the 2011 census reveal that the interim years have prompted *even* further desegregation across most British cities and 'Local Authority Districts'. As Jonathan Portes (2013: 8), the Director of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, states in his frank rebuttal of the claim that ethnic minorities are prone to self-segregation:

> The number of people from an ethnic minority background who live in areas dominated by their own ethnic group remains small. […] Most non-whites live in fairly diverse areas; it is whites who don't. [For instance] you would be hard put to find a single ward (each has a population of about ten thousand) anywhere in Britain where more than one in ten of the population identify as Somali.

These trends towards cohabitation suggest that diversity will always be apparent and it is in the course of public space engagement that this diversity is most pertinently lived. As signalled above, this impression of super-diversity is readily apparent in my London field sites as well: Harrow (West and Central) which was home to seven of the research participants and Clapham Junction (Wandsworth), home to the remaining four. Harrow, for instance, is particularly notable for its religious diversity. The 2011 census figures revealed that Harrow was the municipal authority with the highest level of self-professed religious identification of any area in England and Wales (*Financial Times* 2012), and this religious identification spanned a dizzying array of orientations: Anglican Protestantism; Irish, Polish and also considerable Sri Lankan-origin Catholicism; Hinduism (the largest concentration of Hindus in Britain, resulting from arrivals both from the Indian Subcontinent and East Africa); Sunni, Shia and Sufi Muslims (12%); Sikhism; Zoroastrianism (Harrow hosts the largest Zoroastrian temple in the UK); Baha'i; and also a well-established Jewish community (ten times larger than the national average). Harrow is also home to a confident and expanding middle class, many of whom are of minority background: principally realised by those of non-Muslim Indian origin as well as Sri Lankan Tamils. Their presence contributes to Harrow having the lowest percentage of NEETS (young people not in employment, education or training) of all Greater London Boroughs and also helps the municipality to rank 38th nationally in educational attainment (*Financial Times* 2012). This range in class trajectory within minority backgrounds – which ably undermines the purchase of a generalised minority category – adds a further layer of heterogeneity amidst one single borough, and allows my research to involve participants who could loosely reflect this range from low-income to comfortably middle-income households.

My second research site in London was the Clapham Junction (South-West Battersea) area of Wandsworth Borough, a rapidly gentrifying area just south of the Thames. The area has recently become highly attractive, like Sundbyberg, to young professionals and their families. It does however retain close proximity to severely disadvantaged wards with large minority populations. Indeed, all four participants from Clapham lived either in or nearby a prominent set of council estates, built in the 1960s and 1970s, situated close to the train station and the Clapham Junction high streets. The sprawling, contiguous labyrinth of council estates housed a large Afro-Caribbean as well as a West and East African contingent, though other backgrounds, including British White, were also well-represented. Of the four second-generation participants from Clapham, two were residents of the estates. A third, who worked at his uncle's corner-shop located at the mouth of the estate, lived with his parents in a terrace house nearby. The final participant had recently moved into a flat-share which was also situated near the estates, but the apartment was considerably closer to the mid-market price range. Again, it should be made clear that the expansive scale of these council estates as well as the attractiveness of the surrounding areas to the emergent middle and upper-middle class renders the broader public spaces eminently super-diverse. This was particularly apparent with regard to the Clapham Junction high streets, which separate the estates from the surrounding middle-income areas.

The outward impression of the estates, when bracketed off from the rest of Battersea/Wandsworth, is generally understood as 'black', and its notoriety is partially hinged to the estates being commonly framed as a problematic 'black space'. Anecdotally, the fact that the estates birthed a nationally iconic grime music collective and was also formerly home to a prominent, Jamaican-born entrepreneur reveals the black cultural history of the estate. But it is clear that the multiple Afro-Caribbean generations who have been resident here since the 1960s now live cheek by jowl with an assortment of other residents whose demographic and socio-economic circumstances vary. For instance, the fact that the estates constituted one of the few outlets for affordable housing within the area rendered it home for various people who are socio-economically vulnerable, including, of course, asylum seekers, economic migrants and foreign students with little financial security. The area was hereby characterised by a significant ethnic diversity which is reflected in the observation that all four of my Clapham participants, though all second-generation minorities, had unique ethnic

backgrounds: parents who were from Jamaica and Trinidad respectively, parents who were both Jamaican, parents who were Turkish Alevi, and parents who were Yemeni Arabs. Similarly, of the seven participants from Harrow, a number of ethnic backgrounds were apparent: Jamaican, Gujarati Indians from East Africa, Punjabi Hindu, Nigerian Hausa, two participants with Iranian parents, and a final participant of Pakistani background. This ability to easily find participants from such varied backgrounds – reflects the multi-ethnic reality of the spaces which feature in my research.

Moreover, drawing upon both Clapham and Harrow allows me to capture reasonably well the broad sweep of multiple socio-economic locations which characterise the second-generation experience of London. Through sourcing second-generation participants from both Harrow and Clapham, in a manner comparable to the tying together of Väsby and Sundbyberg in Stockholm, the research design harnesses a reasonably accurate spectrum concerning socio-economic position and mobility. Indeed, through my involvement in Harrow, I was able to include a few participants who belong to an Indian origin cohort whose assent into the middle class has received much attention in the academic literature on ethnic diversity. The suburban non-Muslim Asian presence and their further consolidation of middle class status can be considered a key feature of a protean multicultural Britain which resists the bundling of all non-whites into a common classificatory terrain: into the fold of a generalised minority position (BME) or even the far too simplistic categorical unit of British Asian itself (Modood et al. 1997: 138-150). It was important for my spread of London participants to be loosely reflective of this socio-economic diversity, a diversity which unpacks the illusory unity which certain identificatory boundaries invite. It is this attempt at difference – which is not merely about ethnic difference but also resonant in terms of relevant socio-economic trajectories – that is apparent in the profile of the participants involved in this research. As the analytic chapters of this thesis unfold, various details concerning these socio-economic circumstances will be touched upon when relevant to the participants' testimonies.

2.4. Participant observation and interviews

Having outlined some features concerning the structural and demographic context of my research sites – via a discussion of conceptual themes such as post-racial racism, super-diversity and the hourglass economy – this chapter will now move towards a

more focused discussion of the practical research process pursued. The approach which guided my research consisted of participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Participation observation itself involved both informal conversation and other everyday interaction between the researcher and research participant, whereby I was granted access to some of the events, spaces and cultural rhythms ordinary to the participant's life. The simple aim of this participatory stage of the research was to observe social engagements and cultural themes as the participants themselves encounter and interpret them (Baker 2004). Also implicit in this approach is the development of an open-ended, informal research relationship which could allow for a personalised and comfortable interview.

Participant observation sessions (two to three sessions with each participant) generally involved sharing time with the participant as he or she attended to certain tasks, usually of a leisure-order. The focus of my presence here was to gather situated material which would then be used to introduce certain conversational themes during the interview, with specific attention to matters of identity, culture and the attitudes expressed concerning the politics of integration and multiculturalism. Thus, the material from participant observation sessions served primarily as support for the interviews and is rarely used for stand-alone analysis. I do however *occasionally* include in the following chapters a few select extracts from my field notes regarding the spaces which the participants were privy to (e.g. the square located at the centre of the Clapham estate complex which was a noteworthy hub of local activity).

The decision to utilise a combination of methods (observation and interviews) was motivated precisely by this allowance to structure the interview in accordance to the participant's own public life (Baker 2004). This combined approach provides the researcher with references and interactions which are organic to the participant, allowing the material which emerges from the interviews to carry a greater degree of familiarity and involvement from the perspective of the interviewee (Sinha and Back 2013). Moreover, through juxtaposition of the interview narratives against the observed activities, I am able to stretch certain narratives (the way in which the participants *describe* their lives) away from the prevailing discursive repertoires available when discussing multicultural life. As Brubaker (2004) warns, the very language of multi-ethnic relations tends to rest on a 'groupist' conflict-orientation. In other words, the manner in which discussants enact both acculturated and/or multicultural lifestyles (key concerns of my

thesis) can be less forthcoming from an interview perspective without my access to those patterns of interaction revealed during the observation sessions. Or, put differently, these habits of fluent multiculture are more likely to be 'elicited' (Sinha and Back 2013: 5) when interviews are stimulated by acknowledgement of certain features ordinary to the participant's life. Sole reliance upon interviews (including focus group interviews) can often lead to material which lacks sufficient reference to the participant's own context. Consequently, the issues associated with the study of ethnic identification – of groupism, of ethnic ontology (reification), of a reductivism of culture to racialised location – are often likely to reassert themselves during the interview process (Back 1996, Nayak 2006). My own emphasis on second-order interaction (interaction outside of one's family and immediate peer-group) too is rendered more difficult when restricted to an interview-only approach, given that second-order interaction, due to its transient and spontaneous character, is less prone to tangible articulation.

Consequently, this desire to locate the interview in the local references of the participant is not merely a practical ambition aimed at generating a more personable comfort between researcher and participant. It is more significantly a methodological claim whereby interview responses are understood as performances too (Nayak 2006: 426). In the scenario where questions are posed to the participant in abstract, seemingly universal terms, these questions elicit according performances within that register. The respondent is incentivised to articulate statements which are located within an overarching and pervasive discursive scheme. This tendency is particularly likely due to the researcher being disarmed of any relevant individual detail which might be posed in the interview as a means to implicitly complicate these normalised and intuitive narrative scripts. But if the question is couched within a certain scene or incident referentially individualised to the participant in question, it then invites a different performance, a performance where the individual is to contend with a bank of memory and agential witness which is her own. Consequently, it is the mixing of observation and interview methods, whereby interviews and lived moments are brought into a dialogic relationship, which offers a unique research appeal.

2.5. Research schedule

The research process commenced in Stockholm during August 2010 and lasted till February 2011. The period included initial scoping sessions of the field sites, participant recruitment, observation sessions and a concluding interview lasting approximately 90

minutes with each participant. The London phase of the research which followed the same sequence was conducted from February to July 2011.

The first step regarding all four field sites was to make use of any existing contacts, in the role of gatekeepers, to embed myself in certain leisure-related group activities relevant to the areas and demographics required for my project. These demographic outlines had to satisfy only two key conditions. The first is rather more self-explanatory, whereby participants had to be of second-generation (ethnic minority) background with at least one parent who is both a minority and an immigrant to Sweden/UK.

Second, participants had to be between the ages of 22 to 30. The age bracket specified was intended to capture the stage of the participants' lives at which their future socio-economic horizons had already obtained some early definition. By excluding those ages where people are most likely to be either in school, university, or just coming out of school, I ensure that my participants had already had some degree of experience with the labour market and that participants had also mapped for themselves a personal geography concerning excursions into various parts of the city, including its centre. Given my research emphasis on public interactions, it was important that the participants had a certain latitude in terms of how they might engage the city around them. Those of a younger age were unlikely to offer such reach given that their engagements are still largely restricted to school environments, alongside being generally confined to the immediate environs of their locale. Finally, the decision to cap the age bracket at thirty is informed primarily by the specific circumstances of postcolonial migration which has led to the reconstitution of Stockholm's ethno-scape. As discussed previously, postcolonial migration and its impact upon the changing complexion of Swedish cities only gathered pace from the late 1970s onwards. Hereby, the second-generation cohort that has grown up in Stockholm with a pronounced and more assertive minority population around them are approximately 30 years old or younger (Lacatus 2007). Consequently, in order to further a critical study of *second-generation* experiences of integration and multiculture, the 22-30 age spread seemed the most applicable.

Due to this youth-oriented demographic profile, my early scoping revolved around activities such as playing football, socialising at bars and cafes, spending time in libraries and hairdressers (both male and female), and visiting local churches and mosques. With

time, I was able to secure the interest of dozens of prospective participants, and ultimately settled on 12 individuals from Stockholm (7 from Upplands Väsby and 5 from Sundbyberg) and 11 participants from London (7 from Harrow and 4 from Clapham). The gender distribution is a fraction imbalanced, with 13 of the 23 participants being men (8 in Stockholm and 5 in London). Some of this imbalance could be a result of me being a man, whereby I was likely to find certain forms of implicitly masculine vernaculars easier to access. This might have been particularly the case in Stockholm (resulting in the spread of 8 men and 4 women), given that, due to my own upbringing in Stockholm, I am far more likely to lapse into certain masculine vernaculars, references and turn of phrase. Similarly, some of my scoping activity was, upon reflection, oriented toward sites which carry a pronounced masculine coding (e.g. those sites centred on sport and religion). But I would add that the participant pool in each city still includes a sufficient number of men and women respectively to render the question of gender differences relevant to my commentary as regards how individuals undergo different forms of 'cultural integration' (Nekby 2012) and moreover, how individuals are subject to different forms of racialised interrogation – leading to different sets of grievances concerning public sphere reception. Consequently, though the scope of this thesis does not allow for a full and exacting structural picture of the lives of these participants (e.g. along class and gender lines), some of these factors will certainly be touched upon when acutely relevant to the participants' reflections.

Most of my access was established through immersion in some of the leisure-oriented spaces (one bar/diner nearby Väsby's train station and a jerk chicken eatery located on the estate in Clapham were particularly conducive), whereby I was able to informally converse with a regular stream of people. It was particularly useful that my research in Stockholm commenced at the tail-end of the summer, as public spaces were awash with activity to a degree less forthcoming during the more severe winter months. The other method via which I initiated contact with prospective participants was through asking contacts and local establishments to distribute flyers designating the purpose of my project. For instance, the use of a female contact who worked in a charity clothes-shop in Sundbyberg led to the involvement of two female participants. Most often though it was my own cajoling and extended conversation which bore fruit.

The character of these initial sites which served as the primary basis for participant recruitment does certainly influence the type of field material generated. For instance, my entry through spaces such as high-streets, eateries and other sites of congregation already privileges the domain of public interaction and encounters. This attention to the public domain is of course consistent with the broader research questions probed as regards cultural consumption, fleeting interaction and communication. Accordingly however, it needs to be reiterated that this emphasis precludes attention to other areas characterised more significantly by intimacies and private endeavours. Equally, the public sites accessed were often sites of commercial consumption or in close proximity to such consumerism, generating in turn a particular kind of research participant profile. On the other hand, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, the prevalence of a commercially acquainted subject is as much an indication of the broader socio-historical moment as it is an outcome of my own methodological approach.

Equally, the spatial scale of my research has to be understood in line with the project's broader analytic gaze. Important here is the acknowledgement that though I place my participants in four respective geographical areas, I do not chart the entirety of the each participant's engagement with the multiple spatial levels which she invariably navigates: the immediate, the local, and the city in its most expansive sense. Instead, I allow spaces to become relevant to my analysis as picked up by the participants' own testimony or from my own time with the participant. In other words, a *full* sense of where the participants come from and what their spatial routines are will not be made apparent. Such an omission does of course matter. Where somebody went to school, where they have lived before, and where precisely they work (to name only a few indicators) are all key factors in shaping a person's outlook and reflections. The thesis does not ignore this significance, but adopts a more particular analytic mode. Instead of objectively schematising the role of space and spatial biography, my awareness of such circumstances (e.g. see Chapter 3's discussion of conviviality and space) is channelled through the narratives that the participants themselves offer. Put differently, these details regarding spatial proximity and history often emerge as part of my analysis of a certain participant's commentary, but they are not given a systematic analytic account.

The participant observation sessions themselves (two to three with each participant) were of a varied nature and could last anywhere from three hours to nearly the entirety

of the day. I was granted access to a wide array of activities: both intimate, insofar as I was alone with the respective participant whilst he or she attended to his/her job or some other chore/leisure activity, as well as more group-centred activities such as going out for a drink. Some of the activities undertaken included: accompanying a participant on a study-session with some of her course-mates; watching a local football club where one of the participants played in a match; multiple occasions where I was asked to play in informal, yet dauntingly competitive football games on local pitches – whilst this occurred predominantly in Väsby, it did take place once in Sundbyberg and in Harrow too, but on the latter occasion basketball was the allotted sport; various occasions where I was invited by a participant to join him/her for a coffee, meal or drink, both in the suburbs as well as in the city depending on convenience and the participant's own inclinations; going shopping, again both in the borough settings itself and in the city-centre; going out to clubs in the evening; assisting a participant whilst he in turn was assisting his sister move flat; accompanying any number of participants whilst they attended to a variety of personal tasks, both large and small; and a birthday party organised for one of the participants by his sister, wherein the extended family was the principal presence.

I was also able to join, in a few select cases, the participant whilst he or she was at work, though this was only possible when the participant worked alone or with only a couple of other trusting acquaintances. The job sites visited included: an upmarket boutique in Central Stockholm where the participant often worked alone; accompanying the participant whilst he drove his metal collection truck round industrial Stockholm in the early hours of the morning; a mobile-phone outlet located in a Harrow shopping plaza whose store manager was one of the participants; being seated in the Upplands Väsby train station ticketing booth whilst the participant attended to his duties; and spending time at a Clapham convenience-store whilst Mehmet, the nephew of the owner, tended to the shop.

These participant observation sessions were primarily conducted in order to provide material which could localise the interview. Hereby, it is to be understood that much of the interview material which features in the following chapters emerged from initial discussions around various local references which I introduced when probing certain themes. Similarly, as is the case with most qualitative approaches, not all of the

individuals who partook in this research will feature in my analysis. Of the 23 participants, only 16 will be mentioned, and some considerably more than others. The purpose of sourcing 23 participants, time-consuming as it was, was to amass enough material to render my discussion purposeful and focused. Only those interview tracts which best distil, frame, or provoke a relevant theoretical discussion will be covered. The analysis chapters could have made use of material provided by any number of participants, given that there was a great degree of material which was similar in texture and content. But for the purposes of analytic immediacy, the excerpts chosen are the *most* indicative of the multiple testimonies arising from different participants.

The combining of interviews and participant observation methods does certainly find its bearing in the broader tradition of ethnography. But as has hopefully been made clear, the approach I adopt does not attempt to map in exhaustive anthropological detail the participants' broader interactive rhythms and the many techniques of state governance which affect the lives of my participants. Instead, the ambition of this discussion is primarily one which looks to deconstruct the field of integration and its conceptual lens. Ideas of integration, multiculture and identity assertion become themselves the focus of my research. Herein, the research material serves as a means to parse into integration's many anachronistic limitations, and equally, allows for a fleshing out of alternative ways to think about the city and its multi-ethnic character. The material used is thereby selective for the purposes of theoretical explication and does not allow for an extended scan of all the individuals who participated.

It is worth restating here the implications of the approach that I adopt in generating the analytic claims of my research. To understand the *status of these analytic claims* requires of course a particular attunement to what sociological claims amount to in terms of 'truth'. As should be apparent, the balance struck regarding truth in this thesis refrains from any attempt at objective, naturalistic verification and as equally, from according with a more general postmodern retreat from claim making *in toto*. Instead, the thesis does venture a certain reading of the observations and interviews available but does so within the analytic frameworks (regarding interaction, cultural activity and communication) already peddled by the sociological field of integration itself. In other words, the 'claims to truth' operate critically within an already demarcated conceptual field provided by the sociology of integration. In sum, the terms and horizons of the critical claims this thesis advances takes its cue from the conceptual traditions active in the contemporary

sociology of integration and, by implication, multiculturalism. What matters here is that participants are able to both problematise and expand upon, calling upon various circumstances regarding their own experience, the orthodox frameworks which guide normative evaluations of both integration and multiculturalism.

More importantly however, the claims made are also to be seen as specific interventions geared towards telling a particular yet robust story of how multi-ethnic life is conducted in today's Western city. To repurpose an elegant reflection of Salman Rushdie (1991: 13) regarding the place of the novel, literature and also, I believe, a broader tradition of qualitative social science:

> Description is itself a political act. [Writers are] engaging a war over the nature of reality. […] So it is clear that redescribing a world is the necessary first step towards changing it. And particularly at times when the State [dominant discourses] takes reality into its own hands, and sets about distorting it, altering the past to fit its present needs, then the making of the alternative realities of art, including the novel of memory, becomes politicized.

In short, the claims made regarding the participants' lives are also necessarily political claims which, utilising the material available, mobilise a different analytic script to the ones favoured within the pervasive literature of integration and the discourse of integrationism. This intervention in formulating alternative scripts, presenting alternative accounts of multi-ethnic life, is a central concern of a sociology which dispenses with its founding pretence of absolute objectivity (Becker 2007) and chimes with the arguments made by contemporary scholars of urban multiculture (Keith 2013, Wise 2013). Hereby, both at an analytic and at a political level, the claims made and foci operationalised need to be contextually understood within the types of claims already made in the field of integration. It does not work outside of those discourses.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined a number of methodological features relevant to my study of ethnic difference vis-à-vis multiculture and integration in London and Stockholm. I first established a repurposed constructionist stance more receptive towards a thinning of communal difference. This theoretical outlook was central to the design of my research. The chapter then touched upon a number of historical and conceptual features relevant to the field sites engaged (e.g. the Million Programme, super-diversity, post-racial/cultural racism and the hourglass economy). These features helped situate the participants who guided this research. Finally, the chapter reiterated some of the

limitations of this thesis, stressing to the reader that the scope of this study does not allow for a panoramic structural scan of the participants' lives. Instead, the focus of study is simply to problematise certain reductive associations – ethnicity/culture, identification/internalisation, race/ontology, and intimate versus fleeting urban relationships – as necessary for a critique of how integration and ethnic difference is commonly understood.

3. Conviviality and urban interaction

3.1. Introduction

This chapter engages the concept of conviviality as an alternative to integration-led conceptualisations of multi-ethnic urban *interaction*. The argument is exemplified through presenting an analytic framework for assessing how racialised ethnic difference circulates in certain public fields of interaction accessed by the second-generation participants. I specifically emphasise the routinisation of such difference as a motif of everyday, benign sociality, parallel to its occasional evocation in explaining and rationalising conflict. The overarching argument that will run through this discussion is as follows: whilst the identity markers of difference claimed and moulded by many of these subjects are accorded a prominent role in their understanding of self, it need not operate in a manner which precludes the integration-outcome of fluent *interaction* across such putative boundaries. Conviviality is presented here as the basis by which individuals' comfort as members of certain common and interwoven field of encounters is predicated on the normalisation of ethnic difference within it. This normalisation – the ordinariness of difference – amounts to what Ash Amin (2012) calls an 'indifference to difference'. This is contrasted either to the wholesale dissipation or demotion of ethnic particularity (i.e. orthodox integration) or to those identity markers operating in a mode which endorse parochial withdrawal – a 'Right to Difference' which aspires to inure itself from other communal identities (orthodox multiculturalism).

In order to qualify this broad-brushed reading of the participants' interactive routines vis-à-vis the circulation of racialised ethnic difference, four sub-themes will be detailed: a) the rendering of multicultural life as normative; b) the ability to accommodate multiple performances of racialised ethnic identity, both ambiguous intermixture as well as hyper-visible racialised others (e.g. asylum seekers with little cultural and economic capital); c) the techniques involved in negotiating ethnically-framed conflict; and d) figurations of space in allowing for convivial fluency. Of particular importance here is my attempt to reconcile conviviality, as a patterning of sociality, with ordinary claims to ethnic difference – whether assertive or not. Simply, evocations of ethnic difference need not be beholden to an ontological, communalist purpose and equally so, conviviality should not be seen as simply privileging those subjects who are often represented, accurately or not, as 'hybrid' and ambivalent. Though the theoretical

engagement of Gilroy is restricted to the extended middle stage of the paper, I hope it will become apparent how it relates to the chapter as a whole. Consequently, the chapter constitutes a framing of Gilroy's conviviality in accordance to my rereading of how integration-as-interaction is to be understood in today's urban environment.

3.2. Normalising difference

In theorising the rhythms of fluent interaction which by-pass racial and ethnic boundaries, the analysis opens with a sketch of my time with one of the London research participants, Farima (24). The foundation from which the convivial interaction I picture throughout this chapter proceeds lies in Farima's attestation to the ordinariness by which the presence of difference is made normative (both sociologically and philosophically[10]).

> Scene: When with Farima, a female participant from Harrow of Iranian background, on two different occasions (a Saturday afternoon and a Wednesday evening), we wandered our way through the Harrow high streets with a couple of her friends (they were all either Iranian or South Asian of varied provenance). We flitted at a leisurely pace between cafes (her preference being Starbucks) and shopping, though the former took up the bulk of our time. As we strolled through the commercial streets and meandered through the two shopping complexes (St. George's and St. Anne's), we would regularly chance upon any number of other people who were acquaintances to one or more of those women I was with. In one case, on the Wednesday evening, when making our way to a Nando's off the high-street for an after-work meal, we happened upon a white acquaintance who was promptly asked to come along. Which she did. The strongest overall impression I gathered, apart from being generally awed by the sheer number of people they seemed to know, was the array of backgrounds which were represented in these myriad acquaintances.

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[10] The sociological refers to the structurally generated cultural norms which are apprehended by the relevant socialised members as neutral and common-sensical. The philosophical is specifically restricted to the sphere of ethics where *'ought'* statements, in the Aristotelian or Kantian mould, concerning issues of right and wrong *(moral* injunctions) and good and bad (*ethical* principles) are deliberated. There is of course great transpositional overlap between the two treatments, but we can perhaps draw a distinction where the sociological pertains primarily to *descriptive* statements and the latter relates to *speculative*, ideal-theory value-sets.

The sketch of the above sessions, prosaic as they are, echoes numerous observations during my research which specifically appeal to what could be phrased as the *normalisation* of difference. At these sites, ethnic difference can appear 'unremarkable', 'banal' and unworthy of comment. Even the two establishments mentioned here (Starbucks and Nando's), though loosely stratified by class, and to a lesser extent age, reflect the ease with which diversity circulates outside its doors – the streets from which this teeming mass of multiculture spills into the franchise.

Furthermore, apart from the fact that the *clusters* of people we would come across, or were simply around us, were often already multi-ethnic in composition, it is also worth commenting on what might be classed here as *second-order interaction* – a term which I will develop more robustly in the coming section. Provisionally, this term helps me to distinguish between the interactions which are conducted with those in one's immediate social circle (for instance, those with whom a particular person enters a social space) – classed here as *first-order* – in contrast to those acquaintances with whom the person in question both shares a certain space and perhaps engages in spontaneous conversation with, whether fleeting or prolonged. It is such informal breaching which punctuates these movements, whereat the sharing of the public space with (numerous plural) others is compounded by the habitual engaging of conversation. This mode of impromptu interaction, best attested to in the invitation to further socialising made in the Nando's instance, was common to the lifestyle rhythms of many of my participants. As was confirmed during the interview, the young woman who joined us at Nando's was merely an acquaintance to Farima. She was not considered a friend with whom any of the women present would consider having 'planned time' (an analytically apposite term suggested by Farima). It is precisely such instances of casual second-order relation with those who are inscribed as ethnically different (whether white or other minorities) which was both preponderant, and by extension, unspectacular for many of the participants.

These routines as evidenced by my time with Farima, where the spaces visited are *multi-ethnic* and the interactions *cross-ethnic,* constitute the general process of normalising difference. However, if racialised ethnic difference is rendered 'mundane', 'banal' and 'ordinary' (the terms used throughout by Gilroy when characterising convivial interactions/spaces), this is not synonymous with it being rendered trivial and

expendable. During the interview with Farima, I looked to ascertain what she herself would account as being important in allowing for this type of fluent interaction. Evidenced in the following excerpts, the type of normalisation detailed here is not to be read as denoting the transcendence and/or absence of ethnic difference; as John Solomos (2013: 20) comments: '[A] lived experience of multiculture does not take us 'beyond race'.' On the contrary, this normalisation relies on *presupposing* the presence of difference – racially and ethnically construed. Namely, those who animate such convivial spaces deem such intermeshed identity diversity a pre-established given.

> Farima: 'I am Iranian, foreign, […] many kinds of things you would say. […] I have a history that is mine and I'm proud of it. [And] this is how others see us, if we like it or not. But you see there is the difference. I mean, there is the difference in *how people make choices about this*. If I am Iranian, that's not the problem. But you can choose to see me like I am a problem or you can choose to see me like. I don't really know, but just, like, you can choose to see me in a way, a way that me being Iranian is not a problem. That is all I ask for. To be treated fairly, until I mess up I guess. […] You know, innocent till proven guilty. Not the other way round.

> 'So this is what I meant [I had asked her to clarify what she meant when she said that 'it was whiter than I imagined']. […] At Uni (Westminster) there were so many people who didn't seem used to being with other people. I found it hard kind of to be with them, but it's strange because I know loads of white people from Harrow, like Claire [who I had just mentioned as a prompt]. It's just that I meant people who aren't used to being with different cultures. You can tell that they are unsure about what my history might be. Like what I do and think. I don't want to be with people like that. […] People who might think when they see me: 'Oh, I wonder if her parents are on benefits, I wonder if they allow her to go out to clubs. [Laughter]

> 'The [white] people here, who grow up with different people – like, grew up with people like me in school and everything – they know how to behave and know they shouldn't joke about certain things, like not ask stupid questions about this and that. [...] It's really just about some kind of respect for each other,

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[…] not thinking that I have to be the same as you, you know, and not being uncomfortable. That's what it is. […] But over on the other side, where it is just English people, like in Uxbridge and Watford even, there you have a different kind of white person. Maybe he doesn't behave in the same way. He hasn't had, maybe, so many ethnic friends. So immediately, it's certain things that he thinks of differently which makes it difficult for him to be with us. Maybe a bit uncomfortable if there are too many of us.'

The criteria specified in her comments centre on the acceptance and subsequent routinisation of ethnically signified difference. This is a crucial *a priori supposition* concerning the presence of such difference, which an agent such as Farima assumes as self-evident when going about her 'convivial' movements. Having presumed the legitimacy of racialised difference, and, providing that such legitimacy is forthcoming from those others present, it is indeed likely that race is to make less of a conspicuous, surface-level impression. But this merely entails that such difference has been formalised as a *taken-for-granted*, matter-of-fact quality (i.e. normativity). It is precisely this tacit recognition of multiculture that underpins the realisation of ordinary interaction so common to the routines of the participants.

It is an appeal to a comfort with diversity which is only possible upon freeing race of suspicion ('innocent till proven guilty'); an attempt to reconcile society with difference in a manner which sponsors interaction, whilst upholding the right of persons to fashion presentations of self unbound by the racial inscriptions of inferior worth and status. It is an address to race without hostility ('know how to behave, not ask stupid questions') which is said to emerge from familiarity ('used to being with other cultures'/ 'knows people from different ethnicities'). Ultimately, the mode through which ethnic difference is breached in servicing a common interactional field without the relevant actors resorting to an evocation of that very difference in an incendiary or demagogic manner, is penned here as the signature mark of conviviality. A multiculture which is predicated on a stance towards racialised difference as non-intrusive ('I am not a problem') and thereby unremarkable, as opposed to a stance towards such difference as simply non-existent or subsumed.

It is within this specific analytic terrain that I situate Gilroy's (2004: 105) pivotal claim that amidst conviviality – when compared to the other ordinary pleasures and hazards alike which the cityscape has to offer – race is made 'essentially insignificant'. I believe that it is an 'insignificance' which emerges from a well-accustomed *indifference*, not *non-difference*, which is at the centre of the urban ethos advanced by Farima. This reading of how difference is normalised inverts in turn the programmatic logos of integrationism which continues to guide our understandings of how multi-ethnic interactions are best envisaged. At worst, integrationism militates for the absolute effacement/elision of racialised ethnic difference, whilst at best, minority communal identifications are to be rendered subsidiary to the overarching symbolism of a national self (McGhee 2008). Put simply, integrationism reads the possibility of shared life as emerging primarily from the absorption of the minority into a unitary collective bond – even if some of its proponents do acknowledge the need for that collective identity to be reconstructed. Conviviality marks a rejection of this orthodoxy. Conviviality is a reading which posits the same outcome of regularised interaction but finds that interactive fluency does not rest on articulating a unitary identity field. Rather, and crucially, identities of ethnic or national self are made politically obsolescent in the first place. It is not that a normalisation of difference arises from the macro-actualisation of a 'national sameness'; instead, it is a normalisation of difference of its own accord. As Amin (2013: 11, emphasis added) sums up in an analogous context:

> I see the challenge of *integration* in the hyper-diverse society *less as one of changing identities and building inter-subjective empathies* than as one of deepening commitment to the idea and practice of the provisioning and plural communal, so that the status and visibility of particular bodies recedes as a measure of their social worth and entitlement.

As I will argue in the following sections, Gilroy's approach to identities of difference is not to undo or render them absent, but rather to divest communal difference of its ability to limit the terms by which people wish to interact, however momentarily. It is an ability to allow for interaction and cultural undertakings in a mode less restricted by what he terms in *Between Camps* as 'pre-political', 'automatic solidarities' (2000: 8, 133) – group solidarities characteristic of modernity which preclude a trust or openness to those who register as different as well as dissuade members from courting certain values, tastes and forms of expression which are presented as being outside of the respective community's 'authentic' repertoire.

3.2.1 Second-order interaction: moving away from intimate ties

Having flagged this particular reading of Gilroy's objection to racialised ethnic identifications, a discussion which will be expanded upon in the second part of this chapter, I first incorporate further participant material complementary to the above vignette of Farima. This incorporation facilitates a more substantive discussion concerning the proposed term 'second-order interaction'.

It was generally true that my participants' *intimate and immediate* friendship circles (those with whom regular and repeated interaction is conducted) were, for the most part, comprised of other persons of minority ethnic background. This pattern held firm irrespective of the participant's current socio-economic status – which varied amongst the participants from lower working class to embryonically middle class. And whilst a considerable range was apparent within the minority appellation itself, in the sense that the parents of those present had provenance in *various* non-European countries, the participants might have *appeared* to be leading social lives which were notably constrained by racialised differentiation. Insofar as, much of their closer circles consisted of people of similar minority identity-types. It is ill-advised, however, to limit the analytic gaze to this level of intimate ties, as it misses two important points far better attuned to the stuff of today's urban experience. First, and only briefly, the minority presence was never *exclusively* so. In other words, there was at least one, though often more, white British/Swedish friend apparent at *some* point during the course of my brief interaction with each of the participants (excepting one black participant from Clapham, Ruben). In fact, it became particularly clear during the interviews that they all had, in varying intensities, *numerous* such acquaintances.

More importantly, recent research has noted that it is the interactive rhythms which occur *outside* of one's intimate social ties which is most indicative of conviviality and/or tension. These works, which I read as complementary to Gilroy's notion of conviviality, are of immediate relevance in supporting my attempt to cast a wider interactional net by which to assess the quality of multi-ethnic encounters. Not least, Amin's (2012) recently published *Land of Strangers*. Amin's insights concerning urban life and its many unknown and less known strangers adds considerable theoretical nuance to my attempt to situate conviviality as a progressive alternative to the increasingly exclusionary and

unimaginative conceptions of social integration. Moreover, the recent special issue which was subsequently published by the journal *Identities* as a complement to the book – a collection of articles from leading researchers (e.g. Keith 2013, Solomos 2013, Wise 2013) who develop different strands of the book – is not only useful for my own theorisation, but gives me confidence that this thesis's attempt at re-picturing promising formations of shared life in today's city is a worthwhile project exercising minds far more seasoned than my own.

Central to these commentaries is the need to dispense with prolonged and intimate relations of *friendship* – what the influential Commission for Racial Equality (2007:25) optimistically identified as the need to 'foster sustained, deep and meaningful interaction between people from different backgrounds' – as the standard by which to picture shared life or 'belonging'. It is argued that policy makers need to better acknowledge that 'apart from a few contexts such as work and school, most urban encounters are fleeting or momentary' (Vertovec 2007b: 29). It is no longer meaningful in large-scale cities hosting increasingly complex diverse populations to think of cohesive or conflict-free spaces as having to be comprised of persons with whom 'meaningful' bonds of affection are to be shared. Indeed, Amin's broader thesis appeals to what he calls an 'indifference to difference'. In this reconfigured context, it is important to analytically recognise that a key interface at which positive relations are already fostered without it being predicated on a common sense of belonging 'is amid the fleeting and superficial kinds of contact that are the daily stuff of urban life' (Vertovec 2007b: 31). Here, the challenge at hand amounts to an attempt to 'dislodge the ideal of belonging' from its 'current mooring' in a calculus of intimate 'social ties' (Amin 2012: 6).

It is the false ideal of friendship, happiness and neighbourliness[11] which acts as the critical object of Amin and the Steven Vertovec piece mentioned above. Sara Ahmed's (2010) more philosophically tuned book, *The Promise of Happiness*, also works against the obfuscation which the guiding reference of friendship engenders vis-à-vis our understanding of a viable basis for collective politics amidst super-diverse settings. Ahmed argues that the moral premium placed upon a perennial happiness has led to a paralysis in contemporary political pragmatism. Whereby, what is otherwise best understood as minor inconveniences and/or necessary critique (e.g. negotiating the

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[11] In Denmark, for instance, the 'cosiness' which neighbourliness is said to engender is often evoked in political discussion, as a specific and worthwhile *ideal*, through the ubiquitous phrase, 'hygge'.

differences of those around us and confronting racism), transmutes into intractable, master explanatory frames of modern anxieties. In other words, if all phenomena and encounters are to be appraised against the ideal of happiness, it leads to a troubling dismissal and impatience with certain situational realities which cannot be undone (e.g. diversity). Ahmed calls for a preference for notions of agonistic deliberation conducted in the interests of a greater good (understood as a confidence in disruptive change) instead of continuing to suffer the regressive distortions of the happiness ideal.

It is my interpretation that Gilroy's conviviality thesis does too nestle within this broader move – against both the policy emphasis on intimate social ties as well as the wedding of our political imagination to misguided happiness indices – to rethink how a new commons might be actualised without subsuming all difference into a superordinate and intimate affective affiliation. A closer look at some of the participant testimonies from both cities helps substantiate the feasibility of any such move towards a practice of 'indifference to difference' – an everyday ease with those who are strangers (both literally as well as those whose identity markings do not comply with the majority sense of community) – which Amin proposes. It is with this theoretical challenge in mind that I look to ground Gilroy's conviviality in those interactional fields, as evidenced in Farima's daily engagements, which emerge outside of one's regular and intimate social network. My development of the phrase 'second-order interaction' acknowledges that the bulk of contemporary urban life consists of navigating through people who are, at best, only loosely known to the subject, and moreover, such persons are increasingly less likely to be of the same ethnic background. Consequently, in looking to better understand integration – that is to say, to understand the engendering of a sense of ease with one's daily surroundings – it is important to explore the specific manner in which subjects demonstrate casual competence in their fleeting interaction with those who are nominally marked as 'different'.

3.2.2. Comfort with distance: 'You don't need to be brothers to get on'

This ethos is best discerned by addressing two related themes: the first concerning a fuller demarcation of what *non-hostility* entails and the second concerning a sound of caution whenever civility is evoked as the basis for fluent multi-ethnic living.

The first is easily handled, involving simply the oft-forgotten appreciation for 'agonistic' public deliberation (Gilroy 2004: 4, 80). Put differently, it is necessary to work away from those political imaginations where 'respectful distance [and] principled disagreement becomes discarded as a way of negotiating the society of strangers' (Amin 2012: 170). Here, shared public life and the constant entangling of persons with different backgrounds and life-stories should not be conflated with a general *comfort* at all times. Instead, what is lifted forth is a decidedly minimalist claim which documents only the *absence of conflict and hostility* in the course of these multiple navigations.

Robban (29), a male participant from Väsby, and of Moroccan background, brought particular clarity to this distinction between non-conflict and comfort:

> 'I think it is a real mistake to think that I could be friends with everyone. And, you know, I do find that I relate better to people who have a migrant background. I don't know if that's a good thing or bad thing really, but that's just how things have happened. […] Especially as I have gotten older, I have found that more and more of my closer friends are Invandrare, […] but this does not mean in any way that I find it difficult to get on with Swedes. […] And yes my friend, you have seen yourself that I know loads of Swedes and there is no problem. We don't need to be brothers to get on and do things together.'

It was indeed true that Robban, during the course of my time with him (once playing football and once at a surprise birthday party held for him by his younger sister and her friends), appeared perfectly comfortable in numerous Swedes' company. His footballing past in particular – Robban was known during his youth as one of the more promising talents in Väsby – was prominent in accounting for the great and diverse number of acquaintances he seemed to maintain without them being absorbed into his primary peer-group set.

At the time of research, the team with whom Robban would occasionally play, Märsta Tre IP, was set up by Peruvian first-generation migrants in Stockholm. Robban's close friend of Bosnian origins affectionately, though perhaps inappropriately, referred to the team and its core members as 'The Indians'. Primarily intended as an engagement by which this already close group of Peruvian men would congregate on a weekly basis, the

team gradually expanded to include non-Peruvians as they proved more and more successful in the intra-Stockholm amateur leagues. Herein, by the time the team was brought to my attention due to Robban's involvement, the squad was half comprised of first-generation Peruvians and the other half a motley crew of second and third-generation *Invandrare* as well as a handful of Swedes from the Väsby-Märsta area. Of particular interest here in relation to the sentiments of Robban above – namely, 'we don't need to be brothers to get on' – was not merely the camaraderie amongst this unlikely collection, but the manner in which two different non-antagonistic social circles emerged within the team. This largely benign cleaving did not map onto a generic Swede-Invandrare divide, but to a Peruvian (first-generation) – second-generation/Swede distinction. It was apparent, in the socialising both prior to training and matches as well as after, that the Swedes amongst them were consummately at home with their Invandrare peers, partaking with ease in a shared social and comic lexicon.

And though there was distance (even 'a respectful distance' perhaps as Amin (2012: 170) might have it) from the Peruvians, this was not one of antagonism. As Robban later recalled:

> 'The Peruvians are so funny, Val. They are just so different to us and don't really get us I don't think. […] But you saw us, it's just great fun. I ask them about their wives and children and work and all sorts and everybody has a good time. […] I do care for them you know. If I saw Daniel on the street and he needed a lift, I will always offer him one.'[12]

Though obvious, it is noteworthy that the attention to difference and distance ('don't really get us') does not preclude demonstrations of comfort in each other's company. This 'unremarkable' (Gilroy 2004: 105) aspect of the lives and entangled routines which characterise such multi-ethnic spaces is however highly remarkable when considered against the archaic preoccupation with intimate social ties and bonds of community which continues to characterise so much of our discussion on cohesion and shared life. Daniel is not someone who would be invited to Robban's birthday party (there were no

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[12] At practice, it was frequently commented upon that some of the Peruvians, having only recently arrived in Sweden, did not have cars and thus had more difficulties reaching the rather marooned grounds at which the team practise.

members of the football team present, apart from the aforementioned friend of Bosnian origin). Nor is Daniel someone who holds any exotic appeal to Robban. Instead, and far more in accordance to the 'mundane' (Gilroy 2004: xvi) routine of sudden encounters ('if I was to see Daniel on the street'), Robban's relationship to the Peruvians in his team is one of comfort, but a comfort that is not borne out of intimacy or a manifestation of sameness ('They are just so different to us and don't really get us I don't think').

3.2.3. Going beyond civility

It is also worth clarifying that this minimal mandate (non-hostility) for a multicultural sensibility to emerge is not simply a matter of encouraging a greater culture of civility and politeness in our everyday interactions – as is seemingly the argument of Vertovec (2007b: 30-33) and indeed, at certain junctures, Amin (2012: 69-71) and Anderson(2011[13]). This second disaggregation does however necessitate a little theoretical elaboration whereby, though civility is manifestly a good in its own right, it is analytically significant to disentangle habitual competency in interaction with difference/strangers from the general cultivation of a civic disposition towards others.

First, the turn to a discourse of civility risks unwitting endorsement of the increasingly fashionable turn to civic values in contemporary narrations of European nationalism (Balibar 1991, 2004, Lentin and Titley 2011, McGhee 2009). A narration of nation which centres civic virtues as the prevailing criteria for generating a European body politic (Habermas 2001, Kymlicka 2001, Miller 1995) is anchored in many of the discursive meanings and 'representational regimes' (Hall 1997: 232) redolent of colonial European understandings of 'ethnic' others. Simply, the minority ethnic subject (most notably, the Muslim) is coupled with certain intrinsic cultural properties which render her an undesirable, deficient citizen vis-à-vis civic virtue. Amidst this fraught context, it is prudent to suggest that an ease with difference cannot be rooted in a call to civility alone.

More importantly, numerous excerpts from the interviews conducted revealed that the participants take greatest exception to being deemed inadequate *in the first instance*, regardless of any civic display of politeness which might manifest subsequently. In other

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[13] In fact, the subtitle of Anderson's *The Cosmopolitan Canopy* (2011) reads: 'Race and civility in everyday life.'

words, civility as pictured by these discussants should not manifest in spite of hostility, but as summarised above, that very hostility or suspicion is to be effectively dispensed with for ordinary and fluent interaction to transpire. Whilst Amin is right to welcome a civic politics arising from a shared concern for the management of local resources and collective well-being, this civic orientation should however not be presumed by the reader as applicable to the reception of difference itself (the differences in background and identity claims which characterise the population residing in any metropolitan locale). Instead, the civic politics should be birthed *from* a shared indifference to the difference apparent. That is to say, ethnic difference is no longer to constitute a basis for interrogation, at worst, or, at best, civic tolerance.

Indeed, as discussed during the introductory chapter's engagement of multiculturalism and its caricature, the realisation of tolerance at this superficial level (concerning the very background of the individuals encountered as opposed to the actual conduct of any respective individual) can show itself to be an impossible end. There is of course *already* a well-recognised political conservatism to any simple appeal to tolerance, in the sense that the prevailing political hierarchy is reinforced in the very act of distinguishing those who tolerate from those who are to be tolerated. This insight concerning the power-relations which undergird acts of conditional tolerance has been made compellingly by both Wendy Brown (2006) and Jacques Derrida (2003: 127-130[14]). There is no dissolution of the distinction between insider and outsider but instead, the outsider remains a negatively coded, undesirable entity, awaiting interrogation and verdict. In Derrida's argumentation, however, there lies a further implication apposite for the argument sketched above. The political logic of tolerance suggests not only that it is invariably an exercise of privilege, but more importantly, that there is in actuality a certain *impossibility* to tolerance itself. I rephrase his argument here as entailing that an appeal to tolerance, short of any other political undertaking (e.g. 'unconditional hospitality'), can only function negationally – as only a call for the 'reasonable amongst us' to be intolerant. In this sense tolerance cannot be seen as somehow hegemonic (in the sense that 'free-will' or the 'American Dream' is), but rather, as a narrative reference which reminds the rational listener that the outside object *cannot* be tolerated or only be *partially or conditionally* tolerated. Any bracketed appeal to tolerance can seemingly only function in a negational narrative wherein the speaker cites the impossibility of 'us', the

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[14] This book, though authored by Giovanna Borradori, is a relaying of conversations with Derrida and Habermas about philosophy and politics in the post-9/11 era.

impartial adjudicators, to be tolerant of 'them', the ethnic, group-beholden others. Put bluntly, how is a positive appeal to tolerance concerning the fundamentalist-cum-terrorist ever to be advanced? The function of 'civility-as-tolerance' to a broader assimilationist project is I believe of the same negational sort. When various minority constituencies are casually represented as thus, as illiberal and disruptive, it gives tolerance a viable narrative purchase *only* to those who wish to be seen as intolerant of the relevant others. It only appeals to those who wish to be seen as anti-multiculture – wherein they 'turn tolerance into a sign of the nation's weakness' (Fortier 2008: 6). Indeed, it is due to such narrative effects that I believe the turn to civic nationalism is so enthusiastically commended by those who already husband a nostalgic yearning for past avatars of ethnic nationalism.

In tune with this Derridian-inspired line of critique, the participants involved in this project were unimpressed by allowances of difference which rested merely on a thin, civic rendition of tolerance. As is apparent in the above discussion of Robban, his comfort with his Peruvian teammates – and vice-versa – does not hinge on any form of vetting concerning the appropriateness of each other's difference. Rather, it is a casual disregard for difference as being worthy of confrontation or disquiet which seems to allow for regularised interaction. Appeals to civic tolerance were sensed by many of the participants as carrying a confrontational tone, compelling only defensive postures. Instead, it is a show of interactional competency, whereby the difference which might be ascribed to fellow others is intuitively felt as unremarkable, as unworthy of interrogation. This disregard, as Farima attests to, need not manifest as a lack of curiosity or non-recognition, but merely applies to those situations where difference is no longer appraised by any notional standard of acceptability. In other words, the participants wish simply for that difference to be disabled of any negative connotations which they are either to defend or disavow. Tami (27), a second-generation Iranian from Sundbyberg articulated this sensibility thus:

> 'I really don't feel Muslim. Not in the way that my parents and other older Iranians clearly are Muslim.'

> V: 'Yes, I can't say there was anything particularly Muslim that I saw.'

T: 'No, man. I drink, I party, I want girls, I don't go to mosque. Nothing really, [...] but what I wanted to say was that when Swedes start asking me about Muslims in a negative way, like 'you are ok because you aren't actually Muslim but the real Muslims are causing segregation and terrorism' then I get uncomfortable. And I start to, in a strange way, say that I am Muslim and become more 'hard' about who I am.'

Tami's recourse to more hardened postures is given tidy theoretical expansion in a London quotation from Wahid (30, of Pakistani background):

'When you think about it, it has nothing to do with what you actually are. […] It's just really reactions that matter, you know what I mean. […] Okay, it's hard to explain really, but when people around you who just automatically think this is their country [a white country] and start asking questions and describing me as a good type of Muslim because I am integrated then it actually makes you feel like you are never going to be accepted. Doesn't seem to matter what you do because it's like, at the end of the day, they get to make the decision on who is good and who is bad. It's like I am passing a test so then my reactions change. […] You just become sort of more difficult and not trusting of people like this anymore. […] They are just testing you, and man, why should just any normal people get to test me.'

It is Wahid's final stress on 'trusting' and 'why should just any normal people get to test me' which better establishes the ultimately secondary/derivative value of civility in any discussion concerning the place of difference in the public sphere. It is not civility, that is to say an attempt at polite accommodation in shared public spaces, which facilitates a comfort in the company of others. It is also a 'situational' (Amin 2012: 11) code of interaction, a code concerning the reception of difference, which requires observation for patterns of comfort to set root.

What materialises here from a research perspective is therefore a more practical, precise need, as Amin calls for, to better assess the 'frames of encounter' (169), as opposed to a mere positivist description of what transpires during the encounter itself. In other words, a greater attention to what *is not said and what is not done* by the partaking agents

during habitual interaction with multiple others should inform our research agenda. It is precisely an attention to the internal, tacit codes at play which allow for researchers to better parse what Gilroy (2004: 105, emphasis added) terms the 'unremarkable *principle*' of multicultural life. So, in the initial phase of this chapter, not only have I sought to better disentangle the uneasy family resemblances of 'an indifference to difference' from nationalisms which promote a 'civic values' discourse – but I have also sought to further stress the need to recognise that the frames of encounter which guide convivial relations do not have to efface or demote difference (e.g. identifications by ethnic or racial terms). They necessitate only a particular form of interactional familiarity with difference and its evocations.

A perhaps instructive analogy, as means of explication, lies in Habermas's (1989) well-known drafting of the 'public sphere' spirit.[15] The relevant detail, for a discussion on Amin's 'frames of encounter', is Habermas's distinction between communication and the norms of communication. Habermas is not particularly concerned with the amount or regularity of conversation, but only with the norms of conversation that precede it, norms which promote ideals of equal participation and concern itself with the collective well-being. Comparably, when the 'frames of encounter' preclude an easy, fluent identification with difference, the resulting encounter itself is unlikely to neutralise animosity and distrust.

Put differently, whilst there were at the time well-documented moves in 'public sphere' literature to read the advent of social media technologies and its possibilities of communication as inaugurating a 'new public sphere', Habermas himself was keen to dampen such enthusiasm. He sought to remind his audience that it was not the amount of conversation but only the norms that govern the conversation which determines its public sphere capabilities (Papacharissi 2002). Similarly, as opposed to the 'sustained, deep and meaningful' contact which the Commission for Racial Equality offered as an antidote to ethnically construed animosity, it is the very norms which shape that 'contact' that are of significance. Indeed, it is clear that at various junctures – in the

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[15] It is not particularly important what the reader makes of Habermas's *substantive* claims concerning the ability of communicative norms to actualise anything at all, let alone an egalitarian hold on rationalism. I am only advancing this analogy as a way of clarifying the relationship between an act and the norms which precede/frame the act. Hereby, the standing of multicultural norms should not be dismissed simply on the basis that communicative norms might not, in many people's estimation, amount to anything significant in real-world affairs.

absence of more casual dispositions towards difference – it is often contact and propinquity itself which generate animosity. As the anthropologists Thiranagama and Kelly (2010: 12) comment, albeit in the acutely more tense theatre of postcolonial conflict, 'running counter to our assumptions about the amicable and intrinsically peaceful core of neighbourliness as a value in itself, the neighbour is never only a source of care and support but also a figure of whom you can never be sure […] whilst still being dangerously close to you.' Put simply, neighbourly contact, or even neighbourliness, does not of its own accord engender the goods for productive relations across difference to manifest. In light of the above participant quotations, it is more properly understood that the absence of conflict is best realised only when suitable norms (where multiculture is made normative) which pre-empt the encounter are already at play.

3.3. Are race claims always ontological claims?

Of course, even if multiculture is made normative, even if interaction can seem unremarkably regular, a question arises concerning the 'ontological' status of the racialised ethnic difference being negotiated. In short, is race handled as a homogenising sign or is it able to embrace its inevitable intra-level diversity? Is there a move amidst these convivial interactions to 'ontologise' race or are the participants involved more malleable and open-ended in their adjudication of 'valid' enunciations of a particular racialised identity? This middle section of the chapter, through a discussion of Gilroy's critique of race ontology and his treatment of the ambivalent figure, will suggest that it is the latter – an appeal to difference uprooted from ontology – which is constitutive of convivial interactional fields. I argue here, through first detailing in depth my particular interpretation of Gilroy's anti-race position and then drawing upon some of the field-material, that it is only an anti-ontological handle which can render racialised difference 'insignificant' in the broader navigation of the city.

This question is important for it is not enough to demonstrate that interaction across difference is commonplace. If multiple 'groupings' undertake regular interaction yet understand the respective groupings to be ontologically real, they are then prone to upholding the putatively discrete, inviolable boundaries demarcating each 'community'. They risk reproducing a 'groupism' which treats 'ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities' to which interests and agency can be attributed to as if they were

internally homogenous, externally bounded groups, even 'unitary collective actors with common purposes exclusive to its members' (Brubaker 2004: 7-10). Any such fidelity to ethnic groupism is not without consequence.

First, the self-serving pessimism underlying both the logic of integration and of multiculturalism is premised upon the belief that group identities are real to the point that its members act as agents of the group. Whilst integration responds to the supposed groupist fragmentation of multi-ethnic societies by attempting an erasure of the minority presence, orthodox multiculturalism differs only in its claim that communal differences are irreversible and of value in their own right. They both pivot off the same depressing conclusion that as long as ethnic difference persists, interaction across these lines will remain incomplete – insofar as, individuals' groupist conditioning will remain exclusionary and obstruct the imagining of alternative political futures as concerning a shared commons. Second, groupism also implies that relations across difference are always fragile, wherein conflict and division always lurk, ready to unleash new fascisms whenever and wherever circumstances realign (the aftermath of 9/11 tells its own sad story here). Finally, and even more problematically, a belief in groupist determinism binds each racialised subject to an artificially imposed cultural and spatial repertoire, a repertoire which carries hegemonic resonances by its ability to render the terms by which the minority subject is recognised the same terms by which she is economically and politically excluded (i.e. her group culture is identified as the cause of her exclusion). The question that remains therefore is, how do Farima and her peers affirm a sense of their racialised particularity without them restaging ethnic ontologies, without these appeals to subjective identity restricting the terms by which they engage the cultural, political and social lives around them?

Much of Gilroy's own sustained criticism of race when formulating his vision of a 'planetary humanism' (the neologism he coined denoting a reconstructed, non-imperial universalism) resides in the origins of race in racism. That is to say, given that race is birthed out of structural, colonial racism, it is necessarily entangled in the operations of those discursive logics which mark out the racialised as a pathological outsider – as a non-normative, deficient denizen. Furthermore, Gilroy and likeminded critics are troubled by the intimations of fixity, homogeneity and discrete purity which undergird racial and ethnic absolutisms. They conclude that if it is 'inescapably reified as a divisive

and exclusionary concept?' (St Louis 2002: 662), it is indeed so that "'race' can have no ethically defensible place' (Gilroy 2000: 6).

But a need to think beyond racialised groupism/absolutism does not necessarily imply a visualisation of conviviality which is absent of identificatory appeals to 'racial, linguistic and religious particularities' (Gilroy 2006: 40). I argue that upon a more extended reading, Gilroy's framing of planetary humanism and conviviality is not anchored in an 'undifferentiated' polity premised only on a Universalist sameness, as some of his critics suggest (Gikandi 2002, Robotham 2005: 565, Roediger 2006). His project does not actually posit any such future without difference and is certainly not a retreat from a critique of the material inequality and state violence wrought by global capitalism – this being the frankly bizarre charge levelled by Patricia Hill Collins (2002) and Bob Carter and Satnam Virdee (2008: 669-670). On the contrary, it is the internal '*sameness'* which marks appeals to 'race and nation' (Gilroy 2000: 15) that leads to its futility regarding an open-ended and effective critique of inequality and thereby warranting of its ethical obsolescence. It is its imagination of self as part of a homogenous 'pre-political' communal entity which damns its potential concerning a political solidarity intuitively comfortable with difference. 'In a multicultural democracy, solidarity should be constructed on a radically non-racial humanism that avoids the allure of automatic, pre-political uniformity' (Gilroy 2000: 8).

In this manner, race and any other claim to communal identity are being troubled in the interests of actively negotiating *new* forms of critical solidarity. As such, the dictum informing Gilroy's position concerning the relationship between difference (multiculture) and race (communal identity) is that race is the wrong *kind* of difference. It is a type of difference which militates against solidarity by virtue of it imagining the boundaries it solicits for the purpose of distinction immutable. It is a form of difference, premised upon a monochrome interiority, which cannot foster active and new social solidarities but relies instead on pre-given, ready-made (already signified as such) solidarities. In other words, racial communal identity is a 'lazy' form of realising an ethical or political attachment. It could be said, taking some metaphorical liberties, that for Gilroy, solidarity is a verb, not a noun. But if this is the charge to which we must answer, it stands to be seen whether race is in fact culpable of this 'ontological' slide

whenever manifest and whether Gilroy himself thinks racialised ethnicity always, in all its mundane renditions, untenable.

Some critics seem puzzled by Gilroy's ability to maintain a forceful anti-race claim whilst concomitantly detailing the racism which underpins the sad resurgence of a civilizational, anti-difference integrationism:

> Gilroy concludes the book [*Postcolonial Melancholia*] by reiterating the anti-race claim *even though* the majority of the text is about the battle to preserve the postcolonial planet amidst imperialistic [anti-difference] forces (Roberts 2006: 165, emphasis added).

The 'even though' is I think misplaced. As I read him, there is no contradiction in Gilroy's argument against 'race-thinking'; the argument he carves out is intricate but it is clear by my reckoning that his position regarding conviviality is able to countenance the continued relevance of racialised ethnicity in our present and near future. To rework an earlier phrase: racialised ethnicity is *not always* the wrong *kind* of difference. This remains only my own interpretation, but the manner in which I purpose Gilroy's theorisation of the non-communalist conviviality that characterises some of today's urban landscape does not require a habit of identification without race and ethnicity. Rather, it is specifically the ontological avatars of such identifications – the ontology which racialised ethnicity, due to its biological pretensions, invites – that foster a separation beyond time, a separation to be myopically guarded. It is this modernist absolutism that is deemed by Gilroy to be ethically untenable.

Put differently, I read Gilroy's anti-race position as being straightforwardly pro-difference. But whilst he does put forth that race, by the long and gradual recasting of an alternative post-capitalist, cosmopolitan future, will fade away into happy oblivion; I read *After Empire* as suggesting that, *as far as the possibility for a progressive present is concerned*, there are key practices by which race figures in the contemporary constitution of subjective difference which need not be seen as foundationalist, exclusionary and antithetical to conviviality. As he writes:

> Conviviality is a social pattern in which different metropolitan groups dwell in close proximity but where their racial, linguistic and religious particularities do not – as the logic of ethnic absolutism suggests they must – add up to

discontinuities of experience or insuperable problems of communication (Gilroy 2006: 40).

This reading of Gilroy can be situated in complement to some recent insights pressed by Omi and Winant (2012). Best known for their discussion on 'racial formations' – how race is brought into effect and the historical variation in the relation of racial structures to other assemblages (e.g. nation, class) – the authors have of late sought to better distinguish racism from the actual lived performance of race in everyday, situated realities. Omi and Winant (2012: 964) comment that race is so profoundly a 'lived-in and lived-out part of both social structure and identity' that it 'exceeds and transcends racism', thereby allowing for 'resistance to racism' whilst it endures in everyday characterisations of self and others. 'Race, therefore, is more than racism' (964); it is, to evoke the language of Durkheim, a '"social fact' like sex/gender or class.' In light of a sufficient expressive gap between race and racism, I read Gilroy's conviviality as also allowing for those scenarios where racialised ethnicity does retain a potential to circumvent racism and racial absolutism when actualised in the present as an ordinary descriptor of self and others.

Indeed, it might be suggested that at the core of Gilroy's recent treatment of race and identity is a 'triangular' (Gilroy and Shelby 2008: 126) scheme, which involves a disaggregation of the work race does in everyday life. Whilst race as a momentarily felt or performed subjective identity is likely to endure in the foreseeable future, this in itself does not mark a problematic truth. Instead, it is at the level of political solidarity (when racialised ethnicity monopolises our understanding of community) and social conceptions of sameness (where racialised ethnicity stunts acknowledgements of commonality along other measures – e.g. our shared vulnerability to global-finance capitalism and ecological destruction) that racial cues for identification become politically and socially obstructive. Thus, it is at this tripartite nexus concerning racialised identity that the operations and value of conviviality is best addressed.

3.3.1. Accommodating the hybrid and the impure

At those particular spaces where convivial rhythms are routine, race retains a subjective presence and descriptive legitimacy. But its status is ably disassociated from the other two tendencies (political and social) latent in the character of racialised identification. In

other words, it becomes a racialised subjective identity which sheds its metaphysical, absolutist skin. What distinguishes Gilroy's concepts of conviviality and planetary humanism from 'tolerant' and 'pluralist' appeals to difference is Gilroy's attempt to reconcile our contemporary cultural gaze to the broad array of errant identity interlopers – those who are deemed as traversing and troubling the neat taxonomies concerning difference (Us-Them, insider-outsider, native-alien, wanted-unwanted). By extension, by opening up the theoretical space to accommodate such 'in-betweens' and ambivalences, what is being promoted is a conception of communal identity that is less certain of itself and willing, even eager perhaps, to court encounters with those who are ostensibly different. Conviviality, as opposed to being dismissive of racialised ethnicity as a valid mode of articulating difference, is a mode of remaking difference in a manner that is receptive towards such contact, breaching and reinvention (Gilroy, 2004: 163). This sentiment is consistent with what Homi Bhabha (2000) has dubbed elsewhere as 'vernacular cosmopolitanism'. A vernacular cosmopolitanism instils in any affirmation of communal sense a self-awareness of its own partial, unstable nature, and, by virtue of that, is committed to translating across and creating ties with identity locales that are not its own. Ultimately a form of identity less confident in itself is better disposed to welcome contamination amidst shared spaces.

What is at stake here is a racialised identity receptive to the possibility of its own undoing. An appeal to difference which desists from declaring itself a community with *ontological* ambitions. This disavowal of permanence and concerted surveillance of authenticity applies equally to the integrationist-centred rhetoric of nation-building projects as much as it does to those hegemonic as well as putatively resistive modes in which a minority ethnicity might be encouraged (both legislatively and at the level of representation) to reproduce facsimiles of itself, projected indefinitely into an imagined future. What is instead required is 'to develop a reflexive understanding of racialised difference which is neither intrinsically real nor typically insular' (St Louis 2005: 359).

Consequently, in order to trace a practice of ethnicity which is not fixated with the surveillancing of metaphysical[16] communal authenticity, it is instructive to establish how

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[16] I use the term metaphysical as a specific allusion to the rationale of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Romanticism and its view that the world was comprised of a series of discrete and unitary nations. Nations (and races – though Herder, the archetypal Romantic Nationalist, did to his surprising credit repudiate explicitly racial differences as meaningless [St Louis 2002: 672]) were, in other words, things-in-themselves. This national 'spirit' was said to dwell inside any subject who was a constitutive member of

certain spaces might or might not accommodate a broad spectrum of valid positions/performances as operational under the same ethnic signifier. Here, it is by being attentive to how such ambivalence and 'hybrid culture' (Gilroy 2004: 163) – those who register as in-betweens, 'half-different' and 'partially familiar' (137) – might feature in my participants' interactions that it is possible to show how race and ethnicity as an everyday identification can be made compatible with intermeshed co-existence and the continual, dialogic (re)making of each other. For instance, do those who are more readily read as 'hybrid', insofar as they escape easy classification, enjoy smooth access to those spaces which I visit or is their noticeable friction and resentment due, in part, to their alleged classificatory limbo? I will shortly give specific definition to this question through extended reference to the life of an estate square in Clapham.

In using the term hybrid, I do not intend to appraise the participants by some form of mythical, positivist metric concerning cultural repertoires. In actuality, all cultural spaces are hybrid as they are the 'historically negotiated creations of more or less coherent symbolic and social worlds' (Werbner 1997: 15). Correspondingly, all identities are fractured and hybrid as they are interlocked in dialogic conversation with these multiple subject positions/cultures. On the other hand, and crucially, only certain identities are publicly represented or signified as thus (Younge 2010: 73). Ideally, the hybrid ought not to be read as specific to only certain subjects as a special, singular creature. Post-structuralism has taught us that hybridity is everything/everywhere, or rather, multiplicity is everything/everywhere. Nevertheless, at the level of signification (the world of appearances) we can state that only certain subjects are actively inscribed, discursively speaking, as hybrids. These, often racialised bodies, are represented in the literature on integration as inhabiting a no-man's-land in between two places, as is seen in the fashionable colloquial phrase, 'culture clash' (Alexander 2000). It is the experience of these second-generation subjects who might register as partial at the *level of signification* that interests me here.

Gilroy's (2004) emphasis on those agents and cultural artefacts (e.g. Ali G, the Streets and Richard Reid) that trouble existing registers concerning ethnic orderings is a helpful

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any such nation. Any expression of self was an expression of this animating spirit. In fact, as so celebrated by Goethe, this spirit was inculcated in the very natural landscape of a nation's territorial expanse (Bhabha 1994: 139-150). It was, in short, an irrepressible force. It enjoyed metaphysical status as a first cause for any subsequent empirically discernible actions: '[T]o see essence as a preformed inner unit that is to be given an outer expression' (Fareld 2007: 167).

cue when thinking about conviviality's reception of mixture. But equally so, the emphasis on the partial and the semiotically 'undecidable' (Bauman 1993) – the emphasis on a Britain where 'intermixture' is 'banal' (166) and where 'cross-racial sex is no more or less meaningful than multi-racial football' (Gilroy 2004: 144) – is not something which I read as a rebuke to those ethnic appellations which are not *obviously* syncretic. Instead, with some liberty perhaps, I interpret Gilroy as gesturing towards a discursive sensibility that can, without pause, *accommodate* such performances of identity mixture; *accommodate* those actions and persons who do not map on neatly to presiding racial and ethnic schemas. In other words, the ability of society to welcome such evocations of blurred identity is a litmus test concerning its general ability to surrender the idea of communal identity as being ontological in character. Here, it is not to say that the 'hybrid' is to be valorised as the *only* legitimate subject. Rather, it is merely being argued that to refrain from declaring such identity positions as *illegitimate*, *as matter out of place*, serves as testimony to the non-communitarian social gaze active at a given cluster of locales. It is seen as witness to the ability to collaborate with identity difference and to be accepting of the indeterminate, open-ended futures which such encounters threaten: in short, to run the risks which are necessarily contained in the instruction to resonate globally (Appiah 1997).

This reading of what is meant by Gilroy's celebration of, for instance, Ali G (it need be noted that the subsequent repertoire of Sasha Baron Cohen has proven to be a great disappointment), is crucial for making conviviality a viable concept for the lives of my participants. Indeed, there is a significant political danger in unduly rewarding some of the privileges involved in the ambiguous presentations of self characteristic of various second-generation actors and some of their white counterparts (Friedman 1997). When the indeterminate and partial is elevated to a pedestal (e.g. post-racial) what is to be made of those who appear, again at the realm of signification, as 'traditional' and transparently 'ethnic' – the first-generation 'housewife' for instance, or even a second-generation black 'grime' artist for that matter? If only the hybrid, and the dazzling hybrid at that, is to be revered, advanced as the prototype of the future, it easily leads to a disregard, even hostility, towards those who do in fact register as unambiguous and are neatly read as a particular ethnic type. In other words, in embracing only the mixed hybrid-type, a reproducing of modernist terminologies of progress and retrogression occurs, whereby she who sports the hijab and is willing to countenance an arranged

marriage is read as a bastion of a past which the future shall not know. If it is only the hybrid figure that is to be deemed worthy of comment, this remains a rather limited and uninteresting position, not entirely dissimilar to the conceptual problems of integration.

3.3.2. The estate and difference, in all its shades

Though the discussion has been hitherto decidedly theoretical, I wish to make reference to a site that was central to many of my participant observation sessions: a quadrangle servicing a sprawling Clapham estate – the ward being the poorest in the borough – which houses numerous council-housing blocks dating from the 1960s. The residents of the estate (two of whom of Afro-Caribbean background were research participants) were majority black, both Afro-Caribbean and African (Western and Eastern). In this square, which was invariably awash with activity, a staple feature was the well attended, makeshift domino tables, where older, first-generation Caribbean men would sip on their beers and engage in lively gambling. On the same square, there would also often be found numerous women from East Africa seated on the benches at the heart of the square – generally garbed in either a *direh* (long, flowing black dress) and hijab or, less frequently, a full jalabeeb (burka).

In contrast, the square also boasted numerous figures who would be readily understood by Gilroy (2004: 37, 135) as constitutive of 'proteophobic'[17] ambivalence: namely, Muslim converts and certain second and third-generation black Britons. I include here an excerpt from an observation during a street party held on the day of the 2011 Royal Wedding which captures the central presence of these 'hybrid' figures in the life of the square.

> Scene: It is Friday afternoon. Round 12:30. Some younger men are returning from mosque it seems. There is a mosque, a rather rickety one signed 'Islamic Cultural and Educational Center', at the mouth of the lane which leads on to the various estate blocks.

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[17] The anxiety (the mobilisation of fear and suspicion amongst the public) unleashed by the ambiguity associated with the image of the stranger/outsider is what Zygmunt Bauman (1993: 168), also cited by Gilroy, captured imaginatively in *Postmodern Ethics* as *proteophoebia*. It is the anxiety about the ambivalent outsider, an anxiety about the unclassifiable and its unknown future form.

The young men returning, alongside the older types who are clearly first-generation, makes for quite a sight. Whilst attired in the customary and fashionable, 'hip-hop-styled' manner, this is only partially perceptible as a long salwar shirt dangling down to their ankles is worn by many of the young men on top of their usual clothing. The contrast is most remarkable. They swagger in a heavily pronounced, confident and seductive manner, with all the bodily trappings of an urban, gritty machismo, yet one cannot get past the putative piety of the salwar when worn by such young, second-generation men.

And the men, many of them at least, don't seem to be East-African, though they might be. One man with his salwar seems particularly popular as he strolls past the crowd of young men from whom I purchased my food and from where grime music is blaring. They greet him and touch fists. He seems pressed for time though, so apologises (with a fluent knocking of his fist on his heart) and continues on his way into Hawthorne Block, one of the many estate buildings (one is called Nairobi, which always intrigued me). Behind me, where I am still seated, is a black woman with striking, stately features. She is in her mid-twenties it would seem. Her gaze hovers over a number of kids who are scurrying about. They do not seem to be her kids (later on, it is revealed to me as I happen to overhear her conversation with a rather revealingly dressed woman that at least one of the scuttling children belonged to her interlocutor). The woman, who has a most distinctly British accent, though with frequent patois intonations, wears a black hijab as well as a jilbab of some sorts (it is much slimmer and trimmed than I tend to associate with the more traditional forms). I am told later by Michael (a participant) that the woman, of Jamaican background, converted to Islam a few years ago.

Given this context, when interrogating the racial composition of social spaces (e.g. estate squares) frequented by my participants, it is instructive to be alert to those enunciations which do indeed register as *less* ambivalent in terms of racial signification. In other words, these spaces actualised a comfort with performances of identity that are in signification 'traditional' and ethnically singular. In lifting forth the nuance of Gilroy's thesis on conviviality, I read the presence of those who conspicuously resonate as unproblematically and 'stereotypically' ethnic – as opposed to the turn to hybridity – as

an equally valid symptom of an inclusive convivial sphere. For instance, the presence of Muslims of Somali provenance is just as legitimate as the presence of black convert/'revert' Muslims. Those older men who gather around the domino tables, speak with a distinctive Caribbean intonation, and listen to a perhaps dated brand of reggae and dub, do not and cannot garner for themselves any conspicuous markers of hybridity and semiotic undecidability. Similarly, the Somali mothers and aunts garbed in full hijab – and indeed, their daughters and nieces as well – would register coherently along conventional ethnic typologies. They do not disrupt the prevailing signifying fields concerning ethnic identity.

Yet, their presence is equally constitutive in realising this convivial identity space. It is their ability to lay claim to the square alongside their younger, black British co-residents which makes the heterogeneity on display all the more resplendent. Quite simply, the onus is on a space and its inhabitants to be able to accommodate all such racialised types and not simply to promote a particular brand of intermixture and mélange as its own tyrannical ideal-type. It remains of course a given that the more conspicuously ambivalent are not deemed illegitimate when any such inclusiveness is operationalised.

As clarified previously, I do not read Gilroy as consenting to such a narrow position which privileges *conspicuous* intermixture. It is not a case of only celebrating those who cross or confound ostensible boundaries (e.g. the Jamaican-background woman who converts and embraces the hijab *contra* the Tunisian-background woman who dons the same headdress). Instead, it is merely a matter of allowing for (normalising) such contamination and borrowing. At a broader level, I interpret him as arguing that any such borrowing and its social acceptance relies on the various ethnic and racial identities being granted a certain degree of normative legitimacy themselves (which relates centrally to the first theme of normalising difference in all its racialised forms). The symbolic repertoire pertinent to a particular city and locale's cultural life is altered by the gradual access both won *by* and granted *to* any emerging, consolidated and assertive ethnic community. It is through these changes to the dominant discursive representations itself – disruptions to the boundaries and oppositions which they normalise in their representations of community and hegemonic subject – that such groups, and by extension all the various hybrid-types which marry with that same signifier, are granted an ordinary, everyday legitimacy. Or as Bikhu Parekh (2000) argues

in rather more formal and sometimes prescriptive tones, it is only in a cultural imaginary which is continuously decentred and expanded (ethnically speaking) that heterogeneous interactive patterns and shared affinities emerge.

In providing a further instance of the type of convivial, permissive evocation of communal identity made apparent in the lives of the participants, I wish to end here on another implication of the aforementioned 2011 Royal Wedding celebrations. It being the Royal Wedding does of course enjoy some totemic significance concerning the relationship between racialised identity and ambivalence. The manner in which the occasion was commemorated (those responsible did have to obtain clearance from the council to arrange a 'street-party' and leaflets were subsequently distributed designating the occasion as wedding-pertinent) can appear mildly amusing, given the understated and peripheral acknowledgement of the wedding during the party itself. It is however in some respects sharply evocative of the open-ended, anti-foundationalist practice of race which Gilroy would welcome. The scene is replete with the cultural symbols and expressions best characterised as black. For instance, given the Ghana and Jamaica flags (and lack of Union Jacks) and 'inappropriate' selection of music (grime, more grime followed by deep, rumbling reggae), the party seems to flirt, obliviously and sardonically, with a narrative of Imperial Britain. And in the process, the collective scene effortlessly reroutes the commemoration towards an aesthetic of a new, contemporary, multi-ethnic London. It revels in only being a *partially* familiar evocation of Britain. In other words, from an external, nostalgic gaze which fixes the pomp and pageantry of the royal occasion as redolent of a lost Britain, this celebration is rendered incoherent, insomuch as it trades on the same patriotic moment yet distorts it in favour of other interests that are symbolically irreconcilable with that alternative, hegemonic narration of Britain. Quite simply, the scene at the square does not chime with a reading of race as hermetically sealed, absolutist difference. Instead, it can be read as a spectacle of black Britain, a multicultural Britain, which both accommodates and courts a certain element of pollution, a certain element of intentional bastardisation vis-à-vis the dominant narratives around race and nation. In other words, the celebration can be read as an evocation of black culture which is non-responsive to those many attempts characteristic of integration discourses to police communal identity along insular narrations of valid and invalid performances.

3.3.3. The asylum seeker and conviviality

Through again drawing upon Amin, I wish to build further here upon on the dimensions of conviviality as it unfolded in the life of this impoverished estate. During my time at the estate, a number of casual conversations I had made apparent that many of those who lived or frequented the square were either asylum seekers or without 'documentation' altogether. This raises two important themes important to my substantiation of conviviality as an everyday lived practice. First, my research is with those who were for the most part of working class background and in relatively low-paying work (or in between low-paying work). This general economic instability was particularly pronounced in the estate, which was the most deprived area of all my field sites. Yet, despite this general context of class vulnerability, my participants from the estate (Michael and Ruben who lived there, and Mehmet and Shirin who lived nearby), by virtue of their British citizenship, enjoyed notable privileges when contrasted to the circumstances of those without citizenship and who have undergone great hardship to find their way to Europe in the first place. The participants were thus more readily placed, in terms of economic, cultural and legal capital, to actualise the everyday forms of exchange constitutive of the convivial cross-cutting of ethnic and racial boundaries. They were able to exercise a broader navigation of the city without it being checked by acute levels of economic destitution or by carrying the risks bound up in being 'paperless'. In this way, participation in urban conviviality, as hitherto discussed, is certainly conditioned by certain classed (the difference between poor and 'destitute' being the distinction I wish to stress here) and legal (citizenship) constraints. However, and secondly, the presence of recent refugees, Eastern European economic migrants, asylum seekers, and undocumented persons in the life of the estate does further sharpen the depth of conviviality which can transpire when identity difference is normalised – stripped of ontology and political baggage – to the point that it escapes interrogation. Namely, whilst recent migrant arrivals from the 'Global South' and elsewhere too live increasingly vilified and vulnerable lives, their presence in the 'convivium' (Amin 2008: 19, 2012: 72-74) of the square and its surrounding streets enjoy a matter-of-fact quality, becoming part of what Amin (2012: 9) calls the 'urban unconscious'.

The interviews with the four participants from Clapham addressed this presence of the asylum seeker and recent refugee arrivals – who remain of course a central part of 'Europe's constitutive pluralism' (Amin 2012) – in the doings of the estate and

surrounding areas. All four, whilst still partially susceptible to the criminalising regimes of legality which delegitimise the human value of asylum seekers, articulated a well-developed sense of these racialised non-citizens as a non-problematic given of their everyday environs. The following two quotes from Michael (of Jamaican and Trinidadian background) and Ruben (of Jamaican background), both of whom are residents of the estate, reflect well the inclusive character of the square and its adjacent routes:

> Michael: 'It's probably true like they say that they shouldn't be here. Like if they are illegal, then it's a problem right, because laws have to be enforced […] to control how many people come and go. [But] I'm not about to go grassing people up Val. […] I don't care. They are here and everybody just gets on with it. [...] I don't actually know right how it is to be somewhere where there are no refugees. [In fact] my Aunty's closest friend these days, she's going through a rough time right, was a refugee. […] I don't even know if she ever got citizenship.'

> Ruben: 'School was full of people who had just come from all kinds of countries, like Somalia, Kosovo, places like that. The school was always changing. Every next year it was kids from new countries. […] It's not like they were my fam or anything, true […] but it didn't bother me man. […] It's just how it is, I think. It will always be like this because obviously people will always try to come. It's a better life than what they have and really yeah, people have to recognise that. So you can't start bothering about it.'

Both comments distil what Amin pictures as the convivium's incorporation of the stranger. There is no sense here that the respondents are particularly politicised or activists-to-be on behalf of the struggles which constitute the migrant experience of today. But at a degree removed, the participants have successfully neutralised the racialised asylum seeker's presence and the hostility attached to their bodies. This neutralisation is not insignificant and captures well the unromantic ordinariness of convivial practices: 'Conviviality is not the product of civic virtue or interpersonal recognition [but] a habit of negotiating multiplicity and the company of unknown others as a kind of bodily training' (Amin 2013: 4). The fluent 'negotiation' of *the* most symbolically resonant 'unknown other', she who is *new* and legally vulnerable, is a core indication of the conviviality we have been speaking of: the spatial normalisation of

difference, where identity difference in its multiple racialised manifestations ceases to be a body of scrutiny or the negative objective of nostalgic pangs towards another, different-free order.

'[C]ivilities of indifference to difference [are] based on everyday negotiations of, and attachments with, spaces, objects, cultural domains, projects and interests shared with others (including strangers)' (Amin 2013: 3). The stress on strangers, which despite the parenthesising is the recurring theme of Amin's argument, is most acutely evoked in the figure of the asylum seeker. The stranger does certainly come in many guises. Keith (2008: 1.1) points out that '[t]he stranger in the midst of dynamic London settings can be the refugee, the Chinese DVD seller, the asylum seeker, the A8 migrant from the old Eastern Europe, the gentrifier, or the affluent businessman from the Gulf, New York or Shanghai.' But what is important for my own analytic purposes here is the symbolic and material *vulnerability* which characterises some of these positions more dramatically than others (e.g. the asylum seeker and the economically exposed labour migrant). And in any championing of a conviviality where a cultivation of the commons might be visualised beyond the conflict orientations of today's nativist discourse, what is apparent for Amin (2013: 11) is a trained bodily disposition to one's surroundings whereby 'the status and visibility of particular bodies recedes as a measure of their social worth and entitlement.' It is this receding, including a receding in the fraught visibility of the asylum seeker, which the estate square, and its impoverished denizens, actualises. The square reveals a set of habits made bodily intuitive whereby the bio-disciplinary regimes concerning the regulation of ethno-national public space is suspended and made ineffectual.

Drawing further upon the aforementioned work of Keith, I wish to put in much stronger analytic terms the importance of the above sentiments where a fast multiplying migrant presence and accelerated pace of movement become an elemental part of the 'urban unconscious' (Amin 2012: 9). I maintain here that the rendering of the migrant presence as an unremarkable aspect of everyday urban navigation must be *central* to any ethical theory of the city and multiculture. Necessitating this acknowledgement is Keith's recurring argument that the city is, as much as anything else, a migrant place – always being constituted and reconstituted by shifting patterns of migration, both intra-national and inter-national. Keith (2005:10) points out the banal yet often overlooked fact that the city, where most of the world's population lives (2008 marked the first time

in human history where the majority of the world's inhabitants were to be found in cities), is fundamentally a product of constant and renewed patterns of migrant settlement and exit. This people churn – an 'accelerated temporality' (Keith 2013: 25) – needs to be better signalled in the literature on the city and multiculture.

It is the case that my own thesis is about the children of migrants, and, more to the point, my particular reading resolutely rejects any positioning of these subjects as themselves 'migrants' or as less 'indigenous' than others born in the same country, city, and hospital. But I do take this opportunity to make explicit that convivial multiculture must also be about those who are migrant, and, more radically, that conviviality might retain the capacity to 'blur' the *entire* distinction of what remains migrant and non-migrant space.

> We arrive mostly in places rather than in nations, the migrant most often arrives in the European metropolis which is itself on the move; the subject of restructuring. [And] if we are all, always arriving in the metropolis […] then the languages that juxtapose the indigenous with the migrant become slightly more blurred, the claims to *belong in place* always more contingent (Keith 2013: 26, original emphasis).

I read Keith's precise and intricate phrasing here as saying that if the city is always arriving, because of and through migration as much as anything else, then those who are 'already there' are also re-arriving. It is right hereby that a multiculture worth its name is able to normalise that circuit of arrival, departure and renewal. The city and its spaces come to expect migrant movements both into and out of the space in question, as opposed to seeing anew with shock each re-enactment of migrant settlement. It is this ethical property of the city which I take from Keith to better situate the progressive possibilities of the 'urban unconscious' articulated by Amin. The city and its field of horizons that its dwellers *see through* must come to *expect* the migrant. As Michael from Clapham said earlier, 'I don't actually know right how it is to be somewhere where there are no refugees.' Here, in the specific context of my own discussion of conviviality as a post-integration ideal, and in many instances already a reality, it is the ability to account also for the presence of the passer-through and new arrival in a matter-of-fact way which I suggest is partially apparent in the life of the square.

I also add that there is nothing automatic about people of minority status (e.g. the participants) being more receptive towards the plight of the refugee. Andreas Wimmer notes in his study of diversity in three Swiss cities that the second-generation appeared

as hostile to new immigrants as the national tenor would suggest. Though I think Wimmer (2004: 16) unwise to use the phrase 'without memory' – as it reaffirms implicit ethnic reductionisms about 'authentic' political consciousness – his reading does neatly reveal that the sentiments of the above Clapham participants are indeed significant, constitutive of the convivial habituation which I have discussed. The cited phrases – 'not my 'fam', but it didn't bother me'; 'I'm not about to go grassing them up, I don't care'; 'it's just how it is'; 'we just get on with it' – signal dispositions which work the speaker out of the asylum-seeker demagoguery so elemental to our wider political climate (Bloch 2000). Whilst in no way heroic, it is this unromantic ordinariness which speaks to the convivial routine. A quality of ease where difference and the stranger is unremarkable when compared to the daily doings of the city which each participant navigates.

As a ways of concluding, I again draw from Michael's reflections on the absence of racial ontology:

> 'You will say I am black, yeah. […] It would be real dumb if you didn't, you know what I mean. I have no problem with that. Really, I don't think anybody does. […] We are black and there is no doubt about it. […] But my people are Caribbean yeah, but *now* we have Nigerians, Ghanaians, all sorts really. Fuck man, there are more of them than us right [laughter]. […] And also Somali youths yeah, […] they be black too. So like, okay I'm black, but man, it don't mean nothing much.'

Michael's deployment of black as a basis for self-identification does not stand outside of global migration and shifting patterns of local settlement. Whilst he sees his own black identification as straightforward, he also empties it of significance as to what this might 'mean' in terms of cultural history and future. Indeed, Michael noted to me during a passing conversation that many of the major black rap/grime stars of today, such as Tinie Tempah and Skepta, have Nigerian backgrounds, signalling a significant if underappreciated shift or blurring in what Black Britain might be in terms of its recent heritages. (The sudden and undeniably contagious popularity of Afrobeats, a fascinating amalgam of genres, further speaks to this protean remaking of urban Britain and its soundscapes). The word 'now' in 'now we have' makes particularly clear Michael's awareness of contingency, of how characterisations of subjective identity change in accordance with a broader set of 'glocal' realities. I have argued that we might

understand this awareness as conviviality: where identificatory terms of communal difference circulate, but are not bound to the metaphysics of modernity and its move to code the world's people along certain categorical sets. It is the habituation of conviviality which allows for this elasticity, this responsiveness, this permissiveness with regards to iterations of migrant settlement.

The dispensing of such insular anxieties concerning both communal territory and authenticity is at the core of Gilroy's picturing of mundane multiculture. The hope he finds in the emergence of such laxity vis-à-vis claims to difference should not however be read as signalling a position that is summarily post-racial – as somehow necessitating the dissipation of racialised ethnicity as a salient marker of difference. In making a distinction between what might be called synchronic pluralism (multiculture as a given) on the one hand and diachronic absolutism (communalist permanence and authenticity) on the other, I have sought to make Gilroy's anti-race theorisation relevant to the field-material at my disposal. I have argued that Gilroy's own commitment to a humanism which can 'think beyond race' does not extend, in the present configurations of urban Europe, to the articulation of a racially construed *subjective identity* (black, Invandrare, Asian, and yes, 'Swede' and so on). Whilst the degree of attachment to such subjective terms varies, it is still unlikely that all people can or intend to dispense any time soon with ascribed identities of racialised difference. But the point is that even its carried relevance need not prevent a dilution of its ontological pretensions. In the animation of *convivial* encounters where difference ceases to be studied, the hold of racialised difference is hollowed out, whereby race and ethnicity cease to monopolise the terms of solidarity and its conceits of communal permanence are made to look anachronistic.

3.4. Racialising and de-racialising conflict

Having sketched in the first section how racialised markers of difference are not a hindrance to interaction and having subsequently argued that appeals to racialised difference need not be encoded with metaphysical properties, it would be disingenuous to disregard those moments when race does indeed invite antagonism. In this final section, I contrast the habitual cross-ethnic encounters detailed before against the appeal of the pervasive *conflict paradigms* which continue to frame discussions around the 'increasingly complex forms of racialised and ethnicised diversities that have emerged over the past few decades' (Solomos 2013: 18): paradigms which trade in a toxic

'vernacular' which is 'fretful and fearful for the stranger' (Wise 2013: 42). Indeed, what might be understood as a conflict determinism is apparent in the very premise of influential integration and social cohesion discourses – a conflict thesis indicated in the use of behaviourist terms like 'ingroup bias', 'outgroup hostility', and 'stereotype threat'. But whilst these discourses of conflict exercise a considerable reach, even amidst circuits of conviviality, I profile here certain counter-practices of conflict negotiation which the 'habituation of conviviality' (Noble 2013) allows individuals to call upon. To do so, I centre my discussion on one telling incident which I was witness to during the course of my research.

Scene: In a Clapham shop with a participant of Turkish background who is the owner's nephew and is tending to the store alongside his cousin.

I am at the large convenience store on Allot Road, a relatively busy road outside the southern exit of the train station. I am with Mehmet. But I am reading the paper by the entrance. It is late at night with only a gentle, attenuated stream of customers visiting the store. There is, as of now, only a handful of customers inside: a white woman in business attire with a similarly suited partner and an older, rather unkempt, white man who intends to buy some cans of beer. A black couple enters the store. Both of them are around 40 or a little younger. They purchase their goods. I glance over. It appears to be a most innocuous affair.

But then, the woman demands to have a receipt. I hear Mehmet say that he was only joking. Matters stiffen. The situation seems inexplicably tense. The other customers look anxiously towards me. I try to ascertain what's happening. 'I was only kidding. I wouldn't cheat you man.' The man, peering over his partner, shoots back, 'You don't kid with me. You don't know who you talking to.' 'It was only a joke. It was only 1.40. I didn't mean any disrespect.' The woman interjects, 'You don't fucking joke with me. We'll fuck you up. You dunno who you be fucking with.' This seems absurd. Mehmet is such an affable, gentle character.

It is later revealed to me that he had merely quipped that the Lucozade would cost her five pounds (or something to that effect). He couldn't fathom why they deemed this a slight. The pair utter a few expletives whilst leaving. Mehmet, behind the counter, sighs in what I deem an ill-advised, mocking fashion. As they reach the

door, the man glares back ominously, blurts something else and departs. The scene is hushed.

Mehmet and his cousin speak in Turkish. And the remaining customers don't utter a word. After they too have left, Mehmet's cousin claims that if they were black themselves, the pair wouldn't have conducted themselves in such a manner. It's only because they think they are docile, 'freshie' Turks that they act so belligerently. I suggest that the two were under the influence of some drugs in order to account for their behavior. Mehmet doesn't think that it has much to do with them being black or drugs. The cousin disagrees. He claims that they think Turks, and Asians in general I assume, are easy targets to act tough towards. Things have calmed. Normal service resumes.

In this incident, what was poised to be just another innocuous demonstration of convivial life – the ability to happily interact across racial lines without invoking a socio-political desire to 'test' or underdo each other's difference – transformed in an instant into racially charged conflict. Race becomes a marker of suspicion and weariness. It is of course possible that race was not the actual source responsible for either the ludic invitation or the resulting altercation. But it remains a narrative repertoire which can be made applicable for post-hoc rationalisation of conflict – as manifested when the cousin retrospectively apportioned blame in accordance to racialised meanings.

In this example, Mehmet extends a joke which might better establish a rapport between customer and worker, but also, between Turk (Asian) and black. Yet, in wanting to realise the latter, via what is of course an intuitive action (if we are to understand multiculture as normative), the gesture involves the risk of it being unreciprocated. An incident such as this reveals the messiness and the dangers inherent in normative conviviality. It also brings into stark relief the variation in the types of power relations active at different sites. Sites are not neutral but exert their own conditions concerning the interactions available. Simply, the workers in a convenience store are not afforded the kind of protection that can be expected to be found in an establishment such as the Starbucks discussed before. Mehmet and his cousin, by virtue of being workers at an 'immigrant' convenience store (which perhaps offsets their relative cultural mobility as *second*-generation minorities), might be lacking in the symbolic capital which could better

disarm the threats latent in any multi-ethnic encounter. In clarifying this spatial asymmetry I return to the work of Keith. In his *After the Cosmopolitan* (2005), Keith ethnographically distils the spatial register as a key mediator of *different* 'urbanisms' and, in turn, different 'multiculturalisms'. He isolates a variety of ways in which cities' spaces are made, pictured, inhabited as well as lived and exceeded. Notable here is his reading of how ethnic diversity and processes of racialisation are constituted differently in the 'cultural quarter', 'the banlieue', 'the street' and 'the ghetto' respectively – all four of which are ways in which spaces of ethnic diversity are pictured and also regimented. Whilst my thesis is not in a position to engage the finer vagaries of urban space – concerning the relationship between planning, infrastructure and patterns of settlement and local use – I do take here from Keith the important and salutary idea that urban space (both diffuse areas and sites within these areas [e.g. the corner-shop]) is not constituted abstractly, is not lived outside of different configurations of power and status. For instance, the corner-shop might carry a rather different symbolic charge regarding possibilities for multicultural exchange when contrasted to the estate square, or, as I will shortly discuss, the decidedly unglamorous and low-end retail high-street.

In this context of certain spaces carrying more threat, when I asked Mehmet during the interview about his own reluctance to frame the incident racially, what becomes readily apparent was the significant agential intervention required to repudiate vilified understandings of racial others. Namely, the subjects of multiculture and its convivial rhythms are continuously contending with this alternative tendency to assume as self-evident the different negative traits which dominant discourses attribute to different racial types. What is apparent here is not that the participants can entirely divorce themselves from the impact of such prevailing discursive sense-making systems, but rather, that they are often willing to pause. This ability to pause is, I argue, one that requires significant individual energies. An emphasis on the agential intervention involved is well-documented in both Jennifer Lee's (2002) study of multi-ethnic interaction in American cities and Amanda Wise's (2005, 2013) study of Australian suburbia, wherein both authors foreground the 'effort' involved when people cultivate a certain well-meaning, casual acceptance of difference. Wise (2013: 40-42) writes persuasively here about how different narrative 'scripts' about living with difference are made 'common-sensical' – 'internalised' through 'ritual and practice'. But, she continues, individuals are always contending with *competing* scripts which jostle for pre-eminence:

Research has shown the importance of 'scripts' and ways of talking in the way people understand, think and talk about the world and in shaping their perceptions of those different from themselves. [And] as much as darker discourses, […] many such scripts are about accommodation, unfixing and loosening essentialised concepts of the other or simply 'letting be' (40).

The navigation of multiple and often opposing scripts draws attention to the energies which are expended when the negativity and distrust ascribed to certain minority identities are questioned. After all, meanings or scripts are not rendered relevant of themselves, but rather, need to be made applicable and contingent to the vagaries of local living and experience. And in making this transition from the discursive or ideational to local life, numerous discrepancies have to be tackled by the individual.

Mehmet: 'We hear many things like that. I hear it when at home, especially when with Turkish people. It's really bad with the older ones, like black people are just bare trouble, can't do anything good. But you realise bro that this is just stupid talk. People are people. I know from my own life, just like being at this shop you know, that none of this makes any sense. Most people, if you give them a chance, are totally fine. But I guess some people hold on to dumb beliefs even when they know so many people who are not like the prejudices. [...] You know, I love this shop we work at, 'cus when I go off for lunch or something, I call some guys who I know in the area, or like, I've gotten to know them since I started here, and they are usually black yeah, and we chill and just chat. It's not any issue. [...] The cafe next door, owned by the Ethiopians, I love chilling in there. I know the kids, the mothers who come in. It's all good. [...] And what proper bugs me bro, is that if you are Muslim, I think you should be more careful about saying shit like that. 'Cus, you know, there are loads of idiots who just believe all the shit on TV that say all kinds about us. About our mothers. Like they our daddy's slave or something. About us, you know, young Muslim men and all that shit. Like we wanna blow up the place, you get me.'

This extended comment eloquently captures the disjointedness involved when anchoring the discursive (prejudices on TV which are reinforced by fellow Turks) in the materiality of local life ('they know people who are not like the prejudices'). The warm familiarity with those who are different which is cultivated in the course of multi-ethnic encounters (go off for lunch, go to the cafe), serves to complicate the well-established

prejudices and degrading characterisations of locally relevant other figures (working class black). In short, it is this duality which is central in any negotiation with the sign of race. On the one hand, being embedded in mundane and quotidian multicultural lives, whilst, simultaneously, being exposed to – both privately (through family and other intimate and local contacts with whom ideas and conceptions circulate) and at the level of general discursive acculturation (e.g. news media outlets and other racialised popular-culture images) – the conflict paradigms which often situate discussions around race and pluralism.

I turn to a comment by Keith in order to inflect this particular point with another dimension relevant to the role of academia vis-à-vis multicultural 'scripts'. In his response piece to Amin's *Land of Strangers* — Keith (2013: 26, emphasis added) writes: 'the European city dweller trying to make sense of the contemporary condition *looks for narratives* to make sense of the present and it is imperative to provide *alternative* stories that […] challenge the intolerant naming of the stranger.' Not only does Keith indirectly second this idea of scripts, but importantly, he also blurs here the distinction between academia and lived domains of social interaction. I sense here an important intimation that not only does Mehmet, for instance, *offer* and draw upon 'alternative' scripts, but interestingly, that researchers and the humanities in general would do well to better harness and give further life to these alternative scripts. In this context, I wish to reiterate that my own project hopes to contribute to this broader aspiration, whereby, in attempting to capture the convivial potentiality of the city already empirically apparent, I also wish to *return* to the city an alternative script by which to imagine our togetherness.

3.4.1. Safe space

In understanding such local critiques of normative representational regimes, premised on the pathologisation of ethnic constituencies, it is necessary to consider specifically the play of space upon such processes. Put differently, it is to be appreciated that different spaces privilege different interactive trends, leading to a variation in the degrees of allowance concerning such 'pauses' vis-à-vis a recourse to ethnically-framed conflict narratives. The relationship of space to specific patterns of interaction has been ably documented by various influential ethnographies of ethnic diversity, such as Keith's (2005) aforementioned *After the Cosmopolitan* but also notably Les Back's (1996) research in South London, Gerd Baumann's work (1996) in Southall and Nirmal Puwar's (2004)

detailed study of elite spaces (e.g. Parliament culture). These works explore how spaces, in the process of becoming places (in the process of becoming locally demarcated and conditioned towards certain forms of engagement and social purposes), are structured by specific arrangements of power and, in turn, interaction. As Puwar argues, certain spaces become so firmly encoded as the natural domain only of certain bodies/identities that the presence of those few 'invaders' who happen to win access are rendered disproportionately and problematically conspicuous. This structuring of interaction leads to some spaces becoming sites of decidedly impersonal, functional interaction with the relevant ethnic other. The non-normative, ethnic subjects that people such spaces are expected to remain both passive and grateful for the access that they happen to have. The normative hierarchies of nation and nationhood are upheld and reinforced by the interaction realised in such spaces. Other spaces, however, less ensnared in a normative symbolism, allow for more relaxed, informal interaction, whereby the ethnic other is allowed to make a more casual and less apologetic claim to the space shared.

The work most recent, and perhaps best positioned to speak to my own treatment of conviviality, is Elijah Anderson's (2011) *The Cosmopolitan Canopy*. This work is particularly well suited to speak to my own treatment of Gilroy's conviviality, owing to its decidedly optimistic tracking of how multi-ethnic interaction is not by definition geared towards an antagonistic, hierarchical orientation. Anderson's study of central Philadelphia helpfully situates everyday acts of 'cosmopolitanism' in a contingent relationship to the arrangement of power and safety accessible at certain public spaces. Anderson makes clear that a cosmopolitan spirit (comfort and even pleasure in the presence of others) does not simply arise from socialisation into a set of suitably disposed norms. In other words, norms rely on spaces to be rendered actual. Sharing an affinity to the recent and persuasive arguments of Andrew Sayer (2011), Anderson maintains that it is not simply so that individuals internalise certain norms, but that norms are brought to bear only at the nexus of suitably 'socialised' individuals accessing accordingly conducive spaces.

With specific regard to an actualisation of cosmopolitan norms, Anderson is particularly keen to stress the value of safety in binding these two component elements of an everyday cosmopolitanism (socialisation and space). The manner in which difference is represented by dominant discourses generally marks the carrier of difference (the

racialised minority) with associations of fear and threat; particularly with regard to the criminalisation of the racialised *male* (Butler 1993). This vesting of danger in the carrier of difference often leads to a public space manner where minorities are tactfully avoided, stunting in turn the possibilities for spontaneous interaction.

> As anonymous pedestrians actively 'see but don't see' one another, skin colour often becomes a social border that deeply complicates public interactions; stereotypically, white skin colour is associated with civility and trust, and black skin colour is associated with danger and distrust - especially with regard to anonymous young males. Many ordinary pedestrians feel at ease with others they deem to be most like themselves; the more threatening the 'other' is judged to be, the greater the distance displayed (Anderson 2011: 2-3).

Anderson rightly complicates this picture of distrust and antagonism by stating that these discourses are not exhaustive, whereby, to use the phraseology of Raymond Williams, emergent discourses more receptive towards difference can also be glimpsed. Yet, to dispense with that initial, weary notion of fear and threat, and the intimidating sense of distance which difference often evokes, requires a 'trial space' which affords some guarantee of initial safety. That is to say, Anderson's study suggests that the emergent, inclusive framings of ethnic diversity – discursive frames reconciled to the presence of diversity – are most fluently and wilfully subscribed to only upon first having a space for the fiction of the hegemonic national narrative and the fears it fosters to be disproven (or temporarily suspended). When characterising such spaces, Anderson draws attention to the volume of people to be found at those public spaces which act as hubs of activity (e.g. a downtown bus terminus or centrally situated diner). He argues that the safety which such numbers provide allow individuals to conduct their own, autonomous 'folk ethnographies' (74, 93). It is in the context of safe public intermingling that individuals who are otherwise well acquainted with normative representations of ethnic pathology are able to receive the bearer of difference in a more open-ended, innocent and well-meaning spirit. Mehmet's interview does largely support this spatially grounded thesis advanced by Anderson. It is not necessarily the relationships, or lack of, which materialise at the corner-shop that allows Mehmet to exit ethnic explanatory-frames of conflict. It is rather the interactions which he is party to elsewhere (the nearby cafe, the estate square) that primes in him a greater cautiousness whenever invited to racialise antagonism.

3.5. Conclusion

The role played by space and its inclusive infrastructure in disrupting narratives of conflict constitutes the final, if less extensively discussed, detail of my attempt to put forward a rounded understanding of conviviality vis-à-vis interaction. More generally, my treatment of conviviality-as-interaction necessitated a layering of multiple themes: second-order interaction; normative multiculture where difference is presumed as self-evident; the non-ontological status of the difference which conviviality channels; the normalised presence of strangers, even if these strangers (e.g. asylum seekers) do not constitute one's immediate interactive interface; and the agential ability to *work* away from conflict through access to alternative scripts, even if conflict discourses are at first glance more tempting. In layering these different practices and qualities, I hope to have advanced a tangible understanding of how conviviality might operate.

In turn, I have also argued that – in contrast to the integration approach – Gilroy's conviviality offers a more purpose-built set of ideas by which to picture the multi-ethnic urban socialities of today. It is of course not the case that interaction is always convivial. Instead, my simple contention is that *when* interaction is fluent, free of racist interrogation, it is conviviality, and not integration, which I find to be the more useful conceptual tool. Conviviality is a mapping of daily interaction which is better suited to harness the specificity of contemporary urban life, when contrasted to the clunky ahistorical premises which continue to inform the integrationist typecasting of interaction. I have however only periodically drawn directly upon the literature on integration when formulating this implicit critique. The existing literature on integration, though only in its better renditions, will be profiled more conspicuously in the following chapter. But for the purposes of my substantiation of conviviality, it should be already apparent how integrationist heuristics for both documenting and encouraging the outcome of interaction suffer from a series of misplaced emphases: an emphasis on first-order interaction (or close, intimate ties); an emphasis on contact as opposed to norms ('a cultural imaginary' [Wise 2013: 38]); a presupposition of conflict dispositions as opposed to an 'original position' of benign neutrality; and finally, a leaning towards abstracted space as opposed to localised and situated interactive sites which are differently coded in terms of its communal symbolism – or lack thereof. It is these multiple misnomers which I believe conviviality, as purposed for the field material available to me, is well suited to bypass. Conviviality is, in short, a view of interaction

thoroughly contemporary in its application and projected decisively into the future in terms of its ideals.

But despite this generally optimistic understanding of how interaction can be, and is already, realised, I wish to profile one final and perhaps more problematic feature relevant to some of these interactive cycles. This brief reflection will also anticipate some core aspects of the following chapter on culture, integration and ethnic identity. Namely, in the above argument concerning the role of 'trial' spaces in the development of an everyday cosmopolitanism, there does lurk a more significant, ideological undercurrent to the circuits of safety which Anderson leaves under-theorised. This undercurrent is glimpsed in the interview with Maryam (25), a woman from Sundbyberg of Christian Lebanese background, who was impressively versed in a wide assortment of qualitatively different social milieus within Stockholm:

> 'Yes [I do know a lot of Stockholm], I am happy in Söder, am happy in Östermalm, Kungsholmen [affluent, central islands], but also in Rinkeby, Tensta, Färsta [distant suburbs with large immigrant-origin concentrations]. I don't think it's anything impressive really to know all these bits. […] But yeah, I know them and know how things work differently, and I really do feel comfortable in all of them right. […] But there are also places, right, where I simply don't want anything to do with. Like, I don't want to go to sad clubs full of hockey guys, or go out to 'landet' [rural areas outside of greater Stockholm] or end up in those strange small towns. […] You know, there are places that the moment you step in, like even in Östermalm, on Kungsgatan [significant commercial street in central Stockholm which Maryam was very familiar with], though they are mostly I guess in the suburbs, you know, there are still those really sad, back-in-day karaoke bars or like dirty rock-music clubs, those strange bars where it's only real 'Svennar' [colloquial term for a stereotypically Swedish Swede]. Like, I know I am not meant to be there. […] It's like a Stockholm that has nothing to do with us, it's not for Invandrare. I would be really surprised, I mean really surprised, to see any Invandrare there. […] I actually find them frightening to me but also depressing. […] I don't feel like I lose out not being there, but I also know I am not wanted.'

The patterns of city engagement sketched by Maryam invites a reflection concerning the antagonism between late-capitalist, consumerist culture and those leisure regimes which are less well integrated into the market economy. Put simply, the spaces most regularly and electively frequented by many of the participants often shared the quality of being hyper-active sites of consumerism. Such sites were the loci for all sorts of undertakings whereat the normative multiculture which participants find comfort in was seemingly already apparent. Meanwhile, the hostility and/or lack of safety attributed to certain spaces by many of the participants often centred on 'traditional establishments' ('I actually find them frightening but also depressing, [...] it's not for Invandrare') which fell outside of the consumerist, franchise circuit.

There is of course also a more straightforward generational divide at play here in Maryam's comments. But Maryam's extended commentary does partially advance a marrying of the two questions (generation and multiculture) which is especially apparent in her reference to 'hockey guys', 'real Svennar', and 'karaoke' clubs – given that these terms apply to young and older people equally. More generally, apart from the eminently local, independently-owned establishments well known to the participants (e.g. a local pizzeria, shisha parlour, or jerk-chicken shop located on the estate square), the premises 'outside' which my participants would visit were often highly recognisable branded establishments or in the vicinity of such establishment clusters. In other words, whilst familiarity with their immediate locales rendered entry into non-corporate establishments unthreatening and frequent, most excursions outside of their locales were heavily commercial in orientation. For those who were in casual, vulnerable employment, eateries, such as Nando's and Starbucks, and shopping centres figured prominently, whilst for those who enjoyed more secure employment, it was likelier that they would go to more fashionable city-centre bars and mid-tier franchise restaurants (e.g. Gourmet Burger Kitchen and Bella Italia).

This feature of their routines necessitates two initial comments which anticipate the content of the next chapter. First, in wishing to incorporate Anderson's attention to the role of safety, such routines seem to suggest a significant degree of confidence on the participants' part in the securitising regimes and branded lustre within which consumerist domains are nestled. In other words, the premium of contemporary governance (what some theorists term as the 'neoliberal' orientation of the state) to hold

sacrosanct the *security* of commercial property (e.g. shopping centres) extends into a structuring of the 'safe' public intermingling which these participants court. Second, the prominence of consumerism (of being acculturated into consumerist cycles of desire and interaction) in the routines of these participants is a telling reminder that the 'retention' of minority identities does not somehow curtail access into mainstream social trends and forms of expression. It is this second point which will be fully drawn out in the following chapter, consumerism serving as a particularly telling feature of the contemporary mainstream into which subjects are absorbed.

4. Integration, Culture and the Consumerist Capture

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter proposed certain features by which we might want to understand the convivial interactions available in London and Stockholm. Conviviality was posited as a patterning of sociality which marks a hopeful counterpoint to the necessarily defeatist integration-premised analysis of multi-ethnic interaction. I now turn to the actual cultural activities which undergird the participants' engagement of convivial, less convivial and non-convivial encounters. Specifically, I contest the ethnic reductivism prevalent in the literature on integration which sees the signification of ethnicity as denoting, *ipso facto*, a particular set of unique, hermetically sealed cultural values and dispositions.

Using Gilroy's (1993:7) anti-reductionist claim as an analytical cue, this chapter will argue that the role of race and ethnicity in the lives of the participants, when worn as a marker of identity, cannot and should not stand as a transparent sign for culture.

> The especially crude and reductive notions of culture that form the substance of racial politics are clearly associated with an older discourse of racial and ethnic difference which is entangled with the history of the idea of culture in the Modern West.

An instructive affinity from a more quantitatively inclined tradition of sociology is found in Alec Hargreaves' (2007: 136, 207) authoritative take on contemporary France:

> In the overwhelming majority of cases, the descendants of immigrants – whether they come from Eastern Europe, Africa or Asia – identify more closely with France's dominant cultural norms than with those of their parents. […] Yet, if immigrants and their descendants appear less well incorporated than earlier minority groups, the evidence examined suggests that this is due far more to socio-economic and political changes [i.e. the colonial whiteness of French Republicanism] which have taken place within the receiving society than to differences in the cultural complexion of the minority population.

Working from this critical sociological outlook, I argue that ethnicity in the super-diverse European city is better understood when de-linked from deterministic inferences concerning cultural orientation. The analysis which follows in this text will consequently suggest that the claims to difference affirmed during mundane urban

interaction are not predicated upon cultural forms foreign to the normative, Western metropolis. The claim advanced here is not however an apology for those who posit the integration of minority groups as a socio-political imperative. Indeed, much of this chapter will critically unpack these political demands as being both analytically and ethically deficient. For instance, integration often implies a core that is constant, inviolable and worthwhile. This is the proposition which ensures that the 'host' community (i.e. normatively white) are never asked to integrate. I only argue that it is misplaced for those who correctly take issue with the increasingly shrill calls to integrate to deny the empirical presence of any noteworthy acculturating processes (in terms of normative, Western cultural idioms). What is in fact required is an ability to resist the separation of racialised identity performance from the processes of incorporation into, as well as *reinvention of*, the behavioural and value mainstream. The first half of this chapter will hereby provide a lengthy discussion of how integration and the production of ethnic difference are simultaneous, mutually determined processes.

Indeed, a better understanding of the participants' location within the value mainstream allows for a more informed sense of the exclusions which they suffer at the configurative hinges of their classed and racialised lives. In expanding on my reading of cultural integration and affirmations of difference as *simultaneous* processes, the second half of this chapter prises open important ways by which to understand contemporary registers of exclusion and humiliation. I argue that a discussion of felt exclusion is apposite to a critical discussion of integration, revealing the participants' incorporation into late metropolitan capitalism as a whole and its contingent circuits of desire and forms of expression. I specifically comment here on the intense figuring of *consumerist* routines in the lifestyles of my participants. By demonstrating the centrality of multiple consumerist modes of interaction to the lives of the participants, I argue that the academic and policy commentary on integration is woefully unaware of perhaps the *most* relevant feature of contemporary acculturation into Western life. Additionally, given that the Clapham site which I became acquainted with became central to the English riots of 2011, I directly link the question of consumerist subjectivities to some of the participants' socio-political and affective humiliations which the riots drew forth. It is through a brief commentary on the rioting that I am most effectively able to map the reach of consumerism in structuring the activities, as well as exclusions more regularly felt by many of the participants.

4.2. The cultural reductivism of integration

Before proceeding, it should be mentioned that I struggle to see the difference between assimilation and integration. They are subjected to a frequently synonymous, and generally conservative, use. As suggested in passing by Rogers Brubaker (2001: 539-540), 'Integration [is] a term that often, especially in a European context, refers to much the same thing [as assimilation].' Amanda Wise (2013: 37) notes how 'contact politics in the guise of social cohesion policy has come to embody a slow chipping away of the multicultural ideal – inching ever closer to old ideas of integration and assimilation'. Quite rightly I believe, integration and assimilation are listed by Wise as interchangeable. Indeed, Adrian Favell (2001: 352) has it just right when pointing out that integration 'builds its success on swallowing up other [more] unfashionable terms for the same kind of process: terms such as assimilation', 'acculturation' and 'cohesion'. Consequently, I note here that though many of the American theorists referenced below organise their discussion around the term assimilation, I read them equally as scholars of integration.

This chapter's main critical objection is that integration scholarship remains wedded to ideas of discrete, ethnically determined cultural sets. Central to this critique will be the attempt to disturb a distinction that has been presupposed in most academic discussion concerning integration. Milton Gordon's paradigmatic 1964 work, *Assimilation in American Life*, maintained that a process of acculturation (the first phase of integration) which is not succeeded by an incorporation into a shared, core identity (the final phase of integration), signals an incomplete integration. Ever since, it has been commonly assumed in the sociology of integration both in America and Europe that acculturation *properly* conceived leads to dissolution of 'salient' (Alba 2009: 57) identity pluralism: 'a group identity becomes active, or salient, when it is seen as relevant to a situation'. A common, overarching community as 'ratified' (Barry 2001: 75) by the majority constituency must materialise for acculturation to be deemed complete; whereby, the continued presence of ethnic particularity is deployed only on an optional and/or symbolic (benignly decorative) basis. '[E]thnic symbols and practices become less important to people's lives, and ethnic distinctions decline such that ethnicity becomes a symbolic, optional and inconsequential part of identity' (Jimenez 2010: 21). In this vein, the study of integration has tended to assume a chronological bias, where acculturation does the groundwork necessary for the subsequent dissipation of ethnic identity

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differentiation. This chapter suggests the contrary: *entry into normative, mainstream culture is what produces and reaffirms difference in the first place.*

An emergent commentary on integration – led by Richard Alba, Victor Nee, Mary Waters and Tomas Jimenez with regards to the United States, but also present in Rogers Brubaker's influential commentary on European contexts – has sought to temper this endgame attachment to identity homogeneity. 'New assimilation theories' (Alba and Nee 2003: 14-17) argue that integration need not be premised upon a 'disappearance of a distinction' in everyday life based on 'racial or ethnic' background. Instead, these authors put forward softer notions of 'decline' (Alba and Nee 2003: 11) and 'minor impact' as regards the relevance of ethnic difference within the interactive, cultural 'mainstream'. But while this constitutes something of an improvement – on 'older conceptions of assimilation' which assumed as necessary 'the eradication of [ethnic] distinctions and differences' (Jimenez 2010: 33) – it continues to rehearse an unhelpful reading of ethnic minority status as something that is carried independently, as something which is constituted outside of the mainstream. In short, it is still held as an article of faith that cultural integration necessarily *lessens,* to some noteworthy degree, the presence of ethnic diversity. And even if progressively construed, any supposed weakening of an attachment to ethnic particularity is not understood by these scholars as emerging out of a general disenchantment with the very idea of communal identities, as is the underlying thrust of the conviviality detailed previously. Rather, it is maintained by these theorists that a weakening of minority attachments happens only when a legitimate, unitary and all-encompassing national identity takes precedence.

In contesting this formulation, it will be proposed that integration *itself* is the key process through which identity differentiation manifests in the first place. I argue that it is not clear why 'becoming similar' (Brubaker 2001) in terms of cultural activity and values should witness a corresponding 'decline' in racialised ethnic differentiation. Instead, the first half of this chapter frames integration as a term which might consider compatible, even mutually constitutive, the processes of entry into mainstream economic and cultural arenas and the production and affirmation of ethnic and racial difference. Ultimately, the intention is to critically interrogate the *zero-sum game* between integration and differentiated ethnic identity so prevalent in both academic and popular discourse.

This reframing is substantiated through juxtaposing elements of my field material against the theorisation of select post-classical scholars of integration – e.g. Richard Alba, Rogers Brubaker, Herbert Gans, and Ewa Morawska. These authors note how immigrants do indeed strategise around their allocated resources, however limited, in order to realise certain assimilatory ambitions. More significantly, they argue that extended exposure to various institutionalising apparatuses makes such integration inevitable. Here, as opposed to entertaining a polemical debate on the merits of assimilation as a goal, these commentators are interested in adopting a sociologically 'observational' role. They argue that many immigrants and most palpably the second-generations, do assume the lifestyles and customs particular to their broader age and class cohorts, even if that 'mainstream' itself is remade in the process of incorporation. Such a claim is of course largely indubitable, as will be made apparent in the content which follows, and could be considered, in many respects, a *truism*.

What remains elided however in these contributions is the process by which 'becoming similar' (Brubaker 2001) might occur concomitantly to the process of becoming different. In other words, as opposed to considering ethnic difference a static entity, and integration a transformative process,[18] this chapter submits that *both* can be considered active verbs which trace each other's trajectory. Simply put, the inevitability of acculturation does not constitute a gradual dissipation in articulations of difference. Reinforced notions of ethnic difference are not suddenly vacated and rendered trivial. Rather, there is room for a rereading of ethnicity and its performance as being integral to those processes of acculturation into the normative structures particular to the city and country in question. As Avtar Brah (1996) forcefully argued, the process of becoming *black* or ethnically '*diasporic*' is irrevocably tied to the symbolic and material realities of the spaces lived and inhabited. Or as Trinh Minh-Ha once put it with regard to hybridity, a term propinquitous to the 'diasporic': 'The place of my hybridity is the place of my identity' (1992: 29). In repurposing this argument, the material which follows will suggest that minority difference is not an imported identity from elsewhere, but is produced through and during those same acculturating processes.

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[18] Bethan Harries (forthcoming) argues that contemporary discussions around British-ness posit the subscription to a 'British identification' as active and 'in the future', whilst perseverance with markers of ethnic difference are pitched as fixed and being 'tied to the past'.

At one level, it might appear as if some of these post-classical commentators on issues of integration such as Morawska (2003) and Gans (1997) are attentive to this *simultaneity*:

> Immigrants' engagement with 'transnational spaces' has not precluded their identification and involvements with the host society. As they are educated in the host society's schools, participate in its popular culture, and enter its workforce, native-born children of immigrants become part of the latter while they maintain ties to their ethnic origins (Morawska 2003: 22).

The key error, however, in Morawska's 'transnationalism/assimilation model', which she has been developing ever since her oft-cited paper 'In Defense of the Assimilation Model' (Morawska 1994), is that she understands this dual process as inhabiting two *different* temporal-spatial cycles. In the later work of the influential Herbert Gans (1997) too, who seems initially sympathetic to some of the difficulties flagged here, a similar tension surfaces. Gans, alongside Richard Alba, is the American sociologist who has most prominently tried to re-theorise integration in line with the always shifting contours of racial structures and migratory patterns. But whilst initially stating that 'ethnic culture does not necessarily become a victim of acculturation but is [through it] reconstructed or invented anew all the time', he follows up with a considerably less intertwined understanding: 'There need be no inherent contradiction between identity ['retention'] and acculturation. [T]he two processes can operate *independently'* (883, emphasis added). In contrast, I wish to introduce to this debate a perspective which argues that the moment at which a subject encounters and navigates ethnicity and the moment at which she becomes acculturated is often one and the same. It is this final concern, a notion of an *entangled duality* (a monist perspective perhaps), which I will now exemplify.

4.3. Discovering Islam at McDonald's

I will restrict my initial comments to two Stockholm participants, Kale (26-year-old man of Iranian background from Sundbyberg) and Agil (24-year-old woman of Kurdish background from Väsby). My time with Kale – an aspiring real-estate broker who recently managed to secure a paid internship at a fairly prestigious firm – consisted of two participant observation sessions (apart from the interview itself). On the first occasion, I accompanied Kale and two of his friends, both Invandrare, to a night-club in

Söder, one of the trendier central districts of inner-Stockholm. On the second, we visited a cafe in Östermalm (an affluent central shopping district in close proximity to his workplace) and thereupon a mid-market Italian restaurant nearby. The meal was in the company of two other male friends, again of second-generation background – Serb/Croat and Iranian respectively.

Both venues were comfortably middle class in terms of pricing as well as decor and clientele (who were majority Swedish), though Kale's friends were both working in eminently low-wage, service-sector jobs. Such out-of-work activities were indicative of what Kale identified during the interview as his regular leisure patterning.

> 'Nowadays, it's more and more out in the city. […] There have been a lot bars and clubs featuring in my schedule. But cafes and things too, you know, like today. It's a lot really. But mainly in the city. [Money-wise] with it being Christmas and New Year's and all that, my budget really took a real hit. A heavy hit. There was a lot of gifts and quite a bit of going out and things so you know that's not the best thing for my budget. […] In general, because I live at home, I don't really have any bills or responsibilities like that. But I seem to be pretty good at spending money. Going out, clothes. That type of stuff. It disappears quickly.'

Such out-of-work activities readily point to a lifestyle which is unremarkable in terms of the type of pursuits that would normally apply to persons of the same age cohort, regardless of ethnicity. These leisure-rhythms appear comfortably ensconced in the broader technologies of late-capitalist, hyper-consumerist individuation; which has been chronicled by many an important commentator (McIntyre 2007, Sennet 2012) as the defining trope of the modern condition. Quite simply, the lifestyle patterns demonstrated were consistent with the cultural registers prized most by 'Modern Social Imaginaries' (Taylor 2004).

But of greater interest, when directly considering the question of integration, is the complex account of race Kale offers.

'Maybe two weeks ago, I was about to, I mean, I was caught up in an argument with a girl at a McDonald's after the nightclub. And she said all kinds of things to me and the friends with me. I don't really recall what started her nonsense. I should say that I wasn't that sober, of course. […] And suddenly, there were all kinds of things like suicide-bomber comments, which really proper provoked me. I became, became so furious. And we ended up shouting and screaming at each other. And then, finally, police came inside and stood there while we ate! And she was; the thing I was most frustrated, upset by was that if she wasn't a girl we would have dealt with the matter in a different way, you know.[19] The casual way in which she said such racist stuff like that really surprised me. […] It was the second time that it had happened on the same night! The first time it wasn't anything directed to us in particular. We walked by a group of girls. They were from Skåne [Southern Province of Sweden] I think, who stood there talking amongst themselves. And said stuff like, 'Tja jao!' [slang phrase associated with an Invandrare vernacular], things like that. Like, 'These people think they are so cool when they say 'jao'.' It wasn't meant directly to us, but we walked by precisely at that moment. And then I was thinking like what the fuck man. So I did reply, loud enough that they would hear me, 'These Skåningar seem to think that they are still in Skåne.'

[…]

V: 'With stuff like this, do you ever find yourself trying to avoid being seen in that way, being associated with Muslims and…'

K: 'No, in reality no. Because it only shows ignorance and I don't want to justify that. I have also got a little different perspective now. Before, I might have tried to downplay that I am different. But now I just think, 'To what end'. Why should I? Why should I change for their ignorance? So I have maybe become, a bit more, 'Militant' [quotation marks gestured with hands].

[Laughter]

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[19] Amongst other things, Kale professed a strong interest in MMA (Mixed Martial Arts), which is a particularly violent hybrid form of Thai-boxing and wrestling. He tries to, in order to complement his armchair interest in the sport, attend MMA lessons more often but claims to be insufficiently disciplined to do so.

'But it has become a bit more like that for me. A common question people often pose is, even though I have lived here all my life, 'What good Swedish you speak!' That's a classic. And then you are like, 'Ah, I have lived here all my life. It's just so mad that I have managed to learn the language!' It's a bit like that now. Before I would have been more timid; 'Sure' and 'hehehe, thanks'. But now I am more likely to ridicule them, sarcastically you know. 'You are right; it really is strange isn't it that I can speak having being born here."

Incidents such as these prefigure what Kale identifies as the intensification in his assertiveness concerning difference. The sharp riposte ('[They] think that they are still in Skåne') – which also evokes a spatial separation whereby Stockholm attains a unique, progressive status against the less 'enlightened' parts of Sweden such as Skåne – reveals a less compromising tone in terms of communicating and defending the difference ascribed to him. The caricaturing of a particular vernacular is instantly understood by him as applying to his own legitimacy and dignity as an Invandrare in Sweden – even if he himself rarely used such stylised inflections whilst I was with him. The process to be stressed here is not simply that Kale professes a strong sense of difference, but that it is only in contingent relation to a normative, Swedish other that such defiant difference becomes manifest. In other words, his grappling with racialised difference is brought to the fore when partaking in those activities which are straightforwardly identified as constituting mundane integration (e.g. clubbing and eating at McDonald's[20]).

Kale's reluctance to repudiate a Muslim association obtains added resonance when it becomes apparent that he does not consider himself a believer. After all, if only in the admittedly simplistic terms of being impious, the prevalence of drink should suggest

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[20] The emphasis on McDonald's is not as flippant as one, including myself, might think. One of the stranger reports I have come across of late – yet one that is unfortunately rather emblematic of the public debate's staid standard – was featured in the *Economist's* (2011) 'Charlemagne' (the resident op-ed on Europe) piece titled 'From Clichy to Cliché'. Here, a recent study based in Clichy (the notorious Paris banlieue where the 2005 riots originated) claimed that there was a worrying 'intensification' in Muslim identities which they argued was a direct response to broken promises about 'integration'. The article, short as it is, managed to include the report's cautionary finding that the preference for halal meat somehow impeded opportunities to integrate. Yet, the report also sounded an optimistic note due to the emergence of a McDonald's in the banlieue which is remarkably well-frequented despite it desisting from making available halal substitutes: 'Not everything in the banlieues works against integration. More minorities are getting involved in local politics. Turkish entrepreneurs are doing well. In a surprising twist in Clichy, says Mr Kepel, a drive-in McDonald's restaurant has thrived despite refusing to produce halal food, whereas local halal rivals, such as Beurger King (a play on beur, meaning French-Arab), have closed down' (*Economist* 2011).

some distance from the practice of Islam. (When out at the fashionable nightclub in Söder, the frequency with which various cocktails and shots were lined up was both startling and for me, a little intimidating.) Instead, the relevance of a claim to any Muslim affiliation depends upon its functioning as a sign ascribed to him by the dominant gaze. The non-apologetic stance which he communicates concerning that inscription (the Muslim suicide bomber), becomes in practice an identity game contingent to the conceptions of self which he speculatively attributes to Swedes in the *public* sphere. This contingency is in direct contrast to the ability to maintain a Muslim identity in a manner neatly removed, separate and *independent* from his other competent interactions with normative, mainstream cultural idioms. Kale's comments concerning language operate on a similar, if counter-intuitive basis. It is the very fact that he speaks Swedish, perfectly well, which further revives his sense of difference. As he says, speaking Swedish is an unremarkable, obvious feature of his life. And if uncommented upon, it would remain unremarkable. But in the face of repeated and nominally complimentary comments by various Swedish others ('that's a classic'), Kale's understanding of his own difference gradually vacates an earlier 'timidity' towards a more 'militant', insistent and uncompromising assertion of that ascribed difference.

An entanglement of integration and difference in this manner runs against the conceptual framework normally used in the integration literature. What ultimately transpires here is a complication of the *zero-sum* concerning integration on the one hand and 'retention' of 'salient' minority identifications on the other. These frustrations which Kale outlines pertaining to, for instance, 'going out in the city', readily suggest how acculturated, normative lives (e.g. clubbing) act in concert with the further entrenchment of a minority identity. In conflict with Gans's claim that identity retention and acculturation 'operate independently', Kale's experiences point to moments at which the two function in contrapuntal,[21] simultaneous concord. This unfortunate separation surfaces even in the more careful recent works of someone like Richard Alba, perhaps the most prominent American commentator on the assimilation-ethnicity debate. In 'Bright versus Blurred Boundaries' (2005) and *Blurring the Colour Line* (2009), Alba offers a welcome analytic shift towards the role of existing institutional structures

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[21] I use this word because it relates – in musical terms (Baroque) – to having two or more separately trajectories (melodies) which function harmoniously. In other words, both independently and dependently (as opposed to the rigid dialecticism of sonata, symphonic form) and thereby, it captures well the quality of the relationship between integration and ethnic identity I am trying to depict here. Edward Said (1993: 51-66), is of course the one who introduced the term to literary theory and Cultural Studies.

(boundaries) as well as the privileges of whiteness in determining a particular 'migrant' grouping's ability to integrate. Nevertheless, despite this important transference in emphasis from marginalised community to the normative majority and dominant boundary structures, Alba does slip back into a model of ethnicity and integration as mutually exclusive. He specifies a series of boundaries/distinctions which affects the efficacy with which an immigrant community (especially the second-generation) accesses the 'opportunities', both material and symbolic, afforded to the majority. These boundaries – enumerated along religion, language, race and citizenship – are said to vary in intensity from bright to blurred. To his credit, Alba's preference for the critical and creative properties of blurred boundaries, where presentations of self are necessarily 'ambiguous' (2005: 22), shares an interesting if unlikely affinity with the concepts of liminality and hybridity developed by postcolonial theory. It is however difficult to see why the identity positions which might emerge in an environment characterised by blurred boundaries would lead to 'the contraction of ethnicity to fewer and fewer domains of social life' (23). Why might not ethnicity be involved in the very process through which these agents take on acculturated idioms (e.g. the aforementioned fluency in Swedish or investment in the many pleasures and hazards of Stockholm nightlife)?

Even when an attempt is made to 'consider these processes as concurrent' (Morawska 2003: 133), there lingers a failure to theoretically capture this *mutual* texture. For example, in her discussion on middle class Indian second-generations in the United States, Morawska groups two different sets of behavioural features: transnationalism (reinforced ethnic identity) and assimilation (becoming American). The former consists of, for example, enthusiasm for an Indian 'consumer industry' around food, clothing, jewellery, films music and cultural events. The latter consists of:

> [E]vocations of the American dream; its values and realisation of achievement in immigrants' self-representations; American professional culture and other elements of American lifestyles and self-perceptions (including those concerning female identities and gender relations) [...] even demeanour and ideas, particularly self-assertiveness in body language and opinion (2003: 137-138).

Although a tenuous demarcation might be made for purposes of illustration – even if phrases like 'self-assertiveness in body language and opinion' borrow from a troublingly Orientalist lineage – it could be argued that such practices pertain to both 'spheres'

simultaneously. For example, enthusiasm for an 'Indian consumer industry' could well be read as the 'integrated' enthusiasm for late-capitalist consumerism itself. Or vice-versa: consumerism is the vehicle which allows for expressions of an ethnic identity.

An appreciation for stand-up comedy which Kale revealed during the interview offers another apposite and subtle critique here. At the risk of sounding glib, the recent prominence of stand-up in Sweden is driven principally by its younger inhabitants, reared nearly exclusively on a diet of Anglo-American popular entertainment. Yet Kale's sharp praise betrays an interest which carries significant racialised undercurrents, resisting in turn any understanding of a blanket, generalised incorporation into Western popular culture.

> 'I really enjoy stand-up a lot. I like it, partly, due it being such an art form. And also because they still comment on political topics in a way that Kanye and Biggie [rappers who Kale said were his preferred music artists] don't. You see, if you look at the biggest names right now, like Dave Chappelle, Chris Rock [note that the comedians identified are the best-known *African-American* exponents], what these people talk about. Well, they might not be the biggest, but, at least for what I follow, they are without doubt the biggest names. And these guys, they do talk about racism; they take up a kind of politics. […] You know, there are certain important things which these people can't often talk about. I can give you an example if you want. Chris Rock, when he hosted the Oscars, before he could say something negative about Bush, he had to start with, 'I love the Troops. They are simply the best.' [Laughter)] And then only after that is he allowed to say something a bit more critical. And Dave Chappelle, he had a joke which really hit the nail on the head. He said, 'I was going to say something about the war on Iraq, but then I saw what happened to The Dixie Chicks' [Laughter]. You know who they are, right? And he continued, 'If they do that to three white, Country girls, there's not much hope for me!' You see, so if they want to remain popular, there are limits but the comedians, they can often get around it in clever ways.'[22]

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[22] Some clarification might be needed here. Kanye (Kanye West) and Biggie (the late Notorious B.I.G.) are two towering figures central to hip-hop's gradual capture of the 'pop' market: B.I.G. is seen as a figurehead of hip-hop's infamous 1990s 'gangsta rap' era, whilst West is associated with the mainstreaming of an increasingly genre-less and commercially unassailable hip-hop brand. Dave Chappelle and Chris Rock are two internationally prominent African-American comedians. Both

Given the immersion in an African-American standard of comedy (and music for that matter) and his attention to the finer critical points regarding the mediation of the 'War on Terror', it would be apt to ask here if Kale's engagement of comedy is one which signals straightforward cultural integration or one which, amongst other pleasures and functions, gives expression to his racialised self within an identity scheme active in Stockholm/Sweden? It is my contention that the latter is always interwoven into any specific patterning of ordinary integration.

4.3.1. Dealing with a New Orientalism

In order to expand upon this theme of simultaneity, I now turn to Agil from Väsby. Agil, whose parents are from Kurdish Iran and Kurdish Iraq respectively, is currently a Politics student at Sodertörn (the Stockholm equivalent of the converted polytechnic in the UK), after a short period of being formally inactive.

To begin with, Agil revealed a similar ease as Kale when contending with mundane, consumerist lifestyles. Though the specific novelty of the consumerist age will only be parsed in the second half of this chapter, I note at this juncture that by consumerism I mean something far greater than merely the self-indulgent purchasing of objects; consumerism speaks to a fundamental reliance on a set of commodified objects *and* experiences, obtained at a frequent rate, in order to fashion presentations of self, realise moral expression and navigate the urban geography around oneself. It is this reliance, in terms of the leisured individual's relationship to the market, which I found to be central to many of the lives I was granted access to. For instance, of the two lengthy sessions I spent with Agil, the first consisted of shopping (despite her being 'broke') at H&M and other such 'affordable' brand stores in the main commercial district of Stockholm, and later on, visiting a cafe on the waterfront which she had specified as having a particular appeal for her.

> 'Especially in the summer, then I would like to be in Östermalm. And in the
> winter, then I can be in Söder, Slussen. It's just a bit more, I don't know,

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showcase a noteworthy political voice but are also known for their more generic, observational comedy, particularly so in Chris Rock's oeuvre. The Dixie Chicks, a country music female trio, enjoyed considerable fame during the early 2000's. Their repertoire was not known for any overt political consciousness.

welcoming and snug. But the thing with Östermalm, it's just by the water, and I love that. I am often at Josephina's. I think it's so lovely there by the water. Everything is so charming. But, during the winter, then I might actually prefer Söder. It has a different, relaxed feel. Especially at night, with all the little bars you know.'

Agil's ability to distinguish between the differently coded consumer profiles of the city-centre (which is considerable in area), despite coming from an impoverished background (she till recently had lived with her mother in a subsidised council flat whilst her father, who lives in Uppsala, has been on incapacity benefits for over a decade), is befitting of a competent member of the cityscape's consumer economy. It is tempting hereby to interpret the casual comfort with such normative cultural rhythms as a mundane expression of integration. Yet, when the question of ethnic difference is actualised, Agil's narrative reveals a complication which resists a smooth incorporation into any such 'integration-transnationalism' dichotomy.

For instance, it is worth recalling Morawska's mentioning of Westernised 'female identities and gender relations', which she problematically posits as constituting the integrated flank of the behavioural and value registers relevant to second-generation lives. At one initial level, when Agil rejects any positive association with her visits to Iran (both Tehran and the Kurdish provinces), it would seem as if the commonplace gender distinction which Morawska deploys is vindicated:

> 'In Iran, I wanted to die. We simply didn't get to do anything! It was more about you are a girl; you don't get to do anything.'
> V: 'Sure, so that's a place you wouldn't ever see yourself living in I suppose?'
> A: 'Never. Never. I would rather die.' [Laughter]

Yet, when discussing her relationship with her older brother,[23] it becomes clear that Agil does not enter Stockholm's public arena simply as a woman, but as a non-white, Muslim

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[23] When at Agil's house, I had a lengthy conversation with her brother about their father's history. His father was a fighter in one of the Marxist independence groups in Kurdistan, as was the case for many of those who migrated to Sweden from Kurdish areas. Agil's brother, whilst inheriting the deeply atheistic, anti-religiosity so central to his father's ideological struggle, does not feel able to reject a Muslim *identification* due to the manner it plays out in contemporary Europe. This echoes how Kale, and countless others, feel summoned in contemporary Stockholm by a Muslim identification, a summoning which makes it difficult to dispense with the identification on the basis that one might be a non-believer.

(again, this is meant in terms of identity and not faith *per se*) woman. Her extended testimony offers in turn an important complication of the manner in which gender values are referenced in common discourse as providing self-explanatory instances of integration, or lack of.

> 'Just after all the stuff after the Fadime incident [a widely reported and heatedly discussed 'honour-killing' incident], I remember that I was about to visit Iran once. I was 15 or 16, I think. And one day, my teacher asked me in private, 'Is there something you would like to tell me?' So I replied, 'No, not really.' I didn't connect the dots you see. […] And she was like, 'Please, I beg you, you can tell me. You are going to Iran?' And I was like, 'Yeah, I'm going soon.' And she continued, 'Tell me, is anything going to happen to you there? Will I see you again?' And then it all clicked. I just started to laugh. It was so comical but also such an embarrassing situation. It was really pathetic of her to even think the thought. The very idea that my family was a threat! [...] And the worst thing was that she knew who my brother was because she had taught him when he was in the school. So it didn't make any sense really that she could think of him in such a way.
>
> […]
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> And there are also things my friends have said. Well not actually my friends really but my classmates. One classmate once asked, 'Your brother, does he oppress you? Does he hit you? Are you allowed to dress like that? Are you allowed to go out? Can you have a boyfriend?"

It would seem that the ideals of gender equality Agil comfortably communicates in her statements and indeed her activities, are questioned, not by her fellow Invandrare friends/milieu, but rather, by her Swedish classmates. In positing Iran in negative relation to her ordinary life, which is by contrast presented as being reasonably permissive and free, there is a telling irony in the fact that it is her Swedish acquaintances who re-inscribe an Orientalist image of the passive, docile Middle-Eastern woman upon her body. (Importantly, she does not attribute this tension to her Swedish *friends* (as opposed to *acquaintances*), who are presumably better versed in the ordinary, banal multiculture and the principles of 'not asking stupid questions' which Farima drew

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forth in the previous chapter.) In the comfort of Agil's fellow Invandrare – 'I think there is a, some kind of understanding among all Invandrare, we know to be more critical of that which we the media say about different people' – she is seemingly able to express liberal (if it is to be considered as such) values with relative abandon. During our discussion of her current university studies, Agil's highly developed gender consciousness was made expressly clear.

> V: 'You really seem to enjoy the 'Gender-Science' course?'

> A: 'Oh, I love it! It deals with gender roles and how it plays out in society. I think many people misunderstand it. Many think it's just feminism and you are trained to become a feminist or something simple and extreme like that. But it's nothing like that! It's really proper deep analysis of why society looks the way it does.'

By contrast, it is in those public spaces where her racialised body is read by certain Swedish others along civilizational representational regimes that her minority identity is (re)made and (re)marked as conspicuous, and problematically so.

Her experiences point hereby to an inversion, or even collapsing, of the spatial distinction commonly evoked when discussing minority identity retention (intra-minority interaction) contra integrated subjectivities (active participation in public realms with a large white contingent). Her experiences signal that becoming a woman in Stockholm is inextricably tied to becoming an Invandrare, Muslim, Middle-Eastern woman – with all the symbolic charge such associations carry. It is this intersection with gender which cannot be bracketed outside of race (Yuval-Davis 2006). With this complication in mind, the alleged 'Americanisation' or Westernisation of gender norms Morawska posits do not simply override the indelible reality of the racially inscribed, brown body that an Indian woman (this being the context of Morawska's example) wears. Ultimately, the process of becoming a *racialised* woman, rich with meaning for the public domain, is part of her 'Americanisation' (Bacon 2009).

This discursively produced engagement chimes with certain scenarios met by a 'Muslim', Kurdish woman such as Agil in contemporary Stockholm (and Europe in general). The

purported 'problem of integration' so central to contemporary European narrations of nation and its cementing of a liberalism-'bad diversity' (Lentin and Titley 2011: 166) dichotomy has increasingly utilised the Muslim *woman* as its key discursive object (Afshar 2008: 421, Mirza 2013). The instrumental value of gender and sexual freedoms in affirming the nonintegrated status of the minority ethnic subject has been mapped by a series of canonical critical feminist works, most notably Joan Scott's (2005) commentary on the sexual politics of French republicanism, Jasbir Puar's (2006) development of the term 'homonationalism', and Judith Butler's analysis of how torture and neocolonial war is framed as progressive ventures in the name of sexual freedoms (2008). All of which speak to the centrality of a putatively feminist symbolism in the determining of renewed European nationalisms.

Within the increased discursive prominence of such false desires to 'liberate' the non-white woman, a woman like Agil must repeatedly negotiate the carried fixation with narratives of alluringly acquiescent Muslim women, an Orientalist representational frame which has found a new lease of life via the return to integration and social cohesion ideals. Consequently, where does the 'assimilated Western' woman end and the 'transnational ethnic' woman begin when partaking in ordinary cultural conventions particular to a city such as Stockholm? Perhaps it is more accurate to conclude that the distinction is itself misplaced. In other words, Agil's Kurdish, Invandrare, Muslim location works through her acculturated self. It is the exposure to institutions which act as ordinary sites of acculturation (e.g. school) that also affirms ethnic particularity.

4.3.2. Becoming the integrated immigrant, becoming the confidante of racism

Agil went on to expand upon how encounters with white acquaintances are often laced with unpredictability precisely *because of* her presumed integration. These acquaintances can sometimes read her comfort with matter-of-fact mainstream cultural activity as license to articulate a hitherto concealed/coded racism.

> 'When I have been out with work or with course-mates, right, the Swedish people who you only know sometimes just totally flip in their ways. When they're drunk it's like, 'Oh, you are the best, coolest Invandrare I have ever met!' 'I don't know any Invandrare, but still, you are the best!''

V: 'Wow. People really say things like that?'

A: 'Yeah! You know, I have a number of friends who work in various big companies. Invandrare friends. And they say that 'When their colleagues are drunk, you are like their best friend! But the day after, they won't even say hi in the corridor.' Many have said this to me. I just can't understand it at all. That whole way of being.'

V: 'Is it common to hear things like this?'

A: 'Yeah. [Assumes a parodic tone] 'You know what; you are not like other Invandrare.' 'Well, how many do you know?' 'I don't know many. Actually, I don't know any, but you understand!' And then you think for yourself, how can they think like this?'

Again, the point advanced here, though prosaic, effectively problematises the integration-difference dichotomy. What is at once a merry, perfectly ordinary group engagement around drinks after work or suchlike is also the basis upon which her Swedish peers rekindle for Agil a freighted sense of ethnic difference.

By way of concluding this section of the chapter, I relate in passing one more example featuring a different participant – Adivic (of Serbian background who works as a salesperson at an upmarket retail boutique). This incident captures succinctly the process by which the racialised identity presence established by many of the participants occurs *in the course* of their pursuing the many quotidian tasks and pleasures of ordinary Stockholm life. One evening I was at Adivic's flat watching American football together with another male friend of Syrian origin, when Adivic mentioned to us that a Swedish woman, who he had been casually seeing, had just sent a startling text message. The text described two men, who happened to be disturbing her and her friends at a local bar, as 'Blattar' (another highly pejorative term, like 'Svartskalle', for those of immigrant origin). When Adivic conveyed his disapproval, she responded, again via text, that 'he was not to worry as he was not one of *them*.' This response by the woman in question, a logic which exempts Adivic from being a *Blatte* (presumably, by her estimation, only applicable to 'stereotypical', 'undesirable' Invandrare), yielded much laughter amongst the two of them, and prompted a lengthy enumeration of similar incidents which they

had either directly encountered or had had relayed to them by others. The obvious question to be posed here is: does the fact that Adivic was casually courting a Swedish woman constitute integration, as could be commonly assumed, or does it in reality communicate a rather more imbricated, complex story about integration and the production of ethnic difference?

Ultimately, it could be argued that the second-generations' engagement with popular cultural rhythms elude easy classification. It is neither free of racialised ethnicity nor does it seem to be obviously 'foreign'. However, an alternative reading might argue that they have in fact already integrated. Their inscribed and re-inscribed racial difference is a certainty which is entangled in this process. Simply, acculturation will be routed, at numerous nodes, through their performance of a racialised identity. Stuart Hall's development of the term 'new ethnicities', coined nearly two decades ago, is still remarkably apposite for this particular rephrasing of acculturation processes. In the context of Hall's discussion, being British for second-generation Afro-Caribbeans must involve an engagement with being Black – and vice-versa (Hall 1992). Or as others put it, the process of acculturation is threaded, at the least, through an engagement with either empowering selectively cultivated markers of ethnic difference or alternatively, as is more often the case, by an unshakeable discursive inscription of racialised particularity (Bhabha 1996, Portes et al 2005).

It is Rogers Brubaker's (2001) influential redefinition of integration which can seem, within the parameters of the more formal commentary on the topic, the best attuned to this interpretation of the second-generations' cultural incorporation into contemporary Europe. Brubaker develops the oft-quoted phrase 'becoming similar' as opposed to 'making same'. Here, he equates assimilation with the 'patterns of integration, adaptation and incorporation' which produce 'emerging similarities' (534-535) but do not rupture everyday markers of difference. But again, the dichotomous framing of integration and ethnic identity remains largely untroubled here. In fact, it is not sociologically clear how this scheme of becoming similar is able to account for the claims to ethnic difference which continue to feature in everyday interaction. Consequently, a notion of 'becoming similar' too can appear unhelpful if it remains inattentive to how integration – demonstrating oneself as competent in a series of normative activities – is itself often the principal process which precipitates an affective commitment to a differentialised

identity in the first instance. The above two cases of Kale and Agil are, I believe, able demonstrations of this concomitance: becoming similar in cultural habit and taste on the one hand, but becoming different in terms of semiotic, identity 'play'. Whilst it is right to better nuance what might be considered integration, I have argued that a better starting point for theorists of integration would be to account for the engendering of difference from *within*. In short, a better attunement is required regarding how the mainstream itself is the major site in which the difference apparent at any given moment in time is organised and reaffirmed.

4.4. Consumerism and new sites of humiliation

Having discussed at length the ordinary cultural incorporation which sits within the claims to difference of these second-generation subjects, there is one strand of contemporary cultural engagement which merits greater consideration: namely, consumerism. This theme was briefly touched upon during my above critique of Morawska's dualistic approach, where I argued that the frequent purchasing of goods tailored to a visual expression of a minority identity should not be parcelled away from a general familiarity with European, hyper-capitalist modes of engagement. But any discussion of contemporary cultural adaption requires a far more concerted unpacking of consumerism's centrality to contemporary subject formation. A fitting point of departure here, given his earlier prominence via the concept of conviviality, is Paul Gilroy's (2010) *Darker than Blue*. Comprising three long-form essays penned by Gilroy during his time at Yale, the book is timely for my own attempt to better chart how racialised ethnic minorities engage late modernity's unapologetic endorsement of a hyper-consumerist, parochial individualism.

In an argumentative move consistent with his earlier works where there is prolific use of references from popular music, Gilroy mourns contemporary black hip-hop culture for its over-determined centrality to the consumerist aesthetic of *spectacular* opulence and instant gratification. The symbolic value of hip-hop performance to a consumerist culture of indulgence and immediacy has managed to displace a previous black musical legacy more intimately acquainted with the vocabulary of cosmopolitanism and struggle. Quite simply, in Gilroy's estimation, 50 Cent is no replacement for Curtis Mayfield (2010: 124), neither in form nor in substance, neither aurally nor ethically.

Gilroy does not leave this cultural drift de-contextualised, situating it within the broader trend of the social's commercial restructuring. Accordingly, he notes the ways in which the black struggle for acceptance is necessarily wedded, both now and in the recent past, to *consumerist* displays. '[A]frican Americans were being interpellated as consumers long before they acquired citizenship rights' (2010: 9). Gilroy argues that this community, whose standard provision of rights and status as advanced to the normative citizen is denied, look to communicate their human value through their role as consumers. Ultimately, it is this reading of the commercial – its ambivalent basis as a key contemporary node for self and collective expression – which is of immediate interest for my own discussion on how modes of social incorporation need be theorised more robustly vis-à-vis consumerism.

In short, I look to foreground the commercial and the consumerist in furthering the broader discussion concerning the simultaneity of minority identity performance and processes of integration into normative cultural idioms. When undertaking a study of integration, or lack of, it is necessary to establish what it is in fact that people are meant to integrate into. And, as opposed to the current discourse of British/European *values* as being the object of integration, a 'civic' discourse critiqued in the previous chapter as both a misnomer and an 'othering' mechanism, it is necessary to understand that there is something far more prominent about consumerist practices in terms of organising contemporary Western life. Herein, though Alba and Nee (2003) commendably suggest that integration only transpires when the 'mainstream' itself is 'remade', it is equally important for such authors to establish that the mainstream has already been remade along significant non-ethnic measures. Attention to such measures might reveal that integration by second-generations is already apparent to an extent which is not sufficiently appreciated. Put differently, when appraising the extent of integration manifest, I establish as a first condition what the mainstream to which these second-generation participants might integrate into looks like and what its central thrust is. I submit in the following section that consumerism is the engine which motors contemporary metropolitan interaction and that inattention to the centrality of consumerism can lead only to highly tangential commentary on the topic of integration.

4.4.1. What is consumerism?

To better understand the prevailing reach of the consumerist age, it is instructive to identify its key features. I turn here to the works of Zygmunt Bauman. Bauman is perhaps the most canonical voice in tracing the centrality of consumerist routines – of interaction with goods and markets – in the facilitating of sutured identity performances as well as undergirding demonstrations of self-worth and generating momentary impressions of certainty. Others too, such as the political philosopher Charles Taylor (2004), have been central to the tracing of the consumerist imagination's (as opposed to merely its economic circuits – e.g. the consumer economy) increased hold on how contemporary citizens are expected to fashion their selves, their expressive forms and the political undertakings which are available to them. It is however Bauman who best lends himself to a directly *sociological* unpacking of consumerism's principle features. His most recent work, *Collateral Damage* (2011), is particularly apt here as it extends the scope of how best to read the current constitution of the consumerist citizen-subject.

First and foremost, consumerism is not the same as consumption. To consume is a general feature of social existence across time and space – to consume signs, objects and pleasures for instance. Consumerism on the other hand pertains specifically to a type of relationship between the individual and the marketplace: the ability to navigate the market whereby superfluous material goods as well as transient experiences are obtained at a high frequency in exchange for capital (Bauman 2005, 2007). Herein, the consumerist ethos which Bauman sketches should not be confused, as is often the case, with mere gratuitous hedonism and self-indulgence (i.e. excess consumption). Instead, his argument alludes specifically to the attempts by which individuals 'in a world shorn of traditional bonds of identity and social connectivity' (Gofton 2011) turn to the market of ephemeral goods and experiences in *hoping* to 'fill the void'.

There is at times, however, an impression that Bauman considers the corrosive impact of consumerism universal in its reach. Namely, the pursuit of certainty and assertions of self via the consumer register is *eo ipso* futile – regardless of the variation in resources available to the individual or group in question. Many critics, most notably Alan Warde (1994), have persuasively argued that it is presumptive to decree the consumer experience by default dissatisfying. Warde suggests that consumer choices, when properly exercised with informed understanding of a social group's expectations and

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status field, are likely to carry for those competent (both materially and culturally) individuals many social rewards. After all, constraints on choice, if not felt as constraints, are not necessarily a source of discomfort, providing that the consumer is still able to meet the behavioural conventions and status norms prized by her significant social others. In other words, the consumer experience is not simply one which *promises* the means for an affirmation of self and social recognition but can indeed deliver upon such aspirations.

With this qualification in mind, the purchase of Bauman's argument lies in his stress that it is through *access* to consumer realms that contemporary citizens are able to articulate any notionally stable form and self-worth. Furthermore, his insights are best apparent vis-à-vis the reconfigured maps of *inequality*. Premised as it is on purchasing power, access to such consumer-driven repertoires of identity assertion is markedly unequal. The exercise of consumer choice – through which the 'construction and maintenance of self-identity' (Davis 2006: 73) is channelled – intersects with existing divisions in income and other assets. Consequently, material inequality does not only hinder equal opportunity to 'offices and positions', to evoke a Rawlsian parlance, but increasingly structures the abilities of individuals to communicate to their peers an intelligible social identity and observe the status values relevant to the respective identities. Herein, when considering the relationship between ethnic identity and integration, it is important to note that it is an *access* to consumerist practices which is most applicable to the second-generation's performance and assertion of any minority ethnic identity/identities. Here, their communication of difference hinges on a quintessentially Western, late-capitalist mode of expression.

It was certainly the case that, when accompanying my participants, excursions into the public domain often involved spending money. As was evident in the discussion of Farima in the previous chapter, alongside the above discussion concerning Kale and Agil, cafes, shopping on high streets and the frequenting of night-time clubs and bars were a recurring feature. Indeed, the previous mentioning of Nando's, Starbucks and McDonald's in this thesis, though used in those instances as material for other analytic purposes (conviviality and 'going-out'), inadvertently makes explicit the consumerist-franchise undercurrent informing so much of the participants' undertakings.

One question during my interviews, loosely revolving around disposable income, made particularly sharp the centrality of consumerism. As established in the previous chapter,

the participants did not reveal an apologetic tone concerning their minority identity and indeed, with regard to the theme of first-order interaction, socialised frequently with other minority-marked individuals/groups. However, when asked to detail how they thought they dealt with their disposable income, it was the theme of cash-orientated night-time leisure, shopping for clothing and gadgets, and holidays with friends (Maziar, employed as a train-station ticket conductor, would biennially journey to Las Vegas, saving an astonishing sum of 7,000-8,000 pounds for the trip) which were recurring features. Here, consumerism loomed large whilst casually accommodating the 'retention' of their particularised ethnic identity.

Two quotes from Harriet and Wahid, both from Harrow, are particularly helpful starting points for parsing the detail of this proximity of consumerism to integration.

> Harriet: 'It sometimes feels like I all I do is shop. My mother can't understand me. 'Why all these shoes and why different shoes for different dresses!''

Wahid puts it more mournfully:

> 'I see my parents; they seem so much more focused about what's important. My father didn't come for me to just live a stupid, materialist life. But that is what I do. Really, this question even makes me think. […] Like, when you ask me to think about it carefully, it is true, really true Val. It does feel like almost all my money goes on things that are for my pleasure. Holidays with the guys, useless crap for the car, new mobiles, fucking stupid apps.'

These two statements are interesting at two levels. First, it brings into play a contrast the participants themselves affirm, one between their parents and themselves. This contrast is framed around attitudes to consumerism. From the perspective of integration, a field of study which revolves heavily around generational change, the interest of this contrast should be self-evident. Though the participants retain their sense of identity difference, the seeming cultural and value distance from their parents is considerable. This generational chasm is likely the case regardless of ethnicity, but even so, it puts paid to a belief that because people might reference the same marker of ethnic identity, there also exists a shared cultural orientation. To rehash a previous concern, markers of ethnic difference are really quite poor indicators of cultural engagement.

Second, and perhaps more obliquely, laced through both remarks is a degree of regret vis-à-vis their consumerist excesses. Both statements hint at an individualising, volitional rationale which positions the self as the sole author of her life in relation to the practices she comes to desire. This could be read as an individualising, neoliberal narrative dissuaded from any marked acknowledgement of the structural and/or cultural context which 'inculcates' (Mbembe 2004: 405) such consumerist dispositions. I venture to claim that the gesturing at such an ironic narrative, one which blames the self for the ills and excesses they find difficult to refuse, can only be issued by an 'insider' vis-à-vis the normative framework governing a consumerist, neoliberal ethos. The neoliberal times we currently live through lure us into 'common-sensical', but ultimately nihilistic truths. They tells us that the sufferings and 'failings' of people are always, or primarily, their *own* doing. Herein – in light of both Alicia's and Wahid's self-admonishment – appears one of the many dangers of integration; involving a co-option of a more committed anti-consumerist standpoint which could otherwise emerge from their classed and racialised exclusion. Integration is not only about forms of absorption into culture-as-activity, but into culture as a way of 'seeing' one's own life and its way of dictating what constitutes fulfilment. In short, integration involves the ideological capture of a more defined critical vantage point concerning the many exclusions – to be discussed more explicitly shortly – that these low-income participants themselves experience from *within* the consumerist circuit of living.

The lack of a more forceful structural awareness – an awareness of how central consumerism has become to their felt sense of worth and even their communicative forms – is most properly read within an ideological context, as indicative of the pervasive hold of a consumerist imagination. Due to their integrated position inside the consumerist imagination, these subjects are unlikely to acknowledge the ideological centrality of consumerism in rendering contemporary Western life both intelligible and worthwhile. In other words, the minority markers which they attach themselves to when characterising their racial and ethnic background do not lead to an ideologically critical vantage point. Instead, these minority identities settle themselves within the governing gaze of modern life, not outside of it. To recall the aforementioned work of Gilroy which situates American black culture within the tapestry of late-capitalist consumerist spectacles, Gilroy rightly observes that being racialised in contemporary times is no assurance against ideological incorporation. Evoking the legacy of Frantz Fanon, Gilroy

reminds us that the bearing of race is no guarantor of 'redemptive insights' (2010: 158). Or as Ben Pitcher (2010: 321) puts it in the broader context of anti-racist politics: '[T]he end of antiracism's attachment to the trope of brave oppositionality should herald a new maturity that means it is more capable of dealing with the complexities of race and racism in the new century.' These complexities allude to the 'mainstreaming' (2011: 321) of how contemporary racial and ethnic identities often find expression. The bearing and performance of difference is often routed through access to many of the same normative frameworks (i.e. consumerism) applicable to Western life at large.

Some biographical detail concerning the above mentioned Harriet will help clarify this claim. Harriet was a participant aged 25 of Jamaican background. Her mother worked as an administrator in the Harrow council and she had been long estranged from her biological father. Her mother's long-time partner, with whom Harriet had a strained relationship, worked only occasionally, as a DJ and party promoter. Acutely and articulately familiar with her mother's hardship and the general lack of money during her upbringing, Harriet still felt herself removed from an approach to money which did not immediately relate to her shopping 'needs'. Harriet's shopping habits did indeed showcase a certain eccentricity, whereby she managed her considerable wardrobe in accordance with an elaborate colour coding scheme. All her outfits were neatly aligned with a corresponding set of accessories (handbags, shoes, bracelets, and even make-up). This quirk, which developed from a young age, intensified once she found, upon completing her education at Aston University, two part-time jobs as a counsellor both at a prison and a sixth-form college. Not only was Harriet's immediate social circle mainly black and Asian, but her jobs themselves were of a nature which principally involved dealing with young black men. Yet the consumer routines which figured so centrally in her life do not seem problematised by her extended immersion in 'minority life' and the often difficult circumstances which feature in such milieus: '*Feels like all I do is shop.*'

Passing attention could also be drawn to the phrasings replete in Wahid's statement, phrasings which intimate a similarly revealing self-admonishment. 'A stupid, materialist life; fucking stupid apps; [all] for my pleasure; this is what I do; parents more focused about what's important.'

4.4.2. Consumerism and morality

In further foregrounding Bauman's emphasis on social inequality – as opposed to his general treatise on the diffuse condition of uncertainty – it is also worth remarking upon the relationship between consumerism and morality. In *Collateral Damage*, Bauman widens his casting of the consumerist net (2011: 72-82). Whilst already serving as the preeminent conduit for assertions of identity, consumerism also 'mediates', primarily through repeated small acts of gift-buying, the attempts by which individuals rescue their otherwise attenuated remit for care and concern for those around them. In its function as a 'morality substitute', the consumer market 'offers material tokens of concern, sympathy, well-wishing, friendship and love'. 'Shopping thereby becomes a sort of moral act (and vice versa: moral acts lead by way of the shops)' (75-77). Consuming becomes a moral act – a mode of connection with, 'and commitment to, others' (17).

The moral character which the consumer act obtains has previously been anthropologically addressed by Daniel Miller (1998), a decidedly more sanguine theorist of consumerism. Miller hesitates to read morality via the consumer interface as a mere 'palliative' (Bauman 2011: 74), as somehow an illusory intervention in resisting the collapsing of 'interhuman bonds' (77). Miller classes the regular, if spontaneous, act of purchasing on behalf of others (e.g. shopping at a supermarket) a valid mode through which bonds of intimacy are maintained and nourished. Bauman is right, however, to highlight that in 'attaching price tags to acts of goodness' (75) such possibilities of care become 'dependent on access to consumer goods' (79). Hereby, in an argument which echoes Andrew Sayer's later works (2005, 2011), Bauman ably relates in this chapter the figuring of class inequalities in the contemporary capacity to act morally. Granting that consumerism does indeed take on this added function – wherein alongside affirmations of self it also obtains a moral texture – it is possible to further draw out the range of social uses contained in any putatively consumerist act. Put differently, consumer acts often appeal to a basis upon which contemporary citizens are expected to execute their most basic human faculties (i.e. moral responsibility).

This increased recourse to consumerist gift-oriented moral demonstrations of 'interhuman relations' (Bauman 2011: 75) is loosely evident in Kale's passing remark concerning the Christmas holiday season: 'with it being Christmas and New Year's and

all that, my budget really took a real hit. A heavy hit.' More significantly, during the participant observation sessions, I was taken by the frequency with which altruistic gestures amongst a circle of friends often centred on the act of picking up the bill for the group in question. This was particularly apparent during my time with Adivic. Adivic successfully insisted on three different occasions on paying for others (including myself, though I obstinately declined his offer – to some consternation). It is not only his offer to pay which is of interest here. The fact that such an occasion presented itself on three occasions, despite my accompanying him only for two participant observation sessions totalling six hours, is revealing of the consumerist habits regular to his daily goings-on. Though this point might appear minor and/or self-evident, I raise it for the purpose of demonstrating the range by which consumerism is rendered relevant to these lives, and in turn, how well-acquainted these second-generation participants are with consumerism's multiple social uses.

4.4.3. Consumerism and the urban experience

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is also worth noting that consumerism does not simply involve a relationship between individuals and commodified *objects*. As signalled above, it appeals in equal measure to *experiences*. Though the specific character of experiences is not extensively discussed by Bauman, it is clear that he is attentive to its importance: for instance, when he passingly employs the phrase 'experience economy' to designate the prominence of commodified services which 'draw upon the totality of an individual's personality, warts and all' (2011: 46). Indeed, the well-documented shift to a service-sector economy bears witness to experiences being privileged as the more bankable commodity of over-developed capitalist cities.

Importantly, with regard to contemporary measures of exclusion, consumer experiences generate not only affective qualities but also spatial coordinates. The late modern city is engaged as a temporal routine threading together a series of consumer experiences – be it a visit to the cinema multiplex, a meal, or a rendezvous at a franchised cafe or two. The distinctive feature is the fact that the experience is contingent on an ability to buy, and buy discerningly. As Achille Mbembe comments in a paper which details the recent formation of select urban environments within Johannesburg as appropriate to desiring 'consumer publics' (2004: 374):

> Melrose Arch is sold to residents and visitors not as a theater of consumption but as a social environment, a 'community', and a place where people come together to eat, dance, listen to music, enjoy a good conversation, drink coffee, interact, and be entertained (394).

The hinging of a city's experiential core to the denizen's consumer capabilities generates in turn a spatially charted inclusion/exclusion, whereby emergent consumer hubs of the city are rendered inaccessible to those lacking in such capabilities. Attention to such formations of consumer-intensive 'social environments' allows for a speculative theorisation into how city-centres host only those who are already well-integrated into the cycle of consumerist pleasure and forms of expression. Put bluntly, the inner-domains of such over-developed capitalist cities, increasingly bereft of spaces which are not contingent upon purchasing power, transmute into a fortified, yet impossibly alluring 'theatre of consumption' (Mbembe 2004: 390).

Many of the empirical examples referred to earlier already make clear this relationship of consumerism as an entry into the urban experience: high streets studded with franchise restaurants, excursions into the city for a night out and meal after, and regular frequenting of cafes when wishing to congregate with friends. The earlier reference to Agil's comment which charted the pleasures to be had from *different* parts of Stockholm centre chimes particularly well with this understanding of urban spaces as consumerist in texture. Her commentary concerning the different city hubs, all profile the distinctive consumer experiences and textures relevant to those diverse spaces.

4.4.4. Inequality and riotous consumers

Whilst affirming the relevance of consumerism to these individuals along three different measures (affirmation of self, morality and access to urban experiences), I have also periodically hinted at a commentary on inequality, a matter which I will treat more extensively in what follows. This extended phase of the chapter does not, however, engage integration as the chief problematic, as I hope the reader is now sufficiently of the understanding that I believe integration to be an unremarkable, already given reality. The preceding discussion of the second-generation's incorporation into circuits of consumerism assumes witness to a diffuse process of integration. But when Brubaker (2001), Hargreaves (2007) and others insist upon the inevitability of integration as a social process, not only do they underplay the *always* problematic polemical subtext of

integration, but also leave this key node of 'inevitability' unaccounted for. Whilst acknowledging the matter-of-fact integration realised through exposure to key societal institutions (e.g. educational, the labour market, judicial systems and common cultural interfaces), the over-determined analytic emphasis on markers of ethnic identity obscures attention to important everyday practices of consumerist expression. I have argued that this notion of inevitable integration needs to be taken further beyond state institutions and cultural 'values' into the realm of late-capitalist constitutions of the subject which privilege consumerist presentations of self and modes of urban experience. In other words, an understanding of integration which does not account for the centrality of the neoliberal mainstream offers only a lacklustre and ahistorical conceptualisation of integration in the first place.

I put forward the recent riots which bled across English cities in the summer of 2011 as a particularly illuminating set of clustered events for understanding this particular aspect of today's processes of integration. Some of the 2011 rioting, as rendered in south London, centred on a high-street junction situated in close proximity to the housing estates at which both Michael and Ruben lived. In fact, the estate concourse and its maze of high-rise buildings served both as a prominent organising locale as well as escape valve for many of those involved. In turn, certain remarks by Michael and Ruben – though the interviews were conducted a few months prior – provide me with an opportunity to comment on the riots, which were very much in the air during the writing of this thesis. In so doing, I am able to bring out dimensions of my argument regarding consumerism-cum-integration which go beyond my immediate empirical focus. That is to say, the riots not only foreground themes of consumerism but do so within the specific context of *material inequality*.

The political voice of the riots reveals, even if the voice can appear mute to some, that inequality is to a significant extent experienced within the fields of consumerist desires that subjects are *integrated* into. In other words, the fact that the state could *not* pathologise the riots as a problem of insufficient integration – problems of 'culture clashes' and 'community cohesion' which were used to frame previous bouts of rioting in 2001 and the 1980s (Solomos 2011) – is in its own way telling. The dominant post-riot discourses opted instead for narratives of a *multi-ethnic* nihilist materialism fuelled by a dysfunctional youth culture (a framing which does however borrow from racialised

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hysterias around the transmission of black hip-hop). What this alternative framing leaves unsaid is that consumerist materialism is in fact the *mainstream,* and cannot be disingenuously seen as the antisocial preserve of these young rioters. Hereby, for the sake of argumentation – despite its erasure of other causes behind the riots such as anti-police hostility and fast receding employment and educational opportunities – I allow the 'shopping riots' (Williams 2011) characterisation to stand. But in doing so, I look to put forth more provocatively the riots as a direct problem of integration. That is to say, *too much* integration into a neoliberal consumerist imagination and the subsequent exclusions that it necessarily engenders. By the same reckoning, I look to foreground here the consumerist thrust of these participants' lives whilst simultaneously problematising the characterisation of putatively 'consumerist riots' as *apolitical.*

As a starting point, it is worth reiterating that the consumerist desire, as desires which certain objects and experiences provoke, is 'inculcated' in all those present, including in those 'who have nothing to buy and as well as those who have nothing to buy *with*' (Mbembe 2004: 405, original emphasis). The reach of the consumerist fantasy is egalitarian in this aspect, indifferent to variation in class and ethnicity. The testimonies of Michael and Ruben, participants with limited purchasing power, speaks to the unattainable, yet self-affirming, desires which they have indeed internalised and made their own. Their reflections are particularly prescient given that the interviews antedated the riots by a mere two months.

I start with a comment by Michael which references the lack of prospects which might otherwise help cement a sense of purpose in accordance to a stable horizon of expectations.

> 'I don't have much to show really for my life [but] I do try to make sense of things, to find some happiness right, […] and the way we join up is to just go out really, buy some nice gear and just look fresh and kitted.
>
> […]
>
> 'If you put it like that it's obvious innit. […] I don't have much more to think about. I can't see if I will ever have a career like you, obviously plan your life

around the career you are planning for. I don't have that yeah; I don't have a purpose like that.[…] I guess the thing is that when I get some money, I have to be honest with you, I just buy a few things, go out with my people somewhere nice, try to kop something nice for my girl. […] It's how things work here I guess. Yeah, buying things does make me feel good, for a while right, to have some new kicks on my feet and a banging jacket is […] good enough for now.'

This extended reflection starkly contrasts the allure of consumer experiences against an absence of other more affirming pathways (e.g. 'I can't see if I will ever have a career like you') around which to structure a sense of meaning (e.g. 'I don't have a purpose like that'). And it is with such disquieting reflections in mind that I probe the political resonance latent in the 'shopping riots' narrative by which the recent riots that afflicted various English cities have been popularly understood. It is of course true that the discursive move to discredit any potential grievances underpinning the rioting has been to render its psychic economy as one of mere nihilism and gratuitous materialism. Equally problematic, such a framing elides crucial other structural factors such as labour market uncertainty alongside certain long-established antagonistic relations regarding certain state institutions, not least the police (Valluvan et al. 2013). But the analysis offered by both Michael and Ruben suggests that it is indeed possible to maintain a political understanding of the recent discontent even when presupposing, for the sake of argument, that the riots were *purely* consumerist in motive.

Ruben's reading of consumerism moves within a more consciously politicised terrain:

'It's clear yeah that these are poor ends. The people here don't have much and still the things that matter is buying flash shit. It's like the TV tells us to buy and then we buy like sheep. […] Fuck bruv, if people don't have nothing, we need to be more careful. Like why get shoes and PlayStations before trying to save and just move out this place.'

V: 'So you obviously think this is bad? And is it mostly a media problem? Like because of TV?'

R: 'Like, I dunno bruv. But it has to be the media like in some way right. 'Cus this is just straight mad right. In Africa, they ain't gonna be buying unnecessary

stuff when they are proper starving. Like, it makes you think, like, why would we need to go get all the newest gear when other problems are more important. And well, why, it's like the media tells us this is how it means to have a nice life.'

Whilst intimating here that he is himself not fully party to this reconstitution of social life, Ruben does express well the centrality of consumerist drives to modern life, even within the exceedingly impoverished confines of the estate ('This is how it means to have a nice life'). In fact, I interpret what Ruben says to be offering a sharp portent of the violence which was to engulf the nearby high streets just a few months later. The estate's denizens, poor and less poor, black and non-black are all equally exposed to the privileging of consumerism as the experience of the new times *par excellence*. Whilst some might effectively subdue such pressures, Ruben's analysis notes that it was quite predictable that many would feel frustrated at their failure to realise the consumerist dreams they subscribe to. In other words, in internalising consumerism, the urban poor also sense their *exclusion* manifesting within a consumerist calculus.

Hari Kunzru (2012: 90), the author and essayist, comments concerning the relationship between experience, consumerism and exclusion which he glimpses in the Olympics-driven attempt at a regeneration of what planners wish to term 'Stratford City': 'Instead of citizens, we are now to be customers, and our right to the city is contingent on the agreement of the private owners of those spaces.' In a similar vein, the architecture critic Owen Hatherley (2012) laments, during his recent excoriation of the humdrum city-centres to be found in various 'regenerated' English cities (cities such as London and Manchester being emblematic cases), that the inner domains of these renewed cities no longer hunger for a public good – whereby the city's *raison d'être* no longer rests on the cultivation of a shared and interactive agora. Instead, modelled on the influential gospel of regeneration, most popularly formulated by Richard Florida, cultivating a profile as an attractive global city rests on an appeal to, as well as the presence of, an urbane class of self-styled creative innovators, entrepreneurs and students (Hatherley 2012: 149). In the prioritising of these subjects, contemporary consumer-driven cities are gradually rendered 'yuppiedromes', the frank yet efficient term coined by Hatherley. Given this context, the excluded poor not only experience their inability to buy as generating penalties at the aforementioned level of self-affirmation, but find their very ability to access the city curtailed.

> The typical […] streetscape of pound shops and groceries may be unaesthetic, but it represents interwoven circuits of production and consumption that are local and targeted at the people who are already here, instead of those developers would like to see coming, people with more disposable income and fewer social problems. [The] poorest will be shunted out (Kunzru 2012: 87).

It could be said that it was a frustration concerning such a process of 'shunting' which the riots, as evidenced in the characterising of the estate's youth expressed by Michael and Ruben, brought to violent life. The consumerist enigma of nested social environments rests on a carefully scened fantasy of affluent metropolitan life. It is however a fantasy which struggles to accommodate the flows of those bodies which signal a less able consumer profile. In cities where regeneration has precipitated a polarisation in income and wealth, these bodies threaten to expose the fragility of the urban consumer fantasy. Instead, the only feasible recourse is to rally a punitive, securitising regime of 'boundary marking' (Mbembe 2005: 407). It constitutes a regime which looks to better regulate and contain the flows of those citizens that, in spite of internalising the same circuits of desire, have been rendered superfluous to the contemporary order of production and consumption. This containment is however unsustainable, as the desires to taste the goods and opulence of the consumer experience are made equally real for those who have *nothing to buy with*. Herein, the rioting articulates, in a futile, oblique and desperate manner, an observation that contemporary urban space – where experience and interaction is realised – is increasingly threaded by a set of securitised consumer practices.

The profile of glittering shopping facades during the rioting in August 2011 – wherein it was the high streets from which the rioters were alienated that were put under siege – can be consequently seen as conveying a perfectly apposite form of *political* protest. Yet, upon having gestured at these different social functions facilitated through the consumer act (self-affirmation, morality, and the urban experience) – and conversely, the costs borne by those unable to realise their consumer purpose – it appears as if the impoverished constituents that participated in the riots suffer from a double bind. They are condemned for engaging in acts of violence whilst being concomitantly condemned for having only a *consumerist* political grievance to support that very violence. The rioters, by virtue of their seeming refusal to contrive an already sanctioned, 'valid' political grievance – in lieu of those consumer-oriented exclusionary forms that many of them

experience on a more regular and intimate basis – find their protestations represented as silence.

This received impression of the riots as demonstrably failing to gesture at any broader collective ambition ('no common motivation' [Wilson 2011]) must be contextually understood within the prevalent discursive scripts which render certain forms of political action intelligible and others less so. With this in mind, the premising of consumerist desires as *apolitical* in character signals a telling discursive trap regarding the contemporary relationship between registers of felt exclusion (the consumer register) and the vocabularies available for articulating that felt exclusion. Through reference to Bauman, this phase of the chapter has speculated that – though there is never a situation in the UK where race (e.g. criminalisation), state institutions (e.g. policing and social security reforms), and the labour market (e.g. unemployment and underemployment) do not figure in the provocation and/or evaluation of large scale public disorder – outbursts by those most economically deprived will increasingly contain a significant consumerist purpose as well. When the citizen is cast first and foremost as a consumer, it is reasonable to suppose that political unrest will find expression within the parameters of that very consumer ethos. Put differently, the 'privatizing' (Bauman 2011: 16) of social life into a set of individualised consumer routines begets corresponding forms of political response.

The poignant appeal in Michael's statement to the meaning which consumer acts generate (e.g. 'yeah, buying things does make me feel good, for a while right, to have some new kicks on my feet and a banging jacket is good enough for now') is I think consonant with the argument advanced here. Michael and Ruben might not be the ideal frequenters of consumer-intensive spaces, and their lack of purchasing power does indeed informally keep them at bay. But their sense of exclusion is largely felt precisely through this very same register of the consumerist denial. Herein, when two young black men are asked to conceive of the frustrations suffered by their generation, it is through the consumerist imagination that it finds most tangible expression. Their exclusion is sensed in the affective terms most appropriate to contemporary norms of the consumer economy.

Allow me to restate hereby how integration is made to figure in this discussion. I posit that not only do the expressive forms relevant to these second-generation lives bear the qualities of integration into a normative Western capitalism, but of equal importance, their sense of *exclusion* does also bear this stamp – an exclusion conceived through the lens of the consumerist hermeneutic unique to modern capitalist life. This basic impression is perhaps best concluded through brief reference to the conversations that I had with some of the older Afro-Caribbean figures of the estate the day after the riots. These conversations made it apparent that it is not necessarily identity or what we actively do, but rather, it is *what we wish to do and yet cannot* which is sometimes the best indication of the cultural outlook active at a given moment in time and space. It is through a feel for what exactly is the register for frustration – where and what are the sites of humiliation and denial – that reveals an incorporation into a certain social scheme, a structure of feeling, a way of dreaming. To borrow from the neo-Aristotelian turn apparent in recent sociology of ethics (McIntyre 2007, Sayer 2011, Sennett 2012), it is a matter of where we most sense our *character* (socially constructed as it is) being *denied* that is indicative of societal incorporation.

Again, Gilroy (2013b) makes, in a short piece on the 'neoliberal' context of the 2011 riots, an interesting point pertinent to this idea of rioting via the 'mainstream'. He suggests that the black rioters of the 1980s (though importantly, contrary to popular opinion, the rioting masses were not by any stretch solely black), were themselves articulating an idea of self-dignity which differed from the disenfranchised status many of their migrant parents felt limited to. Namely, these often second-generation (though Gilroy is unlikely to ever wield such a positivist term) youth had internalised a social democratic ideal of work and recognition, making them unwilling to suffer their parents' racialised role as a 'super-exploited stratum and the reserve army of labour' (2013: 551). In extending this argument, the neoliberal tenor of 2011's rioting could be read as an attestation to the latest generational shift in terms of the cultural lens through which anger and desire is channelled: '[T]he rioters' greed and gratification, though undesirable, misplaced, and criminal [by the reckoning of the dominant gaze] were also morally insufficient to make them truly deviant. We can see that their pursuit of gratification is in fact a mainstream attitude' (556).

This generational divide picks up neatly on some of my own post-riot observations. Many of the older veterans of the estate seemed eager to convince me that the rioters were not actually from the estates. In doing so, they looked to locate 'the idiots' elsewhere. The younger voices were in turn dismissive of what they called 'being in denial', affirming unequivocally that many of the rioters were quite obviously from the estates. The nostalgia of the older black figures for a different struggle which accords with a different idea of what constitutes a dignified humanity – some of the older individuals were keen to distinguish the riots of the 1980s and its just fury from the 'pointless' violence of the day before – was only partially familiar to the younger people of the estate. Of greater significance was their alignment with the neoliberal codes around them and its affective codes of worth. Put crudely, the older figures could not fathom or accept the violent allure of Foot Asylum, whilst the younger ones generally thought it straightforward, even if those with something at stake resisted a turn at rioting. The younger residents pointed out that it would have been quite foolish for anyone with anything to lose (e.g. a job of note) to partake. And herein lies the key detail. It is not that these non-rioters declined the consumerist urge or thought themselves beyond it; they merely have other ways of realising its ephemeral charms.

4.5. Conclusion

This second half of the chapter has looked to establish the diffuse role of consumerism in informing the desires and also the frustrations of the second-generation participants involved in this project. It is however prudent to briefly route this discussion back more purposefully towards this chapter's broader theme – the simultaneity of difference and integration. Integration-as-acculturation has been situated here within the broader cultural imagination which arises from a particular political economy. Namely, consumerism and the manner in which it renders life both intelligible and meaningful for these ethnically marked subjects.

The chapter initially pursued a narrower focus, whereby it was shown that the reinforcing of ethnic particularity as a felt identity position often transpires at precisely those cultural nodes normative to contemporary metropolitan life. Having listed a few examples as sourced from the lives of Kale and Agil, I sought to extend the scope of my argument into a broader commentary on the contemporary mainstream. This mainstream was identified, via a qualified reading of Bauman, as consumerist in

orientation. The status values, expressions of identity and felt sense of exclusion advanced by the participants were immersed, both spatially and temporally, in consumerist sense-making systems qualitatively unique to contemporary Western, metropolitan life. Put differently, there was nothing fringe about how most of these subjects conceived of a meaningful life and the attendant sense of frustrations and humiliations they articulated. It is through the consumerist lens that a better sense of the lives they lead was understood. In maintaining this claim, I have argued that the received approach to a study of integration and integration policy seems naïvely indifferent to the most significant aspect of contemporary metropolitan life as relevant to emergent generations, regardless of ethnic background. I argue that through locating consumerism as central to the contemporary historical conjuncture, it is better sensed how minority subjects, even if prone to 'retention' of difference, are immersed within the same sense-making and self-affirming logics unique to late capitalism.

5. Practices of Identity Citation and Everyday Communication

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the final feature of my critical unpacking of what constitutes integration. The first stage of this inquiry detailed how ethnic difference itself is rarely a hindrance to interaction. The second considered how acculturation into normative Western society – aspirations and attitudes which carry the consensus of the majority polity to use the phraseology of Talcott Parsons (1965) – are itself the very sites(s) at which racialised difference is both discovered and/or reinforced. The third stage, to be detailed in this current chapter, builds upon the previous 'simultaneity' interpretation of difference and integration. But in doing so, I deal not with culture (taste and activities) or fields of interaction (encounters and conflict) but with the *nomenclature* of difference itself. The focus of analysis will be the relationship between interpellation into minority status and the ability to coherently *cite* that respective minority status. In short, I assess here the participants' *own* perception of the descriptive, identificatory terms available and thereupon, how resulting self-definition is done and not done. It will be advanced that the process of making oneself intelligible to those normative social actors with whom a space is shared is itself an act which constitutes an integrationist end. This reading marks a significant reworking of the orthodox treatment of integration as it posits the *assent* to a certain differential identity – the significance of which lies in its status as outsider/non-normative – as testimony to incorporation into a *shared* societal language. In other words, making and recognising oneself as significantly different in a *coherent* and *intelligible* fashion is an integral stage in rendering oneself an able participatory member of a particular society.

Much of the alarmism about integration is premised on a popular belief that the proliferation of ethnic difference necessarily brings about problems of 'insuperable' (Gilroy 2006: 40) and 'incommensurable' (Bernstein 2010: 381) *communication.* It is this entrenched alarmism – apparent in the Robert Putnam inspired handwringing around a mooted crisis in civic trust and collaboration – about the disruption to communication which ethnic difference generates that this chapter looks to invert. It argues that people often affirm their sense of racialised difference out of a need to remain active within mainstream fields of *communication.* But prior to providing a lengthier outline of the terrain which this chapter covers, it is first necessary to restate how integration theory

has tended to understand the status of ethnic difference when articulated within Western societies.[24]

5.2. More problems with integration

Of paradigmatic importance to integration theory is Milton Gordon's (1964) claim that a process of acculturation (the first phase of assimilation) which is not succeeded by an incorporation into a common, core identity (the final phase) signals an incomplete assimilation process. Even though this claim was made nearly half a century ago, it continues to wield an iron grip upon the sociology of integration. 'Newer theories of assimilation', in moving towards an idea of social complexity, still continue to 'focus on factors that explain the fading of ethnic distinctions over time' (Jimenez and Fitzgerald 2007: 340). In accordance with the axiomatic durability of this proposition, it is still posited in both 'straight-line' and 'bumpy-line' (Gans 1992) conceptions of integration that a migrant grouping brings with them a ready-made communal identity, one which gradually dissipates upon social, economic and cultural incorporation into the host society (Morawska 1994: 77). Indeed, even long-settled internal minorities are presented as possessing an already presumed differentialised identity (e.g. African-American and Native American). In such cases, the broader vocabulary available for any claim to a minority ethnic identity is considered as self-evident, as terms which the appropriate individual readily and unproblematically proposes.

More specifically, taking its cue from the aforementioned work of Gordon, and prior to him the 'race-relations' approach of Robert Park (1950) as well as Gunnar Myrdal (1944), integration is perceived as involving the gradual incorporation of an already

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[24] And though much of the discussion I restage here is American in origin, it remains the locus around which European ideas of *integration* have oriented themselves. For this same reason, I mention again that though many of the theorists featured here use the term 'assimilation' as the object of their discussion, I read them equally as theorists of integration. To reiterate, the distinction between integration and assimilation is rarely a substantive one. Rather, the divergence is primarily symptomatic of a transatlantic historical divide and the subsequent ways in which terms come to enjoy different lives in different contexts. In Europe it is unsurprising to see integration and assimilation being employed interchangeably, whereas in the United States it is only assimilation which commands any traction. This can be accounted for by the specific post-war history particular to the United States, wherein the Civil Rights movements which gathered pace in the 1950s and 1960s concertedly mobilised around a campaign for *integration* – a campaign which agitated for equal access to various public and civic institutions. This movement which militated for equal access to the state had little to do with questions of culture and/or identity as understood today. It is thus so that integration, when considered solely within the American socio-historical setting, projects a very particular political charge and does not presume the effacing of the minority identification. Indeed, it might even presuppose its dignified retention.

established minority ethnic community into a cluster of 'mainstream' cultural habits and values. This either coincides with or precedes a move to identify with the dominant, normative community (the '*Gemeinschaft*' as Parsons [1965: 1009] puts it in his 'Full Citizenship for the American Negro?'). Herein, the ethnic marker of difference is made increasingly 'less salient' in shaping the narratives and choices which individuals construct (Alba and Nee 2003). In other words, the appeal to ethnic difference takes on an 'optional' or merely 'symbolic' (Jimenez 2010: 21) purchase, and those moments where it continues to remain salient are relegated to 'fewer and fewer social domains' (Alba 2005: 23). This end-scenario where the original ethnic difference is either wholly effaced or of only minor and optional, symbolic value constitutes, by the final reckoning, a successful process of integration.

There are many routes to consider in troubling this above *linear* scheme concerning integration. These could include, apart from those key issues already discussed in the preceding chapters:

a) The integration-imagination obstinately expects all outsiders to vanish. Bauman (1993:163) reads this, via Levi-Strauss, as the second of two[25] annihilationist approaches directed against the 'outsider' (the anthropophagic strategy): the desire to efface the inferior ethnic grouping, rendering it unrecognisable, beyond, possibly, a tokenistic, stylistic prefix.

b) It presumes, in line with the functionalist sociology of both Durkheim and Parsons, a bonded, harmonious picture of society which is absolute in its coherence and homogeneity. This phantasmal unit – which is particularly unlikely in times where the nation-state is subjected to fast proliferating transnational and localised disruptions (Wieviorka 2008) – is thereby narrated as being under threat of contamination and disintegration due to the migrant, minority presence.

c) It problematises, a priori*,* the immigrant, racialised community's inability to disappear, provoking in turn a tautology: the very fact that a minority community is identifiable (as significant) is presented as evidence of the

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[25] The first, the direct antonym of assimilation, is the 'anthropoemic' strategy which entails the sealing off, the 'vomiting', of the other. This is intended to ensure only segregated contact between the privileged community and the derided, impure other (read ghettos and reservations).

respective minority's inability to integrate, as being 'incurably alien' (Bauman 1993: 101).

d) It places the bulk of the moral and practical responsibility at the door of the immigrant other (Castles et al. 2002: 11).

e) Explicitly integrationist policies often tend to generate the adverse effect. As such, integration, in its conventional framing, is unable to serve even its proponents' own stated interests. '[Assimilation policies] are indeed more likely to strengthen rather than erode difference, by provoking a reactive mobilisation against such assimilatory pressures' (Brubaker 2001: 534).

These above problems with the integration approach are of course well-documented and very much justified. However, in hoping to avoid a mere repetition of these critiques, it might be worth exploring a more unorthodox, perhaps even original line – one which suggests that the minority research participants' understanding of their own difference is routed through precisely those very processes of incorporation into the mainstream's ordering dialogue. In other words, the critique I actualise in this final empirical chapter confronts integration in its least problematic form, and disregards the low-hanging fruit hinted at above. Instead of moving away from integration when attempting to trouble its explanatory and political purchase, it is perhaps of greater analytic interest to trouble its key heuristic from within. Namely, how might the integration process be considered as simultaneous to the successful production of ethnically marked difference? In turn, it will be argued in the following analysis that to profess an identity in an *intelligible* manner (locally and/or nationally) can *itself* be recast as a sign of acculturation/integration. To communicate an understanding of self as a minority in a manner appropriate to a specific situation is itself testimony to a broader performance of competent membership within a shared society.

Whilst in the previous chapter the production of ethnic difference was reinterpreted as concomitant to the moment of acculturation into normative, consumerist culture, here too there is an attempt to engineer a similar inversion of prevailing understandings of integration. Namely, to successfully *communicate* your difference in an efficient manner signals social competency, a mark of successful integration into the rules and norms governing a particular taxonomy of difference. Put differently, it is not only the discovery of one's own difference – discoveries, as discussed in the previous chapter, which frequently transpire within the very processes of acculturation and its attendant

social/public spaces (e.g. an upmarket Stockholm nightclub) – which allows for a counter-intuitive reading of integration. It is also the important versing in the very *communication* of such difference – to sound one's difference in the appropriate key – which is consequential for successful integration.

As such, through reference to interview material from both Stockholm and London, I address in the first half of this chapter the failure of much literature around integration to register that all declarations of identity are contingent to the *sense-making schemes* available. The spirit of this argument is of course couched within the well-founded conceptual terrain of identity-interpellation, an Althusserian (1971) consideration which heavily informed – though far less deterministically construed – the shape taken by British Cultural Studies in the 1990s (1996 being a particularly productive year: Alexander 1996, Back 1996, Baumann 1996, Brah 1996). As Stuart Hall (1992, 1993, 1996) stressed on numerous occasions, identity is not primarily a question of what you are but a question of what you are allowed to be. Similarly, this type of inquiry into the *active* management of difference by the bearers of difference themselves is situated within a more general shift in the contemporary sociological study of diversity in Britain. Namely, there has been a gradual departure within cultural sociology from structures of representation to a more attentive focus upon how identities are tackled and given everyday expression (Knowles 2010: 25-28). Premised on rich ethnographic observation, much of this work documents the processes by which identities arise, mutate and are subsequently troubled within select social spaces. In doing so, these works seek to bring attention to the navigation of identity beyond the moment of discursive inscription. But whilst acknowledging these points of interest, I wish to raise the question of identity production from within the literature on integration, by operating critically and subversively from within integration as opposed to dispensing with its analytic framework altogether.

Helpfully, one prominent thread of recent integration theory, the segmented assimilation approach, does seem better attuned to some of the argument fashioned here. For instance, the segmented assimilation literature observes that migrants and their descendants, due to their racialisation, may be incorporated in ways which *actively* prevent identification with 'mainstream cultural and symbolic goods' (Portes et al. 2005: 1006-07). Though the use of culture is not one I would endorse, as the previous chapter made clear, this school's attention to processes of racialisation as *the* key determinant in

structuring patterns of integration is particularly useful and merits a considered hearing. Through critical engagement of this response to the linear assimilation model, I will look to nuance my presentation of integration theory as relevant to the participants' engagement of racialised naming codes. There does however remain one outstanding reservation which will spearhead the second half of this chapter. If identity claims are, as I will initially suggest, often only cognisant *citations* as befitting an appropriate communicative code; a question then arises concerning the supposed strong affective commitment to an idea of discrete and self-contained community which any claim to ethnic difference is presumptively said to entail.

In short, what implications does a potential reading of ethnic difference as, to some significant degree, a citational practice carry for broader political concerns of pluralism and inclusion? Let us suppose that the identity positions staked by the participants do not, *ipso facto*, correspond to a metaphysical ontology. Their positions do not necessarily generate illusions of timeless properties putatively intrinsic to the character of the group membership cited. Instead, claims to difference can often be read as an exercise in socially competent self-characterisation as befitting a certain interactional field. If this reading of difference is to some reasonable degree apparent, it is then necessary, as scholars of identity and community, to better establish the political texture that this citational practice engenders with regard to the broader discussion around inclusion in the public sphere.

It is this inability to read identity claims within the context of interactional intelligibility which leads to a confusion, as I see it, within discussions on integration. A momentary and situated claim to identity particularity is too often intuited as somehow furthering an ontological claim, a claim to communal permanence and certainty of being that projects politically into both the past and future. This same presumptive understanding of identity claims maps onto a broader tension riddling the fraught public discussion around *multiculturalism*. It is thus at this juncture that this thesis will transition into a much delayed deliberation upon the status of multiculturalism in relation to the lives led by my research participants. It is however the case that this imminent engagement, as much as it raises multiculturalism, equally involves itself in a concerted attempt to dispel the caricaturing which the term suffers from when evoked in popular debate. Hereby, the second half of this chapter will concern itself with a *qualified* defence of multiculturalism as routed through the testimonies of the research participants.

5.3. Proper and improper usage of difference

The discussion opens with what was perhaps the most concise summation of how ordinary claims to difference route itself through a broader social conversation. Before proceeding, however, it should be emphasised that during these interviews, the questions posed aimed to capture various identifications *as attributed to them by others* rather than how the discussants themselves would most 'like' to identify. Here, the intention was to map how pertinent social fields vis-à-vis 'regimes of representation' (Hall 1997: 232) are *encountered* as opposed to an abstracted speculation into how identity would ideally be evoked *outside* of any such context. Though the dialectical nature of ascription and self-performance (Bhabha 1994, Butler 1997) is key to the analysis here, it is important to profile the discussants' own perception of how relevant social others perceive them.

During the interview with Amir, a 29-year-old metal disposal driver of Bosnian background currently living in Sundbyberg, I asked if he considered 'Swedish' a descriptive term applicable to him. His characteristically authoritative response was:

> 'Look man. It wouldn't make any *sense*. […] You know how things work; if I say that I am Swede no-one would understand it. It would be so damn confusing because people will just think that I am trying to deny something. Or maybe trying to be clever or something.'

Condensed here are a number of particularly instructive phrasings when trying to unpack ethnic difference and the indexical knowledge required to make it applicable/substantive to ordinary Stockholm life. To suggest something as '*non-sensical*' is to already signal first-hand cognisance of a sense-making regime, a sense-making scheme which rests upon certain conventions or rules concerning proper and improper use. Similarly, Amir draws attention to the truism that any identity claim is a *social* activity. It is incumbent on others recognising a claim for the claim itself to stand. This contrasts well with the popular deliberation concerning integration – or lack of – which tends to posit the identities relevant to the minority actor as standing outside of any social, dialogic exercise. It is quite simply moot to make a particular claim if a relevant social other is unable to process it. Finally, the two references at the end to 'denial' or 'being clever' neatly underscores how a certain identity scheme (e.g. Swede/Invandrare

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or white/non-white) is already read as being applicable to suitably inscribed persons (e.g. working class Bosnian as 'Invandrare'). The objective during quotidian conversation with others is to articulate such ascriptions in a manner that is competent; in a manner which does not run egregiously foul of the prevailing scheme lest he invites unkind, problematic speculation (e.g. 'in denial').

Though the above was perhaps the most eloquent (nigh Wittgensteinian) description of difference as a socially mediated articulation, it was a common recurring theme throughout the interviews. Mockery and sarcasm were regularly employed by many when furthering this basic impression, perhaps due to 'non-sense' itself – namely the nonsensical – enjoying an intrinsic comical charge. For instance, Tami evokes a humorous tone when efficiently exemplifying the relationship between regimes of intelligible difference and competent referencing of such regimes by social members.

> 'Everyone knows that Invandrare doesn't just mean foreign. Imagine if a French guy who came to Sweden two years ago would say that he was Invandrare. Everyone would think the guy stupid. You know what I mean. It would be a mad thing to say.'

Here again, there is a telling reference to notions of incompetence ('stupid', 'mad') with regard to the appropriate referencing of difference. A French man (who is presumed as white here) has mistakenly confused 'Invandrare' for its literal meaning (immigrant), when in actuality, it is a carefully mapped social distinction between white and non-white which only members of this particular life-form would be alert to. After all, even seemingly ordinary distinctions between white and non-white are not merely visual cues but involve a wide array of clustered signifiers that allow for pertinent distinctions between Swedish white and Invandrare white (e.g. Bosnian or Serb: recall that Amir himself is Bosnian and would easily be read as white in a differently fraught context).[26] Knowledge of difference is, in short, indexical, requiring the familiarity of insiders in order to be handled competently. As Ellen (23), a younger female participant of Gambian background said, 'If you are Norwegian, you are Swede. If you are German you are Swede. […] If you are Serb, you are Invandrare, if you are Gambian you are

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[26] As has been noted with regard to the historical and present constitution of 'whiteness' (a privileged form of racial invisibility/neutrality), people initially classed as non-white or less white were at various instances throughout history later drawn into the protective fold of being white (Keith 2000: 11, 19; Roediger 2006). Of pertinence here is the obvious yet all too important point that phenotype in itself is only one constituent element in the making and assignation of racialised difference.

Invandrare.' Enigmatic about her phrasing here is that it is so defiantly anti-literal. It is the very collapsing of ostensibly exclusive demonyms that appears so bewildering to an outsider. After all, how is a Norwegian a Swede?

In broadening the analytical scope, it is important to flag that many discussants, though in agreement that Swedish is not a term they would generally think others apply to them, did think it occasionally reasonable to use Swedish as a term to self-identify with. The situations sketched however did not invalidate the general thrust of Amir's original claim above, but in fact served to bolster the importance of being a literate reader of the taxonomies which the dominant social gaze privilege.

For instance, many discussants, including Amir himself, identified time abroad on holiday as more accommodating concerning any self-identification as Swedish. As Kale put it, in what was a symptomatic statement:

> '[When abroad] to say that you are Swedish often gives you a kind of status, maybe allows you to avoid some problems, you know. But also it's funny, because obviously people are surprised. Like Americans [Kale spent half a year in California in 2009] obviously think Swedes are blond, blue-eyed and all the rest of it. So it's funny to see their reactions. […] Here I am, an 'A-RAB', saying that I am Swedish.'

It could be argued that 'abroad', whilst at one obvious level literal, can also function metaphorically to denote a sphere where an established scheme concerning difference is less apparent, less policed. The rules governing proper use of Swede and Other fail to apply outside of its proper context. As such, as an antonymic reference to how identifications normally operate on 'home-turf', it does strengthen the discussants' stress on the importance of abiding, when in the locales relevant to Stockholm, by the ready-made conceptions concerning who is Swede and who is not.

Similarly, as already hinted at in Kale's quote above, there is a provocative purchase to self-identifying as a Swede. Kale, who enjoys a middle class job as an interning real-estate consultant and whose colleagues as a result are almost all Swedish, is only provoking a particular appropriation of Swede having already established what the proper usage actually is. In other words, his act of provocation is a carefully instantiated act of amusing subversion as *enacted* from inside, from within the prevailing taxonomy of difference.

Even those discussants who were averse to excessive identification as minority (Invandrare, Blatte, etc.), with one female participant of Bosnian descent most notable in this regard, articulated their reservations only upon having acknowledged an already operational nomenclature. Adina (24), who was in the process of obtaining her teaching qualifications, was the least receptive to strong assertions of ethnic particularity: 'I think Shad [her Kurdish boyfriend] and them are too much when they say they are Svartskalle and all that stuff. It just makes them look stupid.' Though there is a transfer of responsibility concerning proper identification and alleged separation unto the minority actor him/herself, what is noteworthy is that Adina too identifies an intelligible identity scheme as already operational. 'We need to start talking of ourselves as Swede. Otherwise we are always going to be separate.' The emphasis is one of transcendence against the register which she recognises as currently applicable. In this sense, she is in agreement with the testimony of the others whereby an identity scheme – a sense-making scheme – is readily traced concerning how identity is to be used and what constitutes proper and improper usage. What she does however also communicate is a wish, as an 'ought' or 'should', to somehow move away from these prevailing schemes.

In short, what is being foregrounded here in these multiple examples is the ability of the participants to recognise what constitutes a valid identity reference. To class oneself as minority, as different along a specific index of difference, is I would argue a matter of social *competency*, a mark of being successfully *integrated* into the classificatory codes pertinent to the broader space shared. This conscious attempt to re-read such articulations of difference as a constituent part of integration is equally apparent when some of the London material is taken into account. London, of course, as should be apparent by now, operates along a much different scheme(s) concerning difference, but crucially, a scheme(s) nonetheless. Whilst notions of 'immigrant' have very different associations (at times more akin to refugee) and nothing of the overarching ubiquity of Stockholm, there functions an alternative mapping by the discussants of the identity fields relevant to their lives as competent Londoners.

I turn here to Mehmet, a putatively 'Turkish' participant, who like so many others proved himself a particularly eager narrator of such processes:

> 'Man, if I was to go about saying I am Alevi to people it would be a very strange thing to do, no? You know. What does Alevi mean to people here? [...] But of course I ain't Asian. But some people I think see me like that. Maybe because of

skin colour maybe […] and I become kind of Asian I think even though those who know me, not family really but my people like, would say I am Turkish. […] Like I have no problem being seen as Asian. But sometimes I think what people are looking for is that I am Muslim. And yeah, I'm Muslim. And that is what matters really here. […] Not that I am Alevi, but that I am Muslim. […] So that's what I'll say. Muslim, and it don't matter I guess that I ain't a mosque brother or anything like that.'

Neatly distinguished here is salient, intelligible difference and non-salient, unintelligible difference. Though Alevi would have a longer historical currency in allowing for a broader narration of family and communal past, Mehmet instantly notes that the relevance of any identification rests on the broader scheme of difference made applicable for him. In other words, difference is made for Mehmet, as opposed to Mehmet making difference. Moreover, the discussant makes mention of how personal energies and considerations feature in any act of making one's own claim to difference consistent with the broader societal scheme: 'and yeah, I am Muslim…so that's what I'll say.' Ultimately, the act of declaring difference is a response by Mehmet to the particular index of difference he assumes his interlocutors ('people') to be fumbling for. He recognises that the relevant others are not interested in Muslim as a religious appellation denoting piety and observance ('I ain't no mosque brother'), but rather, as a mere identity calling.

Meera (25), a participant from Harrow of Gujarati background, makes clearer this *individual* need to read anew a change in scene and the specific parameters concerning difference made operational:

'You know in college and stuff, it was normal to say something about being British and stuff, not English really […] because that meant white […] but just saying we are British this and British that was generally normal. But when I went to Uni, you know, and all of a sudden almost everyone was white, you learned that you can't really say as a Asian that you are British *in the same way* because for them it meant something else.'

Meera continues, when asked to elaborate on what was a particularly intricate statement:

'In Harrow, when we were young, being Asian and British was not really a problem. […] Everyone knew you were Asian and that wasn't a problem. So it

didn't contradict to say we are British. But in Uni, I think they [white peers] thought it meant you were [trying to say that you were] not Asian anymore. So it got really confusing for them, you know, in a stupid ignorant way because, I think for many of them it was a good thing that we were trying to reject our Indian background. […] Obviously we didn't think we were doing anything like that. So for us [those of us from Harrow at Guildford] I think we would more regularly say later on that we were Indian or Asian and try to avoid misunderstandings like this. I don't want to be seen as denying I am Asian when clearly that's what they think you are and that's what your origins are also.'

The picture sketched here is of a complex scenario where self-identification is in continuous dialogue with how others are perceived to apprehend the self. In other words, there is a continuous negotiation with the social cost of being read in a certain manner and how certain terms obtain a different resonance, a different profile (e.g. British) when the social field changes so dramatically (from a super-diverse London borough to a provincial campus town). The individual adjusts here to navigate the field in a manner intelligible ('avoid confusion'). Indicative of her testimony is the transition from one register as applicable to a certain situation (Harrow, where I spent my time with her) to another scenario wherein the register shifts considerably. To make oneself competent across such shifting fields is indeed a mark of successful acculturation, constituting the communication of difference in a coherent and fluent way which in turn sponsors 'sensible' conversation. After all, as she states, to maintain casually that she is British in Guildford might have resulted in 'misunderstandings' about her own Indian background (e.g. in 'denial' of her difference).

This idea of 'adjustment' via 'shifting fields' reveals another important feature of the hollowing of race's meaning beyond its role in mediating the imperatives of remaining socially intelligible. I have in mind here the broader processes of *migration* and its altering of the nomenclatures applicable. Michael Keith's sustained emphasis on the centrality of migration in making the city is a crucial point of interest here. For instance, in the context of Amin's *Land Of Strangers* discussed previously, Keith (2013: 26, emphasis added) notes that the 'relationship between urban settlement, modernity and economic change reframes the languages of migration and belonging that predates the *taxonomies* of racialisation and ethnicity, the process of 'naming difference' critiqued by Amin.' Not only does my own use of the term 'taxonomy' relate well to its use by Keith but I also

find affinity in this reading which briefly posits 'named difference' itself as being further emptied of any carried cultural or solidaristic content when contending with the rapidly shifting urban terrain. Not least, the shifts engendered by the constant flow of migration both into and out of the city. For instance, to nod back to some of the empirical content of Chapter 3, Michael from Clapham clarified how an awareness of his black identity is continuously remade in line with new lines of migration: 'Fuck man, there are more of them [those from Africa] than us [Caribbean origin] right. […] And also Somali youths yeah, […] they be black too.' Michael proceeded to note that his own intelligibility as 'black' is remade and realigned in line with the shifts entailed by African migration into his local estate and adjacent spaces/routes. Put in the specific theoretical terms of the above discussion, Michael attests here to the *competency* involved when navigating these naming codes which remain responsive to and altered by processes of migration.

5.3.1. Competency and navigating racism

This recurring concept of communicative *competency* which has featured throughout my analysis should be by now self-explanatory, nestling within a longstanding sociological heritage of interpreting how social members navigate the milieus around them as befitting their internal codes of conduct and status. For instance, the Symbolic Interactionists' emphasis on meaning being generated and monitored by competent insiders of a particular social activity (e.g. smoking marijuana [Becker 1953]) or the contemporary focus by 'Practice Theorists' on the intricate competencies required of individuals in realising a certain end (e.g. going for a 'Nordic Walk' or becoming 'sustainable consumers' [Shove 2005]). It also borrows, somewhat opportunistically perhaps, from an ethnomethodology-cum-Wittgensteinian analytic disposition to interaction and *internal* 'sense-making' language games (Mair et al. 2012). But this notion of competency finds particular familiarity in Uma Kothari's (2008) recent ethnography on migrant street peddlers in Barcelona. Kothari profiles an idea of 'cosmopolitan competency' (512), which she uses to capture the intricate skills that economically and legally vulnerable migrant peddlers use in the course of their daily trade activities, shuffling through and across a wide array of tourists, ethnically Spanish locals, other migrant peddlers as well as wholesalers of various non-European backgrounds (507). Though her work is about the *cosmopolitan* competencies demonstrated when these individuals communicate across a variety of ethnic and cultural differences, it is her broader idea of 'competencies' as being deployed *from the margins* which appeals to me.

My above discussion has maintained that second-generation immigrants engage, from *positions of marginality*, a set of communicative competencies which allows them to remain functional within the foetid racialised codes of difference which continue to bind much of contemporary Europe. In blunter terms, Kothari's notion of competency is important because it is attributed to otherwise unheralded subjects and at unexpected sites. Ultimately, it is this bottom-up consideration of the agential competency showcased when navigating interactional norms and knowledge repertoires that I find interesting. I believe this to be an important emphasis. Integration discourses often pivot off the implicit supposition that ethnic minorities who are purportedly yet to integrate are *lacking* in certain social competencies. I have argued the contrary. Their adjustment to positions of inscribed difference vis-à-vis the space in question – their acknowledgment of self as members of a particular non-normative identity – is a demonstration of competency central to their navigation of everyday society.

The last example detailing Meera's adjustment from Harrow to Guildford allowed me to isolate a key feature concerning the demonstration of such interactional competency. It is to be stressed that any applicable scheme concerning difference shifts from site to site. This is perhaps best detailed in Claire Alexander's (1996) *The Art of Being Black*, upon which innumerable ethnographies of identity-play as contingent to space and circumstance have been subsequently explored. Within this framework of shifts, the symbolic goods as well as penalties accorded to certain identities also change, generating in turn attempts by respective subjects to claim a certain identity whilst elsewhere disavowing it. At these moments, it is crucial that actors be versed in how to ably read the operational scheme and its contingent goods. As such, any active claim or confirmation of a particular minority identity is layered upon a broader understanding on the part of the respective participant of the identity schemes and its respective characteristics as befitting a certain space. People do not passively consent to their role within any such frame. But instead, they look to actively manage the symbolic ramifications of their difference being read in a particular manner.

In this context, it is important to acknowledge that in any competent engagement and situated embodiment of a prevailing 'naming' code, there are often pressures which render it advantageous for individuals to *disavow,* as far is plausible, the ascribed identity position. That is to say, how might participants do '*not naming'*. More specifically, whilst consenting to a position of intelligible difference, racialised individuals must equally

manage the ramifications of how that difference is read. To state the obvious, being the object of racialisation is not ever benign. It carries attributed meanings which, outside of those earlier convivial circuits discussed before, become hyper-visible objects of normative scrutiny. Indeed, the very drive of racialisation is to render *visible* the *inadequacy* written into the outsider subject.

Put differently, those situations where 'naming' is avoided or mitigated are equally worthy of analytic interest. This ability to manage to some degree the symbolic ramifications of racialisation is what I would class as constituent to the process of acculturation-cum-integration. Acculturation does not mean that the individual or group in question is able to shed 'difference', but instead, one becomes through acculturation a little more efficacious at managing the pains, penalties and stickiness of racialisation.

Many of the Stockholm participants pointed out that whilst recognising themselves as Invandrare (and/or another position of difference) was necessary to remain intelligible, it was important in certain contexts to distance themselves from the more abrasive stereotypes tied to their often demonised, inadequate and/or excessive non-white bodies. In other words, a recurring motif in some of the participants' testimony was the strategic ways in which they could overstate their 'integrated' selves, whereby they tried to actively avoid the penalties of being non-white. Kale's statement is again significant here given that his inner-city, fairly prestigious workplace consisted primarily of middle class, white Swedes:

> 'I rid my Swedish of all *bryting* [slang/accent associated with Invandrare concentrated suburbs]. It is really important but maybe unfair too because if a Swede uses really Swedish sayings, like the really old-fashioned, farmer language, it is not a problem of course but we have to be careful because otherwise it's just that you are just a Svartskalle in the wrong place.'

This non-convivial setting where difference is interrogated along normative status standards provokes of course resentment ('maybe unfair'), but it is nonetheless something which these participants find themselves having to manage when securing entry. Otherwise, evoking the heuristic introduced to social theory by Mary Douglass, Kale runs the risk of being 'matter out of place', dirt where it is clean: 'you are just a Svartskalle *in the wrong place*.' Tami says, again speaking about certain work-situations, 'You don't say shall we go for a kebab unless someone else has first suggested it.' The

illuminating intimation here is that certain cultural references ordinary as they might be to contemporary Stockholm life, are problematically freighted when coupled to a minority speaker. Associations of, for instance, an uncultivated poverty (i.e. low status), or of 'just being a 'ghetto-barn' [ghetto-child]' as Tami poetically concluded. Tami went on to capture this general identity play as the basic distinction between Invandrare and Svartskalle: 'Basically man, it's about not being a Svartskalle.' It is worth stressing here that this distinction is equally a classed one as it is racialised. In this classed aspect it is comparable to bio-political distinctions all too ubiquitous in Britain between the viscerally repulsive 'chav' and those who retain dignified and nobly nostalgic presentations of white, working class self (Rhodes 2013). Yet the overtly racialised aspect of the distinction being outlined by Tami, on the strengths of its *visual* resonance, ensures that all those marked as Invandrare are *always-already* Svartskalle. They always bear the embodied *risk* of being Svartskalle. This trailing risk is what Tami is describing, a risk which requires in turn active defusing by the agent in question. And the extent to which one is acculturated shapes the efficacy with which these second-generation individuals can execute any such situated management. A management which involves any number of cultural and economic resources – a tailoring of, for instance, one's clothing, gait, politics, conversation, tastes, and language.

It is of course so that some individuals might accept the distinction of 'bad immigrant-good immigrant' to the point where they look to abide on the 'good' side as a matter of *principle*, as opposed to it being the mere strategic management of these more hostile spaces. In Adina's line quoted before, it is apparent that she does believe it the responsibility of Invandrare to actively present themselves in acceptable terms: 'I think Shad and them are too much when they say they are Svartskalle and all that stuff. It just makes them look stupid.' In her instance, she is happy, eager even, to moralise against the Svartskalle position whilst Kale and Tami are doing so primarily for pragmatic purposes. For Kale and Tami, the distinction is fraudulent in the first place. As they both point out, eating kebabs or speaking with 'bryting' are perfectly ordinary aspects of Stockholm life. It is only the racialised implications which *others* layer upon it which are morally questionable. The general extent, however, to which pragmatic motives can be analytically distinguished from 'real' intuitions is not simple and perhaps not even possible or interesting. But what is interesting for the purposes of this specific discussion around naming and nomenclature is the palpable agential manoeuvring in how an individual 'consents' to a named position.

Akeem (from Harrow and of Nigerian Hausa background) mentioned that he sometimes feels compelled to present himself as the 'good Muslim'. If the Muslim is at certain normative spaces by default bad or invalid, it is up to Akeem to somehow affix a 'good' when presenting himself. Like the Samaritan – who was ordinarily understood as an unruly, heretical other – is only relatable in a positive light if he becomes the 'Good' Samaritan, racialised individuals often find themselves under pressure to posit the 'good' in order to negate the disruptive resonance of the identity position they are otherwise occupying. In certain contexts, this purpose calls for Akeem's furthering, or at the least not repudiating, certain conversations during which those around him mobilise negative ideas of the Muslim presence in Britain.

> 'They [work colleagues] were talking about the burka, okay, and why should people wear it and that it's bad because it's dangerous and anti-social, blah, blah, blah. And I just obviously thought this problem more complicated, but I just knew, you just know, that I shouldn't say anything.'

Here, it is a necessary silence which speaks to Akeem's active management of his identity position. It is the *not* taking a stance which prevents his intelligible difference from being moved into territory where he becomes further and problematically visible. To recall the cruel irony of 'corporate' anti-racism's blunt edge (Ahmed 2005, Puwar 2004), the access won by certain minorities to normatively white spaces can carry with it the unfortunate expectation that these same individuals *do not* call out racism. There is often an unsaid compact that the conspicuous minority remains amenable, remains a willing 'team player'.

Of course, the examples of Kale, Tami and Akeem all adjusting themselves to *work* situations is itself telling. When the social cost is significant (e.g. job security and promotion), defiance becomes increasingly improbable. But during more leisurely situations, as Kale noted in the previous chapter, individuals can be more 'militant', assertive and non-compromising when dealing with racial discourses. Whilst civic racism might be partially circumnavigated through the individual assembling her own urban cartography, where participants string together different spaces and interactive cycles convivial in type, the *work* environment remains largely an imposition, restricting in turn the participant's leverage in avoiding non-convivial spaces – particularly so when the individual comes from a vulnerable class position.

Hereby, though I have argued that naming and the consenting to a position of named difference is in many instances only a process by which individuals remain intelligible to the social conversation, this does not take place in a normative vacuum. On the contrary, when situations lack a convivial character, it is necessary for intelligible difference to be managed competently, lest the participants suffer the racist penalties apparent in the relevant space. Put in more provocative terms, integration is sometimes about the integration into racism. It is the integration – as familiarity with situated practices – into the acceptance of racism which is part of the mainstream, as part of how things are done, of learning how not to be a disruption. Herein, we should ask, what exactly are second-generation participants meant to integrate into? These participants still have to suffer the racism around them. Being integrated might provide them with the tools to suffer it in silence, but not necessarily much more.

5.4. A strength and a weakness respectively of the segmented assimilation approach

This chapter now looks to track back more purposefully to its original analytic concern: difference as intelligible communication. Having enumerated at length the different instances in which the referencing of minority difference is necessarily routed through broader sense-making nomenclatures, it is important to situate the consequences of such contingency within the general sociological treatment of *integration*. One recent and noteworthy departure from the orthodox approach to assimilation (critiqued in this chapter's introduction) has been the advent in American sociology of the segmented assimilation approach. It is of course the case that the immediate argumentative emphasis of the segmented assimilation school is elsewhere. Namely, assimilation of the second and third generation into an already-existing low-status, racialised identity leads to downward socio-economic mobility ('downward assimilation') whilst retention of a co-ethnic enclave identity, which resists this incorporation into a 'pathological' minority identity, can often facilitate upward mobility. The general claim of this school is that immigrants and their children 'can assimilate not only towards native Whites but also toward native minority groups' (Jimenez and Fitzgerald 2007: 340). The emphasis here is that migrants and their children, by virtue of their racialisation, are integrated into existing categorical schemes and not into some chimerical notion of a race-less and homogenous mainstream. This school of thought, whilst initially geared towards analysis

of the United States, has of late found a foothold within European scholarship as well (Song 2010: 1194).

There has surfaced much scholarly disagreement about this posited relationship between ethnic retention and social mobility – mobility being seen simply as advancement upon the socio-economic status of the previous migrant generation – let alone the delinquent pathology which this approach tends to uncritically attribute to pre-existing minority communities (e.g. black/African-American). The segmented assimilation school, led by Alejandro Portes, argues that many second-generation communities have realised mobility only by maintaining an ethnic enclave – a strong ethnic community that engages only in a 'selective acculturation' and whose communal members are densely concentrated in certain urban centres (Portes and Zhou 1993, Portes and Rumbaut 2001, Portes et al. 2005). Selective acculturation refers to the process where socio-economically productive cultural values are adopted from the mainstream whilst less conducive and perhaps even destructive attitudes (if appropriated within the wrong setting – e.g. an excess individualism introduced to a community which is otherwise economically deprived) are rejected. Dissenting perspectives suggest that social mobility seems still to be premised on a broader exit from the ethnic community – key measures of which include residential flight and out/inter-marriage (Alba and Nee 2003, Kasinitz et al. 2002, Waldinger and Feliciano 2004, Waters et al. 2010). Others, meanwhile, speak of a middle-path 'strategic assimilation' (Lacy 2004, Gans 1997) that recognises relative upward mobility through a variety of traditional assimilation measures (such as residential flight) but also recognises the role of retaining access to an 'enclave' community and identity *within* these new, predominantly white spaces. The access retained provides occasional interpersonal systems of support, restitution and other resources in the face of continued racism and lingering attachments to the spaces exited.

It is however the case that my thesis does *not* concern itself with integration when considered against the outcome of social mobility. These claims and counter-claims are hereby moot for my purposes, though undoubtedly of importance in their own right. My interest is instead limited to assessing the relationship between claims to certain communal memberships and the interactional and political consequences of such claims. Having reminded the reader of this focus, it is so that the segmented assimilation argument does raise a constructive objection to linear assimilation models, which, if recast with certain interpretive liberties, complements my own emphasis on the interplay

of intelligibility when ordinary practices of competent identity citation are actualised. After all, if the second-generations do indeed discard or move away from a particular 'home-country' ethnic identity (e.g. Cuban or Pakistani), it is argued that they can only assimilate into a specific 'reference' population as prescribed by the dominant paradigms of race and ethnicity which circulate within a governing discourse (Portes et al. 2005: 1006). A transformation takes place wherein the subject assumes a new communal identity appropriate to the racial and ethnic terminologies particular to the dominant typologies. For instance, a second-generation Haitian becomes African-American or a Pakistani becomes 'Muslim' and South Asian. From a European perspective, Algerians in France become Beur or Maghreb, whilst in the UK a Gujarati becomes Asian. In other words, they formulate new positions only as appropriate to the dominant discursive nomenclatures. Importantly, with specific regard to the citational practice of identity I sought to foreground previously, the insights of the segmented assimilation critique helpfully show that the structural climate which foreshadows any assimilative phase is constrictive, allocating only a certain set of specifically demarcated ethnic 'options' (Waters 1990) into which a subject may 'assimilate' into, particularly when the minority subject is subjected to the vagaries of racialisation (Portes and Zhou 1993: 86-88). That is to say, when racialised, there are only a certain set of identity options which carry with it the intelligible authority required for ordinary interaction with the 'host' polity.

Having acknowledged this strength, there does however remain an outstanding silence which continues to plague the integration field *as a whole* that I will attempt to address in the following discussion concerning multiculturalism. Simply put, it is inadequate to assume, as assimilationist theorists (both linear and segmented) are prone to do, that a certain identity inscription and subsequent citation are sufficient grounds for that inscription to be relevant to the *ethical* lives led by the relevant actor. As Robert Gooding-Williams (1998: 23, original emphasis) argues in his celebrated defence of multiculturalism, which loosely borrows from Ian Hacking's 'dynamic nominalism' approach: 'One becomes a black person only if 1) one begins to identify (to classify) *oneself* as black and 2) one begins to make choices, to formulate plans, to express concerns, etc. in light of one's identification of oneself as black.' This criterion chimes well with a distinction made recently within British conversations concerning identity and belonging by Nira Yuval-Davis (2006). Here, Yuval-Davis is keen to distinguish the act of identification and the affective sense of belonging it evokes from the politicised

and ethical consequences of any such identification. Put differently, being inscribed in a certain common fashion does not necessarily lead, epiphenomenally, to the intensified forms of ethical and historical attachment to that communal identification.

A brief glance at the recent history of anti-racist activism in post-imperial Britain is instructive here; revealing a historical moment at which political mobilisation around a certain identity (black) and ontological investments in historically construed imagined communities amounted to two distinct phenomena. Radical critiques of racism in Britain during the 1970s and 1980s often deployed the identificatory term 'black', borrowing from Black Power but also other anti-colonial movements, in operationalising a resistant basis for solidarity. The collapsing of various migrant histories and regions of origin into such a unitary identity field spawned, however, a divisive debate around the actual purchase of 'black' as an umbrella term within which a broader critique of white privilege was to be waged. Led by Tariq Modood, the religious, linguistic and socio-economic differences of the Asian diaspora in Britain were claimed by some to be ill-articulated within the symbolism of black struggle and black exploitation. It was argued that a mobilisation around a concertedly black struggle was unhelpful and/or futile for those who did not identify on a regular basis *as* black (e.g. South Asians).

It was within the context of this debate that some of Avtar Brah's powerful mid-90s argumentation is situated. Brah, in her celebrated move to revive a non-essentialist, diasporic and inclusive politics of anti-racism, rejected the premising of Modood's 'culturalist' (1996: 99) argument. For Brah, the emphasis of Modood and others on the importance of differences in culture, migratory histories and everyday identificatory practices was to miss the deeper point of black politics. She points out that the politicisation around a particular set of identity markers – and it cannot be denied that black politics did produce powerful and often effective forms of state critique – need not be vested in ontological ideas of community and shared cultural heritages; the two can and should remain different.

> [The] term 'black' does not have to be construed in essentialist terms. The concrete political struggles in which the new meaning was grounded acknowledged cultural differences but sought to accomplish political unity against racism.
>
> […]

[Another] criticism of the ways in which 'black' has been employed in Britain has been that the concept is meaningless, since many South Asians do not define themselves as black, and many African-Caribbeans do not recognise them as such. [But] as a social movement, black activism has aimed to generate solidarity; it has not necessarily *assumed* that all members of the diverse black communities inevitably identify with the concept in its British usage (Brah 1996: 98-100, original emphasis).

I do not intend to weigh these points and counter-points regarding the history of black politics in Britain, but instead, I selectively draw forth two instructive details:

i) Political grievances, insofar as they move through some semblance of a shared social experience (i.e. racism) can be disaggregated from ontological attachments to the daily acts of naming and assumed positions of intelligible communal identity which these acts generate.

ii) Inversely, assuming a particular position of racialised ethnicity need not necessitate *communalist* political aspirations as befitting that identity position. Political aspirations and frustrations vis-à-vis difference and belonging can be understood as separate to any preceding as well as subsequent point of investment in a communal identity.

In other words, to tie together the twin threads of this chapter: to do naming and to be intelligible (e.g. I am Asian) does not have to imply a political outlook of difference limited to the terms of that naming. The realisation of self as different at any moment in time and space does of course compel a certain drafting of political aspirations concerning the public accommodation/de-pathologisation of difference. However, in anticipating the following analysis, the development of such standpoints does *not* necessitate a sense of foundational attachment – a sense of permanent/essentialist communitarian integrity – being nested in the identity term that is at any given moment most applicable. This attempt here to trouble the secondary inference when encountering any claim to ethnic difference does correspond to a much fraught tension currently apparent in the debate about *multiculturalism* – a debate which I will, through further use of field material, address in the remainder of this chapter. This transition in theme also entails an end to my engagement of integration scholars proper, on the basis that it is rare for the literature in this field to robustly consider the relationship between identity inscription/citation and the subsequent manifesting of a general temperament(s) concerning a *politics* of difference and multiculture.

5.5. Multiculturalism

Many critics of multiculturalism, regardless of political creed (ranging from the reconstructed Leninism of Slavoj Žižek (2011) to the demagogic nationalism of Pascal Bruckner (2007), have understood it as a political programme which promotes a particularly extensive mode of communal segregation. David Hollinger (2000), for instance, deems multiculturalism destructive for broader democratic deliberation, as it promotes a retreat to the comforts of foundational, ethno-cultural particularities. Other critics, most notably Brian Barry (2001), understand multiculturalism as a policy and ethos which, in the name of cultural egalitarianism, begrudgingly tolerates the habits and values of certain minority communities despite their being in contravention to the normative standards (both ethically and aesthetically) particular to the majority community. In this sense, multiculturalism, as pictured by their critics, is seen as propagating a rationale of 'self-contained and radically incommensurable' (Bernstein 2010: 381) communities whose cultural properties are featured as homogenous and timeless – insomuch as they are seen as inherent to the integrity and substance of the respective group.

Part of the problem is of course that some prominent early proponents did engage with multiculturalism in this unhelpful 'cultural' mode. Will Kymlicka's (1995) canonical endorsement of multiculturalism was premised on the basis that certain groups should be afforded 'special rights' and other unique facilities which could allow for them to pursue the types of lives which chimed with their culturally contingent understandings of value and integrity. For Kymlicka, the fullest remit of such rights only applies to 'national minorities' (as members of 'societal cultures' with territorial and historical integrity). Indeed, much has been made of how to extend Kymlicka's framework to immigrant communities, classed by him as 'voluntary' arrivals who expect to participate in dominant society. He does nonetheless develop a parallel cluster of 'polyethnic' rights which are suitable for immigrants; it is such rights, as opposed to those pertinent to 'societal cultures', which is the brand of multiculturalism most of us in Europe commonly recognise when the term is evoked. Whilst there is understandably no room for self-governance, ethnic minorities are granted certain exemptions and other privileges which might allow for them to maintain the behavioural and value properties which constitute their intrinsic sense of *cultural* particularity. David Miller, through less

receptive to multiculturalism, commends a 'confirmation' of other cultures on a comparable basis that:

> [U]nless the ethnic group you belong to – ethnicity being a pervasive, visible phenomenon in the sense that it is something that a person carries with her wherever she goes – has its identity *confirmed* in symbolic and other ways by the relevant state, you are likely to feel vulnerable and demeaned' (1995: 122, emphasis added).

Both these positions apprehend multiculturalism as simply the facilitating of group rights to minorities who are otherwise deprived of such provisions. In short, a sensibility which chimes with the thin and what I consider quixotic conception of multiculturalism as merely the *tolerance* of permanently sealed 'Other' communities. I mention here the influential work of Koopmans et al. (2005), which claims to reject multiculturalism on the grounds that the more overt an official policy of multiculturalism (read simply as tolerance of group rights), and the more generous the welfare state, the more likely it is to stunt social mobility for the various minority groups. Apart from the dubious nature of this link, the authors themselves noted (151-153) in their study of five European countries that the number of special group-rights 'demands' made (as reported in the 'mass print-media') in proportion to the total number of claims pertaining to 'immigration and ethnic relations' in general, were a paltry 1.2 to 7.7 per cent.[27] My purpose with this mention is not to trumpet its empirical validity but to lift forth its irony. Namely, a prominent work professedly hostile to multiculturalism, in the course of gathering empirical material, *itself* runs up against the fraudulence of the received conception of the term. Consequently, they themselves signal that the 'clash of civilisation' (152) thesis which maps onto the assimilation-multiculturalism dichotomy is simply a misnomer. Minority immigrants and their descendants are not concerned with multiculturalism when phrased as the right to special rights. It is less the demand for special rights and more the demand for corrective redress against mistreatment (e.g. police discrimination, lack of resources or negative public representations). As I will show in the following analysis, the infatuation with multiculturalism as the politics of difference, speaking in terms of jurisprudence, appears a chimera largely tangential to the lived politics and activities of these actors.

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[27] The lowest and highest rate respectively for the five countries observed: France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Prior to introducing interview material in substantiating this attempt to revise the standard framing of a multicultural commitment, it is to be mentioned that when the term 'multiculturalism' was overtly raised, this tended to occur only during the London sessions. The term, though familiar and occasionally used, does not enjoy the same centrality in Sweden when issues of ethnic diversity/conflict are entertained. It is not that the Stockholm participants were unable to lift forth these same themes, but only that multiculturalism as an explicit term was far less frequently proposed of their own accord.

It was a Harrow participant, Farima (of Iranian descent), who best captured the above disconnect between multiculturalism as a reflection of lived multi-ethnic spaces and multiculturalism as a narrative frame for populist political posturing:

> 'Multiculturalism is really just about accepting each other, don't you think. Just that when we are outside together somewhere people should not feel uncomfortable with each other. It shouldn't matter. […] What I mean to say is, really, that it's just about not even thinking about everyone around you being from different places and religions.'

Complementing this definition – which bears considerable affinity to Ash Amin's (2012) proposed urban ethics of 'an indifference to difference'– is Akeem's (of Nigerian Muslim background) pitching of multiculturalism at the level of collective citizenship; as an attempt to place each citizen's concerns and hardships as equal in their value:

> '[Multiculturalism] is about equality. […] Like just because you are Muslim or black, it shouldn't mean that your problems are less important. Everyone's difficulties, like with police or with crime and unemployment right, they should be made equally important when decisions are being made. […] Nobody is to be favouritised or be ignored.'

This twin focus on an ease with difference and the need to value each citizen on the strength of their circumstances and not on the basis of their background echoes well the above reservations with a multicultural politics that reads only as jurisprudential 'tolerance'. Rather, the priority of multiculturalism might be better understood as the need to *undo* the pervasive discursive mechanisms which represent certain racialised actors as pathological and/or carriers of permanent and problematic cultural traits. To undo these falsely attributed cultural pathologies which delegitimise the difficulties

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which any such community might contend with. This extended quote of Juliet Hooker (2009: 100, emphasis added) is particularly helpful here in trying to think of multiculturalism beyond recognition and tolerance:

> The harms suffered by subordinated racialised groups are not reducible to the lack of recognition of their collective cultural identities by the state. [To be reduced as thus] disregards the crucial ontological mechanism through which race is constituted as a basic feature of human existence, such as the visible markers of difference that immediately brand an individual as *both* 'other' and inferior or threatening.

Hooker, much like Anne Phillips (2007) and Gooding-Williams (1998), proceeds to argue that the initial intervention of multiculturalists within political theory, even as formulated by Kymlicka, was invaluable in terms of their ability to convincingly posit as their central proposition that the state is not *neutral* in the values it espouses. These perspectives made it apparent that the 'reality of ethnocultural injustice thoroughly disproves the premise that the state is neutral towards culture' (Hooker 2009: 14). The limitation, however, of their subsequent deductive leaps was that these early formulations of multiculturalism were remarkably uncomfortable with assessing how the semiotic situating of minority ethnic 'culture' in the inscriptions of *race* was central to such operations of normative civic exclusion (98-105).

It might be ventured that the intertwining of race in the signification of ethnic culture (vis-à-vis a normative culture masquerading as neutral) results in a relational state of affairs far more debilitating than mere 'non-recognition' would analytically allow for. Rather, it actively situates the bearer of a certain ethnic culture as the embodiment of deprivation: deprivation as the absence of a multitude of liberal values which the hegemonic state confers, by positive relation to the negation, upon the privileged, non-racialised subject-type (Lentin and Titley 2011). The ethnic culture ascribed to the appropriately marked racial subject becomes the semiotic site of absence.

In light of such intersections of race and ethnicity in the contemporary European moment, a multiculturalism which is logically consistent with its foundational premise is the commitment to counteract these racial inscriptions. To rework Charles Taylor's (1994) famous heading, '*Multiculturalism is a politics of recognition which disturbs the politics of misrecognition*'. Or, with regard to Miller's phrasing, multiculturalism is not simply a matter of 'confirmation', but one of concomitant deconstruction, one that 'engages

more ruthlessly with cultural stereotypes' (Phillips 2006: 72). As opposed to being a struggle for cultural withdrawal and seclusion, a multiculturalism which is 'race-conscious' (Hooker 2009: 15, Gooding-Williams 1998: 32) is a resistive undertaking which seeks to unwrite existing discursive scripts. Whilst it is certainly a critique of intolerance, constitutive of this critique is the interrogation of the other as she is generally represented – an interrogation of governing representational standards.

This call for suspicion in the face of commonplace stereotypes (commonplace intelligibility) was both predictably and justifiably flagged by all the participants when colouring the varied nature of their fatigue with how minorities are represented in the symbolic realm. Two of the sharpest statements centred on the recent furore around the right to build mosques, which was topical during the interviews as the controversial Swiss referendum to 'ban minarets' held a year prior had generated extensive coverage in Sweden. The quotes demonstrate that any putatively multicultural cause (as the building of mosques is often framed) is often far less an appeal to special treatment on the part of practising Muslims than the desire to gain credibility by combating misrecognition. Its public rejection (of the right to worship which other religious groups already enjoy) relies on an intuitive understanding of the Muslim as a threat, as misogynistic, as undesirable. In that context, the right to build a mosque maps on to a larger, overarching struggle over representation. As opposed to any demand which tries to surreptitiously imagine a particular custom as essential, inherent and binding upon all those who have Muslim background, it merely tries to purge the image of the Muslim of its disabling, hostile negativity. The politics of this scenario does not appear as an appeal to tolerance, but as an appeal to acceptance. In this distinction lies the caricature of multiculturalism understood as the tolerance of otherwise problematic groups and the multiculturalism where difference garners an ordinary, quotidian legitimacy.

Agil (of Kurdish background), who was a politically conscious undergrad at Sodertörn University, drew particular attention to the farcical nature in which the debate around the mosques was being popularly handled.

> 'What's the problem with having a mosque? If you are Christian you have
> churches, if you are Muslim you have mosques. […] The only way that they can

justify it is by saying that Muslims don't have the right to do something which others do.'

She neatly reveals here the perverse nature in which multiculturalism is often represented as a special-rights, exemption-oriented programme when it is often quite the reverse. Wherein, certain minorities look to exercise the opportunities and aspirations which the normative citizen already enjoys. In a different, more diffident tone, Maziar – who did identify as Muslim though he did say that he was, on the whole, a non-believer – deemed it an egregious insult that mosques were even considered worthy of debate:

'Why should Muslims have to apologise for anything? We are either part of [Sweden] or we are not. You can't tell us that we are actually included, only to say that we are actually a threat and shouldn't get to do certain things which don't even make anyone else do something that they don't want to do anyways.'

The arguments rallied here suggest that multiculturalism seems more a response to insufficient inclusion as opposed to any desired exemption. It could be hereby suggested that though it is a formidable disruption to any narration of a national collective (Hesse 1999, 2000), it is difficult to see how multiculturalism could be construed as an attempt to suspend the rule of law or the basic civil rights and protections which constitute the core of a liberal state. As Gary Younge (2010: 188-189) articulates with typical journalistic flair, it would be difficult to find many who might think that *forced* marriages and honour killings, two phenomena which are often said to be excused by multiculturalism, should not be seen as matter-of-fact criminal behaviour (kidnapping and murder respectively). David Cameron in his Hampshire speech (*New Statesman* 2011b) on immigration and multiculturalism suggested that we, freshly armed with a 'muscular liberalism', should be willing to condemn forced marriages. In doing so, he stated, 'I've got no time for those who say this is a culturally relative issue.' The bravado posturing masks the absurdity of the claim. To quote from a lead-editorial piece in the *Independent* (2011): 'Yet he omitted to name these deluded individuals who believe that forced marriages are acceptable.' Such attempts to submit the commitment to salient expressions of diversity as incompatible with a liberal basis of individual rights are however a key trope through which integrationism gains ground. It dismisses

diversity, not through reference to it as undermining a unitary *nation*-state ideal, but rather, by perceiving diversity as breaching the basic juridical foundations of the *liberal*-state. Crucial herein to any critique of contemporary European nationalisms is the troubling of those stereotypes which position certain groups – and at the broader level, multiculturalism – as being ill-suited to liberal ways.

The topic of honour killings that Younge incorporates into his critique of the liberalism-multiculturalism false dichotomy was also discussed at considerable length during some of the Stockholm interviews. The material which surfaced allows in turn for a further layering of the discussants' explication of the tension apparent in the term 'multiculturalism'. Incidentally, it was some of the female participants who were particularly vocal here, perhaps out of a well-entrenched frustration at being regularly represented as passive, acquiescent victims of a 'culturally' sourced male violence. Agil, who it should be reiterated exhibited a pronounced political consciousness (an overt consciousness generally absent in the other discussants), is particularly relevant given the passion with which she conveyed to me her enthusiasm for a Gender Studies module she was, by happenstance, taking at the time.

> 'I so hate it how just because a few terrible killings happen, we [Muslim women] are all supposed to supporting these things. I don't understand how people can think so naively. […] You know, I learnt [from a close friend of Brazilian background] that there are honour killings in Brazil too. And I was like, wow, like it's not something you ever usually think about happening in Brazil. But the thing is that I don't go around thinking, 'okay, now I know: in Brazil it's okay to kill women!''

In a pithier manner, Maryam (Lebanese background) mockingly stressed the logical failings which inform the increased profile of honour killings whenever immigrant communities are presented as incompatible with 'Swedish values': 'If honour killings are so accepted in our cultures, why is not everybody dying all the time. Honestly!' Similarly, Adina commented: 'I don't know one single person who is Muslim who is for honour killings. It's not like we talk about it really, but we do maybe think about it now and then. I have never been somewhere, and someone has said, 'yeah, what those crazy parents did was right. She should have been killed!'' In these multiple instances there manifests not an appeal for special dispensation to further a 'cultural/ethnic' custom

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external to a liberal conception of individual dignity, but only an intense yearning to shed the disabling representational standards by which racialised migrants and their racialised descendants, with particular premium on those with Muslim associations, are commonly appraised.

This absence of any calling to legislatively and/or communally police the cultural integrity of a particular minority grouping (e.g. 'She should have been killed!') hereby allows us to sidestep another curious, yet, alas, pervasive mischaracterisation of the commitment to multiculturalism. It logically follows that enshrined in any viable multicultural ethos is the 'right of exit' (Kukathas 2003) – the right of members to associate and dissociate as they themselves see fit. I ignore of course whether this crucial clause in Kukathas's treatise is 'sociologically' possible, but as a political right particular to a liberal society, it enjoys first-order status. No person should be obliged to (as positive law so to speak) partake in any custom. Equally so, no person should be prevented from partaking in any custom (negative law) unless it demonstrably contravenes the Millian harm-principle so sacrosanct to prominent liberal critics of multiculturalism such as Barry (2001, 2002: 206). This might seem a rather prosaic point but is all too often missed when claiming multiculturalism as being somehow exogenous to liberalism. Indeed, 'extreme Liberalism' might be as apt a summation of Kukathas's defence of multiculturalism that can be mustered: 'Whilst [Barry] believes he is defending a liberal theory, in fact he is doing no such thing because he *dare not go* where his liberal premises take him' (Kukathas 2002: 195, emphasis added).

This decidedly theoretical concern is ably distilled by a passing observation of Rawas (of Iraqi Kurdish background) whilst we were strolling through a department store (NK) in central Stockholm. During this short session, we happened to pass a sales assistant who wore a hijab. This in itself is of little consequence, but it was Rawas's comparative claim in relation to his brief time in London (for a three-month coaching accreditation course) which was informative:

> 'In England, you know, there are girls with hijabs working at the all big stores. It's totally normal. […] You don't see that in Stockholm really. […] I don't know if all the English people like it, that these girls are wearing the hijab, […] but what I'm trying to say is that these girls are allowed to be there because they are doing nothing wrong. They are just being themselves.'

In his secondary emphasis, Rawas ably brings forth the purchase of Kukathas's argument. Simply put, those who wear the hijab do not pose a threat to the liberal order. Moreover, it is sufficient that *enough* people in London are comfortable with the presence of ostensibly Muslim women in frequently accessed public sites (e.g. a department store), without it having to win the aesthetic approval of all concerned (perhaps not even the majority's approval).

Similarly, in further reinforcing Kukathas's emphasis on 'the right of exit', some of the other discussants did express with some care that it was indeed mistaken to think that any individual, on the mere basis of their ethnic background, had an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner putatively befitting of their ethnic identity. Mehmet, the shopkeeper's nephew of Turkish/Alevi background, underscores here the inherent diversity within any nominally Muslim 'community':

> 'I don't even know what it means to be Muslim, bruv. We will all go about it in different ways. […] If someone tells me, bruv, that being Muslim is like what they do in Saudi Arabia I tell them: 'no, my father is Turkish, and he doesn't act anything like that. And you have no right at all, you get me, to tell me he ain't Muslim.'

Expanding on this accommodating take concerning community, one which is emptied of an *authenticity* baggage, Michael (a resident of the Clapham estate) says:

> 'Nobody needs to be Muslim, whatever their parents or neighbours think. [And] a black guy is totally free to listen to Indie music if he likes. There is no one way to be black. All that doesn't matter to me, and if it does to others, it's just childish thinking.'

This important principle of 'there is no one way to be black/Muslim' feeds back into the centrality of a representational critique whenever a multiculturalism worthy of its name is considered. In other words, multiculturalism, far from imposing certain forms as intrinsic to a community in question, is precisely about the right to cultural mobility – being able to socialise and interact with any variety of others and cultural engagements

(e.g. 'Nobody *needs* to be Muslim'), whilst not having to shed one's sense of communal particularity.

The many and often fruitless attempts to channel through popular media more variegated representations of the black male, in comparison to the narrow and repetitive fare of hip-hop, sport and police mug-shots (whether on the evening news or fictionalised), appeal precisely to this multicultural sensibility hinted at by Michael ('listen to Indie music if he likes'). The pronounced presence the black male garners in the contemporary symbolic realm, as a body and image to be desired and emulated, is greatly ambivalent; whilst it posits the young black male at the centre of a spectacular, hyper-consumerism, it simultaneously ties him to a history of exuberant, 'innate naturalism' (St Louis 2000: 54). An amusing instance of the rigid representational cycle currently pervasive was the farcical practice of the BBC Newsnight team to invite Dizzee Rascal, the popular grime artist, to comment on race-worthy news events (most notably, Obama's 2008 presidential triumph). Apart from the comicality of a hapless, avuncular Jeremy Paxman sparring with a man noted for his MCing abilities, it reveals the deeply embedded association of the *authentic* black male voice, regardless of topic, with a non-intellectual 'street-culture'. More recently, the Tudor historian David Starkey, in a notorious rant against degenerate black culture, pointed to David Lammy, the black MP representing Tottenham, as a positive example of black mobility. After all, Starkey reasoned, by the way he 'sounds' Lammy 'could be white'. Apparent in such commonplace examples is the fact that a multiculturalism which is uninterested in the symbolic standards by which difference is apprehended cannot do much to further inclusion. The multicultural point is not to 'tolerate' Dizzee Rascal, whereby he and similarly inclined cultural exponents are advanced a platform regardless of context, but to trouble the very fixing of black with such narrow performative roles. And yes, the fixing of black with such narrow performative roles is indeed, as identified by Michael, '*childish thinking*', which ought to be the function of a multicultural commitment to *counteract*.

Furthermore, it is this persistently narrow representation of the black male (and in Sweden, the Invandrare male in general) as constitutionally criminal and indulgent of a masculine criminal aesthetic, which generated considerable resistance amongst many of

the respondents. Ruben, resident at the same Clapham estate as Michael, laments with a frankly exceptional elegance:

'Look man, who's getting stabbed, other black kids, yeah. Who's scared to go out on the estate at night? All the black families who live exactly here. If anything like we are the ones who are most scared. It's the same people who live here who are scared. And then you hear people up on the other side [the gentrified parts of Battersea] saying we are all criminals and police need to be proper hard against us. It's strange don't you think, yeah, like 'cus when you really think deep, proper deep, about who exactly is the victims of crime, it don't make any sense for us to get the criminal tag and for them to be ones who are scared.'

The most indicative statement from Stockholm, articulated by Adivic (of Serbian background), employed a more sarcastic touch:

'So many Swedes, for them, their main source of information about Invandrare comes from 'Efterlyst' [the Swedish equivalent of the British Crimewatch programme] or news pieces about Swedish-bred suicide bombers! That's how fucked up things are. We are all either potential criminals or potential terrorists.'

In light of such forceful comments, it is worth stressing that a critical mandate for a multicultural politics, one which undoes such prevalent distinctions of victim and culprit ('the tag of criminal', 'who exactly is the victim', 'all potential terrorists'), is not simply a matter of encouraging a greater culture of civility and politeness in our everyday interactions. Though important, the critical stance to representation sensed here extends, when instantiated, into the very reaches of any noteworthy governmental practice, including excessive policing ('need to be extra hard against us') and the brutality of war itself. For instance, one of the most widely discussed actions under the remit of the 'War on Terror' has been the Guantanamo detention policy, a policy which was candidly dubbed by Tony Blair as 'a [necessary] anomaly'. I would contend that the popular support, or at least popular indifference, to such extrajudicial abuses is precisely the same symbolic regime which makes automatic, makes intuitive, a default association of Muslims as being constituted of their own volition outside the theatre of liberal

democracy. Taking some metaphorical liberties, the portrayal of Muslims in a 'medieval' character (as violent, as misogynist, as sectarian) authorises in the court of public opinion a 'medieval' justice.

A similar symbolic scenario applies to the black overrepresentation in stop-and-search figures alluded to by Ruben. Namely, the black male is textually apprehended as constitutionally predisposed to lifestyle, amoral violence (see here David Goodhart's [2011] post-riot causal attribution: '[A] nihilistic grievance culture of the black inner city, fanned by parts of the hip-hop/rap scene and copied by many white people'). 'Targeted policing' is as a result deemed a legitimate response. Judith Butler (1993), in the wake of the 1991 LAPD beating of Rodney King and the subsequent court trial which delivered an exoneration of the four policemen charged, captures this state right to violence particularly well. She argues that the representational regimes in place, and the governmental practices it births, is driven by a 'specter' (20) of perpetual black violence. The black male body is seen here as an instrument of constant and over-determined violence. His body is either already violent, or is caught in a precarious condition of imminent violence. Rodney King was, therefore, always a valid object of white force (police brutality) because, in his black skin resides a phantasmic scope for violence. The spectacle of state force (armed white men bludgeoning a man lying on the ground) is merely, in the eyes of the jury, a reasonable restraint placed upon the violence which 'blackness' threatens. One can pose the tragic death of Trayvon Martin – whereby his killer (Zimmerman) was acquitted and indeed, the very attempt to bring the case to trial was painfully convoluted – as a more recent yet equally high-profile instantiation of this perpetual state of war against the 'phantasm' (20) of black violence. A slight teenager making his way home, confronted by a larger man in possession of a handgun, is still somehow seen as wielding a greater scope for violence – by virtue of his skin colour. In light of such fraught governmental practices, the critique of representational fields – of racially inscribed cultural stereotypes – sought after by these discussants is one that is not incapable of confronting modern day programmes of state *violence*, which is of course only the extreme end along a broad spectrum of oppression.

5.6. Conclusion

Consequently, it is not so much *essentialised* difference requiring tolerance (e.g. the violent black male or the Muslim purveyor of a violent misogyny) as the asymmetrical

control over 'adjudication' concerning *any form* of ethnic difference which needs to be reviewed. Barnor Hesse's summation of the dialectical nature of recognition and misrecognition respectively is particularly apt here:

> Constitutive of the desire for recognition is the objective of questioning the conditions in which certain hegemonic institutions or dominant practices arrogate to themselves a culturally exclusive right to adjudication. [...] I call the response [...] a 'politics of interrogation' (2000: 30).

This *interrogation* of the *conditions* under which identities are inscribed and actualised – in terms of interpreting our own situation and actions as well as the situation and actions of others – would seem consistent with ordinary multiculture, consistent with those urban interactional fields where ethnic difference is habitually breached without it being posited as undesirable. This discussion has attempted to demonstrate the centrality of representational politics to any such multicultural undertaking. Much of what the discussants deplore is not their inability to act in accordance to some chimerically established standard of communal authenticity, but only the terms by which the ethnic identity which they make citational use of, as is appropriate to the setting at hand, is popularly represented. In this spirit, it is hoped that this chapter has made apparent how a robust multiculturalism, as an interrogation of 'recognition/misrecognition', is entirely different from the unqualified instruction to 'tolerate the other' and the cultural essentialisms/communal permanence which such an instruction presupposes.

Having pursued this extended take on how multiculturalism might be made to resonate for those very persons who inhabit the multi-ethnic spaces most relevant, I wish to conclude with one final remark. This is a remark which looks to thread this discussion on the political sentiments concerning the accommodation of difference back to my initial focus on the citational practices via which identity claims are communicated. Herein, allow me to suggest, in relation to the status of identity vis-à-vis ontology, that the ubiquitous cautiousness with multiculturalism, due to its supposed susceptibility of rendering identity 'real' (of naturalising difference), appears largely a fixation of the academy. This is a preoccupation which appears to me rather removed from the lives led by these participants and the ethico-political properties which arise from their assenting to certain minority identificatory positions. When considered at the level of affect only, that is to say how hostility, vilification and distrust are emotively felt and responded to, the multiculturalism articulated by these participants is best construed as a

sophisticated yet coherently mapped set of conditions regarding the *acceptance* of differently marked subjects; which is critically distinctive from an *essentialist entrenchment* of communal difference. I suggest consequently that there is little risk of these participants rendering their difference *ontological*. The affective quality which difference/belonging engenders in their lives is to be seen as resultant of both strategic and integrationist (in the revised sense) undertakings. Making oneself competent in the broader social sphere is not the equivalent of making one's difference metaphysical. It is only so that when these subjects begin to efficiently cite the sense of difference ascribed to them, it does seem also to sponsor a multicultural disposition centring on the normalisation of their presence in the collective public sphere.

6. Conclusion

The last chapter made the case for a particular kind of multiculturalism which is consistent with the grievances and sensibilities of the research participants. Accordingly, the participants articulated a multiculturalism which runs counter to the one evoked by its many detractors. When caricatured, as discussed at length in the introduction to this thesis, a series of dangerous false dichotomies gain traction. It is worth revisiting here David Cameron's 2011 Munich speech (*New Statesman* 2011a) in which it was decreed that 'multiculturalism has failed'. In opposition to the sins of multiculturalism, Cameron made positive mention of the need to cultivate multiple identities: 'Yes, I am a Muslim, I am a Hindu, I am Christian, but I am also a Londoner or a Berliner too.' It is this regrettable state of affairs – the rhetorical mainstreaming of multiple identities in the course of attributing pathologies to ethnic difference (recall that the context of the speech concerned terrorism and Muslims) – that distils well the discursive techniques by which multiculturalism is distorted in furthering an exclusionary end. Cameron's subscription to the rhetoric of multiple identities (which was after all so central to the 'community of communities' multiculturalism of Bikhu Parekh [2000]) is not simply one of convenience, but one that reveals a more complicated complicity between the rejection of multiculturalism and how multiculturalism comes to be represented in these debates. Here, multiculturalism manages to stand in opposition to the ability to peddle multiple identities, whilst, it would seem that at least one small purpose of a multicultural commitment is to accept and demythologise some of those other 'multiple' identities.

More importantly, the demythologisation of minority identities can only be one *small* feature of any noteworthy multicultural, anti-racist politics. In other words, not only does the empirical material presented here look to reclaim the straw-man multiculturalism peddled by Cameron and fellow travellers, but it also projects a multiculturalism which is far more than a mere legitimation of multiple identities, whatever they might be. Put in a more meaningful way, multiculturalism, as a politics of everyday diversity, cannot be about the reproduction of community formations at multiple levels (e.g. ethnic, city and superseding national identities). Adopting such a tiered, pyramidal conception of belonging is still to concede ground to integrationism and its predilection for shared *communal ties* as the only valid basis for doing shared life.

This is not only a problem in the well-understood sense that a great symbolic and material violence is required to actualise such commonality. More notably, and in accordance to the key analytic claims of this thesis, the integrationist aim to somehow usher in a shared communal identity is simply *impossible*. I have argued that a picturing of shared life within the conceptual terms of integration can only pre-empt its own failure. Owing to its own propositional biases – i) of indulging in ethnically determined understandings of culture, ii) of privileging close and intimate interaction, and iii) of reading ordinary identity claims as ontological claims – integration is prone to misreading the continued presence of racial and ethnic diversity for *failure*. When surveying the sustained and multiple iterations of ethnic difference, integration can only see conflict, division and risk. By the same reckoning, the concept of integration is unable to recognise the fluency with which much of contemporary urban life is *already* carried out across ethnic and racial lines. I have argued in these three empirical chapters that the key concerns of integration – fluent interaction, shared cultural activity and intelligible communication – are already apparent, yet its own conceptual gaze prevents acknowledgement of these mundane realities. Consequently, the immanent unpacking of integration actualised in this thesis is meant to invite a more radical rethinking of what it might mean to live together in today's post-integration city.

6.1. Summary

I reiterate here that during this period of research with and on minority youth in the cities of London and Stockholm, I was intrigued and impressed by the fluency with which these young people, whose parents were immigrants, interact with a wide array of other/Other subject positions (and the wider city in general) without necessarily conceding, eliding or apologising for a sense of their own ethnic difference. There transpires however in equal measure a frustration amongst them at the inability of politicians and researchers, and indeed even their *own* inability, to comprehend and convincingly describe these relationships. Integration (and the multiculturalism *caricature* it profits from) tends to monopolise the terms by which we are to describe and appraise the world before us, impeding in turn our ability to articulate these daily rhythms. When culture and place are commonly framed as ethnic property – as belonging exclusively to well-demarcated ethnic constituencies and/or civilizational traditions (e.g. Muslim or Western, Swede or Invandrare) – it becomes difficult to describe certain interactive cycles and forms of cultural consumption without their running up against the decorum

of these governing schemes. Similarly, when the emphasis of academics and policy-makers alike continues to rely on questions of who you marry, who your closest friends are, and even to whom you might give your keys to when away, it obfuscates the myriad relationships which are carved out in the *public* domain (those relationships which I have sought to retrieve through the analytic orientation of second-order interaction). These encounters across identities of difference are often effaced at the point of articulation, whereby, there seems to be no convincing register which might allow the subjects involved to give coherent descriptive meaning to their encounters. It is against the backdrop of the themes implicit in this problematic that I have sought to advance a picturing of multi-ethnic entanglements which works beyond the intrinsic conceptual limitations of integration.

It was through attention to Paul Gilroy's concept of conviviality that I was able to develop this alternative framing by which to describe how multi-ethnic difference figures unobtrusively in everyday interaction and exchange. In convivial situations, identity difference might be carried, referenced, and affirmed, but crucially, it ceases to be an interface of normative scrutiny. In other words, identities of difference are not read into in ways which raise considerations regarding their appropriateness vis-à-vis certain cultural or spatial repertoires. To be clear, I do not claim that interaction is always convivial. I only argue that *when* interaction appears free of racialised exclusions and interrogation, it is not integration but conviviality which is best positioned to conceptually capture these occurrences. This alternative analytic frame was the focus of the first empirical chapter. Going against the resurgent 'sociology of ties' (e.g. the emphasis on a superseding common identity), I demonstrated that the participants' comfort in the everyday presence of difference rests in a decidedly more radical notion: in a disenchantment with ethnic and/or national *community* as a legitimate principle of political and social organisation. In making this point, the chapter aimed to better document the principles of multiculture underpinning those myriad encounters *outside* of one's immediate kin and peer networks (this being what I termed as 'second-order' interaction).

Building on this post-integration idea of urban togetherness, the next chapter revealed the fallacy of reading ethnicity as shorthand for culture. Working against the zero-sum game of integration contra ethnic difference, it was shown that it is during the very

engagement of the cultural *mainstream* and its contingent spaces that these participants discover the racialised difference assigned to them (e.g. Muslim, Invandrare, Indian, Asian, etc.). In turn, it was suggested that those who are, for well-meaning reasons, interested in the entangling of people in *shared* cultural activities and repertoires would do well to dispense with the chimerical fears of culture-clashes that ethnic diversity is said to, of its own accord, bring about. It was shown that the actual problem requiring redress lies not in culture-clashes but instead in the racist interrogation which many of the participants are subjected to during their habitual and intuitive engagement of certain less and non-convivial *mainstream* cultural spaces. I also explored here how an ability to think beyond ethnicity when mapping culture and value dispositions reveals a more diffuse and embedded set of exclusionary realities (i.e. the humiliation delivered through the neoliberal consumerist circuits of expression and experience with which these mostly working class participants engage).

The final empirical chapter further weakened the meaning of racialised ethnic identity. I demonstrated here how the participants *often* engage in an intricate game of 'identity citation'; whereby they consent to a sense of their own difference primarily in order to remain *intelligible* to the dominant social gaze and its normative racial orders. This alternative reading of identity difference, where identity is consented to but not necessarily internalised, triggered in turn a different kind of lived multicultural politics: a multicultural politics which is more about anti-racism than it is about the ontology or metaphysics of communal difference. I stressed here how the defence of difference articulated by the participants is one of acceptance and of the productive fluidity of *multiculture* and not about any purported 'special rights'-premised communal foundationalism.

Consequently, when these chapters are seen together, much of the progressive potential which arises from the urban practices shaped by these young participants lies in the simple observation that ethnic difference is made a lot *less* knowable. That is to say, markers of ethnic difference cease to be cues for culture, communal solidarities and frameworks of interaction. This making of racialised ethnic difference *less certain* – to make identities of racial and ethnic difference less inferentially intelligible – helps us to better appreciate that everyday patterns of multi-ethnic life do not amount to the defeatist conflict orientation that many would have us believe. And, in some important

ways, such a move away from conflict determinism helps us chart some interesting post-communitarian angles by which to think about urban togetherness. Namely, I wish to gesture here at a more overtly political plea for the future: at the post-communitarian, even *cosmopolitan,* potential which lurks in these participants' urban lives.

6.2. A Post-Communitarian politics

Let me state here, in what constitutes only a very brief engagement with the term, that cosmopolitanism is for me not about interaction and everyday encounters. Though important in its own right, I believe it is superfluous to pitch the term at this level. This is a reservation I have with many who tend to conflate quotidian multiculture for a cosmopolitanism which is politically rooted (a 'cosmopolitics' as others have suggested). For instance, in Elijah Anderson's *Cosmopolitan Canopy* which I discussed previously, Anderson equates everyday breaching of racial difference with cosmopolitanism. It is my contention that there is already a crowded vocabulary which speaks to such modes of interaction through and across difference; most notable amongst these being multiculturalism (or multiculture if preferred) and more colloquially, diversity. Cosmopolitanism, as I see it, needs to do a different type of work if it is to remain a useful reference around which a unique set of concerns might be organised. This work is I believe of the *ethical* sort; it speaks to an ethical and political calling unique in character.

As legend has it, when challenged about whether he was a citizen of Athens, Diogenes responded, 'No, I am a citizen of the world.' His canonical affirmation is not I think some vague instruction to be versed in all the ways of the world, in its many backgrounds and idioms. (Indeed, his own unusual conduct points to a stance uninterested in any culturally validated custom – captured in the contemporaneous moniker 'Socrates gone mad'). But simply, I hear Diogenes as saying that his ethical gaze *must* take the world in its entirety – all its 'different' denizens, both near and far – as its rightful canvas. What I draw from here, for the empirically situated purposes of my own concluding comment, is a recognition that the polity cannot and should not be construed in the constitutionally exclusive symbolism of ethnic and national identity. In other words, what is required here for recognising each other's equal presence and claim to a shared space is a post-communitarian intuition.

In turn, the political relevance of making racialised ethnic identity less 'knowable', less susceptible to inference, lies in its ability to put under stress the symbolic appeal of communitarianism. It is reasonable to suppose that when an imaginative space is accorded to an idea of everyday communal identity that circumvents crude distinctions of culture and socio-political solidarity, it generates from *within* a destabilising effect on the communitarian hold. Put differently, a more inclusive reimagining of multi-ethnic social and political space does not arise with the prevailing language of community intact. As the participants made apparent, this idea of a more inclusive socio-political space does not arise through reference to a superseding national identity as is still the default disposition of integrationism. Rather, it arises from a partial estrangement from that very idea, an estrangement of the sort evidenced in the hubs of 'unkempt, unruly and unplanned multiculture' (Gilroy 2004: x) which dot our cityscapes.

An emergent sensitivity to our incompleteness, or more specifically, our muddled conceptions of who we are as a community and what that entails politically and culturally, might render the shelter sought in the seeming certainty of ready-made group identities a little less persuasive. The *inadequacy* of communal identity as indexical references for our cultural involvements and interactive habits is made apparent as being less able to convincingly describe our daily activities and encounters. The complexity of urban life, replete as it is with a dazzling array of backgrounds and contaminations, will appear as too great a picture to be reduced to tidy monochrome units. And when speaking of a difference less certain in its formulation, I do not mean its absolute undoing, but simply a mapping of difference which does not correspond with well-arrayed subject positions. Ordinary differences in values, tastes, traditions and yearnings are not themselves magicked away, but are rendered murky, as where each of us belongs amidst this cultural morass becomes less clear. In other words, the ontological ground of difference is not identity but culture in and of itself. Consequently, what this complication of ethnic identity and its inferential intelligibility marks at the level of political deliberation is a potential departure, as Amin has put it, from the communitarian ethos as the ideal which informs our conceptions of shared public spaces – be it the library, park or indeed, even the national polity.

In the routines and standpoints of the participants that have featured in this thesis, I have sought to make apparent that identity can and need be disaggregated from

interactive as well as cultural repertoires. And it is so that the *fixing* of ethnic particularity to certain cultural, territorial and interactive circuits is not innate to identities of difference. Rather, it is the depressing epiphenomenon of racist practices of state and civic society alike. In turn, through attention to these participants' testimonies, testimonies to operating across positions of difference, it is possible to trouble, stretch and decisively rupture the dominant (i.e. racist) taxonomies of what it means to live in a post-integration, multi-ethnic society. Moreover, and more importantly, in this process of demystification, *all of us* who share this space might gain an alternative perspective regarding our own everyday lives and the manner in which we all enact, unwittingly, a 'convivial' breaching of difference during our unspectacular routine movements. In other words, in subjecting intelligible difference to the critical gaze of these second-generation minority subjects, the conviviality which animates all of us in the everyday navigation of the post-integration metropolitan city might be brought to the fore and take centre stage. The manner in which we imagine our lives might reveal itself as being at odds with the manner in which we live our lives. Or rather, the manner in which we live our lives and the intricate, vast relationality which undergirds it, both at an economic level and a cultural level, contradicts the manner in which we naturalise in thought and political discourse a certainty of being, a certainty of identity, a certainty of separation.

In conclusion, I have argued here that integration, and the caricatured multiculturalism it brings about, is intrinsically committed to a defeatist social thesis. When our shared collective spaces are interpreted from this vantage point, conflict always appears imminent. Lines of ethnic identity are read as lines of suspicion and distrust. In countering this vision, I have documented an idea of identity difference – as negotiated in a daily and unremarkable manner – which is less foundational, less certain, less intelligible. I consider it important for these experiences and testimonies, which work beyond both integration and multiculturalism, to enter the political fray. Tapping into these post-communitarian possibilities confronts us with the circuits of responsibility, care, need and suffering in which we are already implicated but hardly ever recognise when community acts as the governing explanatory frame for how one's life is shaped and with whom that life is shared. The suspicion of the inferential connotations tied to communal difference, as apprehended at first sight, can act as a sponsor of this embryonically cosmopolitan possibility. This is not to equate the empirical patterns

concerning the habitual and unspectacular breaching of racial and ethnic difference common to many of our lives with cosmopolitanism itself. It only suggests that the suspicion of intelligibility can, if harnessed accordingly, contribute to a productive loosening of the hold that communitarian vocabularies exert on our political imagination. If we find ourselves continuously implicating each other in our decisions and doings – or lack thereof – then it is right that we cast our ethical and political net in a manner commensurate. Cosmopolitanism crucially assumes that the world consists of difference, and this difference is not to be elided. But what it also requires, or should require, is a concomitant ability to render that difference *less exclusive* when fumbling for an understanding of cultural self and *less decisive* when narrating our shared spaces or parsing our ethical needs.

This conclusion has deliberately adopted a less analytic and decidedly more speculative tone in comparison to the preceding empirical chapters but I believe it a constructive, or hopeful, note on which to end. Out of today's emergent convivialities – out of a different way of understanding the entanglements of racial and ethnic identities in some of today's urban space – we might begin to entertain new possibilities for active and resistant solidarities of a nascent cosmopolitan character. The analytic focus of this thesis was of course to critique, from within, what we consider to be integration. This was the object of my empirical discussion. But in doing so, I end up with a necessarily imprecise, but nonetheless hopeful, sense of cosmopolitanism regarding our local and shared spaces. Seen differently, I began with the insularity and inwardness of integration and end with the outward-looking, forward thrust of cosmopolitanism.

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