



RETHINKING INTEGRATION

BRIEFING

Myriam Cherti
and Clare McNeil

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Myriam Cherti is a senior research fellow at IPPR.

Clare McNeil is a senior research fellow at IPPR.

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IPPR
4th Floor
14 Buckingham Street
London WC2N 6DF
T: +44 (0)20 7470 6100
E: info@ippr.org
www.ippr.org
Registered charity no. 800065

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INTRODUCTION

There has been an enormous amount of academic and policy work on the integration of minority cultural communities, especially certain Muslim communities, into 'mainstream' society in the last decade. Indeed, since the tragedies of 11 September 2001, few topics have exerted such continual influence on both the political and the research agendas of those interested in questions of citizenship, belonging, and political and social identity.

In academia, most of this work has focused on supposed conflicts of values between these communities and western liberalism and the difficulties that these conflicts create for social life in European countries. Discussion has largely focused on questions of the extent to which minority religious and other social practices should be condoned or accepted in order to persuade these communities to accept the legitimate sovereignty of established law. These arguments have become known as the 'group rights debate', with central issues including the place of women and children in minority, and especially identifiably non-liberal, cultures and the relationship between religious and political authority (see Laborde 2008, Kymlicka 2001, Rawls 1992, Young 2002).

Many of these debates have moved from academia into policy discourse, stemming from such events as the French headscarf affair and the security implications generated by radicalisation and extremism. The emphasis of the resulting recommendations has often been different, however. While many academics have been sympathetic to the demands of group rights and what might be called 'multiculturalism', in the last few years policymakers have tended to favour efforts to *erode* group difference in order to generate a 'shared sense of citizenship'. This has been particularly noteworthy in the last 18 months, when leaders of all the major European nations have tried to call time on the established practices of 'multiculturalism' and aspired to a new language of shared identity, and even patriotism.

The policy community across Europe has thus concentrated on large-scale projects to develop more liberal attitudes among apparently non-liberal communities. Efforts have focused on attempts to inculcate a deeper commitment to the rights and duties of citizenship, free speech and assembly, norms of family practice and loyalty to the established histories of European states. In Britain, examples of this have been seen most clearly in immigration reform, including the development of citizenship tests and ceremonies, and in education, where citizenship classes have been introduced into the national curriculum. It is also observed in less formal policy arenas, such as the efforts of thinktanks and other pressure groups to advance a vision of national identity that at once makes demands of minority groups and is open to some adaptation so as to enable more effective patterns of social integration.

Across Europe, especially within Muslim communities, these efforts have been met at best with mixed success. On the one hand, there have been no major incidences of Islamic terrorism since the Madrid and London bombings in 2004 and 2005, and there is some empirical evidence that integration continues apace in many settings. But on the other hand, there has been little success in reducing public unease at the nature of the relationship between apparently mainstream norms of citizenship and those of some apparently 'non-liberal' communities. In some circles, this has led to increased demands for assimilation. Certain policy thinkers, such as the British commentator David Goodhart, have gone as far as to blame the English riots of 2011 on the failures of multicultural initiatives and to demand a greater emphasis on the necessity of cultural assimilation.

This trend is seen across Europe. Despite obvious national variation in the scope and the level of restrictiveness of civic integration policies across Europe, a focus on 'obligation' is increasingly a shared feature of all of them. The Netherlands, for example, has become more aggressive in imposing Dutch 'norms and values'. Pressured by a uniquely strong right-wing populist movement, it has gone further than other European states in expanding the repressive dimension of civic integration. In other states, such as Germany, the obligatory thrust of this policy has so far remained more subdued, the policy (still) bearing more resemblance to remedial settlement aids for newcomers, but change may be imminent. In France, there has rarely been any question that in the refounding of integration policy it was necessary that the state be rendered its traditional place in guaranteeing national unity. The superficial contractual element in civic integration has allowed the policy to be associated with a rejuvenation of French republicanism, which although it creates some space for opposing the obligatory and potentially repressive trend of the policy, has encouraged France to pursue an increasingly assimilative strategy.

It is our contention that efforts to integrate the diverse communities of Europe into a single, stable social form are unlikely to work. This is not, however, a call to return to simple multiculturalism and group rights. Both models start us in the wrong place. The established approaches used to explain the relationship minority communities maintain to mainstream European society are no longer valid. Neither offers a reliable way of generating the inclusive, stable and fair social order to which most aspire. Elements of them might survive in a new settlement, of course, but as they are currently constructed they do more to hinder progress than assist it.

Our task in this briefing document, therefore, is to outline a potential new approach, one that we call **everyday integration**. We believe that this approach, grounded in new academic work, provides a better way of both analysing and advancing the possibilities for the integration of different communities into a stable social order. We do not claim to be able to develop a comprehensive account of that approach here, but we do believe we can provoke discussion and debate and potentially outline a new direction for research and for policy.

1. NEW DIRECTIONS

Our work challenges the fundamental assumptions of the established debate on integration.

That challenge begins by insisting that the groups that have been at the centre of ongoing arguments – including European Muslim communities – are far more internally diverse than either scholars or policymakers have wanted to acknowledge, and that the processes by which people integrate into the mainstream are far more subtle than have previously been acknowledged.

Until now, the vast majority of both academics and policymakers have taken the groups to be examined as predetermined units, even if they have not intended to do so. Although they often pay lip-service to the idea that not everyone in a particular group thinks like everyone else, their analysis and recommendations are predicated on the relatively uniform behaviour and identity of the group. Both programmes of assimilative integration through citizenship and national identity, and programmes of multicultural group rights fall into this same trap. They assume that people have simple identities which are formed by the groups outsiders associate them with.

The sociologist Rogers Brubaker and colleagues have rejected this view. They insist that people generate far more complex and cross-cutting identities for themselves than these ‘official’ views permit. Brubaker and colleagues thus argue that it is a mistake to talk of ‘internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups... as the basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis’ (Brubaker et al 2008: 7). Instead, we should always begin from a position of suspicion. Those who claim to be able to identify ‘groups’ and especially those who claim to be able to ‘speak for them’ are often doing no more than serving their own interests.

In place of talking about the integration of established groups, therefore, the first task should be to work out how people think about their own place within these groups themselves. Do they identify in the way that policymakers have assumed? If so, when? If not, why not and in what ways?

Brubaker and colleagues continue their analysis by insisting that anyone trying to access people’s sense of their own group identities should *not* start with the so-called ‘big questions’ – such as the place of religion in society or the nature of political allegiance – but instead with a set of distinctly *everyday* concerns. The key ‘analytic categories’, they contend, are the ‘vernacular understandings’ and ‘folk sociology’ that emerge in everyday life and not in abstract reflection. We learn more about ‘who people think they are’ when we analyse their everyday preoccupations rather than some generalised pre-packaged sense of a group’s relationship to some grand theme.

In explaining this work Brubaker et al emphasise the importance of studying everyday preoccupations. In describing their research in Romania, they write:

‘... raising children, paying bills, celebrating family milestones, planning for an uncertain future. We listened to their stories and anecdotes, to their complaints and frustrations, to the ways they talked with – and about – friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow Clujeni, people from different regions of Romania, and citizens of other countries. We noted the categories they used to describe and explain the social world, to express pride or indignation, to formulate excuses or justifications, or to make sense of good or ill fortune. We tried to reconstruct the common-

sense knowledge of the social world – the folk sociology – that informed everyday explanations for who gets ahead, who falls behind, and why. We observed how people talked about politics and politicians – when they talked about them at all. We attended not only to what they said, but to how they said it; not only to matter, but to manner: serious, ironic, playful, detached, moralizing, and so on. We observed routine encounters in public, and took part in ordinary social interaction among family and friends. We noted what languages were spoken in what settings, what cues triggered the use of a particular language, and how conversation sometimes shifted from one language to another. Our aim was to observe when, how, and in what settings ethnicity ‘happened’ in the course of ordinary daily routines.’

Brubaker et al 2008: 16

Building on Brubaker and colleagues’ work, then, and connecting it to other work already underway at IPPR, our proposal is that efforts to better understand and advance social integration on the part of non-liberal communities should always begin from a re-examination of the everyday construction of group identities.

Our working hypothesis is therefore that:

‘As people construct their group identities in everyday settings, so an effective integration policy must begin by (a) understanding the way that identity formation occurs within a representative sample of such settings; (b) identifying the problems for social integration and group identity formation that currently emerge in those settings; and (c) proposing ways in which they can be amended to ameliorate tensions between the groups that emerge within them.’

An effort that proceeds this way would generate analysis and recommendations that may look very different from traditional policy work in this area. Instead of directly assessing the traditional ‘big questions’ – such as citizenship and national identity – and taking the nature of groups for granted, we contend that it is necessary to first look at the way that group formation occurs and then to target new and potentially unexpected problems and possibilities for integration that emerge in the everyday experience of those groups, rather than at the grand level of citizenship and national identity itself.

In more detail, we could choose to examine in detail *four areas of everyday interaction* and to analyse the ways in which they contribute to integrative or disintegrative social processes. We would need to identify these areas carefully, especially if we wished to conduct a comparative, international study. Possible additions would include elements of the world of work, especially in self-employment, retail and engagement in workplace institutions such as trade unions. We have left those out here merely because we wished to identify areas where all members of the communities concerned, of working age and non-working age alike, were potentially involved.

The remainder of this briefing document outlines what such an effort might look like if pursued further, and examines what we already know about the processes of everyday integration in four characteristic areas: childcare in early years, patterns of shopping and consumption, leisure activities, and supplementary education.

2. EVERYDAY INTEGRATION: WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW

We have argued that a new approach is needed to re-think integration to challenge the fundamental assumptions of the current debate which often focuses either on ‘group rights’ or on grand programmes of citizenship and national identity. We have argued that this goes awry both because it assumes that the groups to be dealt with are clearly defined, pre-determined units *and* because it overlooks the parts of life where the possibilities of group formation and integration are actually defined – that is, in everyday experience. Our alternative hypothesis is that as people construct their group identities in everyday settings, so an effective integration policy must begin by:

- understanding the way that identity formation occurs within a representative sample of such settings
- identifying the problems for social integration and group identity formation that currently emerge in those settings
- proposing ways in which they can be amended to ameliorate tensions between the groups that emerge within them.

In the first phase of this work, we have explored the empirical evidence base to try to establish the extent of research and analysis carried out in four characteristic everyday settings. We assess what it tells us about how group identity formation occurs and what problems and possibilities for integration emerge in these everyday settings. We draw on the analytical tools offered by contact theory, social network theory and a number of more recent interventions into the debate.

Given the limited scope of this briefing, our review of the literature has not been comprehensive. However it has reinforced our argument that comparatively little attention has been given to examining the social processes of integration, particularly with a view to understanding how group identities are formed and maintained. Below we summarise a number of key studies that could be identified and set out where the gaps in the evidence base appear to be.

Childcare in early years

Family care arrangements are a crucial aspect of everyday community participation. Ann Bookman (2004) has argued that we need to examine the formal and informal connections to help with family care if we are to extend our appreciation of what constitutes community participation, particularly if we are interested in what women do. Bookman claims that the new relationships formed through these encounters are ‘binding us together and reshaping our communities in a literal and social sense’ (Bookman 2004).

There appears, however, to be little research into childcare settings in relation to the processes of integration of ‘non-liberal’ communities in European societies or into the extent to which childcare is used as a platform for integration.

There has been some limited research on integration in the context of UK government programmes for young children such as Sure Start. Sure Start is a major government initiative to support the health and well-being of children under four and their families, largely in deprived communities.

A national evaluation in 2007 found that there was limited evidence pertaining to the extent of integration achieved between different ethnic and religious groups, whether through structured activities or spontaneous interaction. The authors emphasised that Sure Start could play an important role in promoting community cohesion by building

mutual trust and respect between different communities, but that the programme was missing a major opportunity to do so (Craig et al 2007).

The authors did, however, highlight several examples of promising practice. The sample of centres for the study included many where there was a substantial proportion of minorities within the local population and several where ethnic diversity was considerable (ibid).

Building bridges – 1:

In some cases, parents commented very positively on certain activities or services, saying that they offered the opportunity to build bridges between different minority groups in a context where ethnicity became of secondary importance. In a similar vein, in another programme, the idea of an ‘edible quilt’ had emerged where one group cooked healthy food for parents from other national or ethnic origins and then one of the other groups would reciprocate. Some programmes took advantage of high-profile events – such as the Asian tsunami – to bring groups together to commemorate or celebrate these occasions.

Building bridges – 2:

One example of bridge-building between minority communities was a lunch and cooking activity which involved community members, used as a means to draw a traveller community into the work of the Sure Start centre. In this case the travellers had asked for something to do with cooking and staff felt it would provide a good opportunity for building bridges between different sections of the community. This kind of bridging might be very important to individuals. One traveller mother had been harassed by her ‘giorgio’ (non-traveller) neighbours but at a mixed session at the Sure Start local programme, she felt that ‘nobody judges me here for my culture’.

Source: Craig et al 2007

These examples are interesting but leave many questions unanswered. What was the longer term value of the more structured interventions; how did these compare with more spontaneous everyday interactions; and how meaningful were the group identities ascribed in the context of the interaction described above? The study concluded that opportunities to use Sure Start as a means of promoting social cohesion to reduce tensions between differing ethnic groups had been wasted. Pertinently, the study also criticised previous evaluations for using ‘over-general ethnic categories - white, black and Asian’ which did not allow for examination of the differing experiences of the many minority groups in Sure Start areas (ibid).

It is our contention that more work within this realm could be of extraordinary importance. Childcare practices are potentially extremely important sites of identity construction both for children and for parents. The possibilities of integrative patterns of social interaction developing through shared childcare facilities and experiences appears to us to be significantly under-explored as does the rival prospect for developing deeper tensions and more hostile group relationships in settings where childcare practices become controversial or demonstrative of important social, ethical and religious disagreements.

Patterns of shopping and consumption

The second potential area of examination concerns shopping and consumption; the one everyday practice perhaps most easily identified with advanced capitalist societies such as the modern European states, but again, largely neglected by formal policy work on integration and multiculturalism of late.

There is, of course, some popular acknowledgement of the potential integrative influence of certain aspects of shopping and consumption. The influence of countless nationalities on the UK's cuisine has long been one of the most celebrated aspects of immigration. Most memorably, former foreign secretary Robin Cook argued that the chicken tikka masala is a perfect illustration of the way in which Britain 'absorbs and adapts external influences', explaining: 'chicken tikka is an Indian dish, the masala sauce was added to satisfy the desire of British people to have their meat served in gravy' (Cook 2001). The impact of social attitudes of such efforts is, of course, difficult to measure but the general cultural conversation and its knock-on effects in other domains seem certain nonetheless.

There were echoes of this in media coverage to accompany the launch of the Coalition government's integration strategy this year, with claims that the communities and local government secretary, Eric Pickles, was to establish 'curry colleges' to train people from all backgrounds to become chefs specialising in Indian food.¹ Ostensibly a bid to support integration and social mobility, the 'ongoing support for the Asian catering sector', as it was officially described, was also triggered by the ban on bringing in chefs from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan as part of the government's immigration policy.

For all its power as a symbol of integration, food is equally the subject of more polarising debates. Some fear for example that recent political debates about halal meat in the UK and Europe have become a proxy for deeper fears and concerns about the presence of the Muslim population.

The British commentator Mehdi Hasan has highlighted several such examples. Earlier this year a rejected proposal for a 10-minute-rule bill by backbench Conservative MP Philip Davies would have made it mandatory for retailers to label halal and kosher meat on sale and to make it clear that animals were 'killed without stunning'. Hasan argues that the move was encouraged by recent reports in papers such as the *Daily Mail*, which have suggested that some retailers are deliberately neglecting to inform customers about the origins of the meat they buy (Hasan 2012).

There is a precedent for moral panic over ritually slaughtered meat entering mainstream political debate. In campaigning for the French presidency this year, candidates Marine Le Pen, leader of the National Front, and Nicholas Sarkozy, the outgoing president, both commented on halal meat, with Sarkozy stating that the halal issue was a 'central concern' for French voters.

Given the symbolic status of food in immigration debates, and its place in political rhetoric and recent government policy, food consumption appears to have been the subject of little recent research. One study of an ethnic minority group in Bradford, West Yorkshire is, however, worth highlighting for the insights it offers through the prism of food and consumption.

1 See 'Pickles to serve up curry college', *Guardian*, 18 November 2011: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/nov/18/pickles-curry-college-integration-strategy>.

Ahmad Jamal and Malcolm Chapman (2000) carried out an ethnographic study of consumption experiences among Pakistani Muslims in Bradford. The study explores how it feels to be part of an ethnic minority group in a western society and how such feelings affect day-to-day consumption choices, particularly in relation to food. A consumer study from a marketing perspective, it nevertheless offers some valuable insights into the lives of the Pakistani community in Bradford.

Jamal and Chapman drew upon the theoretical approach of acculturation, referring to the changes and adaptations which occur when people from different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact.² The researchers argue that while the existing literature helped inform their study, enhancing their understanding of ethnic minority consumer behaviour, it failed to go far enough in explaining ethnic minority experiences.

They developed their research design specifically to plug this gap. The data in the study was collected through repeated participant observation, ethnographic research and long qualitative interviews. As part of the participant observation, a journal of daily interactions with community members was developed. A whole range of consumption activities were observed (including meal sharing with a member of the community and going on shopping trips). Findings are summarised below.

Acculturation and Inter-Ethnic Consumer Perceptions: Can You Feel What We Feel? by Ahmad Jamal and Malcolm Chapman, 2000

Two key themes emerged from the research findings. The first was the familiar idea of migrant communities, in this case the Pakistani community, living between two worlds. This was evident in the consumption experiences of first generation community members, which were separated into two distinct domains: the Pakistani community and its cultural world in the UK represented one, and the mainstream population and its cultural world represented the other.

The link with the former was maintained through frequent visits to their country of origin, reading Urdu newspapers and magazines, listening to local radio stations, and watching south Asian television stations. This link was further reinforced through consumption both in and outside the home in the form of consuming Pakistani meals, wearing Pakistani-styled clothes (like the *shalwar kameez*), speaking in Pakistani languages with one another, shopping from Pakistani-owned shops, and so on.

The link with the host community was established through consuming some English foods at home (like fish and chips), speaking English with the natives, buying grocery items from mainstream outlets and possessing consumer durables.

The second theme which emerged from the ethnographic data was that first generation participants were 'in a continuous process of swapping their identities'

² Jamal and Chapman drew on four modes of acculturation which change on a regular basis depending on the perceptions and experiences of particular social groups. These are – **integration**: reflects the desire of an ethnic minority group to maintain its original culture but also make efforts to become an integral part of a larger societal framework; **assimilation**: reflects the desire of an ethnic minority group to relinquish his or its cultural identity over time and move into the larger society; **separation or rejection**: reflect a desire of an ethnic minority group to reject mainstream society while maintaining an identity with their culture of origin; **marginalisation or deculturation**: this characterises an ethnic minority group that rejects movement into the mainstream of society as well as any identification with their culture of origin.

as a result of the 'intergroup' and 'intragroup' feelings that they experienced at any one time. Their sense of belonging to their group had both positive and negative connotations, which were accompanied by 'feelings of love and dislike directed towards their own group and towards others'.

Through the lens of food consumption, the researchers were able to draw out participants' complex and contingent sense of identity.

Feelings of unity, support and solidarity were reinforced through large scale socialisation in the community at wedding receptions, religious events and political and social receptions. At these events the way they selected, prepared and distributed their traditional meals reflected their own social organisation and their relationship with their larger group. Participants enjoyed being part of a larger group. Reflections from participants included: 'I am very happy I am not alone in this country' and 'You are safe here, there are so many of us. No one can bother you here.'

But consumption choices of participants also revealed a lack of trust and confidence in relation to their in-group. A duality (having feelings of love and hate towards their own in-group) was revealed through observing participants' consumption behaviours and participating in their daily shopping activities.

Participants bought items like meat, vegetables, spices, clothing, travel, and so on, from businesses (like corner shops, high street shops, supermarkets, and travel agents) that were owned and operated by their in-group, expressing their ethnicity through their shopping behaviours as and when they strongly identified with their ethnic group. Yet at the same time they expressed a great deal of suspicion about those who ran the businesses, feeling 'jealous, open to deception, and conscious of rivalry in these interactions with their "own" people'. One participant summed up his mixed feelings about his 'in-group' thus:

'[O]ur own people come to us because we are the same people ... they feel comfortable with us because we can explain [things] to them in our own language ... but the difficulty is that they do not trust us ... they always think that we are trying to deceive them ... or we are charging higher prices ... or making huge profits, which is not always the case.'

Conflicts, prejudice and lack of trust were a common feature of life in the community, with participants betraying feelings of mistrust and dislike. Reflections included: 'Our people do not keep promises. They do not have any moral values', 'Our people are after earning money only. No one cares for you' and 'Sometimes I feel ashamed of what I am.'

These feelings existed despite the participants' preference to communicate in native languages and to wear traditional dress, which could seem to an outside observer as a sign of strong affiliation with their culture of origin. 'Objective' indicators such as dress and language do not reveal the nature of the affective responses highlighted in the study. Conflicts observed were often due to differences in the community as various subgroups competed to establish authority and leadership in running the affairs of the community.

The research by Jamal and Chapman shows how group identities are more complex and contingent than often assumed, revealing both opportunities and obstacles for a broader policy of integration. Participants in the research identified at times with their host community, expressing admiration for the values and behaviour of mainstream society, whilst simultaneously expressing positive and negative feelings about their own cultural group. Participants were continuously revising and recreating their perceptions of self and of others, regularly constructing and deconstructing their identity in this context.

Leisure activities

Our third proposed area of further investigation concerns leisure time. Leisure contributes significantly to quality of life and well being and is central to how families and communities bond. It is a transformative experience promoting growth, renewal and reflection which can contribute significantly to cross-cultural communication and understanding (Edginton 2007). Equally, it provides the opportunity to engage in familiar experiences that provide stability in new environments.

Personal and cultural identity is formed to a significant degree in a leisure context. In the context of integration, leisure therefore has at least two important functions: it provides the opportunity for transformation and change in a new culture but it can also offer a link to familiar experiences which can maintain a connection with ethnic, religious or cultural heritage, providing stability in a sea of change. Leisure should therefore be central to any attempt to research group identity formation and social integration.

Our review identified a few studies that examined recent and settled migrants' experience of leisure. These studies provide useful context for the ways in which different groups spend their time and with whom, offering some interesting insights into the nature of social activity involved. But there is less research looking in depth at the processes of integration and in particular the formation of group identity in the context of leisure activities.

A report by Sarah Spencer and colleagues (2007) researched the lives of migrants from the 10 countries that joined the European Union in 2004 from central and eastern Europe.³ Despite an overwhelming focus on employment and employment rights of migrants from A8 accession countries, this report looked at the lives of migrants beyond the workplace, seeking to understand the social lives of migrants and their relationships with residents, through in-depth interviews and migrants' diaries.⁴

Little difference was identified in the types of leisure activities in which recent or settled migrants from central and eastern Europe were engaged, in comparison to British people. Most popular forms of leisure activity were going to pubs, visiting museums and using sports facilities.

More significant were findings concerning with whom migrants socialised in their leisure time. All of the migrants spent some or most of their leisure time with recent migrants from their own country. During the first six months in the UK, half of the migrants said they spent no leisure time with British people, with 42 per cent saying that they had some leisure contact and just 6 per cent spending most of their leisure time with British people. For migrants who had been in the UK for two and half years, one in four still said that they spent no leisure time at all with British people and fewer than one in five said that most of

3 2004 saw the accession of 10 countries from central and eastern Europe to the European Union. They are frequently referred to as the 'A8' countries.

4 Two waves of quantitative and qualitative research were conducted: the first between March and May 2004, the second between November 2004 and February 2005.

their time was spent with British people (ibid). The migrants' perception was that British people do not, as one Ukrainian waitress put it, 'let you into their circles'. Another woman said 'Brits are not very keen to be friends.' This was disappointing for many migrants.

A majority of the migrants – men and women alike – spent most of their time with people from their own country of origin and with migrants from other countries, but rarely spent much time with British people. This suggests that in terms of social capital, the migrants interviewed were drawing on 'bonding capital' formed through long-standing, close ties that provide emotional and psychological support, rather than 'bridging capital' which is more diverse and associational.

Bridging capital is suggested by Robert Putnam to be 'more outward-looking and [to] encompass people across different social divides'. Bonding capital in contrast is suggested to be more 'inward-looking and to have a tendency to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups' (Putnam 2000). An argument advanced in relation to social cohesion is therefore that building bridging capital is important for forming civic ties with others from different social and cultural backgrounds and can have a positive impact on relations between different communities.

A study by the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society [COMPAS] (2007) compared the experiences of Muslim and non-Muslim recent migrants with established residents in three areas of the UK⁵ examining interaction with others in public and private spaces. It reached slightly different conclusions to the Spencer et al study on the nature of social contact among recent and established migrants.

COMPAS found that recent non-Muslim migrants in the three areas (the London borough of Newham, Bradford and Birmingham) were almost as likely to interact with friends from other ethnic and religious backgrounds as with those from similar backgrounds. UK-born non-Muslims appeared to split their leisure time social contact between people from similar backgrounds and people from other backgrounds in all three areas. Given that a diversity of ethnicities and religions was represented among the UK-born non-Muslim sample, with nearly two-fifths defining themselves as belonging to an ethnic group other than 'white British', the authors suggest this meant that the kinds of people they interacted with were truly diverse.

In contrast, the study found that more than three-quarters of Muslim migrant interviewees (including both recently arrived and settled migrants) spent their leisure time with relatives or friends from co-ethnic and co-religious backgrounds. This interaction was not always based in the area itself but often with friends and relatives who lived elsewhere in the UK as well as remotely (via phone or internet) with people in their country of origin. There was relatively little intimate social interaction with other Muslims who did not share their ethnicity, or with those of the same ethnicity but different religion.

The study suggests that among those interviewed, there were higher levels of bridging capital among recently arrived and settled non-Muslims than non-Muslims in each of the three areas. The study points to geographical factors as an explanation for this as there was a greater likelihood of their living in neighbourhoods where other Muslims – mainly but

5 The study analysed data on the lived experience of everyday cohesion in three areas in England where proportionally large numbers of Muslims and people of other faiths and of no faith – both recently arrived migrants and established residents – live alongside one another. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with over 300 Muslim and non-Muslim recent migrants and established residents in the borough of Newham in London, Birmingham and Bradford, from January 2006 to June 2007.

not exclusively from their own countries of origin – lived, but did not explore whether there were other cultural or structural reasons for this.

The authors did conclude, however, that there was also evidence of meaningful (if not always intimate) interaction across religious and ethnic boundaries in a variety of spaces visited in the course of interviewees' daily life. For example, those with family responsibilities tended to meet a mix of people with diverse ethnic or religious origins in a variety of public spaces and there were also opportunities through work and education. The authors suggest these interactions could help to create opportunities for forming bridging as well as bonding capital and networks for Muslim and non-Muslims.

Encouraging contact between different groups as a means to encourage positive relations and reduce tension has a theoretical basis in 'contact theory'. Decades of research in social psychology has demonstrated through the 'contact hypothesis' that increasing the level of contact between members of different groups can reduce prejudice, counter perceptions of threat and improve levels of tolerance. There is convincing evidence that intergroup contact can play an important role in reducing racial prejudice and of ethnic threat and fostering tolerance and empathy toward other groups (Johnson 2012).

Several studies illustrate how sport in particular is used as a vehicle for this. For example, a study by Mahfoud Amara and colleagues (2005) shows how sport can be used to promote the social integration of asylum-seekers into the host community, curb urban violence and decrease tensions between minorities.

Summary of key findings from Amara et al 2005: Football brings together Asian-British and Kurdish young people at Madeley Youth and Community Centre

It is often assumed that established minority groups, because of their history of migration, will be more open to the arrival of other refugees and asylum-seekers, including those from the same religious background. However, one football project at a youth and community centre in Derby was initiated to bring Asian-British young people and Kurdish asylum-seekers together to reduce tensions between the two communities.

Despite sharing the same religion, the groups differ in terms of culture, religiosity, citizenship and social status. Asian-British youngsters formed part of a 'well established' minority group, its members having an established historical and cultural tie with the host society. However, the Kurdish minority asylum-seekers were recently arrived with a very different cultural identity and experiences of migration.

Sport was used to help negotiate these different group identities. It was seen as important to help organise the Kurdish youngsters in relation to the local community, local authority and wider society. Many were unwilling to get involved in what they saw as British culture because of the complexity of their status – many of them were asylum-seekers waiting for their refugee status, or their refugee status had been rejected by the authority but they had chosen to remain in the country as illegal immigrants, or they had been granted leave to remain on humanitarian grounds.

Football was chosen as a vehicle since it was popular among both communities. Sport is also used by the Kurdish asylum-seekers in Derby to build a link with the Kurdish diaspora in the UK through the organisation of football matches and tournaments.

The project demonstrates how, used appropriately, sport can foster an environment of dialogue and mutual understanding. These were the responses of the young men interviewed for the research:

'I am a Pakistani ... but first of all I am a Muslim ... that's how I see it ... and lot of people when you talk about Islam we have got something in common ... we become related.'

'If you go and talk to the people who play in the same football team as them ... they will say that they [the Kurds] are very good lads ... they are not all bad. The people that don't communicate with the Kurdish people they're the ones who see them as dangerous (hanging around in the corners) ... [they say] they are just messing about ... with our girls ... these kind of views ...'

'If you don't know someone ... if someone is just standing there you can just have different views about them ... just by looking at them physically ... but when you communicate with someone ... then you say hang on I shouldn't stereotype this person because he is different or he is not talking to me ... that's how it works ... you can always stereotype someone ... but when you start talking to them you can see that they are not bad persons.'

Source: The role of sport and education in the inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees (Amara et al 2005)

Supplementary education

Our final proposed area of everyday experience is chosen to highlight an area of potential difficulty, the supplementary education provided by some communities, especially Muslim ones.

There is a substantial body of research examining the role of education and integration as well as the extent of segregation in UK schools (see for example Burgess et al 2004). However, less attention has been given to the role of supplementary education. Supplementary schools have been defined as providing education outside of school hours either to reinforce and support the regular school programme or to compensate for educational disadvantages (Maylor et al 2010). The term was originally coined to illustrate that these schools were often organised for and by minority ethnic communities and provided education which was outside or in addition to mainstream schooling. In the UK, some estimates suggest that there are now as many as 5,000 supplementary schools (Adonis 2006).

Depending on the communities they serve, supplementary schools exist for different reasons, including to make up for underperformance in mainstream schooling, to preserve language, and to preserve cultural and religious identity. Most supplementary schools enable children to interact with people their own age who share their cultural and linguistic

background. As such, supplementary education provides a strong opportunity for developing bonding forms of social capital, but little is known about the extent to which it can also help to build bridges between different communities to form stronger civic ties.

Madrassas have been perceived as one of the most controversial forms of supplementary education largely due to negative media coverage. Media coverage in the UK has suggested that madrassas have the potential to radicalise young Muslims, associating them with the foreign madrassas that have been connected to terrorist networks (Cherti et al 2011).

While media reports on madrassas in the UK often focus on their potential negative impacts on community cohesion and child welfare, Cherti et al suggest that the picture is less clear. They show that there are legitimate concerns about how some of these schools are run and the nature and quality of the curriculum taught within some of them, but also that there are good examples of innovative schemes that have been developed to build bridges between madrassas and their local communities and to promote a positive vision of British Muslim citizenship.

Madrassas are supplementary schools run for Muslim children that operate outside the mainstream education system. The Muslim Council of Britain has suggested that three main types of madrassa currently exist in the UK:

- the largest group are madrassas attached to mosques, with one survey suggesting that as many as 94 per cent of mosques in England and Wales are currently providing some kind of education for young people (Charity Commission 2009)
- those run by volunteers who teach Islamic classes in hired-out community centres or school halls
- informal classes held in people's homes.

A later study, by Cherti and Bradley (2011), was undertaken in order to generate a stronger evidence base on the operation and impact of madrassas in the UK, identifying the challenges that need to be addressed by policymakers, local communities and madrassas themselves.⁶ It highlights the important ways in which madrassas contribute to developing a sense of identity and fostering social cohesion.

The findings suggest that madrassas played a significant role in developing a sense of identity for young people – helping to develop strong bonding social capital. They could also play an important part in building links with other religious or educational institutions – paradoxically developing bridging capital – but the study suggested that though many madrassas were actively making these links, there were barriers to doing so. Some key findings are summarised in the following boxed text.

6 The research by Cherti and Bradley is based on a survey of 179 madrassas, in-depth interviews and workshops with parents, madrassa teachers, madrassa pupils (past and present), and interviews with other stakeholders such as local authority representatives, while drawing on a review of the available literature and analysis of media coverage of madrassas from 2001 to 2010.

Summary of the key findings regarding madrassas, identity and social cohesion, from Cherti and Bradley 2011

The study found that madrassas can play an important role in reinforcing cultural values and helping their students to reconcile the multiple identities involved in being a young Muslim in Britain, despite the difficulties this involves for the young person and the madrassa. The schools provided students with a strong sense of religious identity, giving them confidence in their Muslim faith. In some cases madrassas set out to help children to define their place within society as a whole, benefiting from the additional support their teachers were able to provide outside of the mainstream school context.

The study also examined the links madrassas were making within their community to develop relationships with other supplementary schools. To assess the degree to which this takes place, madrassas were surveyed on whether they had links with schools similar to themselves. Fifty-five per cent of madrassas stated that their school had no links with schools similar to themselves but were keen to develop them.

One madrassa representative spoke of their efforts to increase these links:

‘Minhaj-ul-Qur’an itself now has set up something called the Peace Integration Council and what we try to do is build links with a local church, for example, and having an exchange dialogue with them as well, where they can come to visit us here and we go to visit them there as well, and that’s something that’s key as well. We want to build on that. That’s just an initial step as well so it works both ways.’

Madrassa representative, Bradford

However, many of those interviewed for the research felt madrassas were poorly linked to the wider community for a range of reasons. In particular, madrassas were seen as independent organisations, something confirmed by the fact that they are funded mostly through parental fees. There was a strong feeling that increasing links with the wider community would be beneficial to pupils, madrassas and the community as a whole, but it was felt that there were challenges to developing these links.

However, efforts were being made to create links with the wider community – for example, some madrassas talked about holding open days where the public, including non-Muslims, could visit and learn more about them:

‘We hold bazaars and fairgrounds as well ... we have a summer fair at the end of every year ... organised and run by the students themselves ... we invite people from the local community as well as non-Muslims so it’s a good form of [fostering links]. Introducing Islam to the wider community [is] needed, especially in the climate we’re living [in] and the fear that is obviously surrounding us.’

Madrassa teacher, London

This was also suggested by another madrassa teacher who felt creating links would help to improve the perceptions the wider community have of madrassas:

‘If we have an open day on a Saturday, invite all the neighbours, invite all the schools and the parents ... introduce them to what we are doing ... open the books, what is in the books ... I think people would definitely see us in different light ... we would not be the “suspicious madrassa” teaching how to, I don’t know, “how to kill others”, seriously because this is the perspective of people ... when they see us on Saturday morning... they are like ... “what are these Muslims up to today?”’

Participants voiced a strong desire to be open to the wider community and make their activities more visible. Some participants felt that they were already doing what they could to increase links with the wider community:

‘I think it’s always had an open-door policy. I don’t think anybody has ever said you can’t see what we’re doing. I don’t think society is not interested, they’re just too busy and, you know, people just make their own minds up that this is what they want to believe and ... this is what they understand it to be.’

Parent, Bradford

CONCLUSION

For over a decade, the debate on the integration of minority communities into European societies has been characterised by a simple choice between, on the one hand, a multicultural group-rights approach popular in much of the academic community and, on the other hand, an increasingly assimilative approach focused on developing a stronger sense of shared citizenship and national identity, which is popular among much of the policy community.

It is our contention that both of these models are mistaken, being premised on two false assumptions:

- that the communities at the centre of the discussion are preset, determinate entities, instead of continually shifting and internally complex patterns of identification
- that the focus of concern should be immediately on the grand level of citizenship and national identity, rather than at the more prosaic but nonetheless crucial domain of everyday experience.

As such, we propose that future work on the best ways of integrating minority communities into broader society should focus on everyday sites where identities are constructed and reconstructed and where new possibilities of group allegiance are continually developed. We believe that this is especially important given changing patterns of migration. As increasingly diverse and often temporary groups move in and out of major European countries, people are constantly led to negotiate and renegotiate their own identities and their relationships with others. They do so, of course, largely within the everyday settings we have identified. If we are to have a stable social order in the face of such a 'churn' of migrant communities, we will need to have more and more everyday interactions where peaceable and mutually enriching identities can be crafted.

In this briefing document, we have suggested that four potential areas for further exploration in this regard are early-years childcare, shopping and consumption, leisure activities, and supplementary education. We have surveyed much of the available literature in these areas and have concluded that there are significant reasons to suppose that further research, especially ethnographic research, in each of these areas could significantly enhance the options available to policymakers concerned to enhance integration throughout European states. We recognise, of course, that difficult practical, ethical and scholarly questions will remain even if this general direction of research is followed. But we believe nonetheless that it provides a crucial new start for work in this vital area of public policy.

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