Research Project:

Community through Digital Connectivity? Communication Infrastructure in Multicultural London

Final Report

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Executive Summary

1. Communication matters to multicultural urban societies. The locale of our study – Harringay, North London – benefits from diverse and dynamic communication infrastructures. A range of networks support connections within the locale and between the locale and other urban, national and transnational places of importance to residents' identities. Harringay is connected internally, and externally with other places in the country and around the world. Connections are many – sometimes they converge and sometimes they diverge and compete with each other.

2. The range and diversity of communication infrastructures matters in terms of (i.) the range and quality of civic engagement; (ii.) social capital; (iii.) sense of belonging. This is particularly the case in multicultural urban areas, where the local society is constituted by people of different cultural and social backgrounds, who possess different kinds of cultural and social capital. Diverse communication infrastructures support locals in sustaining meaningful connections and in feeling informed and included in urban publics.

3. Digital communication and social media support sustained and effective citizen participation in Harringay, with information and communication exchanges feeding back into the locale's public social and political life. However, digital communication does not benefit all locals to the same extent, as digital inequalities are still prominent in the global city.

4. Face to face communication matters as much as mediated communication in urban societies. Face to face communication enables and enhances networks of information and support among neighbours and members of different communities – ethnic, cultural – but also school and neighbourhood communities. Face to face communication sometimes compensates for the uneven access, use and benefit of media.

5. Urban societies of growing social and economic prosperity still contain significant inequalities. Communication infrastructures can exacerbate these inequalities (especially if they are available and benefit only the few) or can ameliorate them (especially if and when they are diverse, open, democratic and when supported and recognised for their different functions by urban publics and authorities).

This project examined the role that communication plays in promoting and hindering community among London's diverse populations. Community represents a system of values and moral codes, which provide a sense of collective identity and identification with a bounded whole (Cohen, 1985) – in this case, with the city and, more particularly, the urban locale. While symbolic and structural resources such as education, local institutions and property have been systematically studied as community-building resources in the city, urban communication infrastructures are little studied and their potential as community assets remain largely unrecognised. Yet with over half of the world population now inhabiting cities (UN Population Division, 2014), how people communicate with, or withdraw from others in urban societies matters greatly. This is particularly challenging in the case in the global city, a city of concentrated difference, especially along ethnic and cultural lines. Such an investigation has even more relevance at times when the overconcentration of minorities and migrants in cities is targeted by policy makers as a cause of community disintegration and urban anomie (Asthana & Parveen, 2016; Beebeejaun, 2008). Our research in a multicultural London locale represents a systematic effort to record the communicative opportunities and challenges for building community within/across/against ethnic and cultural difference.

For London, the most culturally diverse city in the world and one of the most connected (Massey, 2005), the challenges of co-occupancy and community are pressing. How does London's rich communication infrastructure enable Londoners to communicate with each other? Does this in turn contribute to social capital and building community? Or does it segregate people across social and cultural lines? By focusing on a highly culturally diverse part of London – Harringay, Borough of Haringey, North London – this study examined the role of communication infrastructure in connecting and separating the different groups occupying the same locale.

The project was conceptualised and developed at the Dept. of Media and Communications, LSE, in parallel with a project conducted in Alhambra (a diverse neighbourhood of the wider Los Angeles area) by the Metamorphosis group at the University of Southern California. The two teams shared a range of theoretically and empirically informed questions and methodological tools. The two teams collaborated and consequently produced some comparative analytical work. As the teams worked independently, the Metamorphosis project is not discussed in this report, which focusses exclusively on the London study.

Literature review and conceptual framework

While urban communication infrastructures are often studied top-down, for example focusing on how broadband networks and digital connectivity in cities define social, economic and professional practices and urban prosperity (Augiri, 2013; Williamson, 2015) this project has taken a bottom-up approach, examining the communicative opportunities generated through people's actions within and beyond their locale. Its aim has been to understand the role of different forms and expressions of communication in promoting or undermining participation, belonging and social capital. We learned from Bourdieu's (1985, 1992) conception of social capital as the sum of resources that accrue to the possession of durable networks of sustained (institutionalised) relations and recognition. We were particularly interested in understanding how practices of communication and sociability support groups' efforts to gain access to resources that will advance their symbolic and material power. Thus, we delved into an exploration of meaningful connections for Londoners through an approach to communication infrastructure that draws from and feeds into ecological approaches to the city and communication (Ball-Rokeach & Kim, 2006; Ball-Rokeach, Kim, & Matei, 2001; Drucker & Gumpert, 2016; Lane, 2015). This growing tradition follows the Chicago School of Sociology approach to the city as a functioning organism, where communication and technologies constitute infrastructures that shape conditions and forms of interaction, thus informing the possibilities or restrictions in the constitution of communities (Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925). An ecological approach is even more critical for the city of difference (Georgiou 2013) – the city where people of different backgrounds and trajectories live cheek by jowl, and where the critical question of "how we live together in difference" is central and urgent.

Living the city of difference

The discussion is inspired by urban scholarship on cultural and social urban diversity (Ash Amin, 2012; Massey, 2005) and argues for the importance of communication in understanding its politics. Urban life opens up a space for studying new forms of belonging and their socio-cultural meanings at the intersection of the cultural, social and economic dynamics that make the global city (Eade, 1997). Amin's recognition of the city as a space of "mingling" (Amin: 60) among strangers is subject to these dynamics and the structural, geographical, symbolic and material elements of the global city. As our research has revealed, the spatiality of physical proximity enhances "mingling" across difference. But

"mingling" can lead to a range of socio-cultural experiences: the emergence of diverse publics and multicultural communities, or conflict, inequalities and withdrawal from proximate others.

The opportunities and challenges of living with difference constitute a reality for those living in cities, what Massey calls "thrown togetherness, the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now" (2005: 14); but also raise an ethical challenge: how this thrown togetherness shapes "an urban politics of living with difference" (Amin 2012: 63). Possibilities for such a politics are inherent in the intense juxtapositions of difference (Amin & Thirft, 2002). This is often the case in the global city's multicultural neighbourhoods shaped and reshaped constantly through the mobility of new and old inhabitants into its territory (Zukin, 2010) and through the range of encounters this mobility gives rise to. The urban public space is a space for negotiation of "thrown togetherness", as much as it is a space where tensions and inequalities that surround it are revealed.

Public co-presence often allows the emergence of new publics (Fatah gen. Schieck, Al-Sayed, Kostopoulou, Behrens, & Motta, 2013; Memarovic, 2013; Motta et al., 2013), as well as new conflicts and inequalities. As we will show from our fieldwork, both these possibilities are enabled through physical contact but also through varied forms of mediation. In his analysis of mediation, Amin (2012) refers to the urban infrastructure that includes the built environment and social services but also technologies and symbolic culture. These infrastructures manage physical and mediated contact, informing an urban "collective unconscious" (ibid.: 63); yet, inequalities in access and use of infrastructures also raise questions about who might be excluded by this "collective unconscious".

Urban communication infrastructures

Communication infrastructures, as constituted in the range of systems and technologies that regulate and manage everyday urban communication, represent a rich, diverse and contested element of urban infrastructures (Ash Amin, 2012; Georgiou, 2013). As Buffoni argues (1997), communication infrastructures can become symbolic resources that support meaningful connections, compensating for the lack of material resources. As a critical element of the urban ecology, they both reveal the specificities of the locale's communication cultures and open the locale to other spaces through networks of communication expanding beyond its boundaries (Leurs, 2014). For example, ethnic media often reaffirm local and

transnational community ties, while local media – such as local press or local online social media – often emphasise the particularity of communication and engagement within a specific place (Ball-Rokeach and Kim 2006). Both the media and communications that strengthen ethnic particularity and those that challenge it play an important role in managing ties and networks in the locality and beyond (Nedelcu, 2012) .

Yet, communication infrastructures, like all infrastructures in the city (Tonkiss, 2013), are subject to structural divides. They cannot be idealised, as sometimes they reaffirm boundaries, especially in protecting privilege and ownership of knowledge and status (Bourdieu, 1986). Digital communication networks for example can benefit some groups against others (Van Dijck, 2009). Importantly, the elective affinity, mutuality and social innovation that certain networks privilege, can disadvantage individuals whose primary attachments are associated with relations of kin and shared cultural background (Chambers, 2006) . Thus, infrastructures carry a contradictory possibility: on the one hand, they support community and participation, and on the other, they reaffirm and enhance existing inequalities in the city, especially through new forms of exclusion, such as those relating to specific systems of knowledge, skills, and cultures of connectivity (Van Dijck, 2013).

Communication assets

Communication infrastructures can benefit individuals and groups in urban locales by providing them with material and symbolic tools – assets – that help them manage everyday life, as well as access to resources and to others in the locale. Such tools, which we refer to as communication assets (Ball-Rokeach and Kim 2006), can be used to advance neighbourhood participation, place-making, and thus a sense of belonging in multicultural urban locales. In the literature, community assets are discussed as resources summoned, mobilised, and appropriated by locals in developing networks of support and urban development; these can be generated and supported through communication infrastructures.

Three existing approaches to urban neighbourhood assets (Alexiou, Alevizou, Zamenopoulos, deSousa, & Dredge, 2014; Ball-Rokeach & Kim, 2006; Chen et al., 2013; Greene, 2013; Kretzmann & Mcknight, 1993, 1996) are relevant to our analysis. In different ways, these three approaches show how material, social and/or symbolic communication resources can be mobilised by groups and individuals in enhancing or undermining urban neighbourhood communities and local life. The *Asset-Based Community Development* (ABCD) approach

emphasises social links and institutional and non-institutional local connections, which, if mobilised effectively, can advance specific goals of community development (Kretzmann & Mcknight, 1993, 1996; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003, 2005; Vosoughi & Monroe-Ossi, 2011). The *Communication Infrastructure Theory* (CIT) (Ball-Rokeach & Kim, 2006; Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Chen, Dong, Ball-Rokeach, Parks, & Huang, 2012; Chen et al., 2013; MetaConnects.org, 2013; Ognyanova et al., 2013) brings communication to the heart of community development, identifying different forms of communication infrastructures – from media to ethnic organisations – as assets that can advance shared knowledge and engagement in urban communities. Finally, the *Civic Creativity Model* (CCM) (Alevizou, 2014; Alexiou et al., 2014; Greene, 2013; The Open University, 2013) systematically studies digital media as elements of urban infrastructures that can support local communities, especially in mobilising and supporting voice among marginalised populations in the city. Each of these approaches, influential in its own way, has certain limitations, which can be together summarised in two ways: (i.) research on urban community assets in general pays little attention to the multispatial context where public engagement and efficacy might take place – e.g. other spaces in the city, the nation, and transnational connections – overemphasising the significance and containment of the locale; (ii.) if not completely ignored, communication is less theorised in its complexity, with these approaches privileging either mediated or interpersonal forms of communication.

Yet, and importantly, all three approaches invite us to consider urban residents' agentive skills in mobilising infrastructures to develop their own neighbourhood but also in imagining their own position in the urban world. Methodological tools and vocabulary developed in this research tradition are particularly useful for recording their' own perceptions of assets they mobilise to support everyday practice, but also their acts of public participation and community. *Hotspots* and *comfort zones*, a methodological vocabulary introduced by the Metamorphosis project (MetaConnects.org, 2013), have become useful tools that we employed to record Londoners' own identification of spaces where crucial information about the locale is exchanged (*hotspots*) and where socialising and bonding (*comfort zones*) take place in the urban locale.

Research questions

In dialogue with the conceptual discussions along the three distinct traditions of research briefly outlines above, this project aimed to address a key research question:

In what ways does communication infrastructure advance or hinder local participation and community among Harringay's diverse population?

In addition to the main RQ, the project investigated these empirical questions:

(i) In what ways, if at all, are intercultural relations supportive of and supported by systems of knowledge and communication organised through mediated and face to face encounters?

(ii) How important are local, national and transnational networks of communication in sharing and enhancing participation and community among Harringay's population?

Context of study

Harringay has been a migrant destination throughout the 20th century and currently hosts approx. 25,000 people. Harringay is in the heart of the London Borough of Haringey, one of the most diverse areas of the UK, with 65.3% of its population not self-identifying as White British[1]. Amongst the most prominent ethnic groups are the White British (23%), the Black Caribbean (7.1%), and the Turkish, who in some statistics are masked with other Europeans under the category White Other (36.5%)[2]. While containing high levels of poverty, Harringay is currently undergoing a process of regeneration and gentrification, a process that has brought in the locale more affluent young families. The area is organised as a grid of domestic streets that expand on the two sides of a long and vibrant high street – Green Lanes.

We chose Harringay as place of study for two reasons. First, this is a very diverse area with a rich public life and with few apparent interethnic and social tensions, representing one of the main incarnations of global city's functioning multiculture (Gilroy, 2006). Locals' diverse cultural and social backgrounds do not appear as a source of concern in public discourse but rather, they are often celebrated as a positive element of the locale's identity, as we will show below. Second, this is an area with a rich and diverse communication infrastructure. There is a successful online hyperlocal social network with approx. 9,000 subscribers (Harringay Online [HoL] – harringayonline.com); two local newspapers; more than half a dozen ethnic newspapers; at least four local ethnic radio stations. Alongside the rich mediascapes lie physical infrastructures of communication, such as numerous community organisations, religious institutions, parks and a lively high street.

[1] (Haringey Council, 2011).
[2] (ONS, 2011).

Methodology

Our study was a year-long multimethod project, located in Harringay, North London and conducted between September 2013 and August 2014. As the main question driving the study focusses on the ways in which local people of a multicultural neighbourhood like Harringay communicate in the context of cultural diversity, we decided to focus on three established and numerically significant ethnic groups, as these are recorded in the Census: White British; Turkish; Black Caribbean. In the geographical space of Harringay, we analysed the role that communication infrastructures play in bringing together or separating locals of different backgrounds.

The range of methods we used are:

- **Focus groups:** Five focus groups with 29 local residents of (mixed) Turkish, British white and Black Caribbean backgrounds. Each focus group included participants from the same ethnic background (with some individuals having a mixed background): the Turkish and White British White mixed group were divided across gender. A mixed-gender group was conducted with the Black Caribbean mixed participants. Recruitment for this group proved most challenging, primarily because of the less numerous representation of Black Caribbean residents in the area. All focus groups were organised in three parts. These included (i.) an interactive warm-up exercise where participants visually identified *hotspots* (where vital information is exchanged) and *comfort zones* (where they meet others to socialise or bond) in their neighbourhood, inspired by Metamorphosis' asset mapping methods and vocabulary; (ii.) a group interview focussed on communication practices and connections/disconnections with others in the neighbourhood; (iii.) an interactive target-oriented exercise, in which participants were asked to identify people, institutions and media they would mobilise in a fictional case scenario of a community development project; this last exercise was inspired by the Civic Creativity Model (CCM) asset methodology (Alevizou, 2014).
- **Public engagement event**: This event was organised during a local school's summer fair and involved approximately 45 local residents of different backgrounds (with as random selection as possible, and on the basis of volunteer participation) who attended the fair with their families. This exercise led to the production of a creative map of the local communication infrastructure, as identified by locals. Participants were called to identify *hotspot*/*comfort zones* but also "no-go" areas.

- **Communication asset mapping**: Development of six digital communication asset maps (Motta 2016a and Motta 2016b) identifying the geographical concentration and dispersal of different ethnic groups in the urban locale.
- **Ethnographic research**: Sustained and intense engagement with the neighbourhood included ethnographic research over nine months. This included participant and nonparticipant observations in public spaces, such as the high street and parks, semi-public spaces, such as cafés, and unstructured interviews and conversations with local residents, community leaders and local business owners. Although there were limited resources to code and analyse these data, observations played an important role in developing informed hypotheses that were then refined using the previously detailed methodologies, as well as in developing a deeper understanding of the research context.
- **Survey:** 138 adult residents of (mixed) Turkish, British White and Black Caribbean backgrounds participated in a survey in the early stage of the project. From these 53 self-identified as Turkish, 24 as Black Caribbean, and 61 as White British, representing the number of respondents for each ethic group.
- Apart from ethnicity, the other criterion for recruitment was parenthood. We recruited parents of school-age children, as we expected them to have some sustained commitment to their locale through family life. The survey was designed to be broadly consistent with that used to CIT research in Alhambra (Ball-Rokeach and Kim 2006), but less costly: thus, rather than lengthy telephone interviews we conducted short interviews in public spaces. Selection was randomised as much as possible, but some bias was inherent to the times and places in which interviews were performed. The survey data was analysed using standard descriptive statistics. We express the survey results in percentages to normalise and more easily compare findings across the different groups, given that the number of respondents varies.
- Our survey was not designed to gather representative statistics for the entirety of Harringay; these are already available (e.g. the 2011 census). Instead, we focused explicitly on community building behaviours around Green Lanes influenced by spatial and cultural intersections. Hence, we targeted people on the streets and communal areas of the neighbourhood, leading to a self-selected sample of residents concerned with community building in public spaces. Within this sample, we studied the observed differences and similarities between people who self-identified with the largest three ethnicities in the neighbourhood. The attendees to our asset-mapping workshops, focus groups, the public engagement event and those responding the survey were similarly sampled; therefore, we are

confident to triangulate and complement the information we derived from all these research methods.

The research design and analysis benefitted from research engagement and collaboration with the Metamorphosis team at the University of Southern California, especially through regular exchanges and meetings with Sandra Ball-Rokeach, Chi Zhang and Carmen Gonzalez. With the Metamorphosis team, we shared a range of methodological tools and we adapted some of Metamorphosis' existing tools to the particularities of London's urban realities. Of particular note were the design of surveys to measure CIT and the mapping of *hotspots* and *comfort zones*. We also benefitted from engagement and collaboration with Giota Alevizou of the Open University and shared and adapted some of the asset mapping tools she and her colleagues have developed in the context of the Creative Citizens project (Alevizou 2014), and which they generously shared with us. Giota Alevizou participated in two focus groups and a number of brainstorming sessions with the team, contributing to knowledge exchange and to the development of communication asset mapping tools, which were integrated in the focus group discussions. LSE's MSc students Gaia Caruso and Skye Featherstone generously offered their time assisting with the conduct of the survey and Gaia Caruso also assisted with note-taking and photo taking during the public engagement event and two focus groups. Vivi Theodoropoulou of the Technical University of Cyprus offered advice on analysis and assisted with the conduct of a focus group and the public engagement event.

This is a small-scale study and inevitably it has significant limitations. We do not claim that our findings represent the full range of opinions, experiences and communication practices among Harringay's population. This complexity would be impossible to grasp within the context of a study of this scale. However, these findings represent a systematic, even if limited, analysis of a range of experiences and opinions among Harringay's locals in regards to their engagement with their locale and with each other, their communication practices and their sense of belonging.

Main findings

This section summarises our key findings, as these relate to (i.) living the city of difference; (ii.) access and use of media and communications; (iii.) sense of belonging.

Living the city of difference

City spaces like Haringay/Green Lanes bring together hyper-diversity (Vertovec 2006) but also channel its meanings. The diverse media and communication landscape that expands across the urban and digital streets of Harringay/Green Lanes makes separation possible – even enhances it at times. This separation is partly evident in the lively presence of ethnic press, the multilinguality of communication (and its associated restrictions) but is also expressed in non-ethnically specific media. The very successful digital social network Harringay Online is a vibrant communication space, with great local success and influence, but which is a medium primarily used by white British middle class locals. Our survey of 138 respondents showed that ~46 % of the white British – and largely middle class – respondents subscribe to Harringay Online's newsletter, compared to only ~8% of the Turkish and ~25% of Black Caribbean respondents.

This evidence of communicative separation was acknowledged by many participants across the three different ethnic groups. However, different participants interpreted this separation in a range of ways. A White British man spoke of his concern about what he sees as local divides that spread across the physical and virtual domains:

> You tend to find Turkish and Middle Eastern underrepresented in schools, at PSAs or PTAs, on boards of governors, HoL [Harringay Online]. Almost everywhere. Only the tech-savvy on internet and who speak English confidently engage, but they are very few…The Turkish question is an interesting one, but it is a real challenge for the neighbourhood. There is linguistic barrier first, but also a cultural barrier. Perhaps it would be good to have a HoL, but for the Turkish community? It is not clear how to breach the divide with them and get them involved locally.

While British White participants often mentioned Harringay Online as a key location for finding information and connection with others in the neighbourhood, Turkish and Black Caribbean respondents highlighted different community centres/spaces (such as churches, community centres, and Tottenham Football ground) as their main spatial source of information/communication, which in turn enables them to bind together as a community.

When it comes to physical spaces of congregation and information, White British respondents highlighted restaurants, cafés and pubs as their main spatial source of

information/communication, which in turn enable them to bind together as a community. Black Caribbean participants stressed that local shops and businesses are important spatial sources of information and communication, more than any of the other two groups.

~70% of the Turkish survey respondents are members of local ethnic community centres. ~63% of Black Caribbean survey respondents belong to a sports or recreational group. Finally, ~69% of survey White British respondents belong to educational groups and other neighbourhood groups (e.g. play street groups or residents associations).

In addition, ~24% of the Turkish respondents, ~39% of the White British and ~42% of the Black Caribbean surveyed volunteer in local schools. More than half of Black Caribbean respondents (~54%) reported having donated money to a local school. In contrast, ~64% of Turkish respondents and ~64% of White British respondents mentioned they do not donate money to local schools.

Respondents from all ethnic groups reported that they share information, communicate and socialise with communities different to their own mainly in local parks. Therefore, according to our findings, parks represent important cross-cultural communication spaces for the people of Harringay.

Language skills

The Turkish survey respondents were proficient in two languages or more, as opposed to their White British and Black Caribbean counterparts, who reported speaking fewer languages. The level of linguistic skills and fluency influence forms of sociality and connection or disconnection from other groups that participants share the locale with. For example, only ~59% of the Turkish respondents state that they can speak English. Thus, there is a strong language barrier for a number of Turkish residents in their engagement with English language media, as well as with other English-speaking residents.

However, both respondents from this group and others spoke of a range of public connections and a range of bonds with others in their locale. The majority of White British (~89%), Black Caribbean (~80%) and Turkish (~70%) residents have at least one person who could keep an eye on their house when they are away on holiday.

Figures 1 and 2:

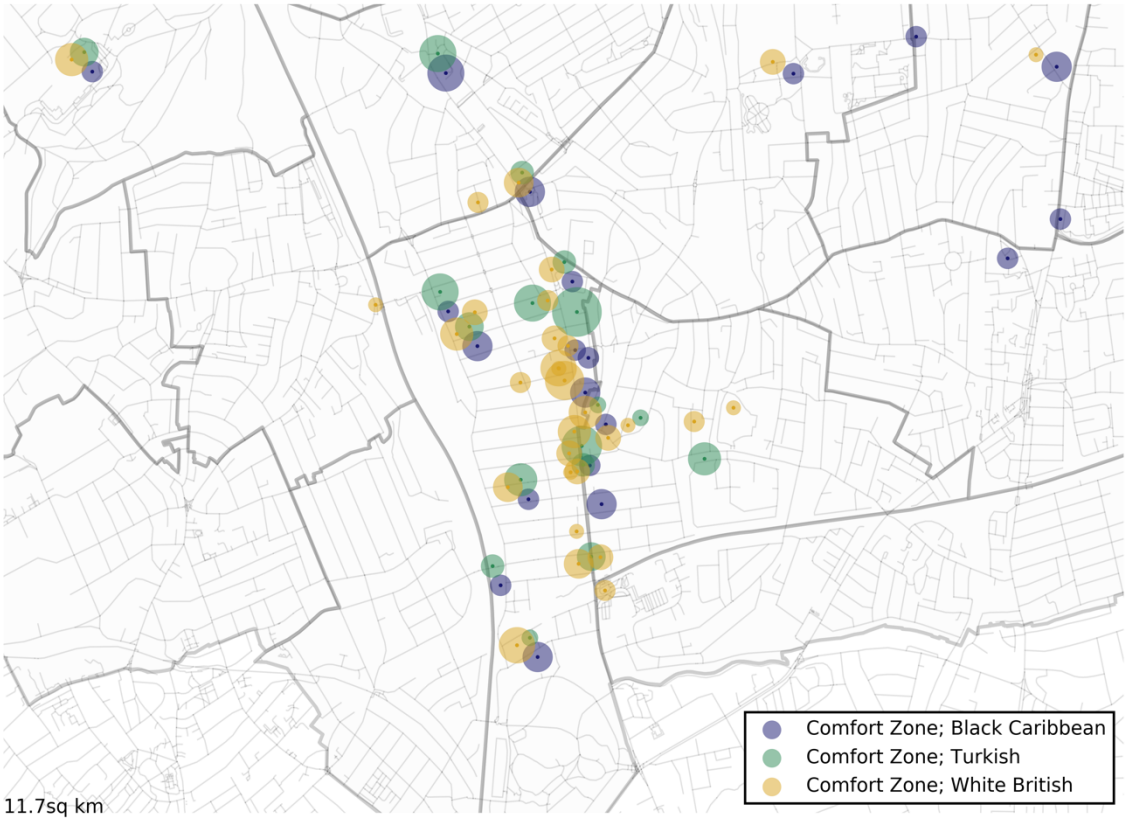

Figure 1: Harringay Map of comfort zones. Map data is © 2016 OpenStreetMap contributors and 2016 Mapzen. This image is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. (Motta 2017a).

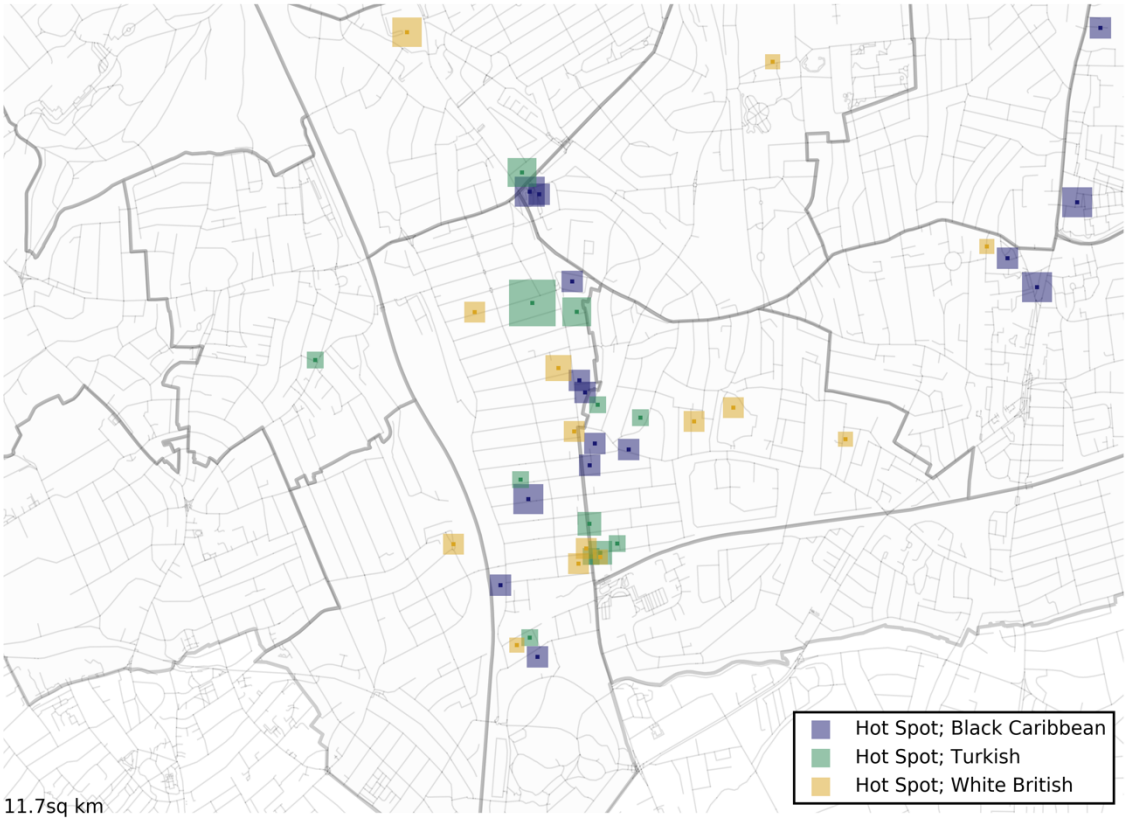

Figure 2: Harringay Map of hotspots. Map data is © 2016 OpenStreetMap contributors and 2016 Mapzen. This image is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0. (Motta 2017b).

All ethnicities exhibit more *comfort zones* than *hotspots*, as shown by Figure 1 and Figure 2. For the Turkish participants, these usually coincide with the community centres, such as the TCCA (Turkish Cypriot Community Association) and the TCWP (Turkish Cypriot Women's Project). For the Black Caribbean participants these coincide with parks and shops. Finally, for the White British participants these coincide with parks, restaurants and pubs. These findings were corroborated by survey responses with regards to group affiliations and informal conversations.

One of the large local parks, Finsbury Park, served as both a *hotspot* and *comfort zone* for all groups. In contrast, two other parks, Alexandra Palace and Fairland Park are perceived to be comfortable areas to socialise (*comfort zones*), but not places where people would obtain important information. Both during ethnographic fieldwork (Turkish) and within focus groups (Black Caribbean) participants mentioned the crucial importance Finsbury Park has for them. This park is an enabler for people to gather with friends and family to share the

preparation of meals, in particular barbecues, which is a common, traditional way of cooking for all of these cultures. We have observed many Black Caribbean, White British and Turkish people gathering with their families or friends in the park to socialise during the summer. This unique property of Finsbury Park (its use for meals and cooking) lends itself more for longer conversations that prove to be both useful and meaningful for people. This is opposed to more casual and brief encounters in other parks where traditional cooking is not allowed and stays are shorter. A Black Caribbean man participating in a focus group explained why Finsbury Park is so special:

> Finsbury Park is the only park within the area I know that you can actually engage with other people, because there's actually a Black Jamaican, he does this on a Friday on a summer (sic). He was doing this last year and it was brilliant. He brings a sound system, and his little barbecue kit and seriously, he would play music and it was mixed. Turks, polish, the black, they've all come to listen to his music and he would also bring chicken, which you wouldn't pay for, so he would barbecue chicken and hand it out. Every Friday, people would come with their cans of beer, seat back and listen to this beautiful music, and the barbecue was going. And even the sheriffs of the park, you are not supposed to have this barbecue, but because there was never any disturbances or problems, he said… 'listen boys, because there's never a problem all I wanted to do is to make sure that nobody leaves any rubbish or their plastic bags around, and then you can carry on'. And for them to actually let him do that, whereas in other places the police would have been called, and you would have been moved down. They didn't do that down there, which I thought it was quite good.

Access and use of media and communication infrastructures

Harringay's communication infrastructures are diverse, dynamic but also fragmented. The majority of White British participants benefit from information and exchanges on the local social media of Harringay Online, but this is not the case for the majority of ethnic minority participants. In terms of online local media, the survey showed that the White British participants use Harringay Online (~54%) as their main resource for information. Correspondingly, the Black Caribbean respondents reported that they predominantly use the *Harringay Independent*, combined with the *Tottenham & Wood Green Journal* (~38%) as

their main information sources. Finally, the Turkish respondents use as their main online information resources the *Harringay Independent* combined with the Turkish newspaper *Olay* (~21%).

Only ~17% of Turkish respondents use online UK media as their main source of information. In contrast, ~57% of White British respondents and ~46% of Black Caribbean respondents reported a preference for online UK media. Whilst most Turkish respondents (~77%) are unaware of the existence of Harringay Online, half of British Caribbean (~50%) and the majority of White British (~71%) surveyed knew about this resource.

Transnational media are important for the majority of Turkish participants. This is very different from most White British and Black Caribbean participants, who almost never use transnational media. Turkish respondents use Turksat (Turkish satellite TV) at home. However, and much more importantly, almost all community spaces in the neighbourhood (e.g. the community centres and barbershops) provide access to many major Turkish channels like CNNTurk, as well as to various Turkish newspapers. Community centres are important places where transnational media are consumed, discussed and assessed. In general, Turkish participants are more likely consume Turkish content through TV or printed newspapers, rather than through online sources.

The consumption of media in social spaces is also important for the Black Caribbean residents in the area. We have ethnographically recorded the community significance of spaces like barbershops and coffee shops. These are semi-public spaces which also offer media access to Sky, Setanta, pirate films and other types of media not readily available at home for many.

As recorded during the focus group interviews, the public engagement event, and during participant observation, Turkish participants value free printed local newspapers (in both English and Turkish language) as a source of information considerably more than other media. They also noted that, when they talk to their neighbours, they like to talk mostly about politics. The White British participants mentioned that, when they talk with their neighbours, they talk mostly about family and about their concerns with local environmental issues. The Black Caribbean participants stressed that radio contributes to their socialisation with others, and reported not engaging in small talk with neighbours as much as other participants. When

they do talk to neighbours, their conversations are mostly about neighbourhood improvements, regeneration plans and employment.

The patterns of media consumption across groups demonstrate the unevenness and inequalities that different users experience through media, but they also demonstrate that these inequalities are not linear and single-dimensional. At the same time, the transnational habitus associated with the migrant condition (Nedelcu 2012) gives many users the ability to move between different media environments more comfortably and to find spaces of expression and identification beyond converging communication spaces, which can reproduce certain national hierarchies. This is apparently, for example, in the rich way that a participant in the Turkish men's focus group described his media consumption:

> I listen to London radio…sometimes on Turkish radio…Read Turkish newspapers…On my TV, my mobile phone I watch BBC news… Even Turkish TV, I watch everything.

As the mediated locale is a dynamic and contested space of communication, residents develop a range of tactics in dealing with its inequalities of urban mediascapes. Some locals develop tactics for sharing information and knowledge even when they do not have direct access to media. For example, a focus group participant told us that she shares information she finds online with her elderly neighbours, as they do not themselves have digital skills. Often we also observed younger generations mediating access to information for their parents and grandparents, compensating for their limited linguistic or technological skills. This was especially visible in the case of first generation migrant Turkish women.

Others struggle and feel the frustration of being excluded from digital communication. As some participants (mostly Turkish men and women) told us, they often feel that important information and access to services are mostly, or exclusively, directed through digital platforms. Digital media increasingly replace other forms of sharing information and knowledge (such as official or commercial print publications which have ceased to exist or which are in the process of discontinuing their printed format).

This frustration became apparent in the Turkish men's focus group. A number of participants expressed their anxiety about further marginalization and exclusion from local affairs as a

result of communication policies that have moved most local official communication online. In the words of one of them:

> We used to get the [local government's information] facilities, we don't get it anymore…Haringey Council used to provide us with all the information in Haringey with newspaper. It used to be a free newspaper.

When asked why he wouldn't get this information online, he responded:

> But I don't have computer, I don't have computer facilities, I am not going to punch on my phone "what's going on in Haringey?" You understand?

While frustration and exclusion from digital information and communication are noticeable among first generation migrants, especially those over 40, the complexities of the digital mediascapes call for mobilisation of different skills among their users.

A highly educated participant explains how he mobilises his digital skills to navigate the hyperlocal Harringay Online according to his interests and needs, avoiding the more confrontational aspects of digital public engagement.

> I probably go deep into it [HoL] fairly regularly, just to search for information, every couple of days, just to sort of scan. Mainly, I think for me it is useful 'cause you see various conversations. There are all sorts of things that I might have been thinking about somehow anyway, like conversations about what schools are doing locally, a festival that's happening, or something to do with the traffic, or some sort of Green Lanes developments. So it is useful just in getting a sense of what information is being shared there. For me, is not that I take it too seriously, but often it can spark conversations you may have in more detail with other people that you know, that you bump into, and you might sort trust those a bit more, (rather) than some random rantings of who may not know what's going on, some of personal agendas being brought forward, especially at the moment because election hearings are getting on, so…[I] put kind of a filter; I try not to read too much into them. 'Cause a lot of what it is, is opinion and conjecture. And you can just spot that and filter that out. But if it is actual things that are relevant to report (like news), I think I would look for those. But

> a lot of it is just gossip and tittle-tattle, and you can choose how much you are going to get wrapped up in that to be honest. (White British Men's Focus Group).

Importantly, these are skills not shared across all participants. Among many working class, ethnic minority participants, such skills were demonstrated less often. These participants expressed anxieties as they felt uninformed and unaware of critical information in regards to education, social services, and housing. This was the case, for example, among many participants in the Turkish women's focus group.

Sense of belonging

Most participants share a sense of pride for their locale, even if at times they have ambivalent feelings about it. Typically, sensitive issues include access to services and housing, interethnic separation, local environment, and crime.

This (complex) sense of pride finds expression in many participants' identification with the area. This was primarily the case among the participants in the two White British focus groups. All participants in these groups praised their area, its diversity and unique identity. Some spoke with pride about local projects they are involved with – such as *Neighbourhood Watch*, play-street schemes, or children's sports initiatives. Most participants in the Turkish women's group agreed that Harringay is a good place to live, though for them, this discourse was less celebratory, as it was often accompanied with concern about housing, cost of living, and crime. Perhaps unsurprisingly, participants belonging in ethnic minority groups had more concerns with everyday issues, such as quality of housing and access to resources; these manifested even when expressing their pride for the area.

The evidence discussed so far demonstrates the identification and connections that participants sustain with other locals. As revealed in the survey findings, most residents have at least one person they could ask to keep an eye on their home whilst they are away. Respondents were instructed to define *neighbours* as those who live in the same building, block or around 15 minutes away from them and whom they trust enough to ask them to lend a hand. However, there is a significant minority of ~31% of Turkish residents and a ~20% of Black Caribbean residents who appear to have no one they think would help them. These percentages seem closely linked to those of the occupations of respondents. Overall, ~40% of the Turkish and ~21% of the Black Caribbean were unemployed and living in council

accommodation. Thus, it seems the people who live in council accommodation tend to have fewer neighbours they feel they can trust. Perhaps this is because tenants constantly change, or people do not invest in strong personal relationships within council estates. One possible reason for this is that they have the desire to eventually move out, and hence decide to bypass the emotional investment needed to create lasting bonds with their neighbours.

While many share pride and commitment to their urban locale, understandings of community are not always shared across difference. In the words of one of the focus group participants:

> There's a lot of harmony amongst the diversity, but actually when I talk about community and stuff going on, when you talk about like the Green Lanes Festival or things in the park, it's actually, not necessarily, it doesn't reflect the whole community. It tends to be, you know, I always say there's a strong middle class community here, but, which, so if there are events going on, then it tends to be quite mono-cultural. (White British Men's Focus Group).

Conclusions

This project confirmed that people who co-occupy multicultural locales in the global city demonstrate certain skills for coping with difference. We observed high levels of tolerance towards others, from all sides and among people of all backgrounds. Of course, tolerance does not equal respect or understanding. However, there is a possibility for understanding and collaboration emerging in the multicultural space of the intense juxtapositions of difference. This is expressed especially at times of crisis (e.g. campaign against the privatisation of a local hospital's grounds) or around specific projects, where interests of locals converge (e.g. schooling or crime).

Urban communication infrastructures represent a key mechanism to manage diversity but also community in the city. On the one hand, communication skills that expand from the high street to the digital street turn into valuable assets for building community – a local community that is fragmented, temporal, and conditional, but one which involves a number of diverse players. On the other hand, lively but fragmented urban communication infrastructures support micro-publics and communities based on culture, origin and diverting interests. As evidence shows, this fragmentation does not in itself jeopardise the possibility of respect and conviviality in the neighbourhood; rather, it supports different groups in

sustaining their sense of belonging and, for some, micro-publics that provide support and information to its members, especially those otherwise lacking access to critical information.

Yet, challenges in the city of difference remain, not least in terms of persistent inequalities that are reflected and partly reproduced in the media. This is most vividly expressed in the uneven use and benefit of digital media in the locale of our study. While some residents benefit from access to rich information and to effective elements of digital democracy, others seem completely unaware or are excluded from the digital engaged and effective publics.

Although people from very different socio-cultural backgrounds are thrown together and co-exist in physical spaces within urban multicultural locales, they relate differently to the communication assets available to them. In many cases, they use these assets to construct shared ethnic identities, which support a corresponding assertion of ethnic differences and a certain level of communicative segregation. Nevertheless, people still pursue diversity and mixing with others – particularly within specific geographical demarcations, such as parks or the high street. This highlights face-to-face encounters as a crucial mechanism to achieve cross-cultural engagement. Our research showed that it is possible to sustain a balance between separation and togetherness – a complex, even if sometimes contradictory mechanism for engagement with communities that are spatially grounded and also culturally defined. Further research on how different locales achieve, or fail to achieve, this balance is much needed. Such research could further understanding of the conditions and of the opportunities and challenges that multicultural cities face in managing and expanding diverse, inclusive and participatory cultures of civic engagement.

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