

## Conference report 'Intersectionality and the Spaces of Belonging', Bangor University, UK, June 28-29, 2012

(by Marcel Stoetzler, Marta Eichsteller, Leon Moosavi, Surpurna Banerjee, Zibiah Alfred, Adéla Souralová, Paula Pustulka and Joowon Yuk)

The Belonging and Ethnicity Research Group, BERG, at the University of Bangor, UK, organized and hosted in June 2012 an international two-day conference on the dual theme of 'intersectionality' – a currently widely discussed methodological concept in the social and human sciences – and 'spaces of belonging', a thematic field that primarily would denote issues of nationality and ethnicity (belonging to national or cultural spaces) but was intended to be open enough to include a wide variety of (actual or metaphorical) spaces and forms of belonging. The conference that was co-organized and sponsored by the British Sociological Association Theory Study Group and the Centre on Migration, Refugees and Belonging, University of East London, UK, provided just the thematic breadth that these two keywords were meant to elicit. Organisers included Prof. Howard Davis, Dr. Marcel Stoetzler, Dr. Robin Mann and Dr. Sally Baker.

The constellation of keynote speakers indicated the interdisciplinary framework of the conference: Professor Nira Yuval-Davis, director of the Centre on Migration, Refugees and Belonging, University of East London, UK, and Dr. Gurminder Bhambra, Director of the Social Theory Research Centre, University of Warwick, UK, are two leading British-based sociologists well known for their feminist and postcolonial work respectively, while Professor Jie-Hyun Lim, the director of the Institute of Comparative History and Culture, Hanyang University, Seoul, South Korea, is a historian highly regarded for his work on 'transnational history'. At the time of the conference, Jie-Hyun Lim was a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg (Institute of Advanced Study) Berlin.

After welcoming words by Professor Ian Rees Jones of Bangor University, the Head of the School of Social Sciences, the conference was opened by the **first keynote speaker**, Professor Nira Yuval-Davis, who spoke on 'The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Constellations' (which is also the title of her latest book). The respondent was Dr Gurminder K. Bhambra. (The report on keynote one is by Marta Eichsteller.)

Yuval-Davis explained that the studies on intersectionality originated in the gender inequality discourse, but that currently its application and relevance are becoming significant for studies on the issue of social exclusion in general. In this context, intersectionality should be treated as a form of 'stratification theory'.

The character of identity intersections indicates that concepts such as gender, class and ethnicity are not only additive, but mutually constitutive, thus their overlapping character modifies social divisions within society. Furthermore, the entangled identity categories are irreducible, in an ontological sense, and cannot be understood by focusing only on one type of social divisions. For

these reasons intersectionality research is highly dependent on the context discussed. However, the complexity of identity intersections leads to the question of how many 'social divisions' should be taken into consideration without losing sight of the subject in question.

Yuval-Davis discussed belonging in terms of social locations: intersectional, mutually constitutive, historical belongings; identifications and emotional attachments; identities as narratives, performances; ethical and political values. She then put the focus on belonging into the framework of political agency, discussing 'politics of belonging', sometimes described as the 'dirty work of boundary maintenance', assuring the set of rights as well as responsibilities associated with and regulated through the categories of belonging such as citizenship, nationalism, religion or cosmopolitanism. These categories, however, are highly contested in the current global situation. The mobility of people, associated with the development of spatial rights and the separation between the discourse of citizenship and nation state as seen through the perspective of administrative and territorial state borders, is significantly altering the discourse of identity intersections. Yuval Davis outlined the following three 'contestations' in her presentation:

#### Citizenship:

- The difference between participation-based citizenship and citizenship in the form of entitlement
- Active citizenship (for example as a tax-payer) as opposed to activist citizenship, involvement in social movements (often international)
- Privatization of welfare as well as public spaces
- Intimate citizenship (surveillance and body modification)
- Multicultural and multi-layered citizenship – membership in different religious, EU and political projects

#### Nationalism:

- Nation as not necessarily bound to the national state (in the administrative and territorial senses)
- Nations as imagined communities with continuing generations are challenged by mobility and globalization
- There are two competing versions of nationalism: autochthonic – based on common origin and culture vs. the multi-ethnic – based on the common present and future
- Alternative senses of belonging – e.g. diaspora identities – create a network of belonging beyond the nation state.

#### Religion:

- The connection between secularism and nationalism, and its questioning
- Religious fundamentalism which is framed in the form of politics of belonging

- Civil society and grass-root social spaces are often facilitated by religious organizations
- Multi-faithism and conversions challenge the stable religious institutions

The discussant Gurinder K. Bhambra raised the following points:

1. The first discussion point highlighted the fact that most of the identity intersections are considered to take place within the individual framework of identifications. As the social context changes, however, it affects different aspects of the intersections. It reproduces one social division, but not the other. In order to understand the identity intersections in terms of social reproduction they should be seen as epistemological communities – black, woman, and working class – overlapping on the individual.
2. The second discussion point addressed the maintenance of politics of belonging and difficulties in building new identities especially from a top – down perspective. Decisions on the history curriculum, for example the teaching of British history excluding the colonial heritage, as currently debated and its impact on education and stratification should be made with special consideration of the variety of groups represented in British society.
3. The third discussion point emphasized the changing character of spaces of belonging. The on-going privatization of the public sphere limits the sense of community and the question who gets in and who is kept outside of community life. For example, cosmopolitan elites who themselves consist of a variety of nationalities and cultures are occupying the same spaces but in the process exclude the local population.

In the discussion, the main concern addressed by the audience was how intersectionality should be approached in research. Where some identity categories are more prominent than others in the empirical data, the question is how the issue of empirical evidence should be addressed and resolved.

The conference consisted of three keynote sessions and five sets of two or three parallel panels respectively.

### **Panel 1a (report by Leon Moosavi):**

Paula Pustulka's paper 'Introducing Intersectionality from afar: Theorizing lives of Polish female migrants on the crossroads of class, ethnicity and gender' discussed migration and motherhood in Germany and the UK, making gender the focal point. Paula holds an insider position as a Polish migrant mother and she seeks to give a voice to other mothers. Her central question is: How do migration and motherhood work together? It is in the labour market where the Polish and motherhood aspects of identity come to the fore but also within decisions about parenting. Poland is a homogeneous nation but the mothers face changes when they come to the UK. They seem to be aware of the 'ethnic ladder' or 'racial pecking order'. They themselves can pass as white until their accent is heard. Some employers actually favour Polish employees because they believe the stereotypes about them being hard workers. Polish

migrants have to learn the 'racial hierarchies' because they are not used to them. The Polish migrants actually express some racist views about Black people such as when they construct themselves as better immigrants than others. They feel that they are the victims of institutional racism and expect to be privileged because they are EU members. They don't want to be associated with all foreign nationals but rather want to have their whiteness acknowledged. Some of the structures from back in Poland are brought to the UK when they migrate which means that where you are from within Poland affects how Polish people already in the UK will treat you. They do feel as though they are socially mobile and have an improved life but also they feel as though their skills are not appreciated as much as they should be. Overall, we can see the way in which different migrants interact with each other when they come to the UK is quite dynamic, sometimes collaboratively and sometimes in tension with each other. As female migrants they also have to contend with specific stereotypes about Eastern European women.

Umut Erel's paper 'Migrant Mothers negotiating the Politics of Belonging' argued that mothers are crucial conduits for the transmitting of a cultural habitus to children and they play an especially crucial role in doing this in migrant settings because of the desire to retain one's culture and language. Some migrants can culturally belong to Britain and to other cultures without being seen as having a tension as the foreign culture isn't considered as inferior whereas others are seen as having to compromise their culture if they want to be British. A case study of a German mother with 3 kids between 15 and 21 is used. She is privileged as a teacher and a cultural consumer. She tries to teach her children German and to be proud of their German heritage even though they live in the UK. She has the resources to hire a German teacher because she is a wealthy migrant. Due to this she has more flexibility in choosing which schools to send her kids to. There are some doubts amongst some migrant mothers about their ability to be good mothers in new contexts because they are not as familiar and confident in the environment as they would be elsewhere.

Indra Angeli Dewan's paper 'Thwarted cosmopolitanism? The experiences of mixed race youth in London' reported on ethnographic research that had been conducted in a school where Indra was working. She spoke to mixed race kids using interviews. No distinction was made between different types of mixedness, meaning that being mixed was the same regardless of whether one's mother or father had a certain identity or what that identity was. Mixed race can incorporate a lot of different identities and class is also a pivotal aspect of the combination. The discourse of cosmopolitanism plays out in mixed race lives. Middle class girls were more likely to have certain types of cosmopolitan identities. The boys of mixed race and working class status are the most disadvantaged from all the mixed groups. The middle class mixed race kids were the most successful. In summary, mixedness in a boy is considered as worse than it is in a girl for whom it can be seen as an advantage. It was also common for the mixed race boys to identify as black

whereas the girls would identify as mixed race. Mixed race identity is becoming more accepted in places like London, and also more common. Some mixed race people exoticise being mixed. They do not report feeling that they are held back by being mixed race. Class seems to be more significant meaning that there appears to be a “trumping of class over race”. It is perhaps easier for mixed race people to go about their lives and be successful than it is for those who are considered ‘fully black’. Mixed race boys do have difficulties in encountering racism though, such as frequent stop and search experiences at the hands of the police. A higher class position can stop a mixed race person from suffering but if one is of a lower class and mixed race then it can be very difficult.

**Panel 1 B** (report by Surpurna Banerjee):

Anna Carastathis’s paper ‘Intersectionality and Coalitional Identities: *Somos Hermanas*, 1984-1990’ dealt with intersectionality and the concept of coalition. Identity politics is often contrasted with coalitional politics. The former is held to be a kind of separatism based on sameness vis-à-vis the latter which is considered to be alliances built across difference. Hence while identity groups are considered homogenous, coalitions may serve as spaces of belonging. Taking off from Crenshaw’s largely overlooked conclusion, the argument is made that identity should be looked at through the lens of coalitions.

Taking off from this theoretical framework, the workings of *Somos Hermanas* is examined which began as a solidarity delegation to (then Sandinista) Nicaragua in 1984. She focuses on the experiences of Carmen Vazquez, a key organizer of the organization who also was a leader of the LGBT movement and social movements; through her experiences and accounts it is demonstrated how coalitions helped her in consolidating the different aspects of her identity. Advancing the relation between identity and coalition further she argues that queer form of identity is under theorized being dismissed as a kind of politics. Critics argue that a focus on identities leads to division and the splitting of identities. Conceiving identity as coalitions enables challenge to this claim. Coalitions are usually formed with contrasting identity groups. They are born out of necessity whereas separatism on the basis of identity almost always excludes some people. Following Crenshaw, she deliberately disrupts the distinction between identity groups and coalitions. Identity groups within themselves are already heterogeneous, their experience is discontinuous and often in conflict with each other. So, she argues, identity groups themselves are coalitions. Identities are also coalitions when viewed internally as they illuminate grounds of solidarity which reach across.

Giving a brief history of the development of *Somos Hermanas*, she shows how the group composed of different racial, sexual components was in itself a coalition. The group contrasted with and challenged the vision of USA as white women. They represented those worst affected by Reagan’s rule. A gesture of embrace encapsulated their vision. One of the organizers of the

group writes how the journey and experiences within *Somos Hermanas* helped her and others to shape their identity. Through small acts of cultural militancy such as dancing with other women rejecting the men, they sought to shatter the hegemony of hetero-normativity. By claiming identity within a liberation framework and embracing others they felt able to embrace parts of their identity that had been so far ignored. Thus *Somos Hermanas* served the function of building bridges, both internal and external and bringing together the aspects of identity falsely separated, demolished or discredited. This coalition enabled them to build solidarity between and outside themselves.

Christian Klesse's paper, 'Queering Diaspora Space – Creolising Europe. Narratives of British South Asian Gay and Bi-sexual men on Sexuality, Intimacy and Marriage', based on data collected between 1990 and 2000, mapped the narratives of gay/bi-sexual South Asian men on key queer tropes. These narratives, he argues, lead to the formation of discursive space allowing for contesting narratives to form a counter-public. He discusses two aspects that his work might involve—queering Diaspora studies as well as diasporing queer studies. Through using a framework of post-coloniality the study identifies a space in white queer politics and also adds to Diaspora studies. Using the idea of creolization which entails domination, inequality etc. questions of power and entanglements in this regard are considered. Using the data from the interview the paper demonstrates how the research participants identify racism as a major issue in their feeling of alienation. His interactions with the participants bring out how gay spaces seem to be exclusively for white gays highlighting the performativity of whiteness. Also these allegations of racism bring out how the question of queer identity remains over-determined. Among the LGBTQI South Asian groups that have evolved some are sponsored by the health sector. These form a wider South Asian counter-public across the British Diaspora space. In dealing with issues of marriage, the interactions bring out a contest to monogamy as well as bringing out contentious issues within it. Non-monogamy is held to be a non-Asian value and the respondents allege that promiscuity is a 'white thing' thus once again expressing a racial discourse. The paper also brings out the debate between the participants about the (in) commensurability of religion and homosexuality, especially Sikhism and Islam, though some, following the relativist argument of critical hermeneutics claim that this is a matter of interpretation. It also opens up the question of (or challenge to) marriage, especially heterosexual marriage. The various positions taken by the participants call into question the universalized understanding of marriage as romantic love. The paper also brings out how participants define identity on a wide range of repertoires. He argues that creolization more than other things accommodate the power domination, agency and the paradigm of mixing that these questions bring out.

Helene Monk's paper 'From Theory to Practice: Violence against Women Service Providers' 'Intersectional' Vision', based on interviews with service providers who deal with violence against women explores how identity

categories operate meaningfully in the social world and asks whether an identity framework can be applied to its understanding. The paper raised questions how the service providers worked with identity, how they acquired the identity information, how they themselves dealt with these identities and how they think about identities and respond to it. The data reveals that identity was implicitly practiced in service provision to violence-affected women. Identity was filtered through the service user needs given the personal nature of service provision. By using the *power and control wheel* the paper highlights the overall perception that the service providers first seem to respond to risks and identity comes in later. Identity, it seems, was filtered through needs. The interviews teased out identity, taking out the most important forms of identity and how through it social divisions can be separated out. This acknowledges the fact that social divisions compound and modify one another and do not merely act as additives. Power systems stabilize identity—when social structures are mentioned the identities become less fluid and stabilized, revealing how social structure pins identity. The research also brings out the significant role played by human agency in formulating people’s identity. The constructing and reconstructing of identity through human agency shows the definite negotiation between structure and agency. The service providers also tended to contest the notions of identity through their own interpretations of identity and the victim’s interpretation of identity. The way in which the service providers manage identity often highlights differences. The paper shows how identities are highlighted as difference within a discourse of naturalization. This is seen in the fluid notions of gender and class vis-à-vis fixed categories of ethnicity. Hence how difference is understood significantly shapes service provision. In case of the service providers identity is necessarily flexible and adaptable and must retain these qualities to span shifting terrains.

In the discussion, Helene was asked whether she prompted people to reflect on differences rather than similarities; she replied that the context or condition in which the women operated made them feel that they could not ignore the differences. Anna added that *Somos Hermanas* was a social movement and they wanted to build connections, focussing on how we can position ourselves given our social occasions. Generally, the point of the limits of coalition politics was raised: when one talks of coalitions, one talks of fragmentation—Latina, women, queer, colour. There might be a non-differentiation between normative values. There thus remains a difference between solidarity politics and politics of alliance.

**Panel 1c** (report by Zibiah Alfred):

The first paper, ‘Agency and Belonging. Challenging Racism in Germany’ was presented by Katrin Reimer. Katrin argued that discourses unleashed by Thilo Sarrazin’s book ‘Deutschland schafft sich ab’ have intensified anti-Muslim racism in Germany, which functions within interrelations of race, gender and

class. In considering how to challenge racism in Germany more effectively, Katrin postulated three drawbacks of contemporary intersectional approaches and presented a methodology that might augment their critical impact. Following general trends in the production of theory in academia and social movements, many contributions appear to focus on how experiences are affected by various interrelations of domination. Katrin argued that there is little understanding of domination on several levels of analyses (individual, collective, institutional and societal), that inequalities are rarely seen as modes of reproduction and that the dimension of class is underestimated. Katrin then presented a methodology that might be used to overcome such drawbacks on the categorical basis of German Critical Psychology (Holzkamp) and the Theory of the Ideological (W. F. Haug). This methodology is designed for unfolding individual and collective agency under contradictory conditions in transnational high-tech-capitalism. It asks how we are positioned in modes of reproduction and how we position ourselves in everyday life and in political struggles with respect to the goal of general emancipation. From this perspective, intersections of domination appear relevant because they can inhibit or facilitate solidary agency. Katrin highlighted benefits of this categorical approach vis-à-vis other critical concepts on intersectionality. Depending upon their methodological makeup and normative stance, intersectional approaches tend to either focus on belonging within different borders or interest-based agency across borders. Rather than discussing 'belonging-differences' and 'agency-interests' as incompatible concepts, Katrin argued that they point to frictions in reality, that should not be dissolved, but addressed in theory and practice. Analysing the discourses unleashed by Sarrazin primarily with respect to interrelations between race and gender and in terms of 'belonging', reveals how anti-Muslim racism constitutes differences. Analysing this with respect to class and in terms of 'agency' unravels common interests. Katrin argued that such readings might open spaces for developing collective agency and belonging across borders in a perspective that may be called 'plural universalism'.

The second paper 'Paradoxes of Multicultural Korea' was presented by Joowon Yuk. Joowon argued that in South Korea, a country known for its strong ethnic homogeneity, the concepts of race, ethnicity and nation have been complicatedly entangled and often conflated. The majority of Koreans tend to perceive "race" to be foreign and accordingly assume that Korea is free from racism. However, various forms of racism have existed throughout Korea's history of nation-building and modernisation. This silence on race is still pervasive even in contemporary Korea where the increase in migrants over the past decade has begun to create an empirical reality of "multiculture". Joowon examined how notions of race, nation and culture are constructed and relate to each other, giving special focus to the analysis of arguments of the "far-right anti-multiculturalists". Contrary to the tendency of mainstream media and academia to ignore these "anti-multiculturalists" as pathological individuals, Joowon argued that their logic is fed by multiculturalism itself. In-depth interviews with anti-multiculturalists reveal how nationalism works



reciprocally with racism without using the language of race. This reactionary tendency closely reflects the contradictions of multicultural policies and paradoxically uncovers the instability of multiculturalism. From its inception, in the era of globalisation, the rhetoric of promoting multiculturalism posed itself as an ethics of embracing diversity while juxtaposing itself with its strong notion of ethnic homogeneity of the past. However, actual policies under the guise of multiculturalism specifically have targeted female marriage immigrants and their families, labelling them as “multicultural families”. Thus, multicultural policy has become a form of a state-initiated social inclusion policy for this particular group. Joowon concluded that this social inclusion based on an ambiguous concept of multiculture rather strengthens the demarcation between Koreans and racial others, conceals hierarchical subdivisions among migrants, and consequently fails to challenge racism.

The third paper, ‘Urban aesthetics in contemporary African literature (1980-2010)’, was presented by Eva Dorn. Eva argued that spatial structure represents more than pure language. The spatial entity of the letter is one of language’s tools to bridge space. The narrative-fictional text delivers the possibility to create alternative imaginary worlds in the continuum of the plot. Henri Lefebvre uses a concept of the ‘superstructure’ to describe this meta-level of spatial dispositions. Lefebvre applies it to explain the semiotic codifications of places, mainly occidental agglomerations. He defines them as an alphabet, a language of urban space, where elementary signs in their paradigmatic and syntactical relations are stratified, and which are circumscribed in streams of power defined by their dynamically changing frontiers. Whether space is closed or open is dependent on the social circumstances and relationships to others (i.e. social capital), of the individual passing through it. The interest in Lefebvre’s model can be circumscribed by the experiment, to attribute some of his terms to differing circumstances traced by African authors and philosophers nowadays. The important connotations they produce create a new meaning of African and European urban spaces, accessible to a western public. They allow us to rethink modalities of global cohabitation in order to surmount unconscious Eurocentrism.

The human migration process is commonly considered as a movement or flow from ‘developing’ countries or conflict and disaster zones to places of exile in ‘developed’ countries. Contemporary African authors attempt to clarify some principal misunderstandings of this one-dimensional view. The Senegalese writer Ken Bugul regards migration as the closing of a circle, rather than a straight, one way movement directed towards industrial wealth. In her first novels the train of events in the life of a female migrant ends in a threatening climax. A forced inertia is followed by the *Retour au pays natal* (Aimé Césaire). Similar situations can be found in novels by Kangni Alem or Alain Mabanckou. Fatou Diome surmounts the implications of these authors towards migration by seeing the process culminating in inert cessation, as a level of impossible free personal movement. In *Celles qui attendent*, the

protagonists are held in a kind of 'nowhere' or 'limbo', stuck between national borders, eventually losing their sense of time and space.

Eva concluded that texts resulting from the African diaspora are writings affiliated to heterogeneous backgrounds and complicated hybrid identities, exploring and ascribing new meanings to concepts of 'non-place', 'heterotopia' and 'dystopia'. The spatial codifications of these richly narrated spaces question and re-evaluate the ideology of utopia and the microcosm of western thinking.

A number of interesting questions and observations followed the presentation of these three papers. Firstly, the question was raised of why Sarrazin had become less popular and whether this could be related to gender relations and his ideas about how immigrants should look after children. Katrin replied that in her opinion, Sarrazin's popularity decreased when he had raised the topic of Jews in Germany. It can be observed that Angela Merkel's Minister of the Interior does not address gender inequalities within the wider community, but calls on Muslims to do so within the Muslim community. Secondly a question was raised about racism having been said to be structural within Korea. Joowon was asked for her views on what causes racism in Korea and to define the term "antimulticultural". It was suggested to do so, "multicultural" would first need to be clearly defined. The idea that perhaps Korea could not be described as truly multicultural was raised. Joowon explained that anti multiculturalists self-identify in Korea as "anti-multiculturalists" in growing numbers and try to differentiate themselves from the far right. Anti-multiculturalists are not in a political group (like the English Defence League). As yet there is no party in Korea comparable to the British National Party in the UK, either. There are both on- and off-line "anti-multiculturalist" groups. Korea has never been thought to be multicultural; the population of foreign residents in Korea is still small. There is some confusion between multiculturalism as empirical reality and multiculturalism as doctrine. The growing discourse around multiculturalism is about being polite, being a global citizen. Many Koreans are self-professed multiculturalists who try to differentiate Korean multiculturalism from the kind of Western multiculturalism found in Canada and Britain. There are social doctrines of multiculturalism but as a philosophical idea, multiculturalism is not a coherent entity.

The third question raised concerned the lack of acknowledgement of the black population in France, the increase in "black figures" during the French Revolution and the observation that dominant frames in France, such as the "aggressive" period of Sarkozy, affect the nature and level of acknowledgement. Eva observed that today many people refuse to be called an "African writer" or a "black writer". The idea that "we are all France" with no such thing as race or colour started to disintegrate in 1968. A fourth question was raised about the influence of migrants living outside Korea upon Korean discourse and policies around "multiculturalism". For instance, many people migrating from Burma to the UK and other countries, for instance to become overseas students, express their views on issues affecting Burma, for instance

the treatment of Rohingya people in the Rakhine State, through online sites, forums and facebook. Through their access to internet, these migrants may have an influential voice, arguably “louder” at times than those living in the state itself. It was asked whether this was also the case in Korea. Joowon responded that there were both on and off line pressure groups. Korean Americans and Korean Canadians do try to exert their influence on Korean policies, sometimes with a vested interest in promoting their businesses there. However, Korean Chinese migrants whose children may have been born in China and brought up in Korean Chinese regions, or as “mixed race” often appear not to have a strong consciousness of being Korean or strong attachment to Korean homeland.

Finally, the nature of intersectionality itself was discussed; it was asked whether there should be any attempt to try to identify specific methodologies of practising intersectionality, and it was remarked that this question was to be answered throughout and beyond the entire conference.

### **Panel 2a (report by Adéla Souralová):**

In session 2a, three papers were presented. In the first paper, Smadar Lavie elaborated the notion of GendeRace. In her paper titled “Wrapped in the Flag of Israel: Mizrahi Single Mothers and the GendeRace of Bureaucratic Torture” she focused on the lives of disenfranchised Mizrahi (“Oriental” Jews in Israel) single mothers to explore the interrelationship between bureaucracy and torture. Marcel Stoetzler presented in his paper “Intersectionality, Simmel and the dialectical critique of society” his – using his words – “little discovery” of the term ‘intersection’ when reading Simmel and the translations of his work into English. He argued that intersectionality is as old as sociology or even older and suggested the scholarship on intersectionality emerging in feminist discourse could benefit from revisiting Simmel and other scholars (including the Marxist and critical theory/ Frankfurt School traditions) who discussed issues central to intersectionality in terms of dialectics and interaction. The last paper of the session presented by Hae-Young Song (titled “A Cultural Critique of Confucian Capitalism from a Transnational and Intersectional perspective: the Dialectic of Universality and Specificity of ‘National’ Culture”) discussed how universal capitalist contradictions manifest themselves in nationally specific forms in the context of rapid catch-up industrialisation. The author focused on social class and gender hierarchies in the East Asian countries and on the way how these hierarchies are reproduced in the name of national culture.

### **Panel 2b (report by Surpurna Banerjee):**

The first presentation, by Heba El-Sayad, titled ‘What does it mean to be a practicing ‘Academic’ ‘Muslim’ working in a ‘Secular’ Western ‘University?’ began with the question whether intersectionality can be understood from a management and business studies perspective or whether it is limited specifically to social science literature. The research focuses on exploring the

lived experiences of academic and non-academic Muslims in relation to praying. Heba El-Sayad argued that Management Studies has not really looked at religion so far, and also the category of religion is not widely understood from an intersectional perspective. The open-endedness of intersectionality takes different forms and shapes which can be used in understanding the notion of religion. The presentation focused on the question of how practices are mediated. The data is based on interviews with Muslim women in UK universities. She explains that prayers are regulated by specific times vis-à-vis organizational practices which again are regulated by specific times. Through speaking to the participants she shows how for some the prayers form a core around which they organize the rest of their activities. Some of the practices surrounding prayers, however, posed problems, cleaning being one such. The participants showed different ways of managing their bodies/controlling their bodies thus creating their own ways of dealing with the problem. A space created temporarily for praying soon becomes an office site. This reveals the fluid temporality of spaces, thus blurring boundaries. She speaks of the various ways of managing the prayers undertaken by the participants. Significant among them is the use of technology to manage their prayer times. Through mediation by technology this space of belonging is created. She mentions that the universities tended to be accommodating places as compared to factories etc. but looking at the facilities provided is not enough. It is important to also examine how practices are managed how people develop different ways of managing their prayers.

Points raised in the discussion included the question how non-religious people perceive such practices as praying, and how sectarianism (in the case of Islam) creates different hierarchies and power dynamics in the prayer rooms provided by the university.

The paper by Yaliz Akbaba '(Un)Doing Ethnicity in Class—Students' Reactions between Tagging and Deconstructing Differences in Class Interaction with Ethnic Minority Teachers' began with the question of how teaching can account for differences among students and accommodate them. It explores how in a classroom setting the practice of 'doing ethnicity' is carried out through interactive processes where meanings are being constructed. In this setting ethnicity is achieved as everyday labelling of differences through standardization of behaviour. Yaliz Akbaba used an exercise in the primary school class, 'let's talk more about my family' to highlight her points. How is difference constructed here? Difference is actually not only produced but made use of. The social fact of demarcation denotes process while ethnicity is the result of the process. There is a sense of forced imposition of identity. The classroom task exploits the background of the students as known by the student and the coding of them ethnically both by the teachers and by the students themselves results into a reductionist process. The 'conversations' presuppose one answer or another within a set of options. The students likewise make use of the unvaried tools that they have at their disposal by giving strategic low risk answers. This constitutes

pragmatic solutions to a complex problem. Labelling thus reveals a degree of compliance. Ethnicity is tied to the ancestry of the parents and in the classroom this is often used as a sense of classifying yourself and demarcating the others. Differences are usually established within this setting without a definite hierarchy, though. The students pick up these tags of difference and reproduce them but they are also capable of using them independently. The setting has a formal and informal impact on their negotiating their identity. This setting sets the premises on which their ability to handle differences is determined.

### **Session 2c (report by Paula Pustulka):**

The paper presentations given during the Track C of the second first-day panel focused on intersectionality in the intertwined contexts of mental health and national belonging. Fiona Zinovieff discussed a cutting-edge research project that tackles issues of exclusion practices related to dual-diagnosis of mental health patients with substance abuse problems. Having discussed the precarious nature of both service provision (i.e. limited funding) and its recipients (experiencing stigma), she has pinpointed the intersectional framework as capable of resolving policy and service restructuring pitfalls. Saffron Karlsen broadened the scope of discussion with a quantitative take on national belonging. Examining survey data pertaining to European and national identities of Muslims in Germany, England and Spain, she explored the “ethnic boundaries” imposed on individuals by members of majority groups. In addition, she managed to address contemporary questions typically perceived as “qualitative” aspects of identities (ie. fluidity, hybridity, belonging/feeling at home, lifestyles) by use of large-scale numeric data. Finally, the immigrants to Germany – a subgroup within the second presentation’s subjects, became a focus of Dominik Baldin's talk on categorizations of disabled people with migratory background in Dortmund (Germany). Dominik addressed theoretical issues arising from his dissertation project, focusing mostly on power relations that can impact his interview-partners. Furthermore, he made an important point of insufficient research on connections and relatedness between disability studies and ethnic dimension that can be found in his project.

### **Panel 3a (report by Adéla Suralová)**

In session 3a, Gail Hickey’s paper “‘People were kind of shocked’: Gender, religion, and work in U.S. South Asian Women’s narratives” explored South Asian women immigrants’ career experiences. The issue of marriage, gender and religious background were recognized as mitigating factors in decisions about education and career. Marie Godin in her paper “‘Intersectional Capital’: A resource used by Congolese women in the UK and in Belgium in their ‘diasporic engagement’” stated that women and men engage differently towards their country of origin. To analyze this diversity within transnational

social field, she discussed the usefulness of the concept of “intersectional capital”. Leon Moosavi closed this session with his paper on “Religion and Race for Muslim Converts in Britain”. Here, he focused on the experiences of converts – the minority in the minority – and discussed the denial of particular categories as a black/white/feminist/British Muslim as the essential part of post-conversion experience. The attention was directed to the way how converts are doubted both by British people (dealing with the question “You do not want to be British anymore?”) and by Muslims (asking “Are you really Muslim, you do it because of your boyfriend or it is a fashion , etc.?”).

**Panel 3b** (report by Joowon Yuk)

In this session, three interesting presentations engaged with the issues of intersectionality from various perspectives. First, Zibiah Alfred presented her paper on “Belonging, Non-Belonging and spaces between and beyond: voices of refugees in London” based on her research involvement in a Refugee Communities History Project (RCHP) and the exhibition “Belonging: Voices of London’s Refugees” that was created using material collected from refugee life narratives. With an aim to challenge press representations of refugees and also to highlight their own experiences and contributions to community, the exhibition team tended to capture confident collective narrative about the possibility of people from refugee backgrounds fitting comfortably into new circles of social “belonging”. However, Alfred found that refugees themselves often express “non-belonging” or “unbelonging” reflecting on their past and present instead of associating themselves to certain conventional identity categories. It was interesting to learn that people from refugee backgrounds often choose for themselves not to conform to a pre-constructed group or position while reflecting on their experiences of painful rejection, outcasting, racism and so on. Alfred concluded that the exhibition may have jagged, splintered edges of such narratives softened to make them more pleasing to the ear whilst their stories, in fact, might have been edited into an exhibition about human “unbelonging”. Followed were stimulating discussions about whether such expression of “non-belonging” in fact can be read as stemming from a more acute sense of belonging shared by people who survived agony.

Adefemi Adegunle’s paper, “power, positionality and participation”, brought up the issues of intersectionality in relation to research positioning discussing his doctoral research which looks into how young people understand and experience territory in their lives. He delicately pondered on his own position as a policy researcher, academic researcher and youth worker while revealing tensions within different positionalities with respect to data gathering, data interpretation and etc. Being aware of and being sensitive to power relations between researcher and the researched in different institutional contexts would be a start to make one’s research more reflexive and nuanced. By creating a cumulative research methodology and also employing various methods such as focus groups/individual interviews, observation, surveys and participatory GIS, Adegunle attempted to not only move beyond researcher

and the researched by engaging with ethical challenges but also to capture subtle, implicit power dynamics.

Robin Mann presented his paper on “English national identity, class and the absence of social equality” which explores English identity and its relationship to class. By referring to Nairn’s analysis that English nationalism lacks ‘a semblance of classlessness’ as an ‘effective mobilising myth’, Mann problematised English class-nation which he argued, fails to provide an ‘imagined social equality’. This claim was backed up by his analysis of qualitative data on how English people feel about English identity. According to his analysis, associations with Englishness and class took two forms: One tendency considers English identity as upwards with the upper class such as the English gentlemen; the other tendency is opposite by associating Englishness with the underclass such as hooligans. Both class associations make white middle class people feel uncomfortable about being English. Furthermore, Britishness seems to be perceived as a more inclusive identity compared to people’s conception of Englishness as an exclusive identity which is antithetical to multicultural reality. A comparative look he provided in his conclusion was interesting: He argued, different from strong entanglement of class and nation in English identity, other countries which are no less socially stratified such as U.S. still seem to be able to create a nation as a community filled with “imagined social equality”. Questions and following discussions about the problematic aspects of associating Britishness with civic identity and Englishness with more of an ethnic identity – particularly considering Britain’s imperial history – were thought-provoking while discussions extended into the relationship between (or contestations of) civic and ethnic identities.

**The second day of the conference began with the second keynote lecture**, given by Prof. Jie-Hyun Lim: ‘A transnational history of victimhood nationalism: national mourning and global accountability’(report by Surpurna Banerjee). Due to illness, Prof. Lim was unable to attend in the flesh, so that lecture, comments and discussion were conducted via a skype connection.

Lim discussed the complexities of forms of nationalism that are based on a sense, or an experience, of being victims, typically, of other nationalisms. In victimhood nationalisms, the sense of being victimised often is elevated into a feeling of having been sacrificed, which carries a religious connotation. The binary simplification of the world into victimizers and victims, good and bad, is not adequate to properly appreciate the complexities involved. Rather there is an entangled convolution of how the very complicated historical factors play on historical memory. Korean, Japanese, Polish and German are examples of languages that use the same word for victim and sacrifice; Lim pointed out that also more traditional usage of the word victim in English is very close to the definition of sacrifice. Today, however, it is used in a different way. Today victimhood is (in English) conceived quite differently from sacrifice. But the German and Polish words for victimhood still have a close connection with sacrifice. People’s perception of victimhood is integrated to the moment of

sacrifice, e.g. martyrdom. Victimhood nationalism arises from a similar understanding.

There was a debate regarding the Poles' engagement with the Polish holocaust where Poles were also looked at as the victims. An important essay by Jan Blonsky raised the question that though it was the Germans who killed the Jews, the Poles were also present there. Hence they should also share in the feeling of guilt. Another book brought forth how the Poles had themselves complied in the killings of the Jews. This new revelation about the massacre negated the Poles' self-perception as victims and made them in some sense perpetrators. This shift has challenged existing understandings of nationalism.

The post-war generations in Korea could hardly be considered as victims as they had been born after the war. They, however, continued to perceive themselves as victims. This can be called 'hereditary victimhood'. The concept of hereditary victimhood is a tool to critique nationalist historiography. In January 2007 a number of major Korean newspapers criticized the autobiographical novel *So far from the Bamboo Groves* by Yoko Kawashima Watkins, a Japanese post-WW2 expellee from Northern Korea describing her childhood memories. The wave of criticisms had originated among the Korean Americans. This book, they feared, portrayed to the American audience a story of Japanese victimhood and Koreans as perpetrators negating the years of imperialism, torture etc. that Korea was subjected to under Japan.

Lim then addressed the issue of globalization of memory, e.g. of Holocaust memory. The Holocaust was instrumental in the formation of the EU. In the 1950s, German expellees from East Germany held themselves to be victims of the Holocaust. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Holocaust discourse has been used in different ways both to re-territorialize and de-territorialize national memories.

Trans-nationalism also has a role to play in this understanding. To understand Polish victimhood, German history also has to be known. In the case of East Asia, one has to understand colonialism, Japanese colonialism, World War 2 etc. to understand victimhood nationalism. Hence trans-nationalism is a necessary methodological tool through which to understand victimhood nationalism.

Contextualization and decontextualization are also important. Histories are complicated. A murder by a Jew was used propagandistically by the Nazis. Thus through a very complicated formulation the German victims were at the same time perpetrators of violence. But there is a kind of decontextualization in this kind of understanding. Over-contextualization, though, can be found in the case of Korea. Since all Koreans were victims of Japanese colonialism then the whole of Korea could be considered a victim.

Agency also has to be considered. Victims always have a perception, victims make historical agents. This victimhood nationalism takes away the agency.



The first respondent, Nira Yuval-Davis, said that Jewish people do not like to use the word Holocaust as it means sacrifice and sacrifice has agency. In this particular case there was no agency. There are different standpoints of victims and perpetrators. Her second comment was that Zionism did not arise in response to the Holocaust. The past as a victim leads to being a part of heroic nationalism. There is also a need to not dichotomize too much between apologetic victimhood and hereditary victimhood.

The second respondent, Gurminder Bhambra, said that Wendy Brown's work on 'injured identity' is relevant in this aspect. The injury forms the basis of identity. Often what people keep doing is to be fixated on the injury and not concentrate on its politics. She and her colleagues, in their work say that there is the injury and it cannot be really wished away. It, however, has to be resolved by working through its politics and moving on. Also it is important to not hold on to an identity once it has met its purpose. She also pointed out that the fact that the website of the EU celebrated 60 years of peace without making any mention of the French-Algerian war which was completely erased from national memories. Also colonial history, assigned as part of the national histories and not a part of EU's history.

In his counter-response, Lim cited a public rally whose intention was to make public the private suffering of the Koreans at the hands of the Japanese in order to justify contemporary Korean nationalism. Similar examples can also be found in how Israeli Zionist literature treated survivors.

Again the example of the EU shows how entangled histories are on the global scale. Another complex dilemma was mentioned: that of the Turkish Germans whose not being identified with the Holocaust and hence not needing to apologize for it implies, or is linked to, their exclusion from the society they inhabit.

Nira Yuval-Davis added that even the Jewish word 'Shoa' for the Holocaust invites scepticism as it means a sort of natural disaster. She cited an example of how different languages/countries ascribed guilt to different nations for the massacre. Fighting countries always regard themselves as the victims of Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia, e.g. Estonia, Ukraine.

Apologetic victimhood reinforces national solidarity among people who feel they have to say sorry. The new German nationalism is strengthened and solidified through this. Also it is important to think of the globalization of Holocaust memories and view this from the standpoint of the minorities, the newcomers to Europe.

Other points raised by audience members included:

- How would victimhood nationalism work in the case of civil wars where the victims and victimizers are the same people?

Prof. Lim replied that it is difficult to apply victimhood nationalism to civil wars. It might be a victimhood narrative but in a different manner.

- Differing perspectives on nationalism may influence other forms of victimization. It was argued that victimhood is a good theoretical means for self-empowerment especially for minority groups. It becomes a tool for justification. It stops people from having self-reflexivity. There are many examples of multi layered expressions of victimhood.

- There are shifts from hero to victim in nationalist discourses. In the global public sphere there has recently risen a global human rights regime. In the global world to be victim in the public sphere means to have a strong moral and ethical position.

**Panel 4a (report by Paula Pustulka):**

Track C of the afternoon panel on Friday was devoted to intra-state dynamics between competing and contradicting ideas of local identities, orders and belonging. Adela Souralova talked in her paper 'Vietnamese First Generation Nationals In the Czech Republic: Czechs with Vietnamese passport?' about the peculiar situation of the young generation of Vietnamese-Czech migrants. Problematizing citizenship, she showed how her interview-partners struggle in their efforts to feel at home in the Czech Republic – where they grew up with a local Czech nanny but have difficulty obtaining a nationality and passport. Furthermore, their connections with Vietnam have been often severed (due to the lack of having relationships with the immediate family there), leaving a void of no sense of (legitimized) belonging. Scott Hancock in his paper 'Runaway Slaves, Citizenship and Belonging in the Antebellum United States' took an historical perspective on intersectionality, looking at African-American slave-runaways in the pre-war US. He demonstrated how an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach can assist us in understanding gaps within the global studies of race, connecting friction of identity awakening when the newly freed slaves were faced with institutional and state demands.

**Panel 4b (report by Leon Moosavi):**

The first presentation in panel 4b was by Nicola Samson and addressed 'Women's narratives of belonging: Situated stories of ethnicity and citizenship'. Fourteen women living in Nicola's street were spoken to. Some of them were migrants and some were not. Some were involved in seeking British citizenship, specifically three of the migrant women. This revealed the gendered nature of citizenship. Seeking belonging is an emotional endeavour that generates profound feelings and raises deep questions. In their attempts to acquire citizenship, it was seen that it did not have the type of relevance to the woman as some may expect. Rather they were quite ambivalent to national identity and acquiring a British passport was more to do with practical reasons such as being able to travel more easily. Britishness is perceived as giving freedom such as freedom of speech, freedom for women, freedom to live how they want, rights for disabled people and overall fairness. Although they don't express a strong attachment to Britain, they do have the pragmatic attachment in that it can make their individual situation better off. For example, citizenship can grant them security and respect from others. Some retained

dual citizenship and some found it difficult to give up previous citizenship because there was some type of sentimental or emotional attachment to it. However, in some instances having a British passport is quite inspiring and something sought after. There is a fascinating tension between citizenship and belonging in that one can belong without having citizenship.

The second presentation was by Nilufar Ahmed who discussed 'Belonging in Bangla Town: A longitudinal qualitative study on the first evolving sense of belonging for first generation Bangladeshi women over the life-course in Tower Hamlets'. This study shows the emotional attachment to place. It is based on longitudinal research from 2001 to 2011 where Bengali women were interviewed on both occasions. Some general observations relating to ageing were made apparent especially the way in which older people come to be more aware and bothered about health concerns as they get older. These women have not had their story told as they came to join their husbands who were the first to come to Britain and therefore were always treated as second best in some way. Quite remarkably, their migration continues even after arriving in Britain because they continue to live in uncertainty and to move around. They experience an intimidating and scary journey. As their children grow up, after spending years caring for their children, they then begin thinking about themselves. They have more time for themselves and their role changes through enrolling in English language classes for example. They end up being successful and integrated more than they realised they would have been. There are satellite channels which help the women form an imagined diasporic community living in Britain. The local areas have changed and are more welcoming to them than they were in the beginning. They find all the services they need in their local communities but they also feel somehow trapped here because of their children when they might rather be living back in Bangladesh. They may therefore long to return to Bangladesh but remain in London for the sake of being near their children. As time passes they do have a sense of Britishness and develop more attachment to their locality. Belonging can be seen as fluid, ebbing and flowing, not necessarily consistent throughout life. One important observation is that belonging is related to the first initial experiences, the local area, children, education and health care. So if a person has a positive early experience of migrating to a new place they are more likely to have a positive long-term experience.

**Panel 4c (report by Joowon Yuk):**

Sahra Dornick, the first presenter of this session, discussed her paper, "Spaces of Silence – Intersection of Trauma and Longing in Gila Lustiger's novel: *So sind wir*", by exploring this novel as an anchor to understand the impact of traumatisation (in relation to *Shoah*-experiences of the author's father) within a family. Dornick scrupulously analysed *So sind wir* looking into how the process of trauma transition and identity construction of family members occur through "silence" (the father's "silent mouth") rather than through literal explanation or expression of trauma. In so doing, Dornick claimed that this novel opened up a possibility to recognise trauma as "a

condition *sine qua non* of our social constitution” rather than pathological illness or abnormal status which needs therapeutic treatment. Furthermore, by understanding the father’s silence as an active reaction to trauma and emphasising Gila’s persistent longing to create a “space of belonging” in silence, Dornick highlighted how family finds ways to survive trauma engaging intimate spaces of belonging. It was interesting to see how such a mode of novelistic writing is perfect to capture the mental process of internalising “reactions” of trauma and concomitant identity construction of family.

Jana Husmann’s stimulating paper, “Anti-Semitism and Spaces of Belonging: Intersections of Religion, Race and Gender within German Christian Fundamentalism during the Third Reich”, examined intersecting categories of religious and secular knowledge by discussing religious anti-Semitism of German Christian fundamentalists in the 1930s and its advocacy of National Socialist ideologies. Particularly, by focusing on Wilhelm Möller’s vindication of the Old Testament based on the tradition of Christian literalism, Husmann critically analysed in what ways the Old Testament was re-interpreted as an anti-Semitic document and how anti-rationalism and critique of Higher Criticism were imbricated in gendered and racialised forms of knowledge which corresponded to hegemonic discourses of anti-Semitism. Furthermore, she explained cogently how the racist nationalisation of the Holy Scriptures, the racialisation of Christianity and the sacralisation of National Socialist Christian identity were practiced by such fundamentalist re-reading of the Old Testament while anti-Semitic discourse came to be understood as a ‘timeless’ form of biblical knowledge. Husmann’s juxtaposition of the role of religious anti-Semitism producing secular knowledge about race/nation and National Socialism as a “secular religion” itself made a persuasive conclusion.

Jeong-Mi Park provided an interesting reading of post-war Korean military prostitutes as *Homo Sacer* (borrowed from Agamben) presenting her paper, “The Cold War’s *Homo Sacer*: Military Prostitutes and the South Korean Government’s Control of Sex Work in U.S. Camp-Towns, 1953-1966.” By examining the Korean government’s control of military prostitutes (particularly through mandatory STD examinations) and their legal status during the height of the Cold War, Park delves into the workings of gendered nationalism unravelling the relationship between the rule of law, violence and gender. Park’s paper explored how camptown prostitutes were constructed both as perpetrators of national purity and as crucial resources for national security while the alliance between US imperial power and Korean patriarchal nationalism was forged through the subordination of these women’s bodies. In addition to that, she added another layer to previous studies of these sex workers by identifying that the Korean government’s control operated in conjunction with a “two-tiered reversal” of legal hierarchy – reversed hierarchies between the Constitution, Laws and Administrative orders – which she elucidated using Agamben’s “state of exception”. In this context, she claimed to see the status of military prostitutes as *Homo Sacer* who existed at the threshold of law and violence.

### **Panel 5a (report by Leon Moosavi):**

The first presentation in panel 5a was Surpurna Banerjee's 'Identity and Belonging: The perception of group-formation among the women workers of Tea plantations in Dooars, India'. The focus on the study is in a tea plantation in India. This is a place where poor people come to in order to find work. The workers are often treated as though they are from one class when actually the picture is more complicated than that and they have internal differences amongst them. The women who work in the plantations have multilayered identities but they only bring forth some of their identities depending on who they are surrounded by and the context they are working in. They have complex identities that are attached at different intersections and therefore their identities should not be understood as being divergent but rather they are attached and interconnected. These identities become intersected and change over time. The women form informal groups amongst each other and co-operate in interesting ways to support each other. There are also times when some of the women are excluded or negative feelings are held towards some of the women. For example, some women are seen as feigning injury or weakness in order to be allocated an easier job than in the actual fields.

The second presentation was by Anindya Raychaudhuri and was titled 'Place to Connect: Nostalgia and Radical Identity Constructions in Virtual Diasporic Spaces'. People who have migrated from various places often use the internet as a medium to stay connected to their community. For example, there are social networking sites specifically for Indians living in the UK. One interesting way in which diasporas have a presence online is through food websites that discuss recipes and ingredients. Through these websites and through talking about food from 'back home' they manage to reconnect to home. South Asian cuisine is a pathway to returning back to a distant place where one has fond memories of. Hybridity emerges in these online forums and networks because of global influences which means that new combinations are produced. These type of online connections are especially important for those diasporic communities which are not great in number or who live around the UK in different locations because it means they can connect in ways that would not be practical or realistic in the real world. Nostalgia is a key term to consider when looking at these online communities because often they want to explore their identity through reminiscing and having a fond memory of place and home. Minorities often feel as though their identities are under threat at the moment because of broader trends to criticise foreigners and to glorify British values and the British people, and so the online presence of multiracial and multiethnic communities is a valuable resource.

The third presentation was by Valer Veres and discussed 'Ethnonational identity and citizenship in Hungarian communities: the challenges of dual belonging'. This study looks at Hungary and minorities in neighbouring countries. Quantitative surveys are used to understand how Hungarians who live in Hungary and in other countries nearby consider their national identity and how it is considered by others. The regional identification was most strong

but there was no one clear and dominate way of identifying. This shows that people relate to their ethnic and national identities in a variety of ways. There is some ethno-cultural identification though. Mother tongue and culture is the most important aspects of how people relate to one another. Most people think these regional communities are part of the Hungarian nation but there is more difference as to whether they belong to the country they live in depending on which example is taken. This shows that Hungarians living outside of Hungary are still considered as belonging to Hungary even though they may also identify as strongly part of the nation they now live in. This means there are different levels of integration happening which is perceived by others in multifaceted ways. There are broader issues that are seen elsewhere about who belongs to which nation and who contributes and whether people belong elsewhere. Accents are one way in which peoples' belonging is doubted or called into question, because through accents people are placed and categorised. Overall, it is significant to note that to be Hungarian doesn't mean one lives in Hungary, this reminding us of the fluid nature of modern nation states' borders.

#### **Panel 5b** (report by Adéla Souralová)

Panel 5b was opened by Elisabeth Badenhop's paper on 'Citizenship as contested "space of belonging": inclusions and exclusions of migrants in the British Citizenship test and ceremonies'. Analysing the British Citizenship test, the author focused on the process of racialization, arguing that the tests serve as a platform for the narrow definition of "what the British people do". Marta Eichsteller broadly discussed in her paper "Cross Routes Identities – Transnational experiences and the sense of belonging" use of narrative methods for the plural actor theory. Analysing her empirical data, she discussed the topics of establishing transnational personal relationships, accessing local communities, jobs and organisations in narrative constructions. Stefan Baumgarten's paper on "Intersectionality and Translation: Towards a Multidimensional Analysis of Power Relations" dealt with the issue of power relations in transnational studies. Taking intersectionality as the point of departure, he aimed at providing epistemological, theoretical and methodological pointers towards the development of a 'multimodal analysis of power'.

The conference was concluded by the **third keynote lecture**, Dr Gurminder Bhambra's paper 'Race, Class and the Sociological Endeavour: A Critique of the Limits of Community' (report by Zibiah Alfred). Gurminder Bhambra revisited the classic sociological study 'Middletown'. Middletown is a pseudonym for the US city of Muncie in Indiana which was the subject of a study commissioned by Rockefeller. Rockefeller was concerned about the escalation of labour conflict and wanted to end hostile relations between business owners and workers. The study was done by Robert and Helen Lynd and published as "Middletown: A Study of Modern American Culture" in 1929. It became a best-seller and was seen to represent "typical" American society. The study projected an image of the town which was seen to be

quintessentially American. It presented a homogenous white population with a small “negro” community that could be ignored. However, the African-American population there stood at 6%, higher in proportion than that of Cleveland or New York. In erasing the existence of the African Americans, essentially an all-white community was created, a myth perpetuated by subsequent studies. It was decades later, in 2004, that African-Americans were first acknowledged as being part of the city. The presentation of Middletown, whilst empirically inadequate, did reflect dominant conceptions of the US and being a homogenous white society with others seen as marginal and unnecessary. Lynd wanted to address the issue of increasing class conflict in the US but simplified the racial diversity of the city. Lynd discussed the relative lack of unionisation and explained this in terms of the lack of working class consciousness. He missed a key reason for its absence by artificially constructing homogeneity. The white workforce saw a growing black workforce, usually hired at lower rates, but Lynd, in not addressing racial diversity, missed this explanation. Lynd, in identifying the homogenous nature of native born white population, did refer too to the small foreign born population which included Catholics, Jews and “Negroes”. However, he failed to acknowledge the existence of native born American-Indians and the ‘Negro’ population made up largely of Africans enslaved by the Europeans, who together forged the US materially, socially, politically, economically and so are entangled in US history.

Dominant histories that get told do not include work by African American scholars such as Oliver Cromwell Cox. As in the case of the US, in Europe the colonial moment is often written out of subsequent analysis of Europe’s social and political import. Recent discussions of multiculturalism in the UK and Europe look at political community as a national political order. Yet most European states, prior to becoming national states were imperial states. With decolonisation the colonial system of domination translated to one organised on racial and latterly religious grounds. Here one may refer to the debate on immigration in Britain in the election period of May 2010. Elections mark a period of time when terms of political contracts are up for negotiation. There are presumed original members and newcomers who are excluded from the history of the political community. Newcomers are frequently represented as outsiders, may be presumed not to have rights to redraw the terms of the political community. There were public expressions of anger around issues of immigration in 2010 and public debates about why migrants get “our jobs, our houses”. One Liberal-Democrat candidate commented: ‘We’re in danger of a lost generation – parents and grandparents worry about a future where their children can’t repay student loans, can’t find a decent job and don’t have a sniff of a chance at getting on the housing ladder. Their concern about the knock-on effects of immigration is genuine and it isn’t racist’. This politician did not address the fact that the government had introduced tuition fees and sold off council houses. Minorities are easily scapegoated and white workers may enjoy caste privilege. There is a common public refrain that in the rush to celebrate multiculturalism, the white working class is left behind. Leading

politicians have disavowed the political project of multiculturalism. The working class gets divided along racial lines. And yet singling out the white working class as specially deserving of attention means the concern is about race rather than socio-economic disadvantage. Some argue that addressing issues of racism is not racist. However, a focus on whiteness is central to the racialised system of domination. Positing migrants as second class citizens is part of racialised politics where European states deny their own complicity in the maintenance of this order.

The European project assigns all unbounded histories to individual states, not to the history of Europe. The colonial past is erased and so the post-colonial present and post-colonial subjects are disavowed. A politics of accommodation leads to migrants having to assimilate “on our terms”. Europe today is riven by public expressions of anger to those seen to be different and who do not belong.

Gurminder Bhambra concluded that contemporary accounts of inequality tend to assign race and inequality to a script; class is an emergent form of hierarchy. The European system of modernity was organised within a wider system of domination. The failure to notice that embodied slavery and possession of colonial difference in Europe is curious. There appears a rather selective understanding of who constitutes belonging in particular communities.

In her response, Nira Yuval-Davis argued that a relationship can be said to exist between class and racism, rather than class and race. Nira commented on the notion and construction of community. In contradictory ways, African-Americans may be excluded from communities because of notions of race. It is important to analyse American society as a settler society, and consider the history of escaped slaves and American Indians. However, the US never saw itself as a settler society – indeed US, Israel and South Africa tend to see themselves as exceptions. Nira Yuval-Davis shared her own experiences moving to Britain and studying the sociology of racism. She encountered Marxist sociology but found the British Sociological Association to be less interested at the time in antisemitism. In Britain there appears to be a monopoly in the race relations industry of focusing upon ex – Empire colonialism and blacks where other kinds of racism may be excluded from discourse.

A number of questions and comments were raised by participants: the first question referred to the fact that in the area of the San Francisco Bay the majority of people are Chicano and Asian Americans and asked, how does this fit into the Black/White narrative model? One of the BERG conference participant’s sons has sat in front of the president of the university’s offices demanding Asian American and Latino Studies. How do you allow space for other racialised groups? Gurminder responded that thinking about how we can understand race differently in British society we can look at issues of inequality and issues of identity. Race may be considered as a form of



historical institutional order, produced and reproduced. The history of the US is a history of the displacement of native Americans. New migrants predominantly came of their own volition or as bonded labour. Free black people in the US were in danger of capture and enslavement. The history written about the US and disseminated in white institutions was not one that spoke of the emergence and establishment of European migrants with slavery as central to the founding of American society. New migrants' contributions need to be understood but there is a deeper history that needs to be understood. It is interesting to consider how the discipline of sociology has emerged. The American Sociological Association celebrated 100 years of establishment and produced a book in which three chapters addressed issues of race and were all written by African Americans. Race did not feature within other chapters. There appears to be a racialised construction of knowledge production which needs to be unpacked.

A further question asked, what is the link between elections and immigration issues in public discourse? Gurminder commented that at election times what gets constructed is the history of the nation. Michael Gove (the British Secretary of State for Education) is attempting to reconstruct the school history curriculum as 'Our Island Story'. However, arguably to understand British society today one has to understand the history of empire. Prior to 1707, both England and Scotland had colonies and were imperial states before becoming nation states. There is a need to understand England in the context of being an Imperial state. The current debates around the crisis of British identity relate to the demise of the Empire – without Empire a crisis emerges around what it means to be British. Being British should be located within the processes of decolonisation.

A further response from the audience pointed out that when Gordon Brown went to Africa he spoke about British values of enlightenment and tolerance, linking these to the "civilising mission" of the British Empire, implying you can be British and proud because the Empire contributed to the enlightenment of the world. Gurminder added that this also appears to be the view of some so-called professional historians such as Niall Ferguson, who at the time of the conference delivered the BBC Reith lectures. Within the Making of the Modern World series, there is an episode where the camera pans across lush green empty fields with the commentary that India had faced the choice of being ruled by England or by France. Significantly, the image portrayed here is of land empty of people. Yet what about the Indians?

Another audience member drew attention to another classic study of American sociology, "Wartime Shipyard" by Katherine Archibald from 1947, a Berkeley sociologist. The book which explored race, gender and ethnic belonging, has been reissued recently. From the position of working as a clerk in a Californian shipyard, Archibald was able to observe how different groups of men and women relate to each other and all the intersections here.

Gurminder commented Middletown has come to be regarded as a key book in the field of community studies. It presents an image of community readily taken up by the dominant population. The construction of the discipline of sociology describes race as “over there” but does not regard race as fundamental to the way in which we understand social life generally.

Another question pointed out that the study Middletown was funded by Rockefeller. From the 1880s to 1920s there was a struggle between the industrialists and trade unionists. To what extent was this study connected to the 1905-1920 struggle? Gurminder responded that trade unions were under pressure across the country. In some cases one needed to be a trade union member to gain access to jobs. Black workers and black intellectuals argued for black and white workers to unite in class struggle. However, white workers refused to give up privileges based on their whiteness and racialised dynamics of segregation continued. In the UK, in the 1980s Thatcher broke the unions leading to a greater mixed ethnicity labour force. In Birmingham ethnic minority taxi drivers were not allowed to work in Longbridge car factory as entry to jobs was controlled by the union. In order to become a union member you had to be white. By breaking the unions, Thatcher helped break the racialised division of labour in Birmingham. A further question wondered how widespread this was. Anecdotally, the father of a BERG conference participant worked for Ford in Dagenham in the 1970s and was both from an ethnic minority and a union member. Were there means to allow people from ethnic minority communities entry? The Indian Workers’ Association in Birmingham held influence, was it the case that migrant populations were unionised?

This session was a great way to conclude the conference on intersectionality, raising further questions about the importance for researchers themselves to reflect on their own positionality and consider how “race” and “class” etc. is not only “out there” to be studied but also “within”, influencing the perspective of researchers and affecting the very nature of how research itself may be conducted and the type of studies that may be undertaken within different subject disciplines.