

ESF Exploratory Workshop on
**Postmigrant Youth Scenes in Urban
Europe**

Frankfurt am Main (Germany), 1 – 4 July 2010

Convened by:
Prof. Dr. Kira Kosnick

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

1. Executive summary

The ESF exploratory workshop on Postmigrant Youth Scenes in Urban Europe took place at the Goethe University Frankfurt in Germany on July 2nd and 3rd 2010. The group of participants consisted of thirteen researchers coming from six different European countries, not including the ESF-representative.

Its aim was to overcome the limitations of research on young immigrants and postmigrants in Europe, which is currently dominated by two main approaches characterizing work in the social sciences and in the humanities respectively. While in the social sciences, there is a strong focus on structural factors and institutions shaping young people's lives, in the humanities, research is overwhelmingly focused on questions of cultural identity and attitudes of young people. What is lost in the gap between quantitative indicators of the social on the one hand and cultural orientations on the other is the question of the social as lived practice outside the institutions of family, workplace and schooling. By turning its attention to the socializing practices of young people with migrant backgrounds in Europe, the workshop addressed this question in an interdisciplinary context that included young and advanced scholars from the social sciences and humanities. The workshop aimed to break new ground by bringing together researchers from different disciplinary perspectives interested in developing a cross-disciplinary research agenda for the study of (post)migrant socialities. It brought together researchers ranging from social science experts on "second generation" integration, youth scene researchers, humanities scholars working on music and identity to researchers who address issues of sexuality in club scenes and other leisure contexts. By focusing on the leisure practices of young people with migrant backgrounds in urban areas, it sought to encourage mutual exchange and collaboration between scholars whose work has up to now been oriented towards separate but interrelated fields.

The meetings were held in the historical Eisenhower conference room at the heart of the Goethe University's main campus in the Westend district. Coffee/tea breaks and lunch were served in the surrounding rooms, allowing to continue discussions and network in a more informal setting that carried over into joint evening dinners. The general atmosphere was exceedingly friendly and inspired fruitful and lively discussions, despite freak weather conditions which confronted participants with scorching heat.

The workshop was structured into five panels, three on the first day and two on the second. They were entitled Migrant Socialities, Scenes and Youth Socialities, The Second Generation in European Cities, Sexuality and Leisure as well as Music, Media and Identities. The first panel introduced the rationale for the workshop and presented the ongoing work of the ERC-funded New Migrant Socialities project based at Goethe University Frankfurt. Focusing on the leisure practices of young migrants and postmigrants in European cities in the context of clubbing, the project raises wider concerns regarding an interdisciplinary research agenda for the study of migration, youth and leisure that the workshop aimed to discuss and develop.

The second panel on youth scenes focused on the question of whether the concept of scenes can be productively used to describe migrant leisure practices, in an effort to move beyond the concept of ethnic community and its implications of intimate and bounded social groupings. The third panel on 'second generation' research addressed the question of how urban social practices of second- and third-generation immigrants can be studied beyond structural indicators and questions of ethnic identity. The fourth panel on sexuality and leisure focused attention on the heterogeneity of identifications and socializing practices among postmigrant youth, particularly with regard to sexual orientation and 'dating'. The final and fifth panel on music, media and performance asked how the substantive scholarly work

on music, media and migrant identities could better incorporate dimensions of social practice in urban space. In a final plenary discussion, conclusions from the preceding debates were drawn together and the possibilities for future collaborative research activities were discussed.

The participants had received a discussion paper on the multidisciplinary state-of-the-art regarding research on postmigrant youth in Europe well in advance, which set out the challenges that the workshop sought to discuss. Panel members reflected in their individual presentations upon those challenges on the basis of their particular expertise and research orientation, in the context of the respective panel topics. This set-up was productive in that it oriented discussions toward shared questions and hypotheses, allowing for a focused debate despite the quite different research orientations of individual participants. The rather small number of participants proved particularly beneficial, in that there was both sufficient time for discussion and the chance to involve the entire group in the ongoing debate.

Overall conclusions highlighted the productiveness of and need for further qualitative research that is focused on youth leisure practices in cities, with the aim of a) contextualizing identity claims and representations in relation to practice, and b) moving beyond an ethnic lens to consider (post)migrant urban leisure activities in the context of transnationalized urban spaces in Europe.

2. Scientific content of the event

After a general welcome and introduction and the ESF-representative's presentation, the introductory panel featuring the Migrant Socialities project team from the Goethe University Frankfurt presented the research programme and preliminary results of their first fieldwork period. Convenor Kira Kosnick summarized the project aims and focused on voluntary stranger sociality as a central aspect of urban leisure scenes, meaning that (post)migrant youth scenes cannot be interpreted as 'community' events or segregation phenomena. Presenting fieldwork data gathered at Afro-Caribbean club nights in Paris, Sabina Rossignoli discussed the link between suburban banlieue party locations and the social organization of 'a night out', with locations not accessible by public transport requiring participants to socialize in relatively stable groups. Harpreet Cholia showed how British Asian clubbing in London links practices of distinction to the exploration of new neighbourhoods and club venues formerly coded as 'White', whereas Meltem Acartürk highlighted the connections between virtual social networks and face-to-face socializing among young Turkish-Germans in Berlin. The discussion which followed focused on the concept of scene and its potential to overcome an ethnic approach to urban leisure practices, with some disagreement surfacing over the question of how urban social networks should best be framed. Participants agreed that it was productive and important to study how different cities facilitate or hinder particular forms of leisure socializing.

In the second panel on scenes and youth socialities, Simone Boogaarts-De Bruin (Amsterdam) presented her research on postmigrant club scenes in the Netherlands, which she contextualized as part of a wider fragmentation of urban clubbing catering to different tastes. Clubbers, with or without migration background, move between different party scenes. Anja Schwanhäußer from Vienna talked about a deliberately fluid party network in Berlin, typical of a post-unification period in which the exploration of new spaces and continuous mobility created forms of exclusivity for participants. The joint discussion focused on the distinction between enforced and deliberate mobility in terms of movement across urban spaces, contrasting mobility as a form of distinction with mobility necessitated by a lack of financial resources that moves events into temporary suburban locations.

The third panel began with a presentation by Regina Römhild (Humboldt University Berlin) in which she suggested a conceptual shift towards methodological cosmopolitanism in order to avoid the pitfalls of 'ethnicizing' urban research. She advocated an approach that would understand cities as transnationalized places, with migration and its effects being a taken-for-granted aspect of urban life in general. Mark Hatzfeld (Paris) instead focused on the notion of respect as a central moral demand of immigrants as newcomers to the city, whereby stranger relationality is facilitated through the manifestation of practical goodwill that does not require the overcoming of social and cultural distance. The two presentations marked very different positions with regard to identifying pressing research questions in relation to migrant socialities in urban space, but shared an interest in the practicalities of city residents having to cope with urban complexities and differences as a facet of everyday life.

The fourth panel drew attention to the negotiation of gender, sexuality and subjectivity amongst young migrants. Nicola Mai from London Metropolitan University presented his fieldwork on migrant sex workers and raised questions with regard to cosmopolitanism as a cognitive framework linked to errant mobility patterns. Silvia Rief from Innsbruck presented actor-network theory as an avenue to address the intersection of sexualization and racialization in club cultures, discussing sexuality as oscillating between style and desire.

In a final presentation introducing the concerns of the fifth panel, Rajinder Dudrah (Manchester) introduced Laura Marks' concept of haptic visuality in order to discuss how media are linked to urban geographies. Talking about specific sites such as club venues, cinemas and urban 'hang-out' places, he showed how they work as assemblages that allow for tactile ways of seeing and knowing, challenging thereby conventional understandings of representation. For the fifth panel, Rupa Huq (Kingston University London) took up the theme of representation and discussed how British Asians have achieved a kind of hypervisibility in British mainstream mass media accounts, pondering the consequences of invisibility and hypervisibility. Regrettably, there was no word from Pap Ndiaye from the University of Paris V, who was scheduled to give the final paper but did not show up and could not be reached for comment.

In the general discussion that followed, Ayse Öncü from Sabanci University in Istanbul provided a summary assessment of central issues that emerged during the workshop. Taking up the question of framing, she suggested that rather than aiming for controlled comparison, case studies could better be understood as parallel readings that inform each other. In terms of conceptual innovations, she highlighted the importance of the notion of stranger relationality as an important challenge to the field of migration and integration studies.

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

Participants agreed that it was productive and important to overcome current research limitations in the study of (post)migrant youth by a) directing attention to social practices in order to contextualize cultural identity constructions and move beyond the social-scientific focus on structural indicators of migrant life, b) 'de-ethnicize' work on minority youth by studying their participation in and transformation of various urban life contexts, and c) considering the 'materiality' of cities not as distinct from the immaterial dimensions of the 'cultural', but as complexly interlinked. Future research objectives should explore how the limitations of an 'ethnic lens' could best be overcome by means of developing new conceptual and methodological approaches. The debate begun at the workshop regarding the need to move away from migration and migrant groups and instead privilege the study of transnationalized or cosmopolitan urban life contexts should be continued. An additional

focus of shared interest concerned questions of embodiment in urban space, particularly relevant for social groups that are marked as Other or stigmatized along racialized and heteronormative lines, with actor-network approaches coming into conversation with Deleuzian media theory and urban theories of place-making.

In terms of future research collaboration, the news regarding the restructuring of ESF activities provided by the ESF-representative Bogdan Mach gave little hope of being able to initiate actions for Research Networking Programmes in the near future. Similarly, new calls for the upcoming EU Framework Programmes have yet to be published, and participants agreed that there were few chances, at present, to develop joint funding applications. Instead, it was decided to try and publish proceedings as a special issue of a journal in the fields of either urban or youth studies. A committee was chosen to develop a written proposal and approach journal editors in the respective fields.

4. Final programme

Thursday 1 July 2010

Late afternoon *Arrival and check-in at Turm Hotel, Frankfurt*

Friday 2 July 2010 (venue: Eisenhower Room, first floor, r. 1.314)

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| 09.00-10.00 | Welcome and registration |
| 10.00-10.15 | Welcome by the Vice President of Goethe University Frankfurt
Prof. Dr. Rainer Klump |
| 10.15-10.30 | Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF)
Prof. Dr. Bogdan Mach (Standing Committee for Social Sciences (SCSS)) |
| 10.30-13.00 | Panel 1: Migrant Socialities
chair: Kira Kosnick |
| 10.30-11.30 | Presentation 1 "New Migrant Socialities - research in progress"
Kira Kosnick, Harpreet Cholia, Meltem Acartürk, Sabina Rossignoli (Goethe University Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany) |
| 11.30-12.30 | Discussion |
| 12.30-14.00 | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 14.00-16.00 | Panel 2: Scenes and Youth Socialities
chair: Kira Kosnick |
| 14.00-14.20 | Presentation 1 "Comments on the migrant socialities project"
Simone Boogaarts-de Bruin (University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands) |
| 14.20-14.40 | Presentation 2 "Beautiful People. Scenes as Cultures of Fluidity"
Anja Schwanhäußer (University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria) |
| 14.40-16.00 | Discussion |
| 16.00-16.30 | <i>Coffee / Tea break</i> |
| 16.30-19:00 | Panel 3: The Second Generation in European Cities
chair: Sabina Rossignoli |
| 16.30-16.50 | Presentation 1 "Moving beyond the ethnic lens - toward methodological cosmopolitanism"
Regina Römhild (Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany) |

16.50-17.10 **Presentation 2 "Respect as a skill of the second generation"**
Marc Hatzfeld (EHESS, Paris, France)

17.10-19.00 **Discussion**

20.00 *Dinner*

Saturday 3 July 2010

(Venue: Eisenhower Room, first floor, r. 1.314)

10.00-12.30 Panel 4: Sexuality and Leisure
chair: **Meltem Acartürk**

10.00-10.20 **Presentation 1 "Embodied cosmopolitanisms: the negotiation of gender, sexuality and subjectivity amongst young migrants working in the sex industry"**
Nicola Mai (London Metropolitan University, London, UK)

10.20-10.40 **Presentation 2 "Conditioning (sexual) e/affects. The emergence of 'sexuality' in club sociality"**
Silvia Rief (University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck, Austria)

10.40-11.00 **Presentation 3 "Mancunian British-Asians Bop Bollywood: Haptic Urban Ethnoscapes in the City"**
Rajinder Dudrah (University of Manchester, Manchester, UK)

11.00-12.30 **Discussion**

12.30-14.00 *Lunch*

14.00-16.00 Panel 5: Music, Media and Identities
chair: **Harpreet Cholia**

14.00-14.20 **Presentation 1 "The Changing Face of the British Asian in socio-cultural circles: from invisibility to hyper-visibility?"**
Rupa Huq (Kingston University London, London, UK)

14.20-14.40 **Presentation 3 "Final comments on conference presentations"**
Ayse Öncü (Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey)

14.40-15.30 **Discussion**

15.30-16.00 *Coffee / Tea break*

16.00-17.30 **Collaborative Research Perspectives**

Discussion on follow-up activities and collaborative actions

20.00 *Dinner*

5. Final list of participants (in alphabetical order)

Please note that Dr. Pap Ndiaye has not appeared at the conference, without cancelling his participation or giving any explanation as to his withdrawal.

Convenor:

1. **Kira KOSNICK**
Department of Sociology
Goethe University Frankfurt
Germany

ESF Representative:

2. Bogdan MACH

Institute of Political Studies
Polish Academy of Sciences
Poland

Participants:

3. Meltem ACARTÜRK

Department of Basic Research in the Social Sciences
Goethe University Frankfurt
Germany

4. Simone BOOGAARTS-DE BRUIN

Department of Political Science Department of Sociology and Anthropology
IMES
University of Amsterdam
Netherlands

5. Harpreet CHOLIA

Department of Basic Research in the Social Sciences
Goethe University Frankfurt
Germany

6. Rajinder DUDRAH

Martin Harris Centre for Music and Drama-SL05
School of Arts, Histories and Cultures
University of Manchester
United Kingdom

7. Marc HATZFELD

École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)
France

8. Rupa HUQ

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Kingston University London
United Kingdom

9. Nicola MAI

Institute for the Study of European Transformations
London Metropolitan University
United Kingdom

10. Ayse ÖNCÜ

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Sabanci University
Turkey

11. Silvia RIEF

Department of Sociology
University of Innsbruck
Austria

12. Regina RÖMHILD

Institute for European Ethnology
Faculty of Arts and Humanities (I)
Humboldt University
Germany

13. **Sabina ROSSIGNOLI**

Department of Basic Research in the Social Sciences
Goethe University Frankfurt
Germany

14. **Anja SCHWANHÄUSSER**

Department of European Ethnology
Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies
University of Vienna
Austria

6. Statistical information on participants

Countries of origin:

Austria	2	France	1	Germany	5
Netherlands	1	Turkey	1	United Kingdom	3

Participation by gender:

Female	10	
Male	3	(excluding ESF representative and local organiser)

Participation by age:

20-29:	3	30-39:	4	40-49:	3	50-59:	1	60+:	1
(excluding ESF representative and local organiser)									