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Religion, Ethnicity and National Origins: Exploring the Independence of Variables in a Superdiverse Neighbourhood

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ABSTRACT

Many studies of diverse urban neighbourhoods have identified that the people who live in these neighbourhoods tend to live separate lives based on shared characteristics such as ethnicity, national origin or religion. In his study of Rogers Park in Chicago, Lowell Livezey refers to these as 'ethnoracial enclaves'. Steven Vertovec's concept of superdiversity, however, appears to question this assuming a certain level of independence between different kinds of diversity (ethnicity, language, national origin, religion, legal status, etc.). In my study of Handsworth in Birmingham, UK, I argued that this independence of the variables of diversity allowed people to choose the identity that most suited their needs at the time and that, in the conversations I listened to, they chose identities that brought people together rather than those that set them apart. This paper explores the idea of the independence of the various variables of diversity as assumed in the use of the term 'superdiversity' and uses census data from the 2011 census of England and Wales to test this assumption in relation to the city of Birmingham and the specific neighbourhood of Handsworth.

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Introduction: journeys down two roads

In his large-scale ethnographic study of congregations and communities in Chicago, Lowell Livezey (2000) identified the northern neighbourhood of Rogers Park as probably the most diverse, both ethnically and religiously, within the whole of Chicago. In his paper Livezey describes a journey down Devon Street, the central shopping street of Rogers Park, running from the coast of Lake Michigan and heading inland. What this journey illustrates is a series of different districts along the road, each of which is identified with a specific ethnic and religious group. So Livezey talks about moving from a Jewish to an Indian, to an 'Indo-Pakistani' to a Mexican area of the street (2000, pp. 134-5), each of which is reflected in a series of distinctive religious buildings and community centres. This leads Livezey to coin the phrase

'ethnoracial enclaves' to reflect the way in which diversity is expressed geographically and sociologically within Rogers Park (2000, p. 139). What is more, his analysis identified that only one of the many congregations in Roger's Park, of whichever religion, contained a significant mixing of ethnic groups. This might lead us, therefore, to talk not of ethnoracial enclaves, but more specifically of ethnoreligious enclaves.

This concept of ethnoracial or ethnoreligious enclaves captures, in many different ways, a very traditional understanding of the nature of diversity in contemporary urban areas, whether in the United States, in the UK or in other major global cities. Each ethnic group is seen as keeping to its own religion, to its own particular neighbourhood, or region within the neighbourhood, and to its own particular part of the city. So even when a particular neighbourhood is recognised as 'diverse' then it is assumed that the different 'ethnoracial' or 'ethnoreligious' groups within that neighbourhood will tend to be distinctive and keep themselves to themselves. Ted Cantle reinforces this view in his work on community cohesion when he suggests that multiculturalism is undermined because citizens in the UK are living 'parallel lives' as "minority communities are often highly concentrated in separate geographical areas" (Cantle, 2005, p. 65).

In recent years, however, the concept of 'superdiversity' has been introduced to describe what is seen to be a completely new stage in the development of ethnic, national and religious diversity within society, and increasingly within specific neighbourhoods (Vertovec, 2007). I first drew on the concept of superdiversity when I was looking for something that would help me to make sense of the situation in the Handsworth area of Birmingham as part of my own research into understandings of religious diversity within the city (Stringer, 2013). I chose to undertake extended fieldwork in Handsworth, partly because I knew the neighbourhood and some of my postgraduate students had worked in the area before, but primarily because of the obvious religious diversity that is reflected in the large number of prominent religious buildings situated along the Soho Road, the main shopping street that runs through the centre of Handsworth. If we were to follow Livezey and travel along the road from the centre of Birmingham towards West Bromwich we would find a Rastafarian Café and an Anglican Church at one end; we would pass a number of large Gurdwaras and smaller Christian Fellowships, Halal Butchers, Serbian Greengrocers and other stores, and discover further Gurdwaras and the Chinese Buddhist Temple at the far end. The religious diversity of Handsworth is obvious for everybody to see, but even the distribution of buildings suggests that Livezey's neat division into ethnoracial enclaves may not be appropriate for this 'superdiverse' neighbourhood.

In my research I was interested to see whether the public discourse on religious diversity was different in an area such as Handsworth, from one that was predominantly non-religious, or majority Muslim (Stringer, 2013, pp. 53-71). If the discourse was different, then I also needed to find some kind of theoretical frame that would help me to explain that difference. I began by focussing on boundaries and the way in which people, in everyday conversations, distinguished the different religions, or the different religious

communities. I assumed that the question of boundaries and 'difference' would be the primary focus for such conversations. What I discovered, however, was that this was not the case. The primary focus for conversation was the concept of diversity itself. The people on the Soho Road were proud of the variety of religious buildings; they claimed ownership of these buildings, even when they did not share the religious affiliation, so they talked of 'our Gurdwara' or 'our Church'. They also put a positive value on diversity and distinguished Handsworth from neighbouring areas on the basis that Handsworth was 'diverse'. This was very different from the discourses that I had been listening to in other areas, such as Highgate, where the level of religious affiliation, and religious diversity, was far less prominent (Stringer, 2013, pp. 37-52).

What is it therefore that sets Handsworth apart? One possibility derives from the emphasis on 'diversity' as opposed to 'difference' that I identified in the public discourses. I was looking for language around boundaries. I had assumed the presence of some element of 'ethnoracial enclaves' within the neighbourhood that would have expressed itself in a language of difference. I assumed the dependence between the variables of ethnicity, national origin and religion that is expressed very clearly in Livezey's analysis of Rogers Park. What I found was a language of diversity, a language that implicitly assumed an independence between these variables and a downplaying, or even denying of any kind of ethnoracial, or ethnoreligious 'communities'. What I aim to do within this paper, therefore, is two things. First, I will explore further the concepts of ethnoracial enclaves and superdiversity and seek to identify the assumptions about the dependence, or otherwise, of variables such as ethnicity, national origin and religion within these concepts. Secondly I will look more closely at the data from Handsworth in particular to see what evidence there might be for such dependence, and hence how this data might confirm, or challenge the assumptions of the theoretical analysis.

Ethnoracial Enclaves

Other empirical studies have reflected, or nuanced, Livezey's idea of ethnoracial enclaves over the years, albeit using different terminology for a very similar set of ideas. Richard Sennett, for example, in talking about Greenwich Village in New York, also takes a road as his starting point, this time Second Avenue, and he writes of how seeing Hispanics, Jews and Koreans interweaving along the Avenue "is to pass through an ethnic palimpsest in which each group keeps neatly to its own turf" (1994, p. 357). Here the different populations are not distinguished geographically along the road, but almost chronologically, with each new arrival adding to the overall level of diversity within the neighbourhood. The same idea, however, of each ethnic group keeping 'neatly to its own turf', reflects very clearly Livezey's notion of the ethnoracial enclave. Sennett is not particularly concerned with the religious life of these different ethnic groups. He does, however, add one further element to the discussion by noting the way in which the people of Greenwich Village almost deliberately ignore the diversity around them, each group not only keeping very specifically to themselves, but also ignoring the other groups living around them: "The sheer fact of diversity" he states "does

not prompt people to interact” (1994, p. 357) so reinforcing Cantle’s wider point of parallel lives.

In a British example Martin Albrow undertook a study of Tooting in South London (1997). Here Albrow emphasises how the diversity of people within the neighbourhood leads to disintegration and difference. As in Greenwich Village individuals almost deliberately hold to their own identities, seen here in terms of national origin or ethnicity, and keep apart from those who do not share the same identity. “These people,” Albrow says, “inhabit co-existing social spheres, coeval and overlapping in space, but with fundamentally different horizons and time spans” (1997, p. 48). There is no real sense of ‘enclaves’ in Albrow’s account, whether of the geographic or temporal form of Livezey or Sennett, but Tooting is still constituted, in Albrow’s understanding, of ethnoracial groups who fail to interact or to form any kind of shared values or local identity.

Underlying all of these studies is the kind of ‘dominant discourse’ on community and culture that Gerd Baumann identifies in Southall, another area of considerable diversity, this time in West London (1996). Baumann listened carefully to the way in which the various social groups of Southall use the terms ‘community’ and ‘culture’ and came to the conclusion that there are different ways of understanding these terms that are related to different kinds of discourse. The most important, or dominant discourse is that used by the local council, based on many years of academic and political development. This discourse suggests that Southall, and similar neighbourhoods, are made up of a mosaic of different ‘communities’ each with their own distinctive ‘culture’ (1996, p. 16). This can be taken further to suggest a further link with language, ethnicity and even religion. The council, therefore, is concerned with the different ‘communities’ of the area, with meeting their cultural, linguistic and religious needs, but also, implicitly, in maintaining the distinctions between them.

This dominant discourse was seen most clearly in the responses to the riots that occurred in a number of British cities in 2001. The report that followed on from these riots clearly identified the ‘problem’ as being rooted in the way different ethnic and national groups maintained themselves separately from the wider population and created barriers between themselves and the wider society (Home Office, 2001). This is a very clear example of the ethnoracial enclave in action, but it is also a very clear example of Baumann’s dominant discourse. Much of the debate that followed from the report, however, focussed not on the accuracy of the analysis of separation, but rather on how this could be overcome (Amin, 2002, Cantle, 2005). When these riots, became linked to the experiences of 9/11 with the attack on the twin towers, and in the UK with a major terrorist attack on the London underground (7/7), this led to a shift of focus from what might be called ‘ethnoracial’ enclaves towards ‘ethnoreligious’ enclaves and the development of media discourses, and government policies, focussed on the ‘Muslim community’ in particular (Home Office, 2011). However, as we have seen, Livezey’s original concept implied the equivalence of ethnic and religious groupings, and Baumann’s dominant discourse continues this blurring of the ethnoracial with the

ethnoreligious suggesting a dependency between the variables of ethnicity and religious affiliation as well as those of community and culture.

Superdiversity

This brings me onto the concept of superdiversity. In 2007 Steven Vertovec published a paper in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* announcing a new stage in the development of migration. Vertovec's focus was primarily on the UK and what he observed was one consequence of what had already come to be known as the 'new migration'. The 'old migration' of the 1950s, 60s and 70s was focussed primarily on the new commonwealth and consisted of significant number of individuals, initially men looking for work, but increasingly whole families, arriving in the UK from a select number of countries and settling in specific neighbourhoods. This clearly caused its own issues and problems, both for the migrants and for the host nation. The 'new migration', however, is part of something very different. From the early 1990s, beginning perhaps with the refugees leaving the former Yugoslavia, but building on changes in the European Union and large scale migration from Eastern Europe, the 'new migration' consisted of large numbers of people from many different nations moving for a wide variety of reasons, economic, political, as refugees escaping from war zones, or as asylum seekers, often in relatively small numbers from each particular country, and then coming to settle in a wide variety of different places around the UK, not only the traditional inner urban areas but also in small towns and, in some cases, within the rural economy as well. This led to what Vertovec labelled 'super diversity'.

What is important for Vertovec's construction of the concept of superdiversity, however, is not just the numbers of people migrating, the range of home nations or even the wide variety of sites into which the migrants moved. It was not, in Vertovec's view, simply a case of 'more migration'. The impact was not simply quantitative. For Vertovec this 'new migration', and the superdiversity that arose from it, led to a qualitative change in society, a social context that has not been seen before bringing with it its own issues, its own problems and needing new and radically different kinds of solutions. For Vertovec the important step between the quantitative analysis, a recognition of the numbers migrating, and the number of different nations from which the migrants were originating, to the qualitatively different state of superdiversity, was another feature of the new migration that is stated in Vertovec's paper as a logical consequence of the new migration. If there are so many people moving from so many different places, for so many different reasons, to so many different host communities, then the logical consequence of this is what Vertovec refers to as the "multiple dimensions of differentiation" (2007, p. 1028). It is these multiple dimensions of differentiation, or what we might call the diversity of diversities, that for Vertovec leads to the qualitative difference of superdiversity, not simply the multiplication of numbers.

What Vertovec demonstrates is that the population of migrants coming into the UK is itself diverse and needs to be understood as reflecting a diversity of national origin, a diversity of languages, a diversity of religions, a diversity of migration channels and immigration statuses and a diversity of demographics

(gender, age, etc.). At one level this diversity of diversities could be seen as obvious. If people are coming to the UK from across the world, from many different nations, then they will, inevitably, reflect a diversity of different languages and a diversity of different religions. The nature of the migration also means that it is not only men of working age who are travelling; many children, young families, and elderly members of society are also migrating, for many different reasons. The variety of causes for the migration will also lead to a variety of legal statuses among those who are currently within the UK. The question, however, is not simply to note that the new migration leads to a diversity of diversities, it is to ask how far these different diversities are to be seen as factors of the primary diversity of national origin, or how far they are, to a greater or lesser extent, independent of each other as variables and therefore cross-cutting, adding another layer of complexity to an already complex picture and so reinforcing Vertovec's notion of a qualitative difference in society.

It is worth noting at this point, therefore, that alongside the dominant discourse another discourse is also identified by Baumann among the people of Southall. This is what he refers to as the 'demotic discourse' (1996, pp. 30-31). This is the discourse that the people who belong to the various groups identified within Southall use to discuss their own 'cultures' and 'communities' and is characterised by much greater fluidity than the dominant discourse. It is clear that a simple equivalence of culture, community, ethnicity, language and religion does not work on the ground or for every day conversation. It is in part an analysis of the 'Muslim community' within Southall that leads Baumann to this position, as Muslims do not exist as a single national or ethnic group (1996, pp. 81-6). However, the boundaries between other 'communities', such as the Sikhs and the Hindus for example, are also much more fluid than the dominant discourse would allow. The equivalence of ethnicity, national origin and religion is already seen to be breaking down within this demotic discourse. It is from this position that the independence of these variables on the ground becomes a possibility. If we combine this with Vertovec's analysis of superdiversity, however, then we see that his idea of multiple dimensions of differentiation, or the diversity of diversities, reinforces the possibility of the independence of the variables underpinning the various forms of diversity.

Superdiversity in Handsworth

So far we have seen how the concept of 'ethnoracial enclave' as developed by Livezey, and observed in different ways in Rogers Park, Greenwich Village and Tooting, is firmly rooted in the dominant discourse's association of community and culture, or ethnicity, national origin and religion. Baumann suggests, however, that the 'demotic discourse', the local perspective, does not always reinforce this dominant understanding, and my own experiences in Handsworth tend to support this. There was clearly a very different kind of discourse around religious diversity within Handsworth than in areas of less obvious national or ethnic diversity, a discourse that emphasised diversity over difference and implicitly rejected the idea of ethnoracial enclaves. In trying to make sense of this I needed to find some kind of theoretical framework within which to explore this alternative discourse. At one level I

was able to draw on the work of Sarah Green who, in a paper on women's groups in London, had made the distinction between 'difference' and 'diversity' and framed this in a chronological sense suggesting a shift in the discourses of women's groups over time (2002). I also drew on the work of Bernstein (1967), Sibley (1995), Cohen (1985) and others on the construction of communities and the nature of boundaries. All of these authors helped me to clarify what it was that set Handsworth apart, and the nature of the discourses that I was listening to (Stringer 2013, pp. 62-65). None of them really provided an explanation for that difference. It was in this area that Vertovec's concept of superdiversity became important within my own analysis.

It was particularly Vertovec's idea of a diversity of diversities that I found to be helpful in providing an element of explanation for the situation I was observing. I took Vertovec's basic idea and, drawing on a review of the data that I had collected, pushed it a little bit further. I was particularly struck by the idea of the independence of the various elements of diversity. In my own presentation I reflected this through an understanding of identity (2013, p. 62). What I suggested that my data showed was that the people of Handsworth could choose the kind of identity that was of most relevance to them at any one time. In some cases the emphasis was on religion, at others it was on ethnicity, at others different kinds of identity were expressed; as 'people of Handsworth', as 'young mothers who go to the same crèche', as 'young people seeking work or training', or as 'older men who meet and talk about sport or politics in a local community centre'. The second group of identities created links across religious and ethnic boundaries that appeared to transcend the idea of ethnoracial enclaves. What was significant, however, was that there was a choice, and this choice was facilitated by the multiple dimensions of differentiation, such that a relevant level of commonality could be chosen in order to emphasise the idea of 'diversity' over that of 'difference'.

Linked to this was another argument, based on the history of Handsworth and its association over the years, particularly in the media and in public imagination, with ethnically based riots. I suggested, therefore, that the emphasis on 'diversity' as a positive value was itself part of the explicitly 'public' discourses on the Soho Road, especially when people were talking to an outsider like myself, such that they wished to stress the unity in diversity and to deliberately hide the differences (2013, p. 71). The diversity of diversities, I suggested, and the relative independence of the different diversities that this implies, allowed people to find elements that linked them across differences by focusing on a different set of identities, usually demographic, at the expense of identities based on ethnicity and religion. This was facilitated, I argued, because of the level of superdiversity within the neighbourhood, drawing on Vertovec's analysis to support my position.

Others have also argued that the way people construct their identity in the UK has seen a shift in the last ten years or so from a discourse based on ethnicity to one that is more clearly focussed on religion. Liz Hingley, a photographer and sociologist who worked in Handsworth and produced a wonderful sequence of photographs reflecting the religious diversity of the neighbourhood, draws our attention to a quotation from a local Anglican priest:

“On the Soho Road people are conscious of their faith rather than where they come from. People used to say ‘Oh I am from Bangladesh, Pakistan, West Indies, Poland’. Now people say ‘I am a Muslim, I am a Sikh, I am a Baptist, I am a Catholic; this is my identity’” (Hingley, 2011, p. 261). Such comments also assume, albeit implicitly, that there is a level of independence between ethnic, or national, and religious identities. Once again, therefore, this kind of analysis challenges the dominant discourses about community and culture, ethnicity and religion that underpin the idea of ethnoracial enclaves.

Interestingly, what this also does is to identify a possible line of enquiry that Vertovec hints at but does not develop within his paper. As we have seen Vertovec argues that the state of superdiversity, and the diversity of diversities that underpins this, leads to a qualitative difference in the nature of society, or community, that exists within a state of superdiversity as distinct from that of simple diversity. What I was able to demonstrate, from my work in Handsworth, was one way in which that qualitative difference was expressed, through an emphasis on ‘diversity’ rather than ‘difference’, and to suggest that this was directly linked to the idea of a multiple dimensions of differentiation that is at the heart of Vertovec’s argument. My problem, however, was that this was a result of detailed qualitative ethnographic work, and not directly provable beyond the specific field site of Handsworth itself.

In a previous paper, therefore, I asked whether it was possible to find some element of the census data that could allow us to identify particular neighbourhoods as religiously superdiverse, and so enabling a comparative analysis, testing my hypothesis from Handsworth in other equally superdiverse neighbourhoods (Stringer, 2014). My conclusion was that this was only partially possible because of the lack of detail within the census material, especially in the area of religion, but that a combination of religious, ethnic and national origin data could perhaps help to identify areas that were potentially superdiverse. I also noted that this would need to be checked qualitatively on the ground in order to triangulate my definitions. What I did conclude, however, was that looking at the census data, however flawed, could provide one possible way to enable me to test the qualitative results that were generated in Handsworth, and also, by implication, the theory that I had developed to explain those results.

Testing the Diversity of Diversities

In the remainder of this paper, therefore, I want to ask whether the census data does actually provide any basis for the idea of multiple dimensions of differentiation, or what I have referred to as the diversity of diversities, and the independence of the different variables that clearly underpins my own analysis, but is also implicit in Vertovec’s presentation. I am particularly interested at this stage in the relationship between religion, ethnicity and national origin.

The first problem we face is that the questions as set for the census in England and Wales do not offer the kind of detail that would be most helpful to test this kind of relationship. In terms of both the question on ethnicity and

particularly that on religion, the number of choices available does not fully reflect the level of diversity that might be apparent on the ground. The issues relating to the religion question have been rehearsed many times, but by offering the choice of the 'big six' and then a self designated 'other' category, there are many elements of contemporary religious diversity that are missed (Stringer, 2014). We cannot divide the main religious categories, to measure Catholics as opposed to Baptists for example, and the question did not allow individuals to choose more than one option, so failing to recognise those who consider themselves to be both Christian and Buddhist or Pagan and Hindu, or whatever. This will always be a problem and is seen particularly if we try to combine the ethnicity and religion questions whether at the level of the city of Birmingham as a whole or more locally within Handsworth.

In the context of Birmingham as a whole, what we see is a very clear correlation between religion and ethnicity, with 81% of those who claim a Christian identity also identifying as 'White' (all figures from the 2011 census rounded to the nearest full integer). An only very slightly higher proportion of Muslims identify as 'Asian' (82%), and it is only really among those who claim a Buddhist identity that there is even a moderate range of ethnicities reflected (22% White, 71% Asian, 3% Mixed, 2% Black and 2% Other). Interestingly 'Religion not stated' is the most ethnically diverse category (59% White, 6% Mixed, 20% Asian, 12% Black and 3% Other). If we turn the question around then we will also see that 64% of those identifying as White also identify as Christian, while those identifying as Asian are much more clearly divided (4% Christian, 8% Hindu, 67% Muslim, 10% Sikh, 4% No Religion and 5% Not stated). There is nothing here that might surprise us and this does not really suggest any kind of independence between ethnicity and religion at the city level.

My question, therefore, is whether at a local level, say within Handsworth itself, there is the same kind of equivalence of religious and ethnic identity that is seen in the census data for Birmingham as a city. If there were then this would challenge the idea of a diversity of diversities and lead me to have to rethink the idea of the independence of the multiple dimensions of differentiation that is proposed in Vertovec's notion of superdiversity and my own analysis of diversity and difference in Handsworth.

The Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) at the University of Birmingham undertook a survey of six doctor's surgeries within the Handsworth area. Within the six surgeries the lists of patients identified 170 different nationalities (Phillimore, 2013). By any kind of definition this level of national origin within a single neighbourhood can be defined as 'superdiversity'. What it does mean in practice, however, is that the majority of the various ethnoracial, or perhaps we should say 'ethnonational' groups represented by these 170 different nationalities will be very small, perhaps no more than a single family, or even a single individual. In some ways this makes little sense of the kind of analysis presented by Livezey, Sennett and Albrow, as for people to remain locked into such small ethnonational enclaves with little or no communication between them would lead to a very divided and

dysfunctional community. This was not the view I received from my own researches within the neighbourhood.

This local survey, however, cannot tell us very much about the religious diversity of the people concerned. If we take one of the lower sub-units of the UK census, the super output area – middle layer, and choose that which, by a process defined in my previous paper (Stringer 2014), can be argued to have the highest level of religious diversity, then we find that this unit (Birmingham 036) is an area within Handsworth. In order to test some of my proposals and assumptions within this paper, therefore, I will use the figures from this particular super output area.

The first thing to say is that if we look at the relationship between religion and ethnicity, as I did with Birmingham as a whole, then the results look very different from the wider results for the city, at least at a superficial level. The vast majority of Muslims and Sikhs identify as Asian (81% and 87% respectively). Those who identify as Asian or Asian British are much more diverse in terms of religion than for the city as a whole (Christian 6%, Hindu 13%, Muslim 33%, Sikh 36%, Other 5% and Not Stated 5%). Likewise the majority of individuals who self-identify as white claim to be Christian (71%); however the largest group identifying as Christians are now Black (47%, with 33% White, 9% Mixed and 10% Asian). Interestingly those identifying as White and Christian are now equally divided between 'White British' and 'White Other' which was not the case at all at the city level. Despite an apparently much higher level of diversity than at the city level, much of this can be explained by the higher proportion of those identifying as 'Black, African, Caribbean or Black British' and of those identifying themselves as Sikh, both of which are fairly uniform in themselves (67% Christian in the case of the Black population and 87% Asian in the case of the Sikhs). These figures do not really appear to indicate very much independence of diversities within this local population and tend to reinforce the idea of ethnoreligious groupings.

Table 1: Nation of Origin against Religious Affiliation (super output area Birmingham 036). Source 2011 Census, Office of National Statistics.

	All	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Sikh	Other	None	Not Stated
UK	55%	56%	46%	52%	47%	57%	80%	66%
EU 2001	1%	1%	0	2%	0	0	1%	1%
EU Accession	5%	14%	0	0	0	0	4%	5%
West/Central Africa	1%	2%	0	1%	0	0	0	1%
South/East Africa	3%	2%	4%	6%	3%	0	0	1%
Middle East	1%	0	0	5%	0	0	0	1%
East Asia	1%	0	0	0	0	1%	4%	1%
South Asia	24%	3%	49%	32%	48%	40%	2%	12%
South East Asia	1%	1%	0	0	0	0	1%	1%
Americas and Caribbean	7%	18%	0	0	0	1%	6%	10%

If, on the other hand, we focus on nation of origin, rather than ethnicity, then we find some far more interesting results (see table 1). Here the number of different options listed within the results is not as high as the 176 of the IRiS survey as the statistics are split into regions. However the distribution is still significantly more widespread than the national, and the city average. The Buddhist and Jewish groups are too small to be significant, but in each of the other religious groups no more than 60% are born in the UK. Those identifying as Christian are perhaps the most diverse with significant percentages born in EU accession countries and in the Caribbean. The profile for Hindus and Sikhs are very similar with the largest percentage born in South Asia. The Muslims are more diverse, probably reflecting Arab and Somali populations. The 40% of Other Religions born in South Asia probably reflect the Radivassia who are relatively strong in this area. Finally the None, and Not Stated categories show a far higher proportion of people born in the UK but also an interesting diversity of people from the rest of the world.

The statistics, therefore, do suggest that there is still some relationship between ethnicity, national origin and religion, although to talk of ethnoracial, or ethnoreligious, enclaves in the way Livezey understood the term may be unwarranted. Looking again at my own data, however, it is clear that the discourses I was listening to in Handsworth only go half way in challenging the dominant discourse of ethnoracial enclaves. The emphasis in my conversations was clearly on diversity, rather than difference, and there was the opportunity to choose the identity through which to express that diversity. However, if I go back to the data then it is clear that the identities that were chosen to express the unities that cut across the differences were generally those based in demographics; young mothers, older men, young people, neighbours on the same street etc. It was not the case that people chose to use a religious identity to cut across underlying ethnic differences, or identities rooted in different national origins. The kind of demographic identities that were selected sublimated the underpinning religious identities just as much as they did the national or ethnic identities. It is still possible, therefore, that some level of 'ethnoracial enclave', or religious distinctions based on national or ethnic identities, remained beneath the surface even in the superdiverse neighbourhood of Handsworth. If this is the case then the independence of such variables that is assumed in my original analysis, and implied by Vertovec's presentation, cannot be upheld.

Conclusions

What then can I say as a result of this analysis? I suggested that a central element of Steven Vertovec's presentation of superdiversity was the idea of a diversity of diversities, and that underlying this idea was an assumption that many of the variables underpinning these diversities were independent of each other. I recognised that I had accepted this in my own use of the concept of 'superdiversity' to understand the discourses on religious diversity in Handsworth. I had assumed that a certain level of independence of the variables allowed individuals to choose the identity that meant most to them in any particular circumstance and so allowed some kind of transcendence of

possible differences, whether based on ethnicity or religion or some other factor.

The evidence of Livezey, Sennett and Albrow with which I started this paper, suggested that in many highly diverse neighbourhoods, in the US and in the UK, there continued to be a close association between religion and ethnicity as well as a tendency for the ethnic identities to predominate in emphasising values of difference rather than diversity. By looking at local census data in the clearly recognised superdiverse neighbourhood of Handsworth I have been able to show that the correlation between religious diversity and ethnicity is still very strong, while that between religious diversity and country of origin is less strong but still important. This tends to reinforce the view that the variables of ethnicity and religion are not as independent as the theories of superdiversity suggest they might be. The statistical evidence suggests that variables around religion, ethnicity and national origin are not as independent as I had assumed from a first look at my qualitative data, and I have noted that on a second look at the data the sense of independence in the conversations I listened to was a reflection primarily of the choice to highlight demographic markers of identity rather than a full independence of variables around religious, ethnic, or national, diversity.

What is interesting about Handsworth, therefore, as a superdiverse neighbourhood, is not that religious identity is chosen over ethnic identity in discourses on diversity, as Hingley's local Anglican vicar and many other commentators have suggested, but that both are subsumed, at least in public discourse, by identities based on demography (age, gender, employment status, legal status etc.) and it is by focusing on those elements that link individuals across ethnic and religious divides, that allow people to express a preference for diversity over that of difference within their neighbourhood.

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