Migrant sociality in a "global city": friendship, transnational networks, racism and cosmopolitanism.
A study of Russian-speaking migrants in London.

Darya Malyutina

UCL Department of Geography

PhD thesis

I, Darya Malyutina, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Thesis abstract

This is a work on sociality amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London. The research aims are to explore migrants' informal relationships, particularly friendship, which is localized in London but has both local and spatially distanciated origins, and the construction and dynamics of their cosmopolitan and racialized attitudes as a part of urban sociality within the super-diversity of London. It is based on the results of an ethnographic study of a Russian bar and two series of semi-structured interviews with migrants.

This thesis advances the understanding of contemporary migration by acknowledgement of complexity of the ways in which migrants rely on social relationships in their decisions and practices of mobility and lives in the host society. It is contributing to migration studies by stressing the need to pay more attention to the inner diversity of migrant populations, different structural and personal constraints affecting the mobility decisions and further lives as migrants, and valuable social relationships that are not confined to kinship or neighbourhood. I explore friendship as a specific pattern of connectivity between individuals and within groups, non-reducible to ethnic/national communities or cross-border relationships with relatives, and look at how it can inform Russian-speaking migrants' lives on different stages and from different localities. Also, in this work I focus on the cosmopolitanism and racialization in migrants' relationships with other Londoners, in order to examine how migrants' understanding and practicing of social relationships emplace them as members of the population of the 'global city'. In doing so, I pay attention to the mutually constitutive relationship between migrants' agency in social relationships and the super-diversity of London.

Although my findings are centred on the study of Russian-speaking migrants, the research may have broader implications for the studies of 'middling' migration and complex processes of migrant community formation.

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Introduction

This thesis is about social relationships of recent Russian-speaking migrants in London. My research aims are to explore migrants' informal relationships, particularly friendship, which is localized in London but has both local and spatially distanciated origins, and the construction and dynamics of their cosmopolitan and racialized attitudes as a part of urban sociality within the super-diversity of London.

The reasons for doing research on the complexities of Russian-speaking migrants' social relationships in relation to the discourse of contemporary migration arise out of both my personal and academic interest. As a Russian in London, I was often faced with other migrants' sometimes contradictory, seemingly fixed but eventually flexible, social ties with compatriots in London and across borders, as well as contested relationships with non-Russian-speaking Londoners. As a researcher, I found this recently emerged migrant population not maintaining any universal pattern of connectivity, and not quite fitting into the images of a diaspora or a transnational community. Therefore, there was a need to explore the particular social connections of its members in order to find out how migrants' social networks may function nowadays, and how they may negotiate their ways in the globalizing world. I felt the existing explanations not entirely sufficient, because in the background of people's words and actions there was something else beyond ethnic solidarity, national identity, cultural background, kinship bonds, neighbourhood connections, or unity on the grounds of common vulnerability of a suppressed minority population.

An exploration of these empirical issues provides important insights for theoretical reflections on transnational migration and studies of 'global cities'. Increased mobility and interconnectedness have been addressed in migration literature as main features of globalization. 'Global cities' are described as places with the highest concentration of the flows of people, cultures, and capital. London in particular has been approached as a city with a socially, culturally, and ethnically diverse population due to enhanced migration which contributes to the changes of the social structure, development of global interconnectedness, and problematization of relationships within the everyday multiculture. The city's population has undergone some dynamic changes in the past couple of decades, and the growth of East European migration in particular characterizes the new trends in its development. But research on migration is often

limited to studies of elite free-floating professionals or the bottom social strata. However, London's new populations include large numbers of those in between the extremes. These groups need more research, as they are quite diverse and therefore may maintain connectivity locally and across the borders in different ways. Empirically, my work makes an emphasis on the need to explore the recent Russian-speaking migrants and their sociality as new subjects of this diversity. In doing so, I am following the arguments of the growing body of migration literature (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, 2005b, Smith and Favell, 2006, Ryan et al., 2008) to study the routine interactions and relationships of 'middling' migrants and disclose the 'human face' of contemporary migration. Theoretically, this research contributes to the conceptualization of migrant sociality by introducing friendship as a notion particularly relevant for explaining the dynamics and differences in migrants' social relationships that cannot be fully accounted for by explanations of kinship and common ethnic or national background. My work thus forms a part of the geographical studies of friendship that just started to develop (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, Bunnell et al., 2011).

'Middling' Russian-speaking migrants in London, as an object of research, offer a particularly valuable field for the consideration of social and spatial connections of global migration. This population emerged in the process of London's most recent development as a diverse multicultural city. Their mobility is conditioned by the social, economic, and cultural features of London's development. As well, their migrant lives are underpinned by the ambiguity of their power positions as 'lifestyle migrants' who are, however, marginalized by means of their non-EU status. These new Londoners are not or not quite easily squeezed into most of the common migration categories: 'diaspora', 'ethnic group', 'transnational community', 'imagined community', or even 'East Europeans', while at the same time they can represent a bit of all these. Little is known about the ways in which 'middling' migrants shape and sustain their social networks, build relationships across the borders and locally, and incorporate themselves into the super-diversity. Friendship was chosen as a conceptual category through which I could explore their routine social interactions, long-term and new attachments, constitutions of social networks, relationships with compatriots and non-compatriots, and the influence of these on migrants' everyday lives in London.

Therefore, Russian-speakers are especially interesting because they demonstrate that contemporary migration is not easily and straightforwardly labelled and categorized, as well as they are an example of how London dilutes, transforms and mixes up identities and relationships.

In sum, this work's ideas stem from the acknowledgement of the complexity of the ways in which contemporary migrants rely on social relationships in their decisions and practices of mobility and lives in the host society. This complexity cannot be fully grasped by the theories of transnationalism which have recently become most popular, but also have generated criticisms of their relative applicability, to which this work contributes by theoretical conceptualizations and empirical evidence. The first objective of this work is to disentangle the concept of friendship as a specific pattern of connectivity between individuals and within groups, and explore how it can inform Russian-speaking migrants' lives on different stages and from different localities. The second objective is to examine how migrants' understanding and practicing of social relationships emplace them as members of the population of the 'global city'.

This work consists of three main parts which focus on the conceptual basis of the work and two empirical directions of research. Part 1 is the longest piece of this work, because it introduces a wide and diverse range of theories, notions and techniques which are later exemplified in a set of focused briefer discussions of empirical questions. Part 1 sets the theoretical and methodological background for the research. It focuses on the important theoretical themes of my thesis: contemporary migration, transnationalism, migrant social networks and friendship, racism and cosmopolitanism as features of everyday life in the super-diversity. It describes London and its Russian-speaking population as an object of research, and introduces the qualitative methodologies I used for studying migrants' social relationships from different angles.

In chapter 1 I suggest an optic of researching contemporary migration, going beyond the traditional approach of viewing migrants relatively homogeneously transnational through kinship connections. Following the works of the theorists who claim that with the development of migrant studies the notion of transnationalism is becoming overwhelming and loosely interpreted (Portes, 2001, Vertovec, 1999, Smith, 2005, Scott, 2006), I suggested that the concept of transnationalism has to be approached

with a greater attention to particular circumstances of migration, and a consideration of the stratified and heterogeneous character of contemporary migrant communities. Also, I stress the need to pay more attention to 'middling transnationalism' (Conradson and Latham, 2005b, Blunt, 2007) and approach not only top and bottom social strata but rather migrants who usually belong to 'middling' positions both in the countries of origin and in the host countries, and in whose mobility endeavours economic considerations are not the only or the primary ones, while 'aesthetic' motivations play a significant role which makes some researchers call them 'lifestyle migrants' (Knowles and Harper, 2009). I also look at ethnicity, stressing the relational and interactional nature of its significance and the ways in which this concept is conditioned by group identification and categorization (Brubaker, 2004, Jenkins, 2008). I argue that the place of a migrant group in a city and the dynamics of its development have to be analyzed through a range of people's informal relationships and personal networks that may be situated in different locations and that play an important role in mobility patterns. Friendship is then suggested as the main research focus, as a relationship which is not limited by more fixed kinship or neighbourhood ties (Wellman 1979, Wellman et al 1988, Ryan et al., 2008), has a significant potential in inspiring and sustaining mobility (Conradson and Latham, 2005a: 301), and is a specific human interrelation irreducible to ethnic or national solidarity (Bunnell et al., 2011). Next, I discuss the historical and sociocultural specifics of Soviet and Russian friendship, aiming to outline the meanings which travel across borders with migrants and may be employed in the strategies of building and sustaining relationships in the host country. In general in this chapter I stress the need to pay special attention to the development and proliferation of personal networks of migrants, considering the dynamics of their attitudes and relationships with compatriots and other Londoners, in order to avoid missing on important patterns of urban sociality. I point out that migrants' attitudes and relationships towards Otherness have been largely overlooked in literature; however the intercultural communication in a global city like London is not only conditioned by the mainstream public attitudes towards newcomers, but equally by the reverse. The conceptual background of this work is also shaped by the importance of taking into consideration that patterns of migrants' sociality contain both cosmopolitan and racialized elements, can be directed at the migrant community or at the integration in the host society, and eventually be an indicator of transnational engagement.

In chapter 2, I describe London as a geographical and social space where my research took place. It sets the scene for my empirical research, the results of which are outlined in the rest of the work. As well, it links the research with theoretical elaborations on the social processes taking place in a city like London that are presented in the first chapter. Starting with a portrait of London as a 'super-diverse' city (Vertovec, 2007) and the factors that have prompted the increase in international migration, this chapter continues with a description of the contemporary Russian-speaking population of London, providing an insight into some history of migration from the former Soviet Union, its contemporary social organization, statistics, stratification and infrastructure. I also describe here the variety of paths that Russian-speaking migrants take to get to London, and the role of their informal relationships shaping and supporting their mobility endeavours. The chapter portrays the Russian-speaking population of London as a group contributing to the diversity of this city and a particular migrant community bearing its own inner diversity and special character. I specify here how my research seeks to fill in the gaps in the studies of East European migration in particular, which often miss the complexity of this phenomenon and confine it to mainly European migrants and mainly service workers. It contributes to the whole work by not only describing my object of research as recent but already numerous, new for Britain, 'middling', but often ambiguously positioned within power hierarchies of migrants, but also by pointing out that a migrant community can be made 'visible' by analyzing the informal social relationships that keep its members together.

In chapter 3, I describe the methods that I chose for the empirical research of social relationships of Russian-speakers. I introduce the conceptual frameworks of transnational urbanism, 'middling' transnationalism and a critique of methodological nationalism that determined and shaped my choice of strategy of approaching, observing, and talking to people. These, respectively, define the research strategy through attention to both local and cross-border relationships of migrants, focus on everyday practices of sociality of mostly middle-class migrants, and provide a consideration of inner divisions and intercultural connections of migrants. I explain how I engaged in participant observation in a Russian bar and two series of semi-structured interviews with migrants, regarded as most appropriate for studying a

relatively new, small but constantly growing, socially diverse and spatially disperse part of the migrant population of London, which is not available for large-scale structured research, and is not well represented in British migration literature. I present my research design as consisting of three strands of fieldwork, which took migrants' friendship as a general focus, and consecutively explored social relationships within the frameworks of a network, personal life values, and urban intercultural communication. I also describe the process of gathering empirical data and the ways in which each stage of fieldwork generated particular knowledge and informed the other stages.

Part 2 presents the results of the empirical research that contributes to and develops the conceptual ideas of the first two chapters. Following the considerations outlined in chapter 1, here I aim to analyze the ties and connections that may inform migrant sociality in different ways, and explore the extent to which common ethnic or national origin may underpin their social relationships in real life.

In chapter 4 I focus on the ways in which Russian-speaking migrants form meaningful social connections in London, and explore how connectivity with compatriots can be framed within migrants' understandings of the routine functioning of social life in the city. In chapter 5, I concentrate on social networks that form in the processes of negotiation of a variety of local, transnational, mobile, long-existing and randomly established ties and connections, and examine the functioning of these social networks in the social conditions of London. Finally, in chapter 6 I look at the limitations of the development of migrant communities, critically assessing the potential of common background as a basis of communality among diverse migrants in a diverse city. In doing so, I draw upon researchers' warnings against taking migrant communities for granted (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003, Bunnell et al., 2011, Ryan et al., 2008). In general, this part of the work explores the interconnections and divisions among the Russian-speaking migrants in London.

After focusing on personal relationships inside the community which is a part of a multicultural population of a global city, in part 3 I approach post-Soviet migrants as participants of the urban divisions and complex relationships with other Londoners. In chapter 7, I investigate migrants' perceptions of the diversity they have encountered in

London. This includes perceiving the city and the people surrounding them and living in the same area, possibilities of communication with others, social norms of handling diversity, and eventual effects of these on the perceptions of identities of others and the self. This is the account of how people see the particular nature of the city, and the influence of London on themselves. These perceptions influence how people react to this diversity and how they interact with it, particularly the complexity of attitudes and behavioural practices based on, or attributed to, national and ethnic identities. Migrants, I argued in chapter 1, as a result of enhanced mobility, social differentiations and power inequalities, racialized discourses of both home and host countries, and often limited social contact with the difference, emerge as a racializing agency in the city, as a part of imagining themselves placed within its urban hierarchies. Thus, in chapter 8 I analyze xenophobic patterns of relationships with 'Others', and elaborate on the shaping of racialization processes among Russian-speaking Londoners. I examine how they construct emotionally tuned social hierarchies of difference and position themselves within these hierarchies. Finally, in chapter 9 I discuss the cosmopolitan features of migrants' attitudes to 'Others' and the potential ways of reducing xenophobia. I outlined in chapter 1 the need to understand how cosmopolitanization can develop in practice, and explored how life in a city like London can modify the attitudes towards Others. Following this, chapter 9 describes the positive impact of Russian-speaking migrants' immersion into the super-diversity of London on their attitudes to other nationalities and ethnic groups. Drawing upon the importance of studying migrants' social networks in detail, and the special role of friendly relationships for post-Soviet migrants, described in previous theoretical and empirical chapters, I explore how informal communication with the Other can be linked to developing tolerance and openness to diversity. Altogether, these chapters explore the complexity, dynamics, and sometimes paradoxical character of the sociality practices that Russian-speaking migrants employ in constructing their everyday lives with and within the super-diversity of London.

The final chapter of this thesis puts the implementation of my research strategies into the context of the challenges of migrant social relationships as a research problem. This chapter includes some reflexive thoughts about the ethical implications of doing qualitative research on friendship by a researcher with a presumably 'insider' position

in a migrant group. I will discuss the methodological implications of friendship among Russian-speaking migrants for the relationship between the researcher and the researched. I argue that belonging to the same community can be helpful in conducting research. However, the diversity of this community should be an object of constant reflexivity, and the seemingly easy access to a group should never be taken to mean that you are an insider. Relying upon feminist literature (Rose 1997, England 1994), in the final chapter I discuss how the practical downsides of a study can be analytically approached as a useful experience for the research practice.

In the conclusion, I summarize the work I have done and reiterate the main arguments of the earlier chapters. I emphasize the contributions to academic knowledge made by this research and its implications for further migration studies.

Part 1. Foundations

Chapter 1. Complexities of contemporary migration

1. Introduction

This chapter will set the conceptual background for this research. Based on the writings of the past couple of decades, the world is now described by many social scientists as increasingly mobile and spanned by multiple connections between people and places. Cultural processes are complex and flexible, and the issues of identity and belonging are contested invoking the notions of imagined communities, hybridity, flux, and the multiple positioning of subjects. In this respect, migration issues are becoming a much discussed theme in the discourse of globalization. Cities are regarded as places with the biggest concentration of flows, a common place for new migrant populations to settle, and a state of 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007a, 2007b). Contemporary migrants are often described as being highly mobile and keeping enhanced cross-border connections. However, reflecting on the concept of transnationalism, this work will add to the critique of the proliferation of this term and analyze the limitations of its use outlined by many theorists. I will particularly underline the transnational practices that are characteristic to different social groups and nationalities to their differing extents. Not only are contemporary migrants diverse between immigrant groups, but also within them. Their level of transnational engagement varies, being dependent on a range of factors such as 'migration channel and legal status, migration and settlement history, community structure and gendered patterns of contact, political circumstances in the homeland, economic means and more' (Vertovec, 2007b: 1043). Going beyond this traditional approach of viewing migrants as being relatively homogeneously transnational through kinship connections, I suggest a more refined optic of researching migration and transnationalism, by attending to the diversity and complexity within and differences among migrants' social networks. I intend to show that transnational practices are present to very different degrees, or even not necessarily present in most recent migration trends.

My first conceptual argument in following the need to understand what migrant communities are like in the times of global mobility and increased social differentiation

is approaching informal social relationships of migrants. Here, I specifically underline the role of friendship as an analytical tool for studying migrants' social networks. Following Wellman (1979, 1993; Wellman et al., 1988, 1990, 2001) and Pahl (2000), I explain the necessity of studying communities of informal solidarity based on friendship and not limited to kinship, neighbourhood, or other geographically or work-based communities. In my view of friendship, I understand real friendship as the refusal to practice a critical approach of its participants and to calculate the tangible benefits of a relationship, or the conscious denial of the pragmatic implications of friendship. These ideas are underlined by Bourdieu (1998) and Boltanski (1990, 1999). In respect to the principal focus of my work, I suggest that friendship is the kind of relationship that can inform the ways in which migrants sustain connections both locally and across borders. I claim that friendship and other kinds of informal relationships can help to understand under which conditions and what motivations migrants are brought together, the differences in their transnational engagement, and how the perceptions of friendship can condition the possibilities of the development of positive relationships of this migrant community with 'Others' in the city.

Secondly, while migrants' social networks are usually approached as networks of compatriots, I argue for a more nuanced constitution of their social connections, approaching their participation in social processes within the city space. Looking at a scale of a city like London, I argue that there is a complex relation between the engagement in relationships with 'Others' and with compatriots. Mobility can promote the re-imagining or re-establishing of national boundedness of a community, when migrants' existing racist and nationalist ideas become mixed with the effects of this new environment, the struggle for better life conditions, and the protection of identities threatened by the uncertainties of globalized society. At the same time, moving to a city with a diverse population can involve acceptance of and getting on with diversity in everyday sociality. While 'othering' migrants in this regard is common, the situation needs to be approached from another angle – looking at how migrants, as part and parcel of the variety and multiplicity of London's contemporary population, perceive and build relationships with the locals and other migrants. In seeing how a particular migrant group finds its way in a global city like London, I will claim in this work that it is crucial to consider both the relationships unfolding among

the community members and the variety and dynamics of migrants' attitudes and interactions with other inhabitants of this city. In other words, it is necessary to look at the processes of negotiation of ethnic identities by migrants in different circumstances. Theoretically, in implying the complexity of contemporary migration, this work will warn against methodological nationalism and generalizations in the analysis of these diverse populations. Looking at the networking processes in a multicultural city from the perspective of a migrant but not limiting them to only localized diasporic communities, and considering migrants' agency in the processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization, is an approach I use in my analysis. It allows the study of multiplicity of previously understudied but important characteristics of sociality in the city.

In general, this work is an attempt to perform a detailed analysis of the dynamics and constitution of contemporary migrants' social networks and empirically demonstrate the limitations of transnationalism: in particular, the way cross-border connections can be performed in informal social relationships of Russian-speaking migrants in London. Taking into account the changing patterns of global mobility, its increasing numbers and diversity, new characteristics arguably attributed to migrants, the persisting and developing problems in intercultural communication, and the contested degrees and significance of transnationalism – the question of how contemporary migrant communities work is one of the most topical. Here, I suggest that friendship, as a basis of sociality keeping migrants together as groups, is a relationship that reflects these issues problematic for migration research. Sustaining a relationship across borders, transplanting it to the host country or relying on it in decision to migrate, using it to support oneself while being abroad, or distinguishing between close relationships with compatriots, locals or other migrants demonstrate how migrants are building upon this kind of sociality. I argue that there is a feature of Russian friendship as a specific mode of social interaction that was transplanted from migrants' home countries and that makes them distinguish between relationships with compatriots and with other Londoners.

2. Transnationalism: introducing a popular concept in migration studies

Transnationalism studies began in the early 1990s as a critique of classical migration theories that assumed a linear progression of movement and change: migrants were regarded as individuals who leave one community in order to settle at another, belonging to only one set of social relations at a time. Researchers of transnationalism claim that sending and receiving societies should be understood as constituting a single field of analysis, given the multiple attachments and multi-stranded social relations experienced by migrants towards their societies of origin and settlement (Ho, 2008: 1287). Migrants in this case have ties both with their home country and receiving one. Glick Schiller et al (1995: 484) define transnationalism as 'the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement'. Guarnizo (1997: 288) approaches 'a series of economic, sociocultural and political practical and discursive relations that transcend the territorially bound jurisdiction of the nation-state'. He and Smith (1998) juxtapose 'transnationalism from below', or the everyday, grounded practices of individuals and groups, with 'transnationalism from above', or global governance and economic activities. Portes et al. (1999: 219) use the term to describe those economic, political, and sociocultural occupations and activities that require regular, long-term contacts across borders. In addition, regular contacts imply a normative dimension of transnationalism: travelling and keeping in touch with relatives and communities of origin abroad has become a norm for many contemporary migrants (Portes, 1999; Vertovec, 2007a, 2007b). While describing transnationalism as a way of organizing social formations spanning borders, this notion is also conceptualized as a type of consciousness involving multiple identifications of subjects, a mode of cultural reproduction where the focus is on the constructed, contested and fluid nature of cultures (Hall 1990), or as an avenue of capital that is based on transnational corporations (Sklair, 2000), or even a global public space of political engagement and a way of (re)constructing 'place' or locality (Vertovec, 1999).

Conceptualizing contemporary migrant communities with theories of transnationalism has become a well-established tradition for social scientists. Transnationalism emphasizes the 'multiple ties and interactions [that link] people or institutions across the borders of nation-states' (Vertovec, 1999: 447). One of the pioneers in the

research on transnationalism, Glick Schiller defines transmigrants as migrants 'whose daily lives depend on a multiple and constant interconnections across national borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state' (Glick Schiller et al, 1995: 48). Cross-borders activities include building institutions, conducting transactions, and influencing local and national events in the home countries. The increase of transnationalism is seen in parallel with globalization itself, the growth of global cities as key points of capital accumulation, communication and control, development of technology and communication (Glick Shiller, 1995; Vertovec, 2007a, 2007b).

With so many views of transnationalism, the scale of these studies has been a topic for discussion for some researchers, and quite a few argue for paying more attention to empirical research of small-scale movements and groups. Favell (2001: 397) suggests providing systematic empirical evidence for the studies of globalization, in order to get rid of 'fruitless social theoretical speculations' common to globalization theorists, and thus to focus on migration and transnational networks as 'very real' phenomena. Almost any contemporary book about globalization, as Appadurai (1996: 18) notes, is a mild exercise in megalomania. Smith (2001) underlines that 'global cities' theorists like Saskia Sassen and David Harvey in their works present incomplete social constructions of globalization, which privilege the functional logics of global capital 'from above' – failing to address local and transnational practices 'from below'. He criticizes understanding the local as distinct from the transnational flows of ideas, information, financial transactions, religious and cultural movements, and argues that localities are dynamic (Smith, 2001: 12, 54, 101-102). Portes (2000: 254) stresses that transnational processes are created by common people as response to globalization, and their economic activities are fuelled by and inseparable from capitalist expansion: the labour needs of the developed world and the proliferation of its productive investment, consumption standards and popular culture in the developing countries. Marginalizing or excluding everyday cultural practices tends to deny their importance as historical models of urban agency.

Following these arguments for paying attention to immediate subjects exhibiting transnational features in the everyday, in this work, I will be applying the approach 'from below' rather than 'from above'. I will focus on individuals and small-scale social

networks, and the role of both local and cross-border connections and interactions in their lives. In the next part, I will look at those people and social groups that are usually taken as objects of transnational studies, and point out the limitations of conventional approaches to transmigrants.

2.1. Who is a transmigrant?

The objects of transnationalism studies include institutions like TNCs and the 'transnational capitalist class' (Sklair, 2000, 2002). As a more anthropological strand of research, there are case studies of individuals and their lives in the contexts of border-crossing activities, transnational communities and world cities. Glick Schiller et al (1995: 50) justify studying migration 'rather than abstract cultural flows or representations', and focusing on individuals' and families' life experiences. Portes (2000: 254) underlines the significance of transnationalism studies as a tool for research not only of world system structures, but also for the analysis of the everyday networks and patterns of social relationships that emerge in and around those structures. Favell also suggests stepping aside from macro-level data to study how 'real individuals, with everyday family lives and human relationships, could actually live out the lives predicted for them by the macro economic data about flows and networks' (Favell, 2003: 11). Glick Schiller and Çaglar (2009: 180) suggest focusing on individual migrants, the networks they form, and the social fields created by these networks, understood as systems of social relations rather than spatial metaphors. Following these theorists, I propose to focus more on people as social actors that produce culture, participate in micro-networks of social action, and attend to social processes taking place in contemporary cities on a small-scale level. In these attempts, it is necessary to understand who the people to whom the framework of transnational migration is applied are.

The unit of analysis for transnational studies is an individual who regularly engages in cross-border activities (Glick Schiller 1995, Guarnizo 1997, Portes et al., 1999, Levitt 2001). Smith (2001) regards transnational migrants as participating in communicative actions connecting localities beyond borders, engaging in transnational practices and establishing translocal relations within historically and geographically specific points of origin and destination. 'Intimate circles and small networks can be involved here; the

transnational is not always immense in scale' (Hannerz, 1996: 89). The transnational character of movements does not mean the attenuation and eventual loss of links to the place of origin. The new features of contemporary migration include the increasing back-and-forth movements of people, on a global scale and in a huge variety of forms and frequencies. A new image of migrants appears – an image of those who search for work for a better life; who might return to where they came from not because they failed but because they planned it; who come back to visit regularly, 'postponing an answer to the question where they really belong, or simply making the question irrelevant' (Hannerz 1992: 246). At the same time, being transnational does not mean being unable to assimilate in the host society. Engagement in cross-border activities can be combined with being a well integrated, naturalized, economically successful resident of a host country (Portes et al, 2002: 294, Vertovec, 2007b: 1046). In this respect, transnationalism implies enhanced connectivity with multiple locations, ideally not at the expense of ghettoization or becoming cut off from some connections.

Initially, transnationalism studies often focused (and still focus often) on Third World nationals (Latin American, Caribbean and Filipino migrants), with particular attention to kinship networks and connections (Glick Schiller et al, 1995, Portes, 2000, Levitt, 2001, Soehl and Waldinger, 2010, Gruner-Domic, 2011). These migrants were, according to Favell (2003: 14), new heroes of 'globalization from below', and the main focus of these studies was on economic and cultural networks, business transactions and remittances, and political and social influence on events back home. Other studies address elite groups in the financial, media and service industries (Favell, 2003: 16, Sklair, 2002). The role of education abroad for the formation of transnational professionals has been underlined, often intrinsically concentrating on rather elite groups pursuing education abroad (Waters, 2007, Hall, 2011). Entrepreneurs and their transnationalism, as a form of contemporary economic adaptation based on the mobilization of their cross-country social networks, is another strand of research (Portes et al, 2002).

What I regard as a gap in transnationalism studies is that many researchers mainly focused on the new migrant underclasses and the emergent 'global elites', as the social groups whose mobility is most noticeably motivated by the employment requirements of world cities and prospects of globalization in the developed West. The

focus of academic interest in between these extremes has been not as significant. However, transnationalism may be characteristic of a larger variety of migrants than these two former groups. Recently, attention has emerged to more 'middling' kind of transnationalism, approaching those between the polar opposites of marginalized Third World migrants and global elites: specifically, middle-class professionals. These people belong to the middle class both in home and host countries, and are drawn to world cities not only because of labour market attractions, but also by the cities' cultural and social features (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, 2005b, Blunt, 2007). The emphasis has moved from institutional analysis to the geographies of individuals' everyday lives (Waters, 2007). The context of global cities dynamics and the peculiarities of transnational migrants' everyday lives are central to such research (Smith, 2001, 2005, Blunt, 2007). Conradson and Latham (2005a, 2005b) emphasize the importance of studying networks, connections and relationships evolving as everyday practices of middle-class transnationalism. World cities are more and more often approached as hosts to diverse middle-class migrant populations, and although such mobility is still practiced by a limited number of people, it has become a 'normal' middle-class activity (Scott, 2006: 1107). Scott also underlines the much more 'complex and messy' character of middle-class transnational migration, in comparison with the previously studied corporate managers and cleaners. Therefore, I do not claim here that all middle-class migrants tend to be transnational; rather, I suggest that the extent to which these people may rely on, sustain and develop their cross-border connections needs detailed attention.

So, I argue, transnational migration research requires more effort not only in the empirical studies of individuals' social networks, but also in diversifying and expanding the scope of research to more varied social groups and communities. Following Conradson and Latham (2005a, 2005b), I underline that 'ordinary' people – those not representing the extreme ends of social hierarchies either in home countries or in the receiving society, being middle class both 'here' and 'there', mostly educated, and 'drawn to the city as much by what it offers them in lifestyle and personal experience terms as by any narrow economic calculus' (Conradson and Latham, 2005a: 290) – constitute a large part of contemporary migrations and need more attention from migration and transnationalism theorists. Outlining the need for detailed consideration

of the relation of different patterns and strands of migration and trasnationalism, this part served as a preface to the following section, where I am going to outline the limitations and critique of transnationalism.

2.2. Critique of transnationalism

The main critique of transnationalism studies, primarily, warns that the growing popularity of the concept 'may make it appear as if everybody is "going transnational", which is far from being the case' (Portes, 2000: 264, Levitt, 2001, Vertovec, 1999, 2001, Scott, 2006). Concentrating too much on the transnational subjects may give a false impression that transnationalism is the main method for the political and economic adaptation of migrants. Portes argues against simply re-labeling contemporary migration as transnational. He explains the proliferation of the use of this term by the largely anthropological origin of the research on it, which provided mainly case studies of specific immigrant groups, giving 'rich descriptions but obscuring the scope' of the phenomenon (Portes, 2001: 182). This research field's problems, he claims, stem from failing to notice that transnational migrants are only part of migrant communities in general, similar to transnational practices from the past, and the label of transnational is used for multiple sets of different activities (Portes, 2001, Portes et al, 1999). On the one hand, migration nowadays is usually characterized by larger numbers of people moving and ease of communication. On the other hand, only some of contemporary migrants engage in cross-border activities with such regularity and take part in economic, political and cultural lives of their host and home countries to such extent that allows them to be called transnational. The level of transnational engagement may vary among different individuals and communities (Vertovec, 1999, 2007b). Smith (2005: 88) also underlines the heterogeneity of transmigration even within the same migrating 'nationality' and within the same transnational city. In fact, even not all migrants who exhibit transnationalism belong to the ideal type of a transmigrant who maintains a healthy balance of enhanced connectivity with several places without the risk of being segregated from any of these communities. Transnational links may weaken or disappear over time, as some empirical research shows (Ryan, 2008: 684-685): the dynamism of migrants' social networks and the shifting balance between local/transnational connections is yet to be fully researched.

Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2003: 598) argue against methodological nationalism as the naturalization of the global regime of nation-states by the social sciences, as well as against methodological fluidism which means falling into another extreme, nonreflexively celebrating the radical changes presumably brought in by globalization. One of the gaps in the first wave of transnational studies was contrasting contemporary globalized world with the past – which was presumably taken for granted as consisting of bounded, 'ethnic', homogeneous and static groups and societies. Works of theorists like Soysal (1994) suggest that the role of the nation-state has radically changed with the advent of globalization; Urry (2000) is much criticized (Eriksen, 2002: 29, Favell, 2001, Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003) for depicting the transnational lifestyle as the prototype of the life of contemporary migrants, in contrast to supposedly unitary solidity and boundedness of 'societies' of the past. Making a balanced argument, Wimmer and Glick Schiller also warn against the overestimation of the internal homogeneity and boundedness of transnational communities, and the overlooking of the importance of cross-community interactions as well as the internal divisions of class, gender, region and politics. Sociabilities not based on shared ethnic, national or ethno-religious identities have not been paid much attention. Such limitations of approaching migrant groups 'tend to reify and essentialize these communities', researchers claim (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 598, Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003: 406, Eriksen, 2002: 145, Fenton, 2010), as privileging diasporic attachments may lead to underreporting of practices, sociabilities and identifications that transcend the boundaries of the national or the ethnic. Assuming that migrant transnational social fields and networks can be approached as communities can also be a reason of missing out on the examples when there are no transnational communities formed, or these are not important for migrants. Eriksen (2002: 155) also notes that 'the symbolic reconstruction of a distant homeland is not an inevitable outcome of migration'.

Claims that 'cheap transport and advances in telecommunications have allowed migrants to maintain, as never before, extensive social, economic and political ties with places of origin or fellow members of global diasporas' (Vertovec, 2007a: 7), or that migrants' entry to host countries is now less restrictive (Levitt, 2001) seem to be only relatively applicable. Ong (1999: 134) mentions that boundaries are less flexible

for 'less well heeled individuals': there are structural limits and personal costs to flexible citizenship. McDowell (2008b: 495) underlines the fact that labour is not as free to move as capital, being differentiated by age, skills, skin colour and gender. The particular case of Britain which has a migration management system that is limiting access to the labour market for some nationals while being less restrictive to Europeans, thus reinforcing inequalities in power and access to resources (McDowell 2009, Wills et al., 2010), proves that not all migrants can have the same structural access to transnationalism. Their different positions are conditioned by both institutional structures and their everyday practices (McDowell, 2008b: 496). In other words, transnational studies may be criticized for generalizing about the ease of individuals' communication and travel. In this respect, methodological nationalism could also be a reflection of the Western thinking that might not always realize that despite globalization, the physical mobility of individuals between developing and developed countries may be more complicated than the mobility of ideas and capital. Admitting that there are more opportunities for mobility and cross-border activity now, I would like to stress that these opportunities are not universally available. Continuing and developing the critique by Portes (2001) and others, in this work I underline that transnationalism has to be approached carefully, as a phenomenon dependent on a variety of structural factors and personal motivations.

Considering that transnationalism has turned out to be such a complicated phenomenon, Vertovec (2001: 576) suggests that rather than having a single theory of it, it would make sense to theorize a typology of transnationalisms and the conditions that affect them. Attempts to distinguish transnational practices from non-transnational and to make a taxonomy of its levels have taken place (Morawska, 2004, Scott, 2006, Dahinden, 2009, Soehl and Waldinger, 2010, Van Bochove et al., 2010). These studies measure the balance between transnational and assimilation strategies, link social morphologies to social positioning of migrants, and eventually claim that the contemporary migration has achieved an increasingly diverse 'human face' (Scott, 2006: 1108) and cannot fit any longer into the traditional image of economically motivated migration. Researchers agree that migrants vary in the intensity of their cross-border connections, underlining that the majority maintain only some degree of transnationalism, for various reasons such as the location of key social ties,

acculturation, citizenship status, and the costs associated with the different types of crossborder activity (Soehl and Waldinger, 2010). In particular, migrants in London have different levels of transnational engagement, which is conditioned by a variety of factors like country of origin, migration channel, legal status, migration and settlement history, community structure, political circumstances in the homeland and other dimensions of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007b: 1043).

The key critique of transnational studies, I suggest, comes from the lack of detailed approach to individual circumstances of migration. I reiterate here that contemporary migrant communities are not unified entities expressing the exact same propinquity to cross-border activities and to socializing with compatriots. Transnationalism, as well, has not suddenly become a feature of all migration. Despite the widespread statements about the increasing flexibility of boundaries, those who want to move do not have equal possibilities to do so, and face restrictive limits to crossing the borders. One thing that I consider helpful in getting to understand how migrant communities function, without abstract generalizing and in more detail, is studying informal social relationships that unfold both within a migrant community and those that transcend its borders. This means, according to Brubaker (2004: 11), studying not groups as entities, but rather attending to 'groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable'. Contrary to taking 'groups' for granted as solidary collective actors, he writes, it makes more sense to disentangle the complex processes and relations: identification and categorization, self-understanding and social location, commonality and connectedness (Brubaker, 2004: 41-48). After Conradson and Latham (2005a, 2005b), Ryan et al. (2008), Vertovec (2001, as quoted in Ryan, 2008), I argue for the detailed research of migrants' social networks' actual functioning in practice, for understanding the 'dynamism, diversity and spatial dispersion of migrants' social networks' (Ryan et al., 2008: 685). Also, I realize the need to highlight both the positive and negative sides of any relationships, in order to avoid the risk of depicting an idealized picture of a community or of coexistence of cultures and nationalities within a whole city. In the following parts of this chapter I am going to analyze the role of social relationships amongst migrants, before passing to the contested and problematic issue of intercultural relationships that take place in a dense social space

of a global city. The next section will also discuss the role of ethnicity in migrant social groups: it will serve to connect the conceptual questions of the first part of this chapter – the special concern about the nature, boundaries, functioning, cohesion and divisiveness, and spatial and social positioning of migrants' social networks – with the problematic of the variety of ways in which migrants' relationships with compatriots and non-migrant Londoners are imagined, constructed and reconstructed.

3. Social groups and ethnicity

Earlier in this chapter, I have stressed that seeing migrant populations as communities – more precisely, as social groups, bounded by internal solidarity, and tending to occupy a certain social niche – leads to reification and essentialization of migrant sociality. There might be too many divisions and differences among the members of the assumed communities; there might be a multitude of important social connections between migrants and non-migrants, as well as there might be too little significant social connections between migrants; finally, what could be seen as a migrant community by those who position themselves as external observers may well be, in reality, just one relatively visible segment of the stratified larger migrant population. Apart from that, it would be wrong to suppose that globalization opens equal opportunities of mobility, employment, and communication to people, not just to those from different parts of the world, but sometimes even to those from the same country.

As I already mentioned, this may lead, among other possible consequences, to some oversight in conclusions about the nature and significance of people's cross-border connections and the balance between transnational and local ties. The risk is not only overlooking the importance of spatial organisation of distance and proximity in relationships, but also neglecting the importance of other kinds of distances and proximities. Considering this, I would like to pay more attention to ethnicity as a mode of relationships which may – still arguably though – underpin the distance in some relationships and be mobilised as a basis of proximity in others. This discussion will pave the way to further sections, where I will address migrants' sociality on a broader scale and account for a variety of relationships where ethnic and racial distinctions and

similarities may be embraced or transgressed in the processes of construction of people's social networks.

Ethnicity is a concept which is often revoked regarding migration and migrant groups, implicitly or explicitly (Fenton, 2010, Eriksen, 2002). Earlier sociological and anthropological thought (most notably Park, 1926, as quoted in Cornell and Hartmann, 2007) suggested that ethnicity as a social and political force would gradually disappear and be replaced by more comprehensive identities and attachments with the development of the modern world. The second half of the 20th century demonstrated that ethnic attachments would not decline as forces of segregation and cohesion. Migrants usually combine the strategies of both assimilation and ethnic incorporation in what is defined as integration process (Eriksen, 2002: 124).

In current scholarship, ethnicity is usually presented through various social processes by which ethnic identities and boundaries are reproduced and transformed, and by which individuals form and act as ethnic groups (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007). There are multiple things in the basis of understanding of ethnicity. To start with, ethnic ties are described as those which include a reference to the unity of people of common blood or descent. Most crucial here is not the actual commonality of descent, but rather people's mutual belief in it (which can be based on a variety of factors) – this understanding was introduced by Max Weber (1968, as quoted in Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 17). Ethnicity often involves ideas of shared culture and an array of public and private identities which coalesce around these ideas (Fenton, 2010: 12, 187). The other characteristic of ethnicity is people's self-consciousness as a group, or seeing themselves as distinct from other groups on the grounds of ethnic features. Next, the very definition of a group and its self-consciousness can have its source in the intertwining processes of group's self-identification as well as categorization by outsiders (Jenkins, 2008). Which means, ultimately, that ethnicity is a relational construct: it is an 'aspect of social relationship between persons who consider themselves as essentially distinctive from members of other groups of whom they are aware and with whom they enter into relationships' (Eriksen, 2002: 12). 'Us' and 'them' are distinguished 'on the basis of the claim we make that "we" share something that "they" do not' (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 20), therefore exist in a context that has to include the simultaneous existence of the Other.

Most of the contemporary writers on ethnicity assume a social constructivist approach to this phenomenon (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007; Jenkins, 2008; Fenton, 2010). This approach sees ethnic and racial identities as 'highly variable and contingent products of an ongoing interaction between, on the one hand, the circumstances groups encounter – including the conceptions and actions of outsiders – and, on the other, the actions and conceptions of group members – of insiders. It makes groups active agents in the making and remaking of their own identities, and it views construction not as a one-time event, but as continuous and historical' (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 87). Ethnicity, thus, is considered to be the social construction of descent and culture, and the social mobilization of these and the meanings of classification systems built around them (Fenton, 2010: 3). It is not a property of a group, but a relational and situational communication of differences and similarities, whenever these are made relevant for group formation. Ethnic groups themselves are not fixed entities, and perceptions of these as rigid and clearly bounded (or 'groupism', in Brubaker's (2004) terms) are commonly criticized (Eriksen, 2002).

There are two groups of factors which contribute to shaping of ethnicity: broadly speaking, internal and external ones (Eriksen, 2002). Cornell and Hartmann (2007: 13) write that the research on ethnicity has to understand 'both how people interpret and negotiate their lives in ethnic or racial ways and how larger historical and social forces organise the arenas and terms in which those people act, encouraging or discouraging the interpretations they make, facilitating some forms of organization and action and hindering others'. Ethnic identities and boundaries are created in the interaction between contexts and actions, in other words. The key arenas where ethnicity's meaningfulness is developed may be broadly defined as sets of economic and political conditions (Fenton, 2010: 140). These 'construction sites', in Cornell and Hartmann's (2007: 170) terms, can include politics, labour markets, residential space, social institutions, culture and daily experience. At the same time, people bring their own characteristics into these processes: their pre-existing identities, internal and external relationships, internal differentiations, various combinations of types of capital, and symbolic repertoires (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 211). Ethnicity can be understood both through the 'cultural stuff' (Barth, 1969, as quoted in Fenton, 2010) and its social relevance in changing contexts (Eriksen, 2002: 138, Fenton, 2010).

The construction of ethnicity involves assumptions about classification of people and their group relationships (Eriksen, 2002). Classifications include internal assertions about a group and external assignments of categories, or internal and external definitions (Jenkins, 2008: 55, Brubaker, 2004: 65). These processes are closely interrelated: categories may be defined by others and filled with their own content within a group. Ethnic ideologies also can be used to justify social hierarchies, in addition to other criteria like gender, class, age (although researchers agree that racial relations are more likely to be hierarchical, exploitative, or conflictual (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007, Jenkins, 2008)). These processes of ethnic categorization are crucial to how ethnic identification works, and power relations are often involved. It is in the interactional process across the boundary between 'us' and 'them', 'in the meeting of internal and external definition that identity, whether collective or individual, is created', (Jenkins, 2008: 55). Ethnic identification encompasses the complexity and variability in the manifestations, functioning, and significance of ethnicity, in recognising that it can mean different things for different people and be important or not. This implies perceptions of the self, in particular, as different from others; therefore, it is constructed in relation to others.

Brubaker (2004: 11) underlines the necessity of conceptualizing ethnicity in 'relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms'. Following him, I will refer to ethnicity as a mode of belonging which emerges when certain meaningfulness is assigned to particular cultural (broadly speaking) commonalities among people, and thus sets and is used to justify a distance from those who do not seem to possess this 'cultural stuff'. The issue of primary importance for this work is the relational aspect of ethnicity, which encompasses the often simultaneous malleability of the ethnic boundaries and rigidity of concerns about presumably ethnic determinants of the qualities of social groups. Eriksen (2002: 155) writes about the emergence of collective identity among minorities 'which is neither diasporic nor transnational nor ethnic, but defined through locality and the fact of exclusion from […] majority society'. This is why my main focus in this work will be on the informal relationships of migrants – with compatriots and other Londoners, with Russian-speakers of same and different nationalities and social class, and imagined through the prism of localized lives. Ethnicity does not define the boundaries of a migrant community and the sociality

patterns of its members – but its perceived meaning at certain point in time often does play a role in the development of particular attitudes and relationships and the emergence of certain groups. The key point is that this meaning can have positive and negative connotations, involve group identification and categorization of the Others, and, in different contexts, be deployed or downplayed. In other words, it is constantly being negotiated, which makes the sociality of migrants not necessarily ethnic, and the idea of a singular migrant community irrelevant. Rather than exploring ethnic relationships, then, I will explore different kinds of informal relationships of migrants. The rest of this chapter will set the background for this exploration.

3.1. Social relationships amongst migrants

Conradson and Latham (2005b: 287) point out the need to study global mobility not just through the economic structures driving migration, but also considering the role played by 'a complex set of personal motivations, amongst which financial considerations are not necessarily primary'. Following them, I aim to approach migration on a level of informal relationships that may be situated in different locations, and play an important role in mobility patterns.

In conceptualizing transnationalism, a special accent has been given to relationships that are connected with different aspects of migrants' cross-border activities. Vertovec (1999: 448) describes transnationalism as a condition 'in which, despite great distances and notwithstanding the presence of international borders (and all the laws, regulations and national narratives they represent), certain kinds of relationships have been globally intensified and now take place paradoxically in a planet-spanning yet common – however virtual – arena of activity'. Elsewhere, he draws out the personal dimension of this phenomenon as a new 'approach to migration that accents the attachments migrants maintain to families, communities, traditions and causes outside the boundaries of the nation-state to which they have moved' (Vertovec, 2001: 574).

Cohen (2008: 173) argues that social relationships in a diaspora are based on the 'bonds of language, religion, culture and a sense of a common history and perhaps a common fate' that give these relationships an affective and intimate quality. For traditional diasporic migrants, ethnicity and community of compatriots abroad seemed to be most important things providing cohesion. What the emergence of

transnationalism, no matter how complicated it may be to define who is transnational and who is not, adds to this, is the remaining links to the nation-state the migrants came from, the growing significance of their attachment to it, and the increasing recognition of belonging to that nation-state. The ways in which contemporary migrants are forming communities become more diverse – principally because they have more opportunities to be connected, at the same time with limitations applying to mobility of some of them, and as a result, a variety in the numbers and strength of such connections. The increased cross-border activity and communication is realized through migrants' participation in social networks of relatives, friends, acquaintances and colleagues. Special attention in transnationalism studies has been given to the networks of kin that work across the boundaries of nation-states (Glick Schiller, 1995). These family networks are common for studies on migrants from Third World countries. They provide possibilities for survival and social mobility. Less attention is paid to other kinds of social networks. Conradson and Latham (2005a) outline friendship amongst New Zealand migrants in London as playing a central role in organising and giving content to their mobility, stressing how these bonds shape and give form to the people's movements. I consider friendship networks as very relevant for research on mobility and transnationalism precisely because they are not limited by bonds of kinship or neighbourhood (Wellman 1979, Wellman et al 1988, 1990, 2001): there is less of rootedness or fixity and more of certain dynamism in them, while the personal value of these ties is also high. These are relationships that work across space and time, and inform much of the contemporary migration.

Social networks have always played a crucial role in the migrants' lives, primarily because of all the tangible and intangible support they provide to migrants. Migration spreads through social networks, which are 'the sets of cross-border interpersonal ties connecting migrants, return migrants and nonmigrants through kinship, friendship and attachment to a shared place of origin' (Levitt, 2001: 8). When a network is settled, it becomes more likely that additional migration will occur: there is a group of 'experts' already in the receiving country to serve as newcomers' guides. However, social networks may weaken when there are no new arrivals reinforcing them or when migrants transfer their economic and political loyalties to the communities that receive them. Smith (2001: 170) calls transnational communities "translocality-based

structures of cultural production and social reproduction". Networks of migrants are a cultural medium for the circulation of symbolic and material capital across borders. Transnational practices embodied in historically specific, culturally constituted social relations connect social networks located in more than one national territory. The transnational character of contemporary migrants is often studied in a context of influence on their counterparts in the countries of origin. According to Levitt (2001: 26), contemporary migrants are often incorporated insecurely into the labour market, which is why it is easier for them to maintain a transnational lifestyle, as the new conditions seem to be unstable. It encourages them to keep connected with their relatives (friends, colleagues, employers) in their country of origin; at the same time, economic instability can also be the reason of keeping closer contacts with the other migrants, as the migrant community can provide more a familiar environment. Portes (2000: 257) characterizes immigrant social networks as, firstly, being simultaneously dense and extended over physical distances; secondly, as tending to 'generate solidarity by virtue of generalized uncertainty'.

However, even if we start to identify a group as a transnational community, it does not imply that all members feel solidarity toward one another (Levitt, 2001: 13). The divisiveness and hierarchical nature of all social groups also characterizes them. Any migrant group, whether transnational or not, is a part of society, with all the variety of relationships, inequalities, practices and attitudes of its members. Therefore claiming that migrant communities are by definition bound together would risk missing out on the complexity of social relations that emplace migrants in different ways within the social spaces of the host and home countries and in between these. In line with the argument against reification of ethnic communities, the constructed character of transnational ones is often underlined. Anderson with his concept of 'imagined community' (as quoted in Appadurai, 1996: 28) claims that national community is not a given reality but has historically been imagined in the context of 'print capitalism' and other forms of modern communication. Appadurai (1996: 8) introduces the notion of 'community of sentiment' – a group whose members are tied with collective sense of imagination and begin to imagine and feel things together. He parallels such groups to 'invisible colleges' in the world of science; but communities of sentiment are less professionalized, more volatile, less subject to collectively shared taste or mutual

relevance. Often they are transnational and frequently operate beyond the borders of the nation. Smith (2001) describes the social constructing of belonging to a transnational community as being produced and transmitted through social and technological linkages, including religious ceremonies, telephone conversations, TV and radio programmes, news, visits of relatives and friends, interactions at work etc. The combination of all these processes represents the social construction of 'locality', while employing a 'transnational network which is physically absent but hardly spiritually distant' (Smith 2001: 117).

Social networks are created by migrants anew when they arrive in a country, transplanted from the country of origin and re-established in a new place of residence, and sustained across the borders of nation-states. Not all of them engage in these networks to the same degree; transnational connections can be quite changeable. As well, the sociality of migrants does not have to be and is not directed only at compatriots. Here, going beyond the traditional approach of viewing migrants as relatively homogeneously transnational and relying primarily on kinship connections, I suggest a more refined strategy of researching contemporary migration and transnationalism. First of all, I intend to show that transnational practices can be present to very different extents, or even not necessarily present in most recent migration trends. This implies that contemporary migrant communities can be quite socially diverse not only in between but also within them. Secondly, I suggest that friendship is a kind of relationship that can inform the patterns of both spatially distanciated and local relationships. What I argue for is the need for a balanced and detailed research of the dynamics and functioning of migrants' social networks, and consideration of an increasingly heterogeneous character of contemporary migration. In a narrow sense, studying migrants' social networks in a detailed way means reaching beyond relations with kin and compatriots to those with other people. In a wider sense, it contributes to the social processes in the city in general. In the following parts, I am going to investigate the conditions of development of both positive and negative intercultural communications. After that, I will approach the core concept of this research that forms the basis of the closest relationships – friendship.

3.2. Relationships with Others: migrants' nationalism/racism vs. cosmopolitanism

Through the emergence and development of social networks and personal relationships contemporary migration makes its way in the global cities, and this can be indicative of the migration's degree of transnationalism. Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2009: 180) suggest approaching cities through studying migrants' 'social fields as systems of social relations composed of networks of networks that may be locally situated, or may extend nationally or transnationally', where 'fields' go beyond traditional focus on 'communities' as migrants are suggested to be approached as active participants of urban transformation. They argue for attending to the multiplicity of actors and institutions in the social relationships of migrants that could provide insights of the variations in migrant pathways and different modes of transnational activities and identities (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009: 186). Mobility can promote the re-imagining or re-establishing of national boundedness of a community. At the same time, it can be productive of a 'cosmopolitan sociability', which Glick Schiller describes as 'consisting of forms of competence and communication skills that are based on the human capacity to create social relations of inclusiveness and openness to the world' (Glick Schiller et al, 2011: 402). Migration can push people towards greater world openness and expose them to new relationships and cosmopolitan influences (Kennedy, 2010: 465), developing new mobile subjectivities but not always delimiting allegiance to a national identity (Butcher, 2009: 1353). Here, I will look at both options of developing attitudes towards and relationships with the Otherness. As well as giving a general picture of cosmopolitanism and nationalism/racism, I will pay special attention to the development and presence of these features in migrants' relationships with other city dwellers. Looking at the networking processes in a multicultural city from the side of a migrant but not limiting them to only localized diasporic communities, and considering migrants' agency in the processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization, is an approach that allows the study of multiplicity of previously understudied but remaining significant characteristics of sociality in the city. This helps to consider migrants' sociality not as a feature of isolated groups but as that of a socially diverse part of an even more diverse city.

3.2.1. Cosmopolitanism

Moving to a city like London which is a hub of international migration involves encountering a myriad of different cultures, languages, and skin colours. The next thing to do after facing the difference is learning to deal with it. Vaguely described by many theorists, there is a way of reflexively accepting this different 'Other'. Latham (2006) outlines two strands of understanding cosmopolitanism. The first one, drawing upon Hannerz (1990, 1996), is described as a spatial and cultural promiscuity of someone feeling at home in a wider world, who has a particular disposition towards the difference and cultural competence to navigate within it. Cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1990: 239) 'includes a stance toward diversity itself, toward the coexistence of cultures in the individual experience. It is an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other'. At the same time, a cosmopolitan is not tied to any particular culture or territory, being able to embrace the alien culture but not being committed to it (Hannerz, 1990: 240). This understanding is linked with the increasing interconnectedness of cultures and transnational networks serving as bridges to other cultures. Describing a cosmopolitan culture, he points to a mindset that represents a specific 'intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity' Hannerz (1990: 239). He draws a parallel between cosmopolitanism and the culture of intellectuals and specifies that certain types of people have more chances of becoming cosmopolitan and more involved into transnational cultures: 'their decontextualized knowledge can be quickly and shiftingly recontextualized in a series of different settings […] What they carry is not just special knowledge, but also that overall orientation toward structures of meaning to which the notion of the 'culture of critical discourse' refers. This orientation, according to Gouldner's (1979) description, is reflexive, problematizing, concerned with metacommunication'. It points to the idea that the development of cosmopolitan sociability is not a universal trend, but an opportunity open to selected social groups, which have a higher propensity to recognition of difference and diversity around them, and a particularly reflexive mindset allowing that.

While Hannerz portrays cosmopolitanism as 'a very personal character trait', seeing it as a specific intellectual mode of those possessing decontextualized knowledge and critical cultural competence, in Beck's account it is rather considered in the context of

metropolitan experience and nation-states. This second understanding of cosmopolitanism, Latham (2006: 94) observes, employs feeling at home in the world in relation to openness towards the diversity of the immediate world the cosmopolitan inhabits. If, for Hannerz, it is a mindset directed to a wider world, embracing alien cultures but knowing where the exit is (Hannerz, 1990: 240), for Beck, it is more mundane, encompassing and universal process influential for everyday moral life-worlds of people. The cosmopolitan outlook for Beck (2006: 2) is 'an everyday, historically alert, reflexive awareness of ambivalences in a milieu of blurring differentiations and cultural contradictions. It reveals […] the possibility of shaping one's life and social relations under conditions of cultural mixture. It is simultaneously a skeptical, disillusioned, self-critical outlook'. The central defining characteristic of a cosmopolitan perspective is the 'dialogic imagination' - the clash of cultures and rationalities within one's own life, the 'internalized other'. The dialogic imagination corresponds to the coexistence of rival ways of life in the individual experience, which makes it a matter of fate to compare, reflect, criticize, understand, and combine contradictory certainties. Beck contrasts the cosmopolitan perspective to the national perspective, which he describes as a monologic imagination excluding the otherness of the other. On the contrary, the cosmopolitan perspective is an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities, which includes the otherness of the other, when differences are accepted for what they are.

Beck's take on cosmopolitanism stems from the ideas of global interdependence as an already existing relationship that has reinforced the mutual connectedness of people all over the world. While mentioning that cosmopolitanism often is a conscious and a voluntary choice of the elite, he discusses the concept of cosmopolitanization as a more 'real' phenomenon, 'latent cosmopolitanism, unconscious cosmopolitanism, passive cosmopolitanism which shapes reality as side effects of global trade or global threats...' Beck (2006: 19). It is internalized from within national societies or local cultures, 'a cosmopolitanization of the self and of national consciousness' (Beck, 2006: 72). Cosmopolitanization is a multidimensional process 'whereby ever more aspects of individuals' and organizations' everyday lives are defined by their connection with things that are not local to it' (Beck, 1990, as quoted in Latham, 2006: 96). Becoming cosmopolitan means 'to try and think about the ways that a particular urban

landscape, and a particular group of people, have become seemingly more diverse, more international, more *worldly"* (Latham, 2006: 92). This process is described as internal globalization, and comprises 'the increase in diverse transnational forms of life' (Beck, 2006: 9). Beck also notes the increase in plural attachments that transcend the boundaries of countries and nationalities that makes the dichotomy 'foreigner-native' less applicable to real life. This is connected with the understandings of contemporary world as increasingly functioning on the basis of postnational membership rather than national; the one grounded in a shared social space and shared abstract rights and responsibilities rather than national allegiances and commitments (Soysal, 1994: 166). For Favell (2008: 95), cosmopolitanism is the cultural part of the process of denationalization, which includes 'opting out of a national system and national identity'. Despite this, national identities and consciousness remain significant and 'banal cosmopolitanism' is unfolding on the background of nation-states, manifested in 'concrete, everyday ways by the fact that differentiations between us and them are becoming confused, both at the national and international level' (Beck, 2006: 10). Keith (2005a: 39) speaks about cosmopolitanism as 'an acknowledgment of the heterogeneity of contemporary social reality, a recognition of the uncertainties of identity and the uneven inscriptions of gender, sexuality, class and faith on the social body', as well as, approaching it as an ethical issue, as 'a way of resolving the moral questions that arise from the attempt to reconcile different kinds of difference'. The increasing social diversity, especially characteristic of cities, involves cosmopolitanism as a way of dealing with it.

Cosmopolitanism is related to urban experience and lifestyles. Keith (2005a: 39) considers cosmopolitanism as a way of seeing the city. Latham (2006: 95) describes the city space as offering 'the chance for individuals of any and every particular desire and tendency to find their way to each other. The city creates the possibilities for the exploration and flowering of all sorts of exotic groupings, obscure obsessions, fixations and interests. What is more, the density of urban life and the anonymity that density produces also means that the individual does not have to remain fixed by this identity'. Berger (1963, as quoted in Beck, 2006: 72) speaks about a certain cosmopolitan consciousness especially characteristic of city culture: 'The individual, then, who is not only urban but urbane is one who, however passionately he may be attached to his

own city, roams through the whole wide world in his intellectual voyages. His mind, if not his body and emotions, is at home wherever there are other men who think'. Latham (2006: 95) regards cosmopolitanism as a characteristic of urban life that is inherently connected with the 'diversity that is a product of the sheer density and size of big cities'.

The key points of this discussion of cosmopolitanism involve firstly understanding it as reflexively acknowledging and accepting difference, and doing it without instrumental or consumer motives. Such an approach to life has much more to do with urban life and its attendant diversity, density and anonymity. These understandings of cosmopolitanism agree that it involves a specific intellectual mode of cultural competence (Hannerz, 1990), or dialogic imagination (Beck, 2002) that is developed in global conditions. In times of increased mobility and diversification of urban life, this kind of dealing with Otherness is described as being inherently linked with globalization, increased interconnectedness of cultures, global interdependence and transnational movements and networks. Cosmopolitanism, as well, needs to be approached cautiously: Beck mentions the cosmopolitan fallacy which means that exposure to cosmopolitanization does not automatically produce cosmopolitans: 'living between borders or in a diaspora is not an automatic guarantee of openness to the world' (Beck, 2006: 89). Favell (2008: xii) notes that the impressions of the seemingly cosmopolitan cities may fade and turn into unease and practical difficulties that migrants encounter when they face the real consequences of their mobility.

Cosmopolitanization, described by Beck as unconscious and passive cosmopolitanism that makes people's experiences more and more prone to become exposed to and part of other cultures is increasingly influencing people's lives. However, becoming cosmopolitan in contemporary world should not be taken for granted. A dense atmosphere of urban life may bring in not only the chances of openness and inclusion of the Other, but also the grim possibilities of the developing and reinforcing of the existing xenophobic attitudes towards this Other. Considering all that has been said, in this work I will rely on the concept of cosmopolitanization, or on the processual, interactional and dynamic side of urban way of life and dealing with the different subject. On that note, the next part will concentrate on the roots and reasons of

racism and nationalism, paying particular attention to the features of xenophobia in contemporary metropolitan life, as opposed to the processes of cosmopolitanization.

3.2.2. The dark side of relationships with Others

The disappearance of the closed society described as cosmopolitanization by Beck (2006) is not felt as liberation by the majority of people, who instead see their world in decline. The traditional forms of national and ethnic attachments and opposition are hard to remove. The taken-for-granted privileges people have become used to are suddenly placed into question. This relates not only to those who are facing an influx of newcomers in the cities they are living in, but equally to those who are coming into these cities. The distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are supported and institutionalized by nation-states, and the uncertainty that migrants face comes from being caught in between these social divisions and discourses of tolerance, openness, the positive side of diversity and cosmopolitanism. This is further reinforced by the increasing diversity specifically characteristic of city life, labour market divisions, and all the numerous patterns of ethnic, class, legal, and gender differentiation brought about by globalization and mobility. Constructions of difference operate in multiple ways, and the task here is to explore how this time of increased migration has become a period of increased complexities in intercultural, interethnic and international relations.

3.2.2.1. Patterns of segregation

Patterns of differentiation can be complicated, and some clarification of the terms is required to get a better understanding of what is going on in the society. One of the 'enemies' of cosmopolitan society described by Beck (2002: 38) and inevitably connected with globalization, intensification of migration and the increase of the cities' diversity is nationalism. Beck (2002: 38) outlines the *ethnic globalization paradox*: 'At a time when the world is growing closer together and becoming more cosmopolitan, in which, therefore, the borders and barriers between nations and ethnic groups are being lifted, ethnic identities and divisions are becoming stronger once again'.

The emergence of nationalist stances in contemporary society has its explanation. Fromm, in his 'Fear of Freedom' (1942, as quoted in Billig, 1995: 137), describes the

outcomes of how capitalism has destroyed the fixed identities of traditional societies. People have become free to create their own identities, however some of them have become scared by this freedom. Fromm argues that in this process as they start 'turning away from the uncertainties of the present, they regressively yearn for the security of a solid identity'. Nationalist and fascist propaganda give people opportunities to regain their identifications. Adorno et al. (1950, as quoted in Billig, 1995: 137), in their analysis of authoritarian personality, in a similar vein, underline that in the circumstances of uncertainty and ambivalence, authoritarians need unambiguous truths and clearly demarcated hierarchies. They seek the security of a clear world-view in which evil 'others' can be hated and a pure 'us' loved. National origins seem to be one of the most common denominators that can help people fight the values crisis and the fragmentation of personality (Kristeva, 1993, as quoted in Billig, 1995: 137).

Nationalism is not the prerogative of marginalized groups and separatist movements. Billig (1995: 93, 150, 154) in his classic work writes about 'banal nationalism' which implies everyday, mundane indication or 'flagging' of the nation in the lives of the ordinary people of the West in particular. This phenomenon is a characteristic of the world of nation-states where the features of national identities are naturalized. The main thing that describes the nationalist way of thinking is 'conceiving 'us, the nation' which is said to have a unique destiny (or identity), as well as conceiving 'them, the foreigners' from whom 'we' identify 'ourselves' as different' (Billig, 1995: 61). There is no 'us' without 'them', in other words.

While nationalism as a sociopolitical category implies attachments and references to actual or potential nation-states, racism is a broader phenomenon. Balibar and Wallerstein (1991: 17) describe it as inscribing itself 'in practices […], in discourses and representations which are so many intellectual elaborations of the phantasm of prophylaxis or segregation […] and which are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin colour, religious practices). It therefore organizes affects […] by conferring upon them a stereotyped form, as regards both their 'objects' and 'subjects'. It is this combination of practices, discourses and representations in a network of affective stereotypes which enables us to give an account of the formation of a racist community […] and also of the way in which, as a mirror image, individuals and

collectivities that are prey to racism (its 'objects') find themselves constrained to see themselves as a community'. Race itself is considered to be a constructed category (Dwyer and Bressey, 2008: 2, 53, 95, Cornell and Hartmann, 2007, Eriksen, 2002). Racism includes claims based on continuity with the past and a present-oriented redrawing of the boundaries of groups. These groupings are always ranked hierarchically, although are not always the same. Researchers (Jenkins, 2008: 77, Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 28-30) underline that 'race relations' more commonly than ethnic ones appear to be hierarchical, exploitative and conflictual and connected with power relations, and more concerned with social categorization than with group identification. In other words, 'racial relations' mean that 'there are always some who are 'niggers'. If there are no Blacks or too few to play the role, one can invent 'White niggers'' (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991: 34).

Racism, at the same time, is often connected with the whole set of practices of social exclusion and normalization. Inherently connected with the social structure, labour divisions and stratification, racialization is 'a historical system of complementary exclusions and dominations which are mutually interconnected' (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991: 49). In their Marxism-inspired argument, they claim that along with the occupational hierarchy comes the 'ethnicization' of the work force in a nation-state. 'The constructed 'peoples' – the races, the nations, the ethnic groups – correlate so heavily, albeit imperfectly, with 'objective class' (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991: 84). In other words, in the process of racialization class relations are displaced by relations with a propensity to racism. In particular, the category of immigrant combines both ethnic and class criteria, and the foreigners are placed hierarchically on a scale of superiority or dangerousness according to different religious, cultural, national, psychological or biological criteria. Racialized hierarchies include ideas about difference and the right to belong or not to the receiving nation, attributing certain characteristics to others, and naturalizing the skills and talents of different groups (Ong, 2003, as quoted in McDowell, 2008b: 499). The position in the labour market can also promote racialization, especially when there is preferential access of some groups to an occupational niche. Wills et al. (2010: 106) writes about 'tacit hierarchies' within the UK's labour market that tends to privilege whites and Europeans. McDowell (2008a: 53) points out that even though European migrants are generally more

preferable to Britain as potential workers than those from non-European countries, not all Europeans are equally 'white'. White-skinned British-born migrants, Irish and continental Europeans are typically ranked higher. However, even the notion of continental European has been constantly changing. Some East European countries have joined the EU, and the new waves of migrants have flown into Britain. They generally do low-skilled jobs where they are often favoured by employers, while their whiteness, McDowell notes, provides them with privileges over British ethnic minorities: common whiteness outbids common citizenship. 'Immigrants are differently received and socialized depending on their position within racial hierarchies, gender, class background and income/consumption patterns both in their own and in the country of immigration' (McDowell, 2008a: 52). That is to say, racialization may be based on a huge variety of characteristics, real or attributed to the Other.

This brief discussion shows that xenophobic attitudes are often formed upon encountering difference that breaks into the routine order of things. City space provides a perfect ground for development of these attitudes, with a multiplicity of people from all over the world, to various degrees expressing allegiance to a multiplicity of nation-states across the borders of the host society, as well as occupying their own niches in social, cultural and economic life of the city. London as a place with the highest concentration of diversity, differentiated social structure and restrictive migration policy is where these issues are most topical. Next, I will show how racialization develops in the social space of the city, and especially how it can develop among migrants.

3.2.2.2. Migrants in a global city: new agency of racialization

The emergence of transnationalism has been put into context of 'diminished significance of national boundaries in the production and distribution of objects, ideas, and people', restructuring capital globally and growth of world cities (Glick Schiller et al., 1995). Vertovec (2001: 580) argues that transnationalism offers a possibility of unfixing nation-derived identities and 'arriving at new, cosmopolitan perspectives on culture and belonging'. Soysal (1994) derives from transnational discourse a model of postnational citizenship, which presents the incorporation of contemporary migrants

as based upon personhood and human rights 'as a world-level organizing principle', instead of national rights (although she does not advocate the transnational community as a tightly bounded group based on ethnic or cultural solidarity, or the absence of local connections and identities among transnational migrants (Soysal, 1994: 339)).

However, at the same time contemporary transnational cultural processes and movements have been accompanied by an increase in identity politics. Even Favell's (2008) 'Eurostars' living in London, while they seem to be free to move across borders and develop a denationalized 'European' identity and a cosmopolitan self, eventually find themselves immersed into renationalizing processes, leading to standardized, nationalized lives. Globalizing processes go together with the 'pre-eminence of exclusive, bounded, essentialized nationalisms' (Appadurai, 1993, as quoted in Glick Schiller, 1995: 52). The 'age of transnationalism' is a time of continuing and even heightening nation-state building processes (Glick Schiller et al, 1995: 59). Reconstruction and reinvention of national identities takes place, as a part of 'long-distance nationalism' (Anderson, 1992) that is often generated by the border-crossing identities. Theorists warn about 'the extraordinary continuity and resilience of the nation-state-society as the dominant principle of social organization in Europe' (Favell, 2003, as quoted in Scott, 2006: 1116). In his study on the free movement of professionals in Europe, Favell concludes that the forms of urban life are still locally rooted and nationally specific. Lifestyles imposed by nation-states, 'the basic everyday durability of nationally specific practices and identities in organizing the behaviour of people' (Favell, 2003: 11), are reluctant to change, despite the proclaimed trends of free movements of people, information and capital in the globalizing Europe. Society as an object of social sciences is often understood as congruent with the nation-state, and immigrants can be presented as a threat to the nation-building process (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003: 591). Glick Schiller underlines that individuals do not necessarily develop openness to others: 'Tangible or imagined participations of migrants in transnational and diasporic fields do not necessarily result in cultivation of cosmopolitan identities' (Glick Schiller et al, 2011: 414). Indeed, it is no surprise to see xenophobic attitudes among migrants who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment and who can be stigmatized by the general population as a threat to the

nation-state. What we face now is often a result of cross-fertilization of old racist and nationalist discourses originating in their own way in each country, and the heightening mobility in conjunction with growing power inequalities and social differentiation between peoples.

The dense social space of the global city also offers possibilities for the development of xenophobia. Amin (2002: 11) warns that hybridization and facing diversity on an everyday basis is not a guarantee of the development of intercultural understanding. 'In the allure of the contemporary global city, cosmopolitanism, diversity and difference shimmer for a moment. Racism, nationalism, ethnic cleansing and xenophobia return as urban nightmares' (Keith, 2005a: 14). Racialization takes place in a contemporary city in the times of uncertainty and hybridity, multiplicity of nationalities, ethnic groups and cultures, differentiations within international labour market, localized identities of particular places and segregating migration policies. Objects of racialization are constantly being constructed and reconstructed. Difference and similarity are given shape, reinforced and reconfigured (Clayton, 2008). Keith assigns the city a specific role of mediating the 'realization, visibility and (at times) disappearance of markers of cultural difference and collective identity' (Keith, 2005a: 59). Racialization is further problematized by the transformations of racial identities in flux and the globalizing metropolis itself. The city is described with metaphors of a theatre where different cultural values, economic and political ideologies, and dynamics of social change are brought together (Keith 2005a: 50), or a competing arena of mutable ethnic cultures, a concentration of hybridization and demographic difference (Keith, 2005b: 255). It can be a paradoxical space displaying both intense forms of intolerance and cultural dialogue. The significant changes in the income and occupational structure of London, with the increasing influx of migrants and complex patterns of social differentiations, are connected with reinforcing or developing racialized views. Socioeconomic deprivation and a sense of desperation produced by it can be a trigger for the development of ethnic resentment (Amin, 2002: 5). This is particularly true for London with its unequal social structure and migrants somehow competing with each other and non-migrant Londoners.

Newcomers are conventionally regarded as objects of hostility and resentments. These attitudes are based on a combination of factors that include not just ethnic or national

origin but also migrants' positions in the labour market, language, gender and other. In fact, resentment may be caused by seeing any of the people's characteristics as somehow disrupting the traditional routine life of the nation-state. However, a special way of xenophobic thinking that has not been much looked into is often discovered in the attitudes of migrants themselves towards other (both migrant and non-migrant) inhabitants of the host society, when migrants' existing racist and nationalist ideas get mixed with new environment, struggle for better life conditions, and protection of identities threatened by the uncertainties of globalized society. The 'long-distance nationalism' (Anderson, 1992: 1, 8) is conditioned by the double movement of integration and disintegration happening in contemporary nation-states, as capitalism changes the subjective experience and political significance of migration. Racial intolerance towards migrants can invoke among them 'an appeal to a sense of sentiment that defines certain kinds of racialized solidarity' (Keith, 2005b: 268). Notions of nationality become ethnicized, in parallel with the process of globalization. Beck (2006: 4) speaks about the emergence of '*introverted* forms of nationalism which oppose the 'invasion' of the global world by turning inwards' and promote aggressive intolerance of others. Although they do not aim at military and ideological conquests beyond their borders, these forms involve usually conscious resistance to the cosmopolitanization of people's life-worlds, to globalization and globalizers who are perceived as threatening the local form of life of the 'natives'. 'Those involved seek refuge in a strategic 'as-if' essentialism of ethnicity in an attempt to fix the blurred and shifting boundaries between internal and external, us and them' (Beck, 2006: 4). Anderson (1992: 9) points that migrants' 'emotional life and political psychology often remains nostalgically oriented towards a heimat which, thanks to capitalism and late-century technologies, retains a powerful daily grip over them'. The development of transnationalism can intensify this grip: the features of the globalized world are sometimes regarded as making it 'easier than ever before for people of common origins to maintain ties and identities as even as they moved', which makes ethnicity and race powerful forces in contemporary societies (Cornell and Hartmann, 2007: 4). Moreover, the development of transnationalism brings on the increase in forms of rationality and sentiment that transcend the boundaries of nation-states, but do not necessarily correspond with each other (Keith, 2005b: 269). Human mobility may reinforce all kinds of xenophobic and oppressive beliefs and '-isms' (Baubock and Faist,

2010: 15). Hence, the xenophobic attitudes produced as a result of these processes are an essential byproduct of the development of contemporary world.

There are not many studies of migrants' racialized (or cosmopolitan) attitudes. In fact, as Eriksen (2002: 131) notes, studies of urban immigrant minorities usually concentrate primarily on the issues of power asymmetry between minority and majority. Philip et al (2010) in their study of attitudes of Indian migrants towards African Americans in the USA outline the lack of research on migrant intergroup attitudes. The largely Black/White focus of migration studies mainly ignores how racial/ethnic minority groups treat one another, and misses the point of migrants' resentment of the locals. They claim that mainstream prejudicial views become transferrable to migrants who are seeking acceptance from the majority population. Attitudes are shaped by ethnic identities of migrants, their beliefs about social hierarchy, contact with other migrants and their own immigrant/generational status. Hall (2007: 430, 437) underlines the increasing complexity and the multidirectional character of racial prejudices in contemporary London: 'There are prejudices all over: of one non-white group against another, of Afro-Caribbeans against Africans, of Caribbeans from one island or island group against another. There appears to be anti-white feeling on the part of some black people…[…] And there is certainly evidence of the old-fashioned racism, of whites against non-white races'.

The emergence of East European migration has prompted researchers' interest in new patterns of intercultural relationships. Wills et al. (2010: 108) write about post-accession East European workers articulating superiority over non-European colleagues 'on the basis of a "European" identity constructed around an extended European Union, and underpinned by issues of race', combining in the formation of their attitudes the racist discourse of home countries and response to their position in London labour market. McDowell (2008b: 501) poses problems emerging with the accession of new EU member-states and increased migration from these countries to London: new Europeans interviewed 'were not always tolerant of ethnic Others, leading to intra-class conflict based on ethnicity and skin colour'. Datta and Brickell (2009) explore how Polish builders construct themselves relationally to English builders as they negotiate their place within the labour hierarchies of the building site and in the London labour market, marking themselves as 'superior' to the English through the

versatility of their embodied skills, work ethic, artistic qualities, and finesse in their social interactions. In another paper, Datta (2009) looks at how these builders develop varying cosmopolitanisms in everyday places that are shaped by migrants' transnational histories, nationalistic sentiments, and access to social and cultural capital in specific localized contexts. The issues of power, social and cultural capital, and personal encounters with 'Others' are central for such research.

Understanding racialized relationships and attitudes that are taking place in a global city like London is linked with the social construction of racialized subjects, and the ways in which racialization is based on and keeps structuring power and class relations. Researchers suggest focusing on local and everyday encounters through which ethnicities are made and remade (Dwyer and Bressey, 2008, Amin, 2002, Clayton, 2008). The complexities of contemporary migration and its increasing diversity point to the need to study these constructions of difference that are 'produced and maintained through practices that operate at and across different spatial scales including ideological assumptions, multiple regulatory systems, structures of power and domination and spoken and enacted everyday practices in multiple sites, that operate at both conscious and unconscious levels and open to contestation and negotiation' (McDowell, 2008b: 496). It is through the everyday encounters in a city space that racialized attitudes can be reinforced or start fading away. Ryan et al. (2008: 682), for example, write about Polish migrants who were working in ethnically diverse backgrounds and made friends with people of diverse backgrounds. The routine interactions of a city life dealing with ethnic differences and similarities are embedded into wider social processes. Amin (2002: 17) regards interethnic relationships as related to neighbourhood circumstances, linked to socioeconomic conditions and cultural practices in a locality. At the same time, the possibility of reducing xenophobia is seen in encounters beyond the borders of neighbouroods that can unsettle existing ideas of difference and switch to other forms of solidarity (Clayton, 2008: 263). Such encounters encourage people to step out of their familiar environments into spaces that Amin (2002: 14) calls sites of 'banal transgression' that work as spaces of cultural displacement and destabilization, giving people a chance to break stereotyped views on difference by engaging with strangers in communal activities in new settings. In other words, the racialized Other has to be seen and contacted in circumstances

different from those in which habitual observing of or interaction with this Otherness occurs. Also, the power relations, cultural baggages and experiences brought into situations by its participants should be taken into consideration while assessing the possibility of intercultural dialogue (Clayton, 2008: 264).

This discussion concludes that cosmopolitanization as a process of becoming more open to difference and reflexively accepting it is not a ubiquitous and universal process. Literature that suggests the development of cosmopolitanism in contemporary world (Hannerz, 1990, 2006, Beck, 2006) often describes it as an idealized process, while lacking the evidence of empirical research. In fact, in the best case cosmopolitanism occurs gradually and selectively on the background of multinational and interconnected places like London. This research will help to understand how this selectivity works, and explore how the city can modify the attitudes towards Others. Life in a global city may lead to a gradual cosmopolitanization and reduction of the levels of xenophobia. Latham (2006: 97) writes that 'cosmopolitanization implies an internal reorganization of social life engendered through the reality of greater diversity…To think about cosmopolitanization is to start thinking about the ways that the world actually *becomes* cosmopolitan'. But this opportunity of becoming cosmopolitan seems not to be open for everyone. There are certain prerequisites to it, and they are based on factors contributing to diversity of contemporary cities' population, like social class, cultural baggage, legal position, experience of encountering difference, and the level of immediate personal contact of the person with the Otherness in the city (Philip et al, 2010: 656, 664).

Eventually, the transience and flexibility of identities include the fluid and changeable attitudes and attachments. The cosmopolitan perspective and the maintenance of ethic/national ties and identities can take place simultaneously in the everyday lives of migrants in a global city. Patterns of migrants' interactions with other inhabitants of the host society have been largely overlooked in literature that mainly focuses on the mainstream attitudes towards migrants, power asymmetries and migrants' own psychosocial experience of not-belonging, exclusion and marginality (Eriksen, 2002, Tolia-Kelly, 2008, Philip et al, 2010). What is missing from these debates is the sociality that migrants develop, the ways in which they construct and reconstruct relationships

with others – both cosmopolitan and racialized ones. Glick Schiller et al. (2011: 400) consider both rootedness and openness as coexisting and constitutive elements of the 'creativity through which migrants build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks'. The focus on migrants' agency and the formation of their attitudes, I suggest here, is a crucial element of migration research in times of increased global mobility, diversification of global cities' population and problematization of intercultural communication. Migrants' sociality contains both cosmopolitan and racialized elements, can be directed at the migrant community or at integration in the host society, and demonstrate different degrees of transnational engagement.

Above, I tried to analyze the options of this sociality taking place in a city, describing first the relationships developing within a migrant community, and then looking at the ways of dealing with other inhabitants of the city in the circumstances of heightened migration particularly from the migrants' perspective. As well as the level of engagement in transnational social networks, the development of intercultural communication is conditioned by a variety of factors including socioeconomic position, education and cultural capital, past experience of migration, age, gender, legal status etc. I suggest attending to transnationalism and migrants' groups with a greater scrutiny, and for doing so there is a need to pay special attention to the development and proliferation of personal networks of migrants, considering the dynamics of their attitudes not only towards compatriots but also to the 'Others'. Detailed research of migrants' social networks is necessary for understanding contemporary mobility trends. A balanced analysis that takes into account all the sides and shapes of migrant sociality will eventually show the conditions and limitations, as well as possible risks and benefits of the development of transnationalism. In the last part of this chapter, I will outline friendship as the basis of a sociality that I consider crucial in the formation of intimate social networks that, throughout this work, will serve as a frame for researching migrants' sociality.

3.3. Contextualizing friendship

Interconnectedness among compatriots in a contemporary diaspora is influenced by globalization trends. On the one hand, globalization, the increasing development of

technology and communication, flows of capital and ideas, as well as certain geopolitical changes such as the break-up of the Soviet Union, made people more free to move across the borders and live in other countries without feeling uprooted from home. On the other hand, as Cohen (2008: 145) mentions, despite the virtually free movement of capital, in the age of globalization mass migration is not absolutely welcome in many countries. In particular, UK migration policies are resulting in reinforcing differentiation and power inequalities, and rights and access to labour market among different kinds of migrants. While the movement of European citizens is almost free from limitations, the mobility of others is restricted, and the process of settling in the new country and making a living can be significantly more difficult than for the former. In order to make compatriots' movement smoother a '"migration industry" has been extensively and rapidly developing, comprising private lawyers, travel agents, recruiters, organizers etc. Points of departure and arrival are also linked by friendship, kin and ethnic networks organized by migrants themselves' (Cohen, 2008: 145). Support, emotional and practical, is one of the main implications of relationships in a migrant community. The proliferation and intensification of cross-border connections can play an increasing role in supporting migrants and re-establishing their social networks. In line with what I have said before, however, the transnational components of migrant socializing are diverse, depending on a multitude of social, economic and cultural characteristics, changing over time, and play different roles for different migrants, even among those originating from the same country.

Considering the changing patterns of global mobility, its increasing numbers and diversity, new characteristics arguably attributed to migrants, the persisting and developing problems in intercultural communication, and the contested degrees and significance of transnationalism, the question of how contemporary migrant communities work needs detailed attention. Here, I suggest friendship as a basis of sociality keeping migrants together as groups, as a relationship that reflects these issues problematic for migration research, be it sustaining a relationship across borders, transplanting it to the host country or relying on it in decision to migrate, using it to support oneself while being abroad, distinguishing between close relationships with compatriots, locals or other migrants – generally, building upon this kind of sociality while being a migrant. In the last part of this chapter, I am going to

present a theoretical analysis of a particular kind of sociality that I deem as a basis of interpersonal ties providing a possibility of making a migrant group not as a set of individuals brought together because of some instrumental aims and needs, but a community of people participating in the construction of valuable relationships leading to the development of social cohesion.

Friendship per se has been addressed and reflected upon since the works of Aristotle, Cicero and Augustine, where it was considered a political value and public virtue. Aristotle, for example, distinguishes between three types of friendship: that of utility, of pleasure, and virtuous friendship – the 'real friendship'. Being a good friend is equated with being a good person. Friendships are part of a bigger community, however they cannot involve many participants (except for political friendship – uniting people on the grounds of material benefits, but possibly resulting in the increase of virtues – where one could be a friend to many fellow citizens) (Kharkhordin, 2009). Simmel (as quoted in Epstein, 2007: 54) observes that modern society tended to undermine these friendships of virtue, while in return, more fragmented and specialized 'differentiated friendships' emerged. Since the development of impersonal market relations and bureaucratic mechanisms in Western Europe, Kharkhordin notes, friendship has been largely regarded as a private relationship. Considering it as a part of the private sphere, involving a small circle of individual's interactions, has made the presence of this concept in the social sciences less prominent than of others. In the sphere of contemporary research on migration, researchers have been working on different topics concerning social connectivity – social capital, solidarity, support, cohesion, ties and networks (Putnam, 2007, Cheong et al., 2007, Ryan et al., 2008, White and Ryan, 2008, Soehl and Waldinger, 2010, Hall, 2011), but friendship rarely comes up as a separate research focus (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, Kennedy, 2004, Bunnell et al., 2011). The difference is that not all of the former concepts involve friendship, but friendship rather encompasses all of them, being a particular kind of relationship – private, close and selective; this specificity implies its constructive character for a social group.

Social scientists have long researched the nature of sociality. Simmel regarded sociality as a largely idealistic process, occurring for its own sake and valuable not for its contents, but for its form, being almost a kind of art. Works of Durkheim and Tonnies

describe the opposition of societies with organic and mechanic solidarity, and Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, accordingly, where the first examples represent 'traditional' forms of interpersonal relationships, and the second ones suggest rationalized, exchange-like relationships. The questions of instrumentality are often central for the understanding of sociality. More recent research includes studies usually based on quantitative research and measurements (Fischer, 1977, Wellman, 1979, 1988, 1990, etc.). As a theoretical basis for the ideas they often use the exchange theory, role theory, and the works of Blau, Homans and Skinner. This implies that individuals associate with each other fundamentally because they all gain profit from their associations. Anticipation that the association will be rewarding is the basis of attraction underlying the association. Fischer mentions Homans's point that the exchange of activity could involve tangible or intangible things (Homans 1974, as cited in Fischer et al. 1977: 61). In general, Fischer strongly supports the choice-constraint model as an explanation of interpersonal relationships: human behaviour, including the formation and maintenance of social relations, as choices made with limited alternatives and limited resources. However, the distinctive feature of friendship is that it cannot be reduced to purely instrumental relationship, or simply to emotional attachment. Bourdieu (1998) approaches the economic side of sociality, claiming that while describing everyday exchanges people often call them friendship, because the act of calling them this way supports the network of informal exchange of goods and services. Friendship, thus, becomes 'a place where interest, in the narrow sense of the pursuit of equivalence in exchanges, is suspended' (Bourdieu, 1998: 65). Mutual suppression of the economic reality in the base of friendship by the participants of the exchange is a necessary condition of its existence. Boltanski (1990, as quoted in Kharkhordin, 2009; 1999) adds to the picture of friendship the refusal to practice a critical approach to the relationship by its participants. What he calls agape, real friendship, might develop from the regular exchange of gifts after the participants of this exchange start to consciously refuse to calculate the value of goods and services. Boltanski and Thévenot (1999: 361) write about a principle of equivalence which clarifies what people have in common and which is used to justify 'the operation of bringing together different items or different facts' in a dispute, making connections between these and underlying the criticisms. In the 'ordinary course of common action', then, people use their abilities to calculate in order to criticize. In the affective

regime of coordination (which can be used to describe friendship), on the other hand, 'persons actively cooperate in the process of shoving the equivalencies aside in order to render difficult the cumulating and calculation operations which are required to blame and criticize' (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1999: 362) The conscious denial of the pragmatic implications of friendship is real friendship, in other words.

Reciprocity and social support are common issues for investigation. Community ties with friends and relatives provide social support and make up much of the social capital people use to deal with daily life, seizing opportunities or reducing uncertainties. 'Network capital' makes resources available through interpersonal ties. Network members provide emotional aid, material aid, information, companionship, and a sense of belonging – tangible and intangible things. Also, not all community ties are supportive (Wellman et al. 1988, 1990, Wellman and Frank 2001). Ryan et al. (2008) in their study of social networks among Polish migrants in London, too, underline the existence of both positive and negative aspects of ethnic-specific networks.

Transnational studies, as mentioned before, often focus on migrant communities united by kinship. Wellman who is famous for his studies on East York (Wellman, 1979, Wellman et al. 1988, 1990, Wellman 1993, Wellman and Frank 2001) focused on all members of a network, not only neighbours or kin. He claims that communities as networks do not have to be seen as necessarily bounded by place (neighbourhood) or solidarity groups (kinfolk). He criticizes what he calls 'neigbourhood chauvinism', pointing out that 'community is where you find it' (Wellman et al., 1988: 130). He underlines the importance of studying social structure and social linkages, 'whereas social sentiments and spatial distribution hold important, but secondary positions' (Wellman 1979: 1202). Ryan et al. (2008: 685), similarly, suggest going beyond studies of social capital within communities and local neighbourhoods, and concentrate more on the dynamic, diverse and spatially dispersed character of migrants' social networks.

Wellman suggests to focus on a 'personal community network', a person's set of active community ties, which is usually socially diverse, spatially disperse, and sparsely knit (Wellman and Wortley 1990). Pahl (2000), too, underlines a growing centrality of personal communities as opposed to geographical or work-based communities in contemporary Western societies. These personal communities may be geographically

scattered and may change substantially as people move through the life-course. (Although he makes a distinction that despite frequent visits, phone calls, emails and letters, there still can be no substitute for geographical propinquity (Pahl 2000: 8)). Pahl mentions the importance of informal solidarity based on friendship claiming it can help support the increasingly fragmented social structure (Pahl 2000: 11). In a similar vein, Kharkhordin (2009: 12) argues that in the times of social uncertainty and anomie that happened after the break-up of the Soviet Union, it was friendship that saved Russia from a social collapse, as a widespread, naturally self-reproducing resource, keeping the society together which was almost falling apart, a relatively solid and functioning whole. He finds friendship a positive, constructive element of society.

Large-scale social factors are linked with such small-scale interpersonal relationships as friendship: 'The social form of friendship must be related to the encapsulating social formation of the society as a whole. It affects the way we develop the personal, which may be more or less constricted by wider structures and processes' (Pahl, 2000: 64). Bunnell et al. (2011: 2) warn that the meanings attached to friendship take on different connotations in different sociocultural contexts and cannot be interpreted from a single (western) point of view. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the particularities of friendship in Russia and the former Soviet Union, where virtually all the members of the contemporary Russian-speaking population of London were born and brought up. In the next section, I will present a more extensive analysis on the specifics of Russian/Soviet understandings of friendship. Then, if Russian friendship is a specific mode of social interaction, it may be transplanted from migrants' home countries and make them distinguish between relationships with compatriots and with other Londoners.

3.4. (post) Soviet friendship

Before examining the ways in which migrants in London can form meaningful informal connections, I will try to disentangle the cultural specificity of friendship that can make close relationships particularly meaningful for Russian-speaking migrants.

Research on the social role of friendship in the Soviet Union is quite scarce. Soviet ideology, Shlapentokh (1989: 171, 1984: 214) observes, never assigned to it a title of a significant social value. The value of collectivism was not identified with that of

friendship, primarily, because the collective implies interactions of many people, while friendship is usually dyadic and personal, closer to the individual. Secondly, while the collective relies on the existence of external control, friendship in its essence is the rejection of the idea of any intervention (Shlapentokh, 1984: 214). In this respect, Soviet mass media used the term more profusely, applying it to a macro level of friendship between peoples or classes, rather than to private relationships. Even when personal friendship was touched upon, it was usually framed in the context of the military or workplace, focused on its benefit for the society or the state, but not for the individuals. Shlapentokh parallels this with the ideas of dystopian writers Zamiatin and Orwell, who considered friendship in a totalitarian society an obstacle to the dominance of the state over the individual. Kharkhordin (1999, 2009) in his investigations of sociality in the Soviet Union, also underlines that friendship was never an official Soviet value, with so-called 'kollektiv' being superior in official discourse. Kollektiv was a constructed culturally specific phenomenon, existing almost exclusively in Soviet society, and generally defined as a group of people united by a common goal and a common activity, being opposed to the individual in this sense. Mutual surveillance spanned the collectives: Soviet tourists always traveled abroad in groups (at least one member of which was necessarily pursuing official surveillance) and could not walk in a Western city alone, but only in threesomes (Kharkhordin, 1999: 110). Friendship, thus, became 'an institution against the state' (Shlapentokh, 1984: 213), which helped to form informal social networks subversive to the system of collective surveillance and Soviet discipline (Kharkhordin, 2009: 13).

Although official Soviet media sources never praised friendship, it does not mean it did not exist. Informal relationships in small networks were an important part of everyday life in the Soviet Union. In these circumstances, friendship in the Soviet society had a number of functions. Friends could be relied upon as a source of information otherwise unavailable, or alternative to that from the official sources. For example, people would swap information they had heard on a foreign radio. Such exchange would happen only when people trusted each other. Friends could be trusted in a situation of emergency and would not betray the individual even under the threat of state persecution. They also provided help in everyday practices of 'beating the system': procuring deficit goods, helping with access to services, and supporting the

'second economy' in general – the unofficial system of distributing goods and services parallel to official economy (Shlapentokh, 1989: 174). The subversive implications of friendship are underlined by these theorists. Shlapentokh also notes 'the overwhelming friendship and hospitality expressed in the so-called kitchen-culture. The conviviality and warmth invariably found there was in marked contrast to the stultifying formality and hypocrisy of public life' (Shlapentokh, 1989, as quoted in Pahl, 2000: 156).

Shlapentokh refers to multiple studies comparing Soviet and Western friendship (Rokeach, 1973, Iadov, 1979, Boiko, 1980), and comes to a conclusion that its significance was higher for the citizens of the Soviet society. Data from Kogan's (1981: 177, as quoted in Shlapentokh, 1989: 171) empirical study on friendship compares the differences between Soviet and American perceptions of friendship and the great importance of friendship ties for the Soviet society. According to this study, 16% of respondents met friends every day, 32% - once or several times a week, 31% - several times a month. For the United States of the same times, the median was substantially lower: bachelors met four times a month.

Friendship in the (post)Soviet society had particular moral foundations. Kon (1987) writes that mature friendship is to satisfy two basic needs of an individual: to trust another person unconditionally and to talk about one's problems. Shlapentokh (1989: 174) describes a friend as an individual 'to whom you can pour out your soul, who recognizes your virtues and is tolerant of your weaknesses, who is your advisor in intimate spheres of life, and with whom it is pleasant to spend your leisure time'. Unconditional trust and a chance to confide and discuss personal problems at any time – these two features made mature Soviet friendship an unofficial moral value, different from the value of friendship in the West. Also, such relationship is supposed to be free from any rational calculations: 'as a moral relationship, friendship emerges only after the interpersonal tie stops being considered as a pure expression of emotional attraction, social duty, or the result of a rational calculation. Neither attraction, nor ritual, nor calculation stop to exist and do not lose their autonomous meaning. But now, they conform to higher moral considerations, combined with the concepts of obligation and virtue. From now on, "real friendship" becomes a model […] which represents such personal constants as selectivity, individuality, loyalty,

independence from the situational considerations' (Kon, 1987: 107). I have already mentioned this as one of the key aspects of the understanding of friendship that is used in this work: friendship becomes 'real friendship' after its participants start to consciously refuse the pragmatic implications of the exchanges and interactions that form the basis of a relationship (Bourdieu 1998, Boltanski 1990, 1999, Kharkhordin 2009). Friendship then becomes an exercise in 'active forgetting' (Kharkhordin, 2009: 20). This gives a relationship a potential of altruism, which remains relevant in contemporary Russia.

Friendship in Soviet times, as Kharkhordin (2009: 14) claims, offered a space for individualization, getting to know one's own personality and formation of individual identity, because friends offered a space for existentially meaningful communication. He underlines that the function of friendship has not disappeared in 1990s, when the repressive abilities of the state decreased. In this respect, he finds Russian friendship not very dependent upon the condition of the state institutions. While friendship networks came out of the shadow with the transformation of the elements of Soviet society, they remained a significant constitutive element of the functioning of the post-Soviet society.

If friendship was formed under the conditions of threat of persecution from the state, economic and informational scarcity, and in opposition to the official imposition of a collective, it became a relationship of special quality. The status of a friend was not ascriptive, but rather an achievement that required a significant effort, as it took some time to find out if one could really trust the person (Shlapentokh, 1984: 244, Kharkhordin, 2009: 13). The example that speaks for itself is given by Shlapentokh (1984: 233-236) from his personal experience, which he also addressed with the analytical rigour of a sociologist. As soon as he made a decision to leave the Soviet Union in 1979, his formal status in the society changed. A renowned sociologist, he was placed by the state in a kind of demoralizing vacuum, which was common for would-be emigrants at that time[1]. He made a list of his friends and acquaintances and

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[1] Shlapentokh (1984: 233) writes: 'After my decision to leave the Soviet Union, my status in society changed drastically. Previously a well-known Soviet sociologist and Senior Fellow in the prestigious Sociological Institute of the Academy of Science in Moscow, I enjoyed relatively high status in the scientific community, even if my status was higher among intellectuals than officials. After I applied for an exit visa, however, my status was radically altered.

tried to measure the change in their attitudes towards him. He found out that despite the pressure of the authorities and possible risk of this relationship for their reputations, the majority of these people behaved 'with a distinct lack of obedience to the regime'. His closest friends not only did not turn their backs and stop communication with him, but many have even increased it. He concludes that friendship turned out to be the strongest value, and people were ready to sacrifice other values for the sake of their relationship.

Friendship emerges from these moral considerations as a refuge for the individual from external threats, writes Shlapentokh (1989: 218): 'all other things equal, the lower the sense of security among people and the weaker their confidence in the future, the more intense and vital are interpersonal relationships. This can be demonstrated by the closeness of relations among those belonging to an oppressed minority as compared to those of a dominant majority'. In his statement, there is an important implication for this research. It seems to be bridging the experiences of migration and the practices and dynamics of friendship. I stressed that contemporary migration does not universally become an easy route for many individuals, despite the globalized and increasingly interconnected world. There can be a persistent potential of friendship ties for migrants from the post-Soviet countries.

Friendship among post-Soviet migrants, then, could have a particular moral value that may distinguish it from other relationships – or relationships with 'Others'. First, it may possess a moral value of a subversive relationship, or opposing the control of the dominant collectivities. Secondly, it may be specified as a non-instrumental, altruistic behaviour. Thirdly, it may be understood and practiced as a relationship which had to pass the test of time and possible difficulties of migrant life. This historical and sociocultural background of sociality can inform the lives of migrants, their

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[...] we can look at a picture of the typical situation facing a scholar who has chosen to emigrate. Quickly the scholar will be 1) relieved of all teaching activities; 2) have his graduate students transferred to other supervisors; 3) be deprived of the possibility of publishing articles and books, and have all those in print destroyed; 4) have all his books removed from libraries; 5) have all invitations to participate in conferences and seminars cancelled; 6) be excluded from all councils and other bodies of which he is a member; 7) in some cases, also be deprived of scholarly titles and degrees; 8) in many cases, be fired without any prospect of finding another job; 9) have his children expelled from universities or colleges; 10) face special meetings in the institute, organized to make public denunciation of this antipatriotic act, with orchestrated speeches made by colleagues; and so on.

[...] each act of harassment also signals to friends, colleagues, and acquaintances that the maintenance of good relations with the applicant for the visa would be regarded as unloyal behaviour, with possible negative consequences for those who choose to ignore these warnings'.

relationships with each other, local and cross-border connections, and communication with compatriots and non-Russian-speaking Londoners.

4. Conclusion

In this work, I am looking at the range of informal relationships unfolding among Russian-speaking inhabitants of London with an attempt to discover to which extent the research framework of transnationalism is applicable to contemporary migrants. Taking into account the assumption that with the development of contemporary migrant studies the notion of transnationalism is becoming overwhelming and loosely interpreted, I would like to suggest a more refined approach to this characteristic of migration. Not denying the presence of transnational qualities in some categories of migrants, however, I aim to show a wider picture of migrants' sociality practices. Dwelling upon the analysis of social networks of some representatives of Russian-speaking migrant community, I claim that the actual spectrum of relationships among compatriots can be quite diverse and not completely transnational.

This work presents an integrative conceptual approach based on several strands of literature outlined in this chapter, which includes works on transnationalism, ethnicity, cosmopolitanism, racism and nationalism, and friendship. This chapter engages in a critique of the omnipresent notion of transnationalism in describing contemporary migrants' practices, and underlines that cross-border activity and formation of transnational communities is conditioned by the increasing diversity of migration nowadays. I argue here that the concept of transnationalism has to be approached with a greater attention to particular circumstances of migration, and a consideration of the stratified and heterogeneous character of contemporary migrant communities. There are structural factors and personal motivations shaping mobility patterns of migrants, resulting in high degrees of differentiation among them. The level of transnational engagement also varies. While the diversity of migrants is now greater, research is still often confined to certain social groups, usually either disadvantaged or quite affluent. I stress the need to pay more attention to 'middling transnationalism' and approach not only top and bottom of the social strata but rather 'ordinary people' who constitute a growing share of today's migration. I also underline that the transnational element of migrant sociality should not be overestimated – as well as the

ethnic one. In this work, attention will be paid to migrant sociality on a broader scale, where social ties with compatriots, whether local or cross-border, are not absolutized.

I concentrate on the relational aspect of migrant ethnicity, which encompasses the often simultaneous malleability of the ethnic boundaries and rigidity of concerns about presumably ethnic determinants of the qualities of social groups. In doing so, I aim to approach migration on a level of informal relationships and personal networks that may be situated in different locations and that may play an important role in mobility patterns. Understanding the place of a migrant group in a city, the dynamics of its development, and the degrees of its transnationalism has to be analyzed through a range of people's informal relationships. I suggest that friendship is a kind of relationship that can inform the ways in which migrants sustain connections both locally and across borders. I consider it helpful to study informal social relationships that unfold both within a migrant community and those that transcend its borders, for getting to understand how migrant communities function without missing on important patterns of urban sociality. The city space offers possibilities for the development of both cosmopolitan and xenophobic attitudes, and the increasing diversity of the city populations, labour market divisions, and all numerous patterns of ethnic, class, and gender differentiation brought in by globalization and mobility make it even more complicated. Learning to deal with difference is a complex and dynamic process. The focus on migrants' agency and the formation of their attitudes, I suggest here, is a crucial element of migration research in the times of increased global mobility, diversification of global cities' population and problematization of intercultural communication.

Social networks are created by migrants anew when they arrive to a country, transplanted from the country of origin and re-established in a new place of residence, and sustained over the borders of nation-states. Not all people engage in these networks to the same degree. Special attention has to be paid to the inner diversity of a migrant population. Community ties should not be taken for granted even if there is a significant number of migrants of the same national origin in one space. The sociality of migrants, as well, does not have to be and is not directed only at compatriots. Arguing against methodological nationalism, I claim that migrant communities should not be approached as solid entities but rather as stratified communities consisting of

small interpersonal networks brought together by friendship. I approach friendship as an object and a tool of this research, helping to understand the conditions and motivations that brought members of a particular migrant group together, the differences in their cross-border activities, and how the perceptions of friendship can condition the possibilities of the development of positive relationships of this migrant community with the 'Others' in the city. Patterns of migrants' sociality contain both cosmopolitan and racialized elements, can be directed at the migrant community or at the integration in the host society, and eventually be an indicator of transnational engagement. I suggest friendship as a basis of sociality that people build upon while being migrants, as a relationship that reflects the issues problematic for migration research in contemporary society: the changing patterns of global mobility, its increasing numbers and diversity, new characteristics arguably attributed to migrants, the persisting and developing problems in intercultural communication, and the contested degrees and significance of transnationalism. Also, I draw upon the research on Soviet friendship, which suggests that the cultural and historical specificity of this relationship includes it often being perceived as subversive behaviour, supported by opposition to the control of majorities, a voluntary and altruistic association which is refused pragmatic implications, and a relationship which has to be proved reliable.

Overall, the theoretical approach of my work will provide a balanced ground for researching patterns of social networks of some parts of the Russian-speaking migrant community in London. My position is critical towards the loose application of the term of transnationalism and my suggestion is to analyze it with a focused concentration on particular features of migrant communities, pointing out their heterogeneous character. Also, there is a need to focus not only on engagement in transnational social networks, but on the development of intercultural communication. For doing so there is a need to pay special attention to the development and proliferation of personal networks of migrants, considering the dynamics of their attitudes towards compatriots and 'Others'. My work is innovative in this respect as migrants' attitudes and relationships towards Otherness have been largely overlooked; however the intercultural communication in a global city like London is not only conditioned by the mainstream public attitudes towards newcomers, but equally by the reverse. I offer friendship as a basis of sociality that I consider crucial for the formation of intimate

social networks and that throughout this work will serve as a framework for researching migrants' sociality. Eventually, I argue that friendship is a specific mode of social interaction that gets transplanted from migrants' home countries and makes them distinguish between relationships with compatriots and with other Londoners.

Chapter 2. Setting the scene: London/'Russian' London

1. Introduction

I n this chapter, I will describe the environment in which the empirical part of this research took place. Firstly, I will give a picture of contemporary London as a 'global city' (Sassen, 1991, 2002), full of flows of information, capital, and people (Appadurai, 1996). International migration to the UK has increased greatly in the past decades, and London is seen as one of the most attractive places for migrants. The factors that prompted this were the changes in the economy, extended market relations and the development of communication infrastructure (Wills et al., 2010: 5). The specific nature of London is manifested in its highly stratified population, constant influx of migrants, and the presence of lots of different cultures and languages within one city, that cannot be compared with any other British city in this respect.

The particular characteristic of contemporary migration flows ending up in London is an increase in the numbers and diversification of newcomers. Migration has become more heterogeneous, and the axis of ethnicity/nationality is already not sufficient to measure all its complexity (Vertovec, 2007). The levels of transnational engagement also differ between and within communities. Migration from Eastern Europe since the EU accession in 2004 and from the former Soviet Union since the beginning of the 21st century, in particular, has contributed greatly into the new inflows of people into London. The migrants who I am going to pay attention to in this work are a part of Russian-speaking population of London: those who were born in the Soviet Union and share the same historically specific socio-cultural characteristics (Byford, 2009a, Isaakyan, 2010). Russian-speaking migration has not been the focus of general migration research, although it is achieving popularity as a topic of interest for those more concerned with Russian studies and for postgraduate students from different disciplines. It has, relatively recently, appeared in the UK in noticeable numbers, which are still unclear in the statistics. Russian-speaking migrants are forming a vague, stratified and loosely connected community. Social ties which bring its members together are of contested and diverse character. These migrants take their part in the

most recent trends of contemporary migration, as a part of new white migration, and diversify the social landscape of London.

This chapter will serve to set the scene for my empirical research, the results of which will be outlined in the rest of the work. As well, it will link the research with theoretical elaborations on the social processes taking place in a city like London that were presented in the first chapter. Starting with a portrait of London, it will continue with a description of the contemporary Russian community in this city, providing an insight into some history of migration from the former Soviet Union, its contemporary social organization, statistics, stratification and infrastructure. Also, I will describe the routes and connections which bring to London Russian-speaking migrants like my respondents. The chapter will concentrate on the Russian-speaking population of London as a group contributing to the diversity of this city and a particular migrant community bearing its own inner diversity and special character. This chapter will contribute to the whole work by not only describing my object of research, but most importantly by pointing out that a migrant community can be made 'visible' by analyzing the informal social relationships that keep its members together. Following researchers like Smith and Favell (2006), Wills et al. (2010), I intend to study the 'human face' of contemporary migration and people's social interactions that make a 'global city' global. After those like Vertovec (2001), Conradson and Latham (2005) and Ryan (2008), I introduce this chapter to set a background of studying how migrants' social networks operate in practice in their diversity and dynamism.

2. London

The characteristics of London that make it such a popular object for migration studies are manifested in its highly stratified population, the constant influx of migrants, the anonymity of social life, and the presence of many cultures and languages. In this part of the chapter, I will give a picture of London in the context of international migration, and describe how this city has become a place with an extremely heterogeneous population, and some new trends recently encountered.

2.1. Who makes it 'global'?

Sassen (1991, 2002) names London as a global city. Such cities play an increasingly important role in linking their national economies with global circuits. London is one of the major financial and business centers of the world that concentrates top-level control and management of industry. The occupational structure of London started to change in 1960s and early 1970s, when the manufacturing industry declined (Hamnett, 2003: 6). The financial and business services, in turn, started to develop. This influenced the occupational profile of the city: service-sector employment characterized by sharper differences between social groups at top and bottom ends of the occupational and income hierarchies (Buck et al., 2002, Hamnett, 2003, Wills et al., 2010: 31). The growth of the global management and servicing activities promotes the expansion of central urban areas. Sassen (1991: 26) describes a global city as connected with the mobility of capital and development of transnationalism understood as occurring in the 'ownership and control of major corporations through foreign direct investment, mergers and acquisitions, and joint ventures'. The changes of the industrial structure are linked with changes in labour market, income distribution, housing market, and social and ethnic composition of the city. These changes have taken place not only in London, but the scale here was the most significant. It is very different from other British cities that are still in economic and demographic decline. Hall (2007: 6) compares them: 'They are too generating new service jobs in both public and private sectors, but they are not compensating for the loss of traditional manufacturing and goods-handling jobs. They are too attracting new inhabitants to live in new apartments and conversions around their attractive and dynamic city centres, but these places are surrounded by tracts of urban wasteland, because other people – especially people with children – are leaving for homes in the greenfield counties outside. In the 1990s, Manchester's population dropped by 10 per cent, Liverpool's by 8 per cent, Newcastle's by 6 per cent and Birmingham's by 3 per cent. London in contrast grew by nearly 5 per cent'. In its growth, productivity and export performance, London is performing better than other parts of the UK, especially in the past decades, partly because of attracting and mobilizing high-level human capital (Buck et al., 2002: 135).

Hall (2007: 4) describes London as a city where people do not make things, but provide services for others, demanding that they are always in contact with each other and the rest of the world. A global city like London is characterized by a shift in job supply and income distribution, leading to a growing divide between the earnings of the expanding share of middle-class professionals in financial and business sectors, and less skilled and low paid service sector. This is connected with the changes in housing market and geographical distribution of different groups in the city: residential expansion of those with higher income to formerly working class areas of London, growth of home ownership and rising prices (Hamnett, 2003: 6, 19). At the same time, together with the shrinking manual force it results in the growing marginalization of the less skilled and unemployed. The National Statistics' 'Focus on London' news release (2007) called it a 'city of wealth and deprivation'. The nature of the recent and drastic changes in the labour market of London has been interpreted variously by researchers in the past decade. Hamnett (2003) argues that what is taking place is growing inequality, understood as a widening gap between the incomes of the rich and the poor, rather than polarization described by increase in the numbers of the both groups. Inequality is conditioned by the fast relative rise of the incomes of the rich and much slower increase of the poor's earnings. The greatest increases have been amongst City workers (Hamnett, 2003: 77). Inequality is regarded as a result of an expansion of a new middle class whose earnings and household incomes are growing rapidly. This puts higher pressure on socially disadvantaged groups. The processes of gentrification and increase in home ownership make London more and more segregated. Hamnett argues for seeing London as a city whose social structure is described by professionalization as the growth of professional groups and decline of manual workers, rather than proletaranisation or polarisation. The polarisation thesis supporters (Sassen, 1991; Friedmann and Wolf, 1982, as quoted in Hamnett, 2003: 60, Wills et al., 2010), argue for growth in both top and bottom ends of job market and income distribution. Both professionalization and polarization opinions underline the growth of new professional elites, and both realize the sharp class divisions in contemporary global cities. What Hamnett (2003: 61) stresses, however, is that large proportions of low-waged workers do not mean large numbers of them. The changes in the labour market are thus explained by the expansion of new middle-class professionals rather than absolute growth in numbers of both them and low-paid

workers. They result in greater earning inequalities rather than greater sizes and proportions of high- and low-income groups (Buck et al., 2002: 150). These earning inequalities are much sharper in London than in other British cities.

London is described as a city where the UK labour migration trends are concentrated, where the waves of newcomers contribute to a strong migrant labour supply. The income and occupational distribution of foreign workers is unequal too. Some flows of migrants increasingly tend to be described as professional and managerial rather than clerical and manual workers (Salt and Millar, 2006: 337, Hamnett, 2003: 12). The formation of a new professional class is another feature of a global city. Beaverstock (1996) underlines the role of skilled international labour migration within London's investment banking industry as an important element of the city's functioning within the world economy. However, migrants coming to London nowadays are not only represented by high-skilled professionals. Migrants are often described in general terms rather than being approached as a diverse and stratified set of individuals and social groups that represent 'the human face of global mobility', where labour migration is differentiated and the very notions of 'skilled' and 'educated' can be just labels for real people with very different 'skills' and 'education'. 'The heroes of global free movement – top ranked employees of multinational corporations, international business, IT companies, scientific research agencies and so on – are, presumably, the human hands, brains and faces behind the impersonal dynamics of global markets and nation-state decline' (Smith and Favell, 2006: 2). Apart from the well-known and well-studied reliance of London on the flows of highly skilled migrants, London's economy is increasingly relying on the labour of low-paid migrant workers. The share of foreign-born among low-waged workers is also a product of economic development that has created the necessity and desire for people to move to the UK from other countries in search of work that the British would reject, and to fill in the gaps in the employment structure (Wills et al, 2010: 7). Even if migrants take up low-paid positions in the London labour market, researchers often realize that they can be overqualified for these jobs, possessing relatively high levels of education but being employed in low-paying jobs, that however provide them with a bigger income that they would have had back in home countries (Drinkwater et al, 2006, Hall, 2007).

International migration to the UK has increased greatly in the past decades, and London is seen as one of the most attractive places for migrants. The factors that prompted this were the changes in the economy, extended market relations and the development of communication infrastructure (Hamnett, 2003, Wills et al., 2010: 5). All that makes London's demography even more special than its economy. Its attractiveness for varied groups of people makes London 'almost like a different country' (Hall, 2007: 7). The changes in occupational and income structure induced by the development of the service economy are reflected in the diversity of migrants. Besides, it resonates with the migration management policies of the UK, which deal differently with highly skilled educated migrants and low-skilled workers for bottom-end jobs, providing them with different rights (McDowell, 2008b: 495). In the next section, I will show what kinds of 'human faces' contributed to Britain's migration history, and how London has become a place with a truly unique demography.

2.2. Migration: history and figures

Keith (2005: 264) mentions that there was not a point in the history of London 'when cultural differences have not played a significant role in shaping the life of the city'. Enhanced migration and a multiplicity of cultures is a specific feature of London. Patterns of migration, however, do not always follow the same trend. In different periods, the UK had seen influxes of newcomers from all parts of the world, the process that was conditioned by different historical and economic circumstances, global geopolitical changes and local immigration policies.

From the 1930s until 1983, London's population was decreasing because of the effects of the war on the population. A lot of Londoners were moving out of the city – the latter still takes place, but is has become compensated by an increased influx of new migrants (Buck et al., 2002: 141). Traditionally, Britain's immigrant population has consisted of people from the Commonwealth and former colonial countries in the Caribbean and South Asia that came to the UK in large numbers in the 1950-1970s, brought in their relatives and formed large and well-organized communities. McDowell (2008a, 2009) writes about another dimension of immigration to the UK – that of white migrants. Explaining why these people have been paid less attention in post-war migration studies, she argues that their whiteness provided them 'a cloak of invisibility'

making them different from non-white migrants. She distinguishes three strands of white migrants after the Second World War. Firstly, the state of the British economy in the after-war period was weakened by the shortages of labour, so the government turned to migration as a possible way out. Industries that required more labour force were iron, steel, coal and agriculture, the construction industry, and, what was identified as short of female labour, transport, the NHS and domestic service in private homes. Moreover, Britain was constantly losing people because of emigration: approximately 1,5 million British residents left the country in two decades after 1945 (McDowell, 2008b: 22). This was another reason to seek for alternative sources of labour and promote immigration. After-war migrants were mostly refugees and displaced persons, demobilized soldiers and prisoners of war. They mainly came from parts of Europe occupied by Germany and the Soviet Union, and from refugee camps in Germany. Many of them were reluctant to return to their home countries that had become part of the Soviet Union. Of these, many were women from the Baltic states. They did not have any previous connections with Britain – not legal, cultural, linguistic, nor religious. In general, 600,000 white European 'aliens' were recruited to work in Britain at that time. Secondly, Irish citizens were encouraged to migrate to Britain at the end of the war. They were given legal rights of British citizenship and retained their Irish citizenship as well. Between 1946 and 1962, around 50,000 to 60,000 Irish people annually entered the country to search for work. The third source of white migrants was the 'new' Commonwealth, a trend that started with the 1948 British Nationality Act that gave citizenship rights to people from the Commonwealth. These British 'citizens', however were often regarded by the British as 'foreign'. From 1,000-2,000 annually in 1948-1952 to 42,000 in 1957 have entered the country (McDowell, 2008a: 55). From 1962, the control over immigration had started to tighten, while the numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers increased among immigrants. Moreover, the joining by Britain of the EU has opened immigration for EU nationals. Meanwhile, in the first half of the 20th century and until the 1980s, British people leaving to Dominion countries, particularly Canada and Australia, were still making it a country of net emigration.

Between 1991 and 2001, the UK saw a large numerical increase of the white population (421,000). The increase for other ethnic groups was 270,000 for Black

African, 257,000 for Pakistani, 147,000 for Indian, 118,000 for Bangladeshi and 60,000 for Black Caribbean populations (Poulsen and Johnston, 2008: 161). The next decade was marked by an increase in the numbers of all ethnic groups (4,1 per cent per year) except for 'white British' which remained static in size (0,6 per cent per year). 'The Other White' group again shows the largest absolute growth – of 553,000 – between 2002 and 2009 (Office for National Statistics, 2011b: 3). Buck et al. (2002: 148) demonstrate the increasing dominance of white migrants since the 1990s, describing them as people from East European countries, and people likely to stay short periods. Since 1994, the situation in the UK is marked by net inflows of people (Vertovec, 2007: 1028, Buck et al., 2002). In the beginning of the 21st century, London was steadily accommodating around 40 per cent of non-'White British' population of the national total (Ellis, 2009: 28). In 2001, 21,8 per cent of its population were born outside the EU, compared with only 6,6 per cent in England and Wales (Hall, 2007: 7).

Currently, the UK sees a variety of migrants come from the same post-socialist countries that were sources of economic migration after the war. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the break-up of the Soviet Union increased migrant flows from East European countries. Following that, post-accession migration since 2004 allowed many more people to come to the UK without a visa (although they had to register if they worked according to the Worker Registration Scheme, which was abolished in April 2011 after turning out to be not very functional). The reason why these migrants chose the UK as their destination was that, alongside with Sweden and Ireland, it was offering the least restrictive regime among other European countries, conditioning entrance to people from the new EU member states (Drinkwater et al., 2006: 2). Migration from the countries that joined the EU in 2004 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta) brought in a wave of newcomers. Poland, for example, is now one of the top five countries from where people come to the UK, representing 5,4% of all migrants (preceded by India – 11,9%, Pakistan – 5,8%, and followed by Australia - 5,2%, and China – 5,2%), according to the International Passenger Survey (Rogers, 2011). This wave of post-accession migrants has contributed significantly to filling in the places in low-paid job sectors, being considered by employers as reliable and highly motivated workers able to work hard in

'low paid, demanding and often demeaning jobs with long or anti-social hours that British workers tended to find unacceptable' (McDowell, 2009: 27).

Since the 1990s, the UK has been characterized by a proliferation of migration channels and migrants' legal statuses (Vertovec, 2007). The UK has a complex and constantly changing system of migration regulations. Different nationalities have different visa requirements for entering and staying in the UK. European Economic Area and Swiss nationals do not need a visa to come to the UK, while for over 100 other nationalities, covering three-quarters of the world population, a visa is required for any purpose or for any length of stay, and all remaining nationalities need a visa to come to the UK for over six months or for work (Home Office, 2010)[2]. Migration management policies produce and reinforce hierarchies of migrants in access to rights in the UK and to labour market (Wills et al., 2010, McDowell, 2009). The result of these policies is that the UK now sees lots of highly differentiated and stratified migrants, where different legal rights assigned to them by migration laws give them additional

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[2] Roughly, UK visas can be classified into three categories: entry clearances allowing a person to come to the country for a limited period of time (usually as a visitor, student, student visitor or temporary worker) and in some of these categories to renew the visa before it expires; secondly, visas leading to settlement, which means that at the end of a certain length of time, usually between two and five years, the person can make an application for 'indefinite leave to remain'; and finally, settlement visa permitting a person to remain indefinitely in the UK (Home Office, 2010). Main categories of points-based system which is now gradually being replaced by stricter immigration rules include 5 tiers. Tier 1 is for 'highly skilled individuals who can contribute to growth and productivity' (Home Office, 2010) and this category has undergone most significant changes making it less possible to stay and work in the UK for recent graduates and most skilled and educated migrants that do not have enough money to get an investor's visa and do not have a sponsor (employer). Tier 2 (former Highly Skilled Migrants Program) is for skilled workers from outside the EEA with a job offer from a UK employer. Tier 3 which is currently suspended was for limited numbers of low skilled workers needed to fill specific temporary labour shortages. Tier 4 is for students. Tier 5 is aimed at youth mobility and temporary workers, people allowed to work in the UK for a limited period of time to satisfy primarily non-economic objectives (UK Border Agency). The immigration policy has become more restrictive since David Cameron became Prime Minister. While the changes are starting to be implemented, the migration figures remain high, with 2010 being the record calendar year with net migration of 252,000 (Office for National Statistics, 2011a: 3).

degrees of difference: between nationalities, some of which are more privileged in their access to the UK, and between those with different skill levels, which to a large extent predetermines migrants' social positions in the country.

Managing migration has been connected with the changes in the British economy in the last 50 years. The highly skilled professionals are attracted by the development of the post-industrial service economy; the less skilled are drawn in by the jobs that bring them more income than back home. London was a place where the changes were most significant, and is now a hub where most of these inflows concentrate. The population is growing despite the constant outflow of UK-born people from London: net international migration outweighs it (Ellis, 2009, Hall, 2007, Buck et al., 2002). As a result, the city has a unique vibrant atmosphere that by itself can serve as another attraction but at the same time trigger the development of tensions between different groups. Next, I will focus on what kind of population has appeared as a result of the constellation of so many different people within one city.

2.3. Complexities of diversity

A notion that has been used recently to describe the population of London is 'super-diversity'. As Vertovec (2007: 1029). puts it describing the contemporary state of Britain and especially London, it is 'a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade'. New immigrant groups have appeared on the migrant scene of Britain, differing from the previous migrants from Commonwealth countries or former colonial territories by being smaller, less organized, and highly differentiated, and not having similar historical links with Britain (Vertovec, 2007: 1029). Currently, London is a new home for people from some 179 countries. Vertovec's article from 2007 notes that 'of the local authorities with the highest percentage of non-UK-born population, the top twenty-two are all London boroughs, from the first, Brent with 46.5 per cent of its 263,463 population, to the twenty second, Redbridge with 24.2 per cent of its 238,634 population'. The racially and culturally diverse character of the city is even more striking, researchers admit, because London used to be more predominantly white just a bit more than half a

century ago (Hall, 2007: 407). Calling it super-diverse, however, has to do with the most contemporary changes in the UK's immigration profile. Conventional 'black and white' distinctions do not explain anymore the complexity of London's social hierarchies (McDowell, 2008a, 2008b). Essentially, super-diversity has brought into the UK a multiplicity of more subtle, less visible degrees of distinction among migrants. The reason I find this concept applicable for describing the current situation is that, because of changes in the UK population and economy and the geopolitical changes that took place since the Second World War, the country ended up being in a unique demographic situation: the epicenter of which is London. This city's development has led it to becoming the place with an extremely diverse population.

One of the key features of super-diversity is not only that contemporary migrants are diverse in many aspects aside from ethnic/national origin, but that this diversity is increasingly becoming a characteristic within ethnic/national groups as well as in between them. This is conditioned by the UK migration regulations that create and reinforce differentiations among migrants. As a result, now in a single migrant community one can find representatives of different social strata, who came to the UK via different migration channels, have different legal statuses, are members of different generations and have different personal migration histories. Diversity is also a feature of settlement patterns of migrants. Vertovec (2007: 1041) underlines that only a few nationalities are highly concentrated in certain areas of London. For example, Tower Hamlets has 42 per cent of London's Bangladeshi population, which comprises of 21 per cent of the whole borough population and 12 per cent of the country's Bangladeshis (Office for National Statistics, 2011b: 5). Concentrations of ethnic minorities are described as local rather than 'bunched together in particular parts of the city' (Buck et al., 2002: 46). Pratt (1998, as quoted in Vertovec, 2007: 1042) mentions that 'multiple cultures and identities inevitably inhabit a single space […] and a single cultural identity is often situated in multiple, interconnected spaces'. Proximity to compatriots is not a defining feature of more and more contemporary migrants in London.

Another dimension of the complexity of super-diversity is differentiation in the levels of transnational engagement. The increase in transnationalism takes place on different levels: on the one hand, on a global city level, concerning international communication

and transactions that give it its particular role in the global economy; on the other hand, on the level of new connections between London and cities in other countries, established and maintained by the new networks of international migration (Wills et al., 2010: 28). Although transnationalism has grown in the past years, it is conditioned by a multitude of factors: 'migration channel and legal status (e.g. refugees or undocumented persons may find it harder to maintain certain ties abroad), migration and settlement history, community structure and gendered patterns of contact, political circumstances in the homeland, economic means and more' (Vertovec, 2007: 1043). The spatial distribution of migrants' social networks, similarly, can change over time, from more transnational to more localized or the other way round; the dynamism of these changes varies for different social networks of migrants with different economic and cultural capital (Ryan et al., 2008: 684-686).

The presence of many cultures and nationalities in the city space and breaking up the conventional black/white divisions between migrants is a source of new patterns of segregation resulting in many ethnic minorities tending to live 'parallel lives' to their hosts meaning that 'the ignorance about each other's communities had been turned into fear, and even demonization. The result was intolerance, discrimination and, in extreme cases, violence' (Community Cohesion Panel, 2004: 7). New immigrants, particularly those in low-paid positions, are often seen as 'coming and taking our jobs' by the British and older generations of migrants, which is explained by high rates of unemployment and decreasing (or growing too slowly) wages and work conditions, especially for non-professional jobs (Wills et al., 2010: 8, 19, McDowell, 2009: 20). On the one hand, the whiteness and European status, in addition to the developed stereotype of a 'good Polish worker' diligently working long hours for a low pay, make them attractive for the employers. However, the overwhelming share of the Poles among all those who came to the UK in the last decade (Polish migrants provided 72 per cent of approved applicants for the now closed Worker Registration Scheme in 2007, 66 per cent in 2008 and 52 per cent in 2009 (Home Office, 2010: 42)) is a source of some generalizations about 'East Europeans' who in reality are much more diverse in terms of social class as well as nationality. New patterns of inequalities and prejudice are a result of a complexity of race and class relationships. Recent and varied inflows of migrants to the UK have brought in new forms of racism, including that

among the British towards newcomers and among previous generation ethnic minorities towards the newest ones. Furthermore, what still lacks research on, there are emerging patterns of racism among new migrants themselves directed to the British and older ethnic minorities. McDowell (2008b: 34) puts 'the current hierarchy of suitability and appropriateness between new A8 white Europeans, older migrants, people of colour and British BME workers' as a new problematic issue for the intergroup community and workplace relations in Britain. As intercultural relationships are becoming more complex with a growing diversity of white migrants arriving in the country, whiteness itself is becoming problematized. Keith (2005: 177) stresses that London is increasingly witnessing new migrant flows from the former Soviet bloc that might disrupt the conventional binary framing of BME ('black and minority ethnic') and 'white' communities. McDowell (2008a, 2008b, 2009) mentions that whiteness is a socially constructed, variable and contested category, implicated in the politics of domination, and resulting in 'the establishment of hierarchies of whiteness'. Social divisions between migrants are increasingly based on other factors apart from skin colour – age, gender, education, occupation, income, legal status etc. These constructions of difference, McDowell (2008: 496) notes, 'are produced and maintained through practices that operate at and across different spatial scales. These practices include ideological assumptions, multiple regulatory systems, structures of power and domination and spoken and enacted everyday practices in multiple sites, operating at both conscious and unconscious levels and open to contestation and renegotiation'.

These particular features of London lead to an establishment of a special atmosphere and are connected with the formation of special attitudes towards the city. A place with such a diverse population offers possibilities both for intercultural communication and conflict. Above all, facing diversity is followed by learning to deal with it in certain ways, which is often complicated (Community Cohesion Panel, 2004: 7). Simmel (1903: 12) describes the metropolitan life as consisting of 'the rapid telescoping of changing images, pronounced differences within what is grasped at a single glance, and the unexpectedness of violent stimuli'. In these conditions, a specific 'blasé' kind of personality is formed, trying to protect itself 'against the profound disruption with which the fluctuations and discontinuities of the external milieu threaten it' therefore

becoming indifferent to distinctions between things. The city dweller learns to perceive the diversity surrounding him/her in a less personal and emotional way. Dealing with difference as well as defining one's own place in the city life is often connected with losing old ties and finding conventional rules of behaviour inapplicable to new settings. This is the reason why the city like London is a 'crucible of economic, political, and cultural change precisely because old values and old orderings are disrupted by the tumult of city life' (Keith, 2005: 257). New identities and solidarities are formed, and the patterns of their formation can follow somewhat unconventional directions. Miller (2008) names London 'nowhere in particular', meaning that people come to this city 'in order not to be anything in particular, as an escape from […] identity by origin rather than to replace one with another'. He describes contemporary new Londoners as people who more and more often try not to be identified by others or themselves with traditional identity like ethnic origin. In these circumstances, narratives of cosmopolitanism and globalised identity develop. However, such changes to people's lives do not necessarily imply getting into the state of anomie and alienation (Miller, 2008). New relationships are developed, new solidarities formed, and eventually what happens is the 'emergence of new ways of seeing and thinking through patterns of creolization and hybridity' (Keith, 2005: 262). In this work, I intend to analyze how these new ways of perceiving and dealing with the super-diversity of London life unfold in the case of one migrant community, which is itself a contributor to the development of particular conditions of the city life.

This part of the chapter shows that London nowadays exhibits very special migration processes. There is a state of super-diversity that characterizes the population of this city, meaning that those who are moving to London are becoming increasingly differentiated. Migration has become more heterogeneous, and the axis of ethnicity/nationality is already not sufficient to measure all its complexity. The levels of transnational engagement, similarly, differ between and within communities. Migration from Eastern Europe and from the former Soviet Union in particular has contributed greatly into the new inflows of people into London. However, the problem with the literature on contemporary migration is that, although aware of the general trends, it usually misses the complexity of the particular phenomena constituting these trends. Recent writings on East European migration (which in itself is a loose term to

be applied to such a variety of newcomers) may highlight the history and present state of migration from the Baltic states (McDowell, 2009) and the impact on the British labour market, transnational practices, survival strategies and networking among the omnipresent Poles (Wills et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2008; Drinkwater et al., 2006; Datta, 2009; Rabikowska, 2010). The research can be timely and significant, but it brings the risks already present in academic discourse – extending the image of an almost scapegoat Polish worker to most of the people coming from the countries that at some point in history were somehow linked with the communist regime. While not denying that migrants from Poland, for example, play a significant role in keeping 'London working' (Wills et al., 2010: 1), I would like to stress that making a city work is not limited to one niche of its economy. There is a multitude of other people helping the city not only work, but develop; not only contributing to its economy with work and investment, but also to cultural and social life. I consider Russian-speaking migrants an aspect of the super-diversity that for different reasons have been slightly overlooked. In the next part, I will concentrate on the state of the current wave of Russian-speaking migrants that, I claim, are a particular representation of the most recent trends in migration, consisting of a set of diverse social groups and having different levels of transnationalism.

3. 'Russian' London

In a short video that appeared on YouTube on 6th February 2012, the mayor of London Boris Johnson invited the watchers to a Russian festival 'Maslenitsa' to take place on Trafalgar square on 26th February. He mentioned his own Russian ancestry and described London as a city 'with a vibrant Russian community'. Indeed, migration from the FSU countries in its current volume, regularity and variety represents one of the recent trends that have contributed to diversification of social life in London. Having few, if compared with other countries, historical and migration links with the UK, contemporary Russia and other former Soviet Union nation-states[3] nowadays supply a

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[3] Other former Soviet nation-states include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

significant and regular influx of immigrants to the UK, particularly London. These migrants are forming a vague, stratified and loosely connected community, with the social ties bringing its members together that remain of contested and diverse character. This part of the chapter brings together the scarce statistical data on Russian-speaking migrants, the history of their movement to the UK, and accounts of contemporary social structure of this community, outlining their physical and symbolic presence in London, and their representation in migration trends[4].

3.1. Who, when and what for?

Until recent times the UK has not been the most 'popular' destination for Russian migrants, unlike France after the revolution and USA, Germany, Israel in the last decades of 20th century. In 17th and 18th century young people from Russia were often sent to Britain to study. They were mostly aristocrats. Furthermore, some young people were sent by the Russian government, philanthropists and manufacturers to improve their skills of shipbuilding, trade, mining, coinage, brewing etc. Some naval officers were trained in the British fleet (Cross, 2009). The 19th and the beginning of 20th century were represented mostly by emigration of intellectuals, politicians, and revolutionaries. Besides, between 1870 and 1914, Russian Jews fled from the Empire under the pressure of political and economic situation, and settled in the United Kingdom (Berrol, 1994: xi). The figures from the population census from 1901 reflected this movement of Jewish refugees across the continent that had begun thirty years earlier: the three largest groups of foreign-born Londoners in 1901 were 39,117 Russians, 27,427 Germans and 15,429 Polish Russians (The Museum of London, no year). Since the mid-19th century and throughout the 20th century, it was the country where the political, cultural and literary opposition intelligentsia found refuge (Kaznina, 2009: 23). Migrants were not numerous, although accounts of the size of the

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[4] In this chapter, I aim to get the fullest picture of the migration to the UK and particularly London of the people from the former Soviet Union. While this gives a general description of the Russian-speaking migration, my empirical work does not intend to cover all of the social layers of this migrant group, although it covers many. However, as it will become clear from the discussion of the fieldwork results, it is grasping the diversity of Russian-speakers in London.

community in the beginning of the century differ: the estimates vary between 2,500 and 100,000 people (Kaznina, 2009: 30). Migrants were diverse, although mostly represented by aristocrats and middle-class liberal intellectuals (Hollingsworth and Lansley, 2009: 22), and were socially and politically active: they formed different organizations, published newspapers and magazines and worked on keeping alive Russian cultural traditions. At the same time, many became involved in the academic and cultural activity of the British society's intellectual circles.

The history of emigration to the UK from an empire like the Soviet Union, where Russian was imposed as the dominant identity, has increasingly consisted of different kinds of dissenters and victims of the totalitarian regime. There was another wave of ex-Soviet migrants to the UK after the Second World War, when the British government decided to recruit workers for compensate for labour shortages. Former prisoners of war from the displaced persons camps in Germany who had not been repatriated back to the Soviet Union after the Yalta conference in 1945, were brought to the UK. Also, surviving Nazi collaborators had fled to the UK (particularly from Ukraine), as well as to USA and Canada. Tannahill (1958: 9-10, as quoted in McDowell, 2008b: 21) writes about large numbers of East and Central European prisoners of war: 'there were forced labourers of many nationalities who did not choose to go home…There were nationals of the countries which have been submerged by Russia (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), or which had been subject to Russian rule before the war and disliked the prospect of its continuance (Byelorussia and Ukraine). The majority of these had been forced labourers or had retreated with the Germans in the face of the Russian advance of 1944 and 1945…'. These were economic migrants who ended up as such in the UK as a result of a clash of nationalisms in mid-20th century Europe.

Later, in the time of Cold War, a relatively small new wave of Soviet migrants added to the White emigration of the start of the century. Migrants were characterized as people seeking separation from their counterparts, who appreciated the concept of 'privacy' and tolerance and apparently did not have much contact with Russian émigré society: some were political dissidents; some KGB defectors (Lipskiy, 2007, Hollingsworth and Lansley, 2009: 22).

After the 1980s the movement of Russian people to UK and particularly London became more frequent. In post-Soviet time the migration of Russian and former Soviet Union people to UK saw new trends. Completely new kinds of migrants appeared between 1993 and 1994: 'a mix of state bureaucrats, entrepreneurial hustlers, Kremlin insiders, former KGB officials, […] members of emerging Russian-based criminal gangs' (Hollingsworth and Lansley, 2009: 23). These contributed vastly into the formation of a stereotypical and unflattering image of a Russian as a bandit with a suitcase of cash. However, they were outnumbered by middle-class migrants. Among the labour migrants the recognizable proportion was of professionals and academics, following the brain drain from the collapsed country with deteriorating higher education and inappropriate conditions for academic work (Isaakyan, 2010). Besides, since then, increasing numbers of people have started to come to the UK as students. The new waves of migrants include businessmen of different levels. Since the 90s, the motivation of Russian migrants changed: the role of economic reasons for moving increases. Terentiev (2007) introduced a social categorization of migrants on the basis of general types of visas. He distinguishes the following social categories of migrants: extra rich entrepreneurs; representatives of middle-scale and small-scale business; managerial group; students; low-paid workers; and marriage migrants.

3.2. Social stratification

In the period from 2000 to 2006 Russians bought property in London to the overall sum of £2.2 billion, which is more than was bought by investors from USA and the Near East put together. Russian people comprise about 25 per cent of those who buy London property worth over four million pounds (Kravchenko, 2007). Journalistic articles mention the following dynamics of rich migrants and capital investment: Arabs in the 70s, Japanese in the 80s, and Russians since the 90s (Cowell, 2006). The current wave of Russian migration in some instances is stereotypically and infamously associated with oligarchs, who now form a significant part of demand on real estate and luxury objects, as well as own some British enterprises (Waterstones) and newspapers (Evening Standard, the Independent). Most of the leading local banks, large law firms and estate agents now have special Russian departments to make sure the rich Russians get higher quality service (Dmitrieva and Yuferova, 2011). It is not

accidental that top level Russian businessmen chose London. Britain has a favorable tax policy towards those who have assets offshore. Britain does not generally tax the income of resident foreigners unless they bring it into the country, unlike most countries' requirements. The UK government has considered closing the loophole, but decided against it. That would mean dampening the property market, as well as denting the pay of international lawyers and accountants (Anon., 2006). In 2008, the government introduced a £30,000 annual levy on non-domiciled residents, which was not a significant sum for these rich Russians (Hollingsworth and Lansley, 2009: 18). Besides, the UK 5is often regarded as a kind of an alternate airfield which can be used in case of unexpected and undesirable changes in Russia. In other words, businessmen feel protected by the British law and find the UK a safer place to live in. Middle-scale and small-scale businessmen try to make success for their companies on the British market. Accordingly, London is regarded by them as a good starting point for their personal or professional ambitions. Some are trying to find a western partner for investment, or integrate into British market, with its wide international business network.

Another part of Russian migration is what Terentiev (2007) names 'Russians in the City'. Those are employees, 'white collars', who generally do not bring initial capital with them, but rely on their own abilities to integrate into foreign environment and make a career. The majority are young people, often British graduates. Now they can relatively easily find a job in the service sector – having excellent command of English, degrees acquired in prestigious universities and, eventually, the opportunity to become a part of British managerial class. Apparently, many come from a middle-class background. Education is crucial for this group of migrants. They are not participating greatly in the life of Russian community, as they rapidly acquire ties with their international colleagues.

The 'brain drain', as already mentioned, plays an important role in the process of shaping of Russian-speaking community (Isaakyan 2007, 2010). Among academics affiliated in UK universities, Russians are met rather often. Earlier wave academic migrants were part of the Soviet scientific community: in early and mid-1990s, around 100,000 academics moved to the West and became successful there (Isaakyan, 2010).

New academic arrivals from the post-Soviet space contribute to the development of this intellectual elite of the Russian-speaking community. Students are a large group, and 'going to London to study' has already become a trend among Russian young people. Young people have been coming to Britain to study since the 17th century. Currently, Russian-speakers are well represented in many UK universities, especially in London. A very common young respondents' response to the question 'Why did you choose London for studying?' is 'And what else could I choose?' One reason for that might be the quality of education and the wide acceptance of a British degree in other countries. Then, London itself is attractive to young people in terms of its culture and employment prospects. Britain, its culture, literature, English language have been familiar to educated Russian young people since childhood. Another, more instrumental, reason for the popularity of British education is that getting a student visa is relatively easy; it allows its holder to work and gives a possibility to extend it or change to another type without leaving Britain. So, often it becomes a way to come and stay in Britain. In this regard, the category of students who are most likely to become part of middle-class professionals is mixed up with those who obtain 'dodgy' student visas that give them possibilities to stay and work but sometimes do not even require even the attendance of classes in their small colleges. Recent restrictions of the immigration policy have aimed to allow paid work only to postgraduate degrees, and to increase control over educational establishments.

One more migrant group includes low-paid workers (Terentiev, 2007). They obviously work in the spheres where the high qualification is not a requirement (construction sites, hotels, factories, farms etc.). Women often do housekeeping jobs: an interviewee described his encounters with 'a whole community of Russian-speaking nannies and cleaners, all of them probably with Soviet university degrees, doing such jobs here for Russian-speaking families'. Some of them do not have a proper command of English. This category includes the highest number of illegal migrants. Speaking of this category, it is necessary to differentiate the national origin of workers. Many of guest workers come to London from the CIS countries, and the share of Russians among them is said to go down: 'Russians assimilate quickly and you do not see many of them working in kitchens and restaurants' (Dmitrieva and Yuferova, 2011).

Ukrainians, Belarusians, and people from Baltic States, on the other hand, are more often doing low-paid menial work.

Finally, marriage migrants are, according to statistics, overwhelmingly represented by female migrants (Home Office, 2008, 2010). Marriage migration of Russian women has become widespread, and the 'Russian wife' has become a social stereotype and even a migrant category in its own right, although this category contains a big number of Russian-speaking women living abroad who just happen to marry a non-Russian-speaker. Marriage migration began in the Soviet times. Byford (2009b: 14) describes the relationships of Soviet women with Westerners developing at that times as 'extraordinary and exotic Cold War romances, products of fateful chance, unfolding under the voyeuristic eye of some secret service officer in rather artificial, stage-like settings, such as a hotel or cruise-ship or some academic site or student lodgings, whether in the USSR itself or, even more often, abroad, and then blossoming through a necessarily cautious, unpredictable, always in some way censored, epistolary exchange', bearing a stigma of betrayal of Soviet homeland and risks of leaving previous lives behind. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, marriage migration has become more common, despite becoming stigmatized in the West as instrumental, economically motivated marriage. Byford (2009b: 15) describes Russo-British marital relationships as involving the problems of dealing with cultural difference – 'the spouses' mutual cultural "othering"', stereotyping each other (he gives a common example of an opposition of 'English manners and the Russian soul'). However, the widespread character of such marriages tells that even despite the existence of these problems, they are often dealt with, and the solution leading to mutual marital coexistence is found through daily negotiations.

Having said all this, I assume that the classification of Russian-speaking migrants and the periodization of their movements to the UK is more applicable to describing migrants from Russia, rather than for particular republics of the former empire. In this respect, I would like to stress that this work concentrates on people with the common 'historically-specific socio-cultural background shared by the generation of people born in the former USSR' (Byford, 2009a: 55) rather than on those with the same current national origin – although in most cases these might coincide. Their formal nationalities may be different, but they were born in the same country, and their

countries of origin, as they are defined now, in most cases have strong historical, political, economic and cultural links with Russia. Those who have such similar sociocultural characteristics are likely to find common language and group together. Thus, different formal national origins may not be enough to differentiate people, and that is the implication of super-diversity, as well as one of the consequences of the break-up of the Soviet Union. Likewise, the same nationality may not be sufficient to bring people together.

In general, a significant part of Russian migration to London is represented by middle-class professionals or those who are on their way to becoming such. These migrants contribute to the development of the global city. Most of them are relatively young. However, Russian and Russian-speaking migrants are by no means restricted to one social layer. They are much more diverse than it may seem to those whose knowledge of this group is confined to journalistic articles about another yacht bought by another oligarch, or the legal battles of these oligarchs. Apart from that, it is indeed more diverse than it may initially seem to someone who is in direct contact with some members of this migrant community. The reason is that Russian-speakers in London are a vast and socially stratified collection of people, where different social classes do not interact with each other much. How, then, is this particular feature of this community explained? The community is broken up into many classed segments, where social positions of migrants are just to some extent related to their nationalities; these smaller social groups are living their own lives, rarely engaging into close interaction with other compatriots. They are a relatively new and large group of migrants in the UK, internally differentiated, maintaining different levels of contact with home countries and with compatriots in the host country; they are mostly white but mostly not European which adds complexity to the already contested hierarchies of London inhabitants.

3.3. Coming to London

What makes these people come to London? In this section, I will describe the most common routes taken be the Russian-speaking people in my study. There are multiple routes that bring London its recently emerged population from the former Soviet countries. First of all, a common route from the home country to London is connected

with education and/or employment. Many Russian-speaking respondents see London as a perfect place where one would go to get internationally recognized education in a good university, or a well-paid and interesting job; this place is often seen as offering more opportunities than the home city or country. Most of my youngest informants came to London with a student visa, with the main formal reason to get education or study English. Some of them are still studying, like Olesya, who has been in the UK since she was 14, went to boarding school, did her Bachelor in Warwick, Master in Oxford, and now is finishing her PhD at a university in central London. Students constitute a steady and quite numerous supply of the Russian-speaking migrants, according to visa statistics (Home Office, 2008). The Home Secretary Theresa May on 21 March 2011 has called the student route the most significant migrant route to Britain. But sometimes, education can be only a pretext for moving and have a very instrumental purpose, when the student visa is rather an easy way to get into the country than a genuine desire to get a degree. Such routes are facilitated by what Theresa May called 'institutions selling immigration, not education', in her speech on restrictions of student migration (May, 2011). This is how things worked for Nastya, a 28 years old illegal migrant. She came from Minsk first to Bournemouth, where she had been attending a language school for a while. She initially obtained a student visa with the help of her former boyfriend in Belarus, who acted as her sponsor. When she moved to London, she extended her student visa via a 'dodgy' college run by a Ukrainian. Among her friends, there are quite a few of those who employed similar strategies and attended that institution. For many of these people, as well as for the genuine students, formal reasons for moving to London are often combined with not so clearly formulated implications, where the city itself is assigned a special role. It is a global city which is not as far from Russia as some others, has a degree of European familiarity, but also is culturally diverse, and offers career prospects. In general, a usual scenario of getting to London among my respondents involved choosing a college while being at home, applying for a student visa, and in most cases, after finishing one degree, aiming for further education or a job, extending the visa and staying in London as long as possible. Sometimes, the choice of educational establishment is not an individual decision. A few people recall situations when a friend willing to study abroad influenced their decision; my informants would join them 'to keep company'.

Then, education often leads to consecutive employment, like in the case of Polina, who came to London in 2002 and is now working as an executive assistant in one of London's business schools. Before that, she did her Bachelor, Master, and courses of business English. Others come straight to London to work, like Firuza, originally from Tajikistan. She moved to London in 2006, after having lived in Budapest for two years working for the same employer, the international charity organization where she is managing programmes for students from the former Soviet republics pursuing postgraduate education in Europe. Vladimir, a 40 years old Ukrainian, came to London in 1999. He is an IT specialist, and after changing several jobs in his home town he felt that he had used all possible opportunities in Ukraine, and started looking for a job abroad. He was lucky to be offered a job quite quickly, and since that he has been working in IT support of one of departments of one of colleges in central London. He already has British citizenship. In my interview sample, most of the working respondents were more or less middle-class, high-skilled employees. Coming to London to work in a low-paid job seems to be more common, among my informants, for people from the Baltic states who are allowed to the UK without a visa. Visa nationals, on the other hand, are mostly professionals.

Thirdly, based on another visa category but rarely acting as an independent motive, marriage serves as another typical path to London. This route also allows obtaining indefinite leave to remain and British citizenship relatively faster than the student/work visas. Nadezhda, 45, for example, met her English husband in India, where a guru told them they were destined to be together, and came to London with him. These reasons for moving are sometimes combined with the opportunities of professional development. Evgeniy, who now works as a property consultant for affluent Russians, came to London 12 years ago from South Africa with his wife, whose sister was married to the current president of a big record label (he was the third person in the company at that time). Evgeniy is a musician, so he expressed a clear desire to work in the music industry. Marriage provided him a channel to fulfill his professional ambitions. In fact, partnership or marriage hardly functions as a separate factor prompting migration (Morgunova, 2009: 39). Vera, 35, for example, recalls getting spouse visas in turns with her American husband John: when one of them had a work/student visa, the other would apply for a partner one – while both are middle-

class working parents. Marriage, thus, can sometimes be another instrumental way of facilitating migration that was initially motivated by other prospects like employment or education.

Social relationships often play a certain role in people's mobility. There is kinship that for some of the migrants serves as push and pull factor. Kinship, similarly to marriage but perhaps more commonly, often serves as an additional reason for moving. Aleksandr, a Bachelor student, had his elder brother already living in London before he came here to study. They are sharing a flat now, with both of their girlfriends. Yasha, a 25 years old rapper, came to the UK ten years ago with his parents, as his father was offered a position in a university – after their family had lived in Germany for several years. A number of my respondents demonstrate classic examples of transnational migrants keeping in touch with their kin via Skype, email and phone calls, often using the media regularly and skillfully (Metykova, 2010), and actively participating in life back home financially and emotionally. They usually come to London in a chain, following the advice of relatives, friends and former colleagues who already had this experience. Viktoria, a 39 years old nanny from Ukraine, came to London with her husband with a clearly articulated aim to earn money. As she has a university degree and used to be a teacher in Ukraine, her occupation in London could be regarded as a kind of professional downshifting. However, she managed to save money and was sending remittances (money and clothes) back home where her 20-year old daughter and elderly parents live. A few months after the interview the couple made a decision to return home. The main reasons were her worries about her parents (her father had already had four strokes) and desire to improve the condition of her flat on the savings. Vera, for whom Viktoria used to work as a nanny, regretfully tells about her leaving, their warm goodbyes and promises to call each other – also mentioning the 80 kg of clothes Viktoria has sent to her daughter prior to leaving.

Relationships with relatives maintained on a distance are traditionally regarded as a feature of contemporary transnational migration. Connections with family members cross the borders and involve material support and regular communication via phone calls and Internet (Appadurai, 1996). However, kinship does not seem to be the only or even the predominant kind of relationships among migrants' personal connections, rather defining social connectivity for particular social groups in the diaspora.

The last but not the least factor which helps people to make their ways to London and in London is friendship. Friendship and acquaintance provide and sustain the links within the diaspora, connect migrants with compatriots at home, and often serve as multiple strings which pull people to London. Similarly with family ties, these relationships often help the processes of movement go smoother, providing emotional and practical support (Cohen, 2008, Levitt, 2001). Stories of friendship motivating mobility, for example, were often told to me in a Russian bar where the participant observation was done as a part of fieldwork. A representative of such friendship-based chain migration is Katya, a 24 years old Belarusian girl, who came to London on a student visa four years ago. At first, she studied English, and then went to a college to get a degree; simultaneously, she has been working in the bar. A big share of her acquaintances here are those who she had known at home in Belarus before she moved to London. She studied with them in the same university, and eventually these people became a chain of migrants coming to London and finding support and familiar faces as soon as they arrive, consisting of 12 people overall. Her best friend Dasha, also working in the bar, came to London with her and they have been sharing accommodation since then. Friendship networks, as we can see, can be quite mobile themselves (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 287), and it is possible to suggest that these relationships express a higher propinquity to physically cross borders than those with the parents and children staying back home.

Migrants' narratives describing how they initially got to London show a diverse picture of life paths, intertwining relationships, random occurrences and rational choices. Conradson and Latham (2005: 288) underline that there is much more to the contemporary mobility than the economic considerations. Qualitative research describes migrants as active agents who shape their own livelihood strategies (White and Ryan, 2008: 1497). In many cases their movements are linked to certain relationships that help people make a decision to move and provide emotional and practical support. While kinship continues to be important for some social groups of migrants, informal social relationships like friendship and acquaintance are becoming an issue of a big significance in migrants' everyday lives. Conradson and Latham (2005: 301) also stress that 'the sustaining and inspirational aspects of friendship actually shape and give form to much of the movement', with friendship being an important

feature of migrants' social networks. Friendship, as Bunnell et al. (2011: 13) note, are produced through and are productive of geographies of different kinds: 'Practices of friendship are reconfigured through a range of transnational mobilities, producing particular (re)configurations of social geographies in destinations, places of transit and even in sites of origin'. This work, following the ideas of these authors, is exploring the role of friendship in diverse migrants' patterns of sociality, where friendship ties constitute a binding force, not unrelated, but not reducible to relationships between relatives, neighbours, or co-ethnics.

3.4. Outlining Russian-speaking presence in London

Defining the exact size of Russian community in London is difficult. First of all, the exact statistical figures are scarce and can only give hints rather than actual information about how many migrants from the former Soviet Union currently reside in London or in the UK in general. In addition, the category of migrants that I have chosen for my research includes native Russian-speakers from the FSU. These people are supposed to share the most of that particular 'historically-specific socio-cultural background' the researchers have been speaking about (Byford, 2009a, Isaakyan, 2010). The size of this category is unclear, as not all of the people from the former Soviet republics are regarded or regard themselves as Russian-speakers. The joining of new EU member-states in 2004, for example, has led to a drastic increase in the numbers of people from the Baltic States coming to the UK. The Lithuanian-born population in the UK increased from 4,363 in 2001 to an estimated 87,000 in 2010 (Office for National Statistics, 2011c). However, it is unclear how many of these people would define themselves as 'Russians' or 'Russian-speakers'. Finally, estimates of the size of this migrant group are further complicated by illegal migration. Moreover, illegal migration corresponds with the social class and with the country of origin within the FSU, but all that can be done at this stage is merely defining the general trends of illegality rather than calculating exact numbers.

Several journalistic reviews point out that the numbers of Russian-speakers currently living in London varies from 300,000 to 500,000 people (Gessen 2005, Anon., 2006, Kravchenko 2007, Lipskiy 2007). Morgunova (2009: 42) even supposes that there are around one million Russian-speakers in the UK, which is definitely exaggerated. These

figures are highly speculative, but widely reproduced. The IOM Mapping Exercise (2007), for example, referring to the not quite reliable sources, estimated the current Russian population as over 300,000 people, mostly settled in London. The problem here is that official statistics does not give a definite answer to the question. OECD (2001) data based on the census says that there were 15,160 Russian nationals amongst 43,234 USSR-born people in Britain. An article from BBC 'Born Abroad' project claims that in 2001, there were 29,123 people from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, 10,619 people from Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and 3,440 people from Asian ex-USSR states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) in the UK. As for more recent figures, Annual Population Survey 2010 estimates the number of UK residents born in Russia as 40,000 (Office for National Statistics, 2011c).

However, considering the massive influx of Russians into the UK in the past decade, and the enlargement of the EU, this data probably underestimates the real numbers. Visa statistics can give some hints of this. Home Office visa statistics shows that Russia is one of the top visa application countries accounting for 6 per cent of the global demand and preceded by Indian nationals (19 per cent), Nigerian (8 per cent), Pakistani and Chinese nationals (both 7 per cent). 258,000 of Russian people were given leave to enter the UK in 2007, and 250,000 in 2008. Of those, business visitors comprised 57,700 in 2007 and 51,700 in 2008; students – 21,500 and 14,500 respectively; work permit holders admitted for more than 12 months and their dependants – 1,110 and 1,220 altogether; admitted as husband or wife of a UK citizen – 545 and 520 (Home Office, 2008: 44). These categories represent people who are most likely to stay for an extended period and become members of the Russian diaspora in the UK; altogether, they comprise of approximately 80,845 and 67,940 people for 2007 and 2008 respectively. While the annual numbers can fall because of immigration policy restriction, existing figures represent the annual influx of migrants as remaining quite regular. In general, even such scarce data from the past decade can point out that the diaspora is well established, and may include a few hundred thousand people.

Specific organizations and enterprises offer a variety of services for Russian-speaking migrants. Among these organizations are those which have existed for a long time

(more than half a century), such as the Embassy, two Orthodox churches, and at least one newspaper. The beginning of the 21st century has seen the establishment and the rapid increase of the number of Russian schools (at least 13 exist now, without branches), law firms, cultural organizations, newspapers and magazines (around ten), restaurants (more than 20) and shops (more than one hundred). Apart from figures, this is one more indicator of the establishment and maturation of the Russian-speaking community in London.

Despite the increasing number of Russian migrants, a specific Russian area of settlement in London has not appeared. The Russian Embassy in London informed me that 'due to the small number of Russian citizens, ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking people living in London, there are no areas of their compacted habitation'. The BBC 'Born Abroad' (2001) project claims that the most popular areas for the settlement of Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Moldovan people in London were Hyde Park, Kensington, Regent's Park, Acton, Finchley, Chelsea, Golders Green, Highgate and Central London. For people from the Baltic states, the preferred areas were East Ham, Forest Gate, Plaistow, Hyde Park, Tottenham, Finchley and Poplar. Such distribution can be used merely as a guide and not as a source of definitive information of where to search for Russian-speakers – first of all, because it is outdated, and secondly, because putting together Russians and other nationalities that the authors have done is a risky generalization as migrants from different countries usually differ in their average socioeconomic positions and therefore in patterns of settlement. Russians in London mostly do not have an established centre of concentration for settling. Journalists note that most Russians 'emphatically refuse to set up their own residential districts, and make every effort they can to live as far apart from each other as possible' (Dmitrieva and Yuferova, 2011). However, those who come to London illegally, without a good command of English and job prospects vitally need to live among compatriots – this to a much bigger extent describes the situation with Ukrainians and Belarusians than with Russians.

Apparently, the relatively random distribution of Russian migrants around London is also connected with their relative ease of cultural assimilation: when intercultural contacts have not declined, everyday interaction and communication with British people and other migrants are maintained, and cultural patterns of behaviour are

interchanging (Terentiev 2007). Russian-speaking migrants, both in earlier times and now, are described as open to interactions with others, and while generally maintaining cultural contact with compatriots, do not have to rely on them completely (Kaznina, 2009, Byford, 2009a). This is another dimension of the specificity of this migrant community. However, the propensity for intercultural contacts should not be generalized: chapter 8 will examine how these issues are far from being unproblematic. Russian-speaking informal social networks keep building up. But the presence of a community is not so clear for a non-Russian: there is not much spatial concentration of 'Russian-ness' in London. While being omnipresent, and noticeable to a trained eye, the Russian-ness of ordinary migrants is generally inconspicuous. However, the ties of informal sociality keep together multiple social groups in this vast community, and that is when the community/communities become visible – when one sees the social relationships creating and supporting social networks.

3.5. 'Invisible community'?

Russian-speaking migration has not been the focus of much general migration research, although it is achieving popularity as a topic of interest for Russian and East European studies (Byford, 2009a). In the past years, an increasing number of postgraduate students have embarked on studying this group, being themselves part of the current migration wave from Russia and other FSU countries. However, orthodox UK migration literature does not pay much attention to Russian-speakers. This is partly due to the relatively recent appearance in noticeable numbers of this migrant group, which is still unclear in the statistics. Besides, most of the FSU countries are not member states of the European Union, aside from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which has been already mentioned in the migration literature (McDowell 2008, 2009) that concentrates on the economic side of this migration and the new divisions among new and old migrants and the British. In addition, the works on Russian-speakers tend to aggregate in terms of dissemination in academic community, and be relatively narrowly focused, rather than proliferate into the general sphere of migration studies: cause for the relative academic 'invisibility' of Russian-speaking migrants. This 'invisibility' has also a material dimension, which is represented by them being physically undistinguishable from an average 'white European', and not forming a diaspora in a classic sense (Cohen, 1998). While this term hardly relates to certain

public figures such as Russian oligarchs, whose economic, cultural and legal activities are rather demonstratively symbolic of contemporary London's functioning, the vast majority of this migrant population remains inconspicuous, mostly middle-class, generally with a good command of English, and on the whole quite well integrated in their multicultural work or study places.

Kaznina (2009) in her analysis of Russian migrants in the UK in the first third of the 20th century points out that this migrant group was quite different from Russian migrant communities in other European countries. In the UK, Russians did not form an isolated community based on language, culture, or political views. While having a certain amount of independence and being united to some extent on these common grounds, they were generally much better integrated into the British way of life and less detached from communication with the locals, than they were, for example, in Germany (Kaznina, 2009: 34). Morgunova (2009), in a similar way, brings in debates that doubt the unity of Russian-speaking migrants. Grechaninova (2007) calls it 'community of the disengaged'. Kopnina (2005) underlines that Russian-speakers tend to form 'subcommunities' on the basis of social class, profession or interests, and to socialize with compatriots, too. She explains this to be the consequence of a low critical mass of the migrant group. Internal divisions 'account for the fragmentation of Russian migrants and their lack of interest in or awareness of the "Russian community"' (Kopnina 2005: 13). Isaakyan (2010: 285) writes about a 'diasporic symbolic capital', or a specific 'socio-cultural capital […] that helps the diaspora to hold together and dissociate itself from the hosts and other diasporic segments that do not share this experience', considering her example of the putative diaspora of former Soviet academics as a community recreated abroad in a form of a 'platoon' based on the conflation of their occupation, pre-existing friendship and nationality. Byford (2009a: 55) argues that 'diasporization' of the post-Soviet Russian migrants in Britain is not based directly on a Russian ethnos, state, national culture, or even language; but rather united by 'a historically-specific socio-cultural background shared by the generation of people born in the former USSR […], whose formative identifications are therefore rooted, somewhat peculiarly, in a state and society that are no more, and whose lifeworlds span the distinctive juncture between late socialism and postsocialism'). Now, the Russian-speaking migrant group in the contemporary UK is

characterized by a fluidity of boundaries implying its relative openness to representatives and institutions not of post-Soviet origin; a high degree of social stratification; and the different extents to which migrants rely on their community (Byford, 2009a). Moreover, the Russian-speaking population is geographically scattered around London, settling according to social class rather than proximity to compatriots. In this respect they (particularly Russian nationals) are described as people obsessed with secrecy and discretion at all levels of the society: they may engage in networking with compatriots at cultural events or in professional associations and clubs, but always stick to a certain degree of privacy (Dmitrieva and Yuferova, 2011).

At first glance, the Russian-speaking community in London might seem difficult to grasp analytically. It does not form a solid social or spatial entity, its borders are blurred and its members' identifications complex. The 'invisibility' of this community is, firstly, academic (because of the lack of systematic research), secondly, physical (which goes in parallel with the increase and diversification of new white migrants to the UK), and thirdly, broadly speaking, societal (as the understanding of solid and solidary 'community of Russian-speaking migrants' is not quite correct). While lifestyles and economic and cultural activities of some representatives of this population are quite conspicuous and have even become symbolic of London, the majority of Russian-speakers are less easy to track. This migrant group is broken up into classed segments, where social positions of migrants are just to some extent related to their nationalities; these smaller social groups are living their own lives, rarely engaging in close interaction with other compatriots. However, such invisibility lies only on the surface of London life. 'Middling' Russian-speaking migration, as well as being well represented in the city population, has rapidly developed its own social world and ways of interacting with the bigger social world of the city. Above all, this community takes its place in the most recent trends of contemporary migration and diversifies the social landscape of London. In this part of the chapter I have described the state of the contemporary Russian-speaking population of London, showing how much lies under the surface of the putative invisibility.

4. Conclusion

This chapter served as a preface and contextualization of my empirical research. Here, I have outlined the migration trends in contemporary London. International migration to the UK has increased greatly since the Second World War, and it has become particularly significant in the past decades. London is seen as the most attractive place for migrants. The factors that prompted this were the changes in the economy, extended market relations and the development of communication infrastructure (Wills et al., 2010: 5). The city's population is growing despite the constant outflow of UK-born people from London (Ellis, 2009, Hall, 2007). London faces a condition of 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007): migration rapidly increasing in scale and in the variety of sending countries. It represents a deeper social stratification of newcomers between and within migrant communities, with patterns of differentiation not being limited to ethnicity/nationality. Increased and diversified migration from Eastern Europe since the EU accession in 2004 and non-European countries of the former Soviet Union since the beginning of the 21st century has contributed greatly to the development of super-diversity. The size of the Russian-speaking community in London is constantly growing with an increasing number of Russian organizations as well as migrants' participation in economic, cultural, social and other activities. In the last decade, Russian-speaking migration to UK has become an established trend. Particular features of Russian and other FSU migrants in London include the presence of all social layers and occupational categories in this migrant group, a dispersed character of settlement, and sociality patterns that stem from the stratified nature of this migrant group and result in it being a collection of classed 'subcommunities' (Kopnina, 2005) that mostly do not interact with each other. Researchers and journalists speak about relative easiness of Russian-speaking migrants' integration into host society (Terentiev, 2007, Kaznina, 2009, Dmitrieva and Yuferova, 2011), as well as give accounts of cultural misunderstandings and problems in communication with locals (Byford, 2009b, Isaakyan, 2010).

Many Russian-speaking migrants in London turn out to be difficult to fit into classic migration categories. With few exceptions, they generally do not get to London fleeing from a political regime, or being pushed solely by financial needs. They do not form ghettos, being relatively evenly distributed in London. Their migrant life is rather a

result of choice of more comfortable surroundings and enjoying the variety of opportunities provided by London, often similar to 'lifestyle migration' described by Knowles and Harper (2009: 11), broadly, as 'migrations where aesthetic qualities including quality of life are prioritized over economic factors like job advancement and income' (although economic considerations are inseparable from the former). The social relationships of post-Soviet people often facilitate the migration process, and later serve as a resort of emotional and practical support and familiar comfort. Relatives back home are an important part of migrants' lives, but the role of friendship and other informal relationships is increasingly significant: in the immediacy of such communication, in its flexibility and ubiquity, and in the actual potential of relations with friends to prompt mobility and be mobile themselves. In other words, in the routes that Russian-speaking migrants follow to get to London, friendship often has a special place. The question arising from this is what kind of development these personal relationships get further on, and what is their role after migrants have settled in London.

In this chapter, I have called 'middling' Russian-speaking migrants in London an 'invisible community'. Its invisibility stems from a lack of academic research on it as a part of contemporary migration trends, its physically neutral 'white European' complexion, and most importantly, its socially stratified character, where smaller social groups usually based on social class are living their own lives, rarely engaging in close interaction with other compatriots. I argue, however, that the social networks building up this community gain their visibility when one looks at the informal social relationships bringing together compatriots abroad. It is in the case of Russian-speaking informal communication that Russian-ness recreates itself. Following Vertovec (2001, as quoted in Ryan et al., 2008) and Ryan et al. (2008), I intend to get a deeper understanding of how migrants' social networks operate in practice, assuming a great differentiation of networks in their spatial organization, their dynamism, and different resources, support and values provided by informal networks. In the following parts of this thesis, I will look at patterns of friendship as a part of that 'historically specific socio-cultural background' (Byford, 2009a: 55) that brings together Russian-speaking migrants from the former Soviet Union in London, and provides them with community ties. By doing this, I aim to analyze the contemporary unique social

conditions of London, and how these are reflected in and contributed to by sociality exhibited by a group of migrants.

Chapter 3. Methodology

1. Introduction

T his chapter explains the methods I used for the research of friendship networks amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London. In chapter 1, I outlined that the place of a migrant group in a city, the dynamics of its development, and the degrees of its transnationalism have to be analyzed through a range of people's informal relationships that may be situated in different locations and play an important role in mobility patterns. I suggested studying informal social relationships that unfold both within a migrant population and those that transcend its borders, in order to grasp the whole range of important patterns of urban sociality. I then described the Russian-speaking population of London as a new group contributing to super-diversity, socially stratified, geographically scattered around the city, and loosely connected within small 'subcommunities' (Kopnina, 2005).

The issue to be discussed in this part of the work, then, is how particular research strategies can be implemented in order to get an understanding of the complexity and dynamics of migrants' social networks. In this chapter, I will explain how I approached Russian-speaking migrants in London as a part of its diversity, and what research tactics I employed to examine how they construct and rely upon their social relationships locally and transnationally, with compatriots and with other Londoners. I chose friendship as the main point of my research interest, understanding it as an important modus of sociality, different from kinship by being flexible and selective, but nevertheless valuable and supportive in informing and supporting mobility. Here, I will describe how I gathered the data on friendship amongst a sample of Russian-speaking migrants in London. For my empirical work, I chose qualitative methods – ethnography and two strands of semi-structured interviews. This chapter will give an account of how these processes went and how the data I gathered informed the dynamics of the fieldwork. Besides, I will provide the conceptual and practical rationale of doing fieldwork the way I did it.

2. Justification for study

This work is a study of a social group which is a part of Russian-speaking migrant population of London. In this part of the chapter, I will explain why I chose certain issues as central to my inquiry strategy.

First of all, why did I choose a particular group as the object of my main research? As chapter 2 concludes, Russian-speaking population has started its rapid growth relatively recently, at the turn of the century. There is a lack of statistical data about post-Soviet migrants. Also, it is still only partially researched by social scientists, while literature on East European migrants from EU accession states is burgeoning. More precisely, the migration research pays attention mainly to migrants from post-accession states, and mainly to service workers. That is why I considered that there seems to be a gap in the studies of contemporary migration, and particularly in London-focused research. The choice of my study object is in line with the expansion of 'middling' migration to London, and the persisting and increasingly problematic inequalities within its population. People from the former Soviet states have rapidly formed another migrant group that contributes to super-diversity, includes diverse representatives of 'middling' migration (Conradson and Latham, 2005b), and has developed its own social world and ways of interacting with the bigger social world of the city. However, this population has not become a solid social or spatial community, its borders are blurred, its members' identifications are complex and interconnections between stratified groups are loose. Considering all this, I chose qualitative methods as most appropriate for studying a new social phenomenon and a relatively new, small and disperse population, which does not seem to be ready and available for large-scale structured research.

My research strategy was determined by the requirements of studying the everyday sociality of Russian-speakers. I chose to study the routine social practices of a particular social group, in a particular city, and at a particular stage of its development in this city, approached as a part of global migration, transnationalism, cosmopolitanization and racialization discourses in social sciences. I follow Smith (2001: 128) who underlines that '"global conditions" are made meaningful in particular places at particular times by the specific historical and contemporary conditions'. I rely

upon the optic of transnational urbanism suggested by Smith (2001, 2005a, 2005b), which is described as being 'aware of the socially situated subjectivity of human agents while also providing a way to study spatially distanciated social relations' (Smith, 2005b: 235). Conradson and Latham (2005b: 228) stress the usefulness of this approach coming from 'its creative incorporation of both mobility and emplacement. Whilst acknowledging the scope of contemporary global mobility, transnational urbanism is a concept that remains attentive to the continuing significance of place and locality. [...] It eschews accounts of individuals traversing a somehow frictionless world, endorsing instead research that details the emplaced corporealities of such movement'. Such careful and critical approach is particularly relevant to the studies of contemporary migration, which is indeed not an effortless enterprise for many, and consists of individuals who are bearers of diverse socioeconomic, legal, cultural, political, and other facets of identity and social status. That is why I decided to concentrate on migrants' informal relationships, and particularly friendship, which is localized in London but has both local and spatially distanciated origins.

The framing of my research within the approach of transnational urbanism also involves following the two ideas outlined by Conradson and Latham (2005b: 228-229) as particularly relevant for research on contemporary migration and transnationalism. The first requires paying attention to the everyday practices underpinning mobility, allowing to uncover the 'everyday texture of the globalizing places we inhabit', and attending to emplaced forms of different sociality 're-worked and re-imagined through movement and mobility'. The second idea suggests exploring 'middling' forms of transnationalism – the people who are in the middle-class positions both in the societies where they come from and where they move to. For these people, migration is not, or not just, about economic considerations. It is similar to what Knowles and Harper (2009) call 'lifestyle migration', where the aesthetic qualities play a significant role in mobility decisions and practices. These ideas have to a large extent determined my choice of 'ordinary' Russian-speaking migrants as an object of my research. While the elite members of this population are visible and almost symbolic of London's functioning, I underlined in chapter 2 that the vast majority of this migrant population remains inconspicuous. But they seem to be mostly middle-class, generally with a good command of English, and on the whole quite integrated in their multicultural

surroundings. That is, they may be a part of the new 'middling' migrant population of the city that contributed to the demographic changes that occurred in the past decades. However, little is known about the ways in which these migrants shape and sustain their social networks, how they build relationships across the borders and locally, and how they may find themselves incorporated into the super-diversity. Such knowledge could be achieved through exploring their routine social interactions, long-term and new attachments, constitutions of friendship networks, and the influence on these of their everyday lives as migrants living in London.

Finally, my research strategy, especially on the last stages of the study, included exploring migrants' attitudes to and relationships with non-Russian-speaking inhabitants of London. This stems from the warnings against methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003) that was outlined in chapter 1. Arguing against the overestimation of internal homogeneity and boundedness of transnational communities, they criticize overlooking the importance of cross-community interactions as well as the internal divisions of class, gender, region and politics of migrant populations. Taking this population as a diverse one, I suggested that migrants' feelings towards compatriots might be diverse as well, and include the whole range from attachment to repudiation. In doing this, I followed the emerging body of research that avoids seeing migrant social capital and social networks as universally valuable and supportive ties that individuals are primarily supposed to rely upon (Eade et al., 2006, Hellerman, 2006, Ryan et al., 2008, White and Ryan, 2008, Rabikowska, 2010, Bunnell et al., 2011). My idea was not to take Russian-speakers in London as exhibiting some uniform ethnic or national solidarity and thus setting the boundaries of their sociality. Rather, I sought to explore their socialities as Londoners, not just Russians. This approach allowed me to explore the extent to which the considerations of ethnic/national/cultural/linguistic solidarity actually function in migrants' social relationships.

To sum up, the practical implementation of these ideas required centering the inquiry process on people's conceptions of friendship in their everyday life, exploring the spatial and social origins of their relationships, while also trying to understand how these accounts fit into a wider picture of London's social space. Next, I will describe how my fieldwork followed these requirements.

3. Research design and sampling

The use of qualitative methodologies in geography is based on the need to explore the complexities of everyday life for gaining a deeper insight into processes that shape people's social worlds (Dwyer and Limb, 2001: 1). Such research uses an interpretive approach, where 'researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 4). My study was aimed at exploring people's personal relationships and their 'qualities': that is, their meaningfulness shaped in the context of personal history, social position, circumstances of migration, and the spatial and sociocultural settings where these relationships might start, develop, intertwine and be compared with other relationships, gain or lose significance and possibly end. I wanted to get an understanding of migrant friendship. This focused the study on a sensitive issue, which could only be grasped through attending to people's reflexive interpretations of their personal life situations. Therefore, it had to be explored through an engagement with migrants' narratives and practices of social relationships.

The research design included two strands of research, combining anthropological and sociological traditions: ethnography and two sets of semi-structured interviews. The choice of these strategies was a reflection of the continuity of the ideas about migrant sociality that were developing gradually in the course of the study. In the process of building up my sample and defining the tactics of investigation, I used theoretical sampling (Corbin and Strauss, 1990, Flick, 2009). This requires sampling not in terms of statistically selecting specific groups of individuals, but rather 'in terms of concepts, their properties, dimensions, and variations' (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 8). In this case, friendship was the main concept, on properties, dimensions and variations of which I was building up my sample. In this strategy, the choices of empirical material are made in the process of data collection, in order to develop the theory as ideas emerge. Respondents are selected 'according to their (expected) level of new insights for the developing theory in relation to the state of theory elaboration so far' (Flick, 2009: 118). The three stages of research evolved following the new insights and development of concepts provided by the previous stages.

To start with, I planned a participant observation in order to understand how social relationships function in practice. This research took the form of a case study of a particular, already existing network. At this stage, I had little theoretical understanding of how and what kinds of social relationships may function among Russian-speaking migrants. Therefore, I sought to explore a social network as an initial concept, which would provide some knowledge about the variety and specificity of migrants' relationships. After that, I decided to expand the focus of the research and follow the relationships of different kinds of migrants. The next stage was prompted by an emerging theme of the importance of friendship and its possible but also variable ethnic underpinnings, as well as the need to explore how multiple social networks with different degrees of closeness may function in the life of an individual. I conducted 25 interviews with migrants where I looked at their personal histories of informal relationships rather than at any pre-defined group. Next, the concept that evolved was the 'other side' of the ethnic moments in friendship – namely, the problematic relationships with non-Russian-speakers, and the ways in which migrants negotiate their relationships as Londoners. So, finally, there was a set of 10 interviews with different respondents, where from approaching migrants as networks members and individuals engaging in relationships of different degrees of closeness, I turned to seeing them as participants of a wider set of urban social relationships within London's diverse population. These research strategies were complementing each other and helped picturing the complex and multilayered image of migrant sociality. They reflect the variety of ways in which people engage with each other, which was gradually discovered in the course of research.

My 35 participants were selected with a rationale that their social relationships would be representative of this variety. These people were included in the sample because they seemed to be quite typical representatives of the social group that I describe in Chapter 2 – not very conspicuous but numerous and providing an interesting field for research on the diversity of social relationships. Some of them form (parts of) social networks which helped me in the snowballing process. Migrants in general have different social positions and lifestyles, and live in different parts of the city (see Figure 2 for a London map of respondents). But they all tend to be more or less 'middling' Russian-speakers who demonstrate the possession of certain historically, linguistically,

and socioculturally shaped features. Commonly for qualitative research, its results are not supposed to be statistically valid and account for the sociality practices of the whole Russian-speaking population of London. Rather, I aimed at grasping the diversity and complexity that are featured in migrants' socializing endeavours, and keeping consistency of concepts rather than representativeness of persons (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 9). In doing that, I followed Smith's (2005a: 83) suggestion that in forming their own sense of agency people are 'already-positioned subjects, occupying multiple social locations and subject to the inner tensions and conflicts derived from that multi-positionality'. Eventually, the sociality of my respondents was assumed to be a combination of sometimes paradoxical, even contradictory, dynamic, and not uniform attitudes and decisions. This justifies my use of certain qualitative methodologies as a 'means by which the "messiness" and complexity of everyday life can be explored by using research methods that do not ignore such complexity but instead engage with it' (Dwyer and Limb, 2001: 2). Eventually, I suppose that the results of a qualitative research conducted this way allow me to draw conclusions about and to recognise some of the common patterns of sociality exhibited by Russian-speakers who have come to London in the past 10-15 years.

4. Ethnography

Ethnography is a process where the researcher closely observes, records, and engages in the daily life of another culture in the course of fieldwork and then writes descriptive accounts of this culture (Marcus and Fischer, 1986: 18). It is considered to be a good way of getting a deep understanding of a particular culture. In my case, I decided to start with this method because I had to get some initial understanding of a spectrum of informal relationships in which Russian-speakers in London might engage. In other words, in order to picture how social networks function among migrants, I had a closer look at a particular network where I could see the continuity and dynamics of relationships, and not only rely on people's accounts but observe and participate in their actions. Thus, it gave me an opportunity to observe how Russian-speaking migrants practice the relationships of friendship in their 'natural settings'.

In 2009, I spent approximately six months doing participant observation in a Russian bar in London, which will be called 'bar M.' throughout this work. I tried to engage in

the life of a group of Russian-speaking migrants working and gathering there. The place where that research took place is not an explicitly Russian-style bar in its interior design, cuisine and drinks. The owner is Russian, and at the time I was doing my fieldwork, most of the staff were from different countries of the former Soviet Union, as well as was the large group of regular visitors – ex-bartenders, friends of the staff, and friends of friends. Their countries of origin included Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, and Moldova. Most of them did not occupy high positions in London's social and occupational hierarchy, i.e. had service or manual jobs (bartenders, carpenters, electricians, builders etc.). Some of them, however, had a university degree, usually obtained in the country of origin. A few of them, including bartenders, were studying in London, combining it with work. The institutions where they studied were not high-grade, and the aim of getting an education was a way to obtain a visa. Mostly they were rather young – between 20 and 30. At the time of my research, a few people working there were illegal migrants. The labour conditions did not strictly follow the rules: people could work overtime, and apparently were paid less than the UK minimum hourly rate; however they were employed and had a regular income.

My informants were aware that I was researching them, as when I introduced myself I usually told them I was a PhD student writing about the everyday life of Russian-speaking migrants in London. Almost all Russian-speakers from the bar were curious about my research, and had no objections to me asking them certain questions, or regularly coming to the bar and taking notes. They were friendly and sociable, and often demonstrated their interest and concern about my research by giving me suggestions to write that 'Russians here' have certain habits, go to certain places, and like or dislike certain things. When being introduced by these people to their friends, I was usually referred to in a way similar to: 'This is Dasha, she is doing a PhD and is going to write a book about us'. I had some friction with the bar owner, though. This situation will be described in detail in the final chapter of this work, which will approach the ethical concerns of doing qualitative study by a researcher with a supposedly 'insider' position. However, as far as I can see, that clash, first of all, had to do with her mood and character rather than my behaviour as a researcher; and secondly, after some reflection, I concluded that it did not have a negative impact on

the results or hinder the research process, but rather showed me why Russians in London may not be eager to communicate with compatriots.

In the course of my fieldwork, I observed and spoke to people about the environment and the history of the bar, and its clientele, but my primary interest was various social relationships taking place there. I looked at routine interactions between the owner and staff, among bartenders, between staff and customers and among customers. The participatory nature of my research also allowed me to take part in these mundane interactions. In the course of this participant observation research, I usually spent several hours in the bar once or twice every week. Most commonly, I came there on Friday evenings, when the bar was open till late and there usually was a chance to see more Russian-speakers. I would normally sit at the bar, have a drink, and chat with the bartenders and other Russian-speakers. Sometimes, I also prompted discussions about friendship in the bar and in life in general with one or two people. However, as I aimed to get an image of how people behave in their 'natural settings', I tried to act in a less formal way in order to not disrupt the routine flow of conversations. That is, I never used a recorder in the bar, nor did I follow any structured interview schedule, until I got to the stage of doing 'proper' interviews. What I intended to achieve was an informal discussion, not an inquiry.

As I managed to get on with some of the people in the bar, I started to take part in their other informal activities: going out together or visiting them at home. I established quite friendly relationships with two women, in particular. One of them was an illegal migrant originally from the same area of Russia as me. She was one of the first people from the bar with whom I developed a friendly relationship, and she served as a guide, introducing me to other people from the bar. Through conversations with her and observing her lifestyle, I learned about the routine life of illegal East Europeans. This included, for example, their strategies of jobseeking and flatsharing, the ways of staying in touch with relatives abroad and concerns about local compatriots, and various legal problems and creative ways of overcoming them. The second person was a singer and musician. I met a great number of Russian-speaking migrants of various backgrounds through her, some of whom later became my interviewees. Also, I attended a few small gigs in bars and pubs where she sang, and

because at that time she was attracting a mainly Russian-speaking audience, I could witness the sociality of migrants at public events that had a certain national context.

While participating in the social world of the bar and getting to know the people, I also took fieldnotes, aiming to create an 'accumulating written record of these observations and experiences', trying to do it contemporaneously so that initial impressions and subtle details are not blunted by long-term participation (Emerson et al., 1995: 1, 13). Sometimes, I wrote down my observations in a notebook while sitting in the bar, using pauses in the conversations and periods when people's attention was not directed at me. But as I tried to be inconspicuous as a researcher, this only happened a few times when I felt an important conversation had occurred that needed to be described in detail. Most often, I recorded my thoughts when I came home the same evening or immediately the following morning. Fieldnotes were then analyzed through the processes of recurrent reading, coding, and writing analytical memos (Emerson et al., 1995: 143-168). I manually coded the research diary, first defining the themes that emerged in the process of participant observation, and later identified larger integrative themes (see Appendix for the list of codes) which structured my analytical representation of sociality in the bar.

After approximately half a year of intense fieldwork, when I felt I could already provide a comprehensible picture of the mundane functioning of the Russian-speaking social network in the bar, I started the process of leaving the field. I was visiting the bar less often, but still kept in touch with my informants, particularly with the two women I mentioned above. Later, I conducted interviews with them and two other bartenders. In a way, the whole experience of bar ethnography resembled 'friendship as method' (Tillmann-Healy, 2003) in the dynamics of the development of ongoing research relationships. Both fieldwork and friendship 'involve being in the world with others. To friendship and fieldwork communities, we must gain entrée. We negotiate roles (e.g., student, confidant, and advocate), shifting from one to another as the relational context warrants. We may experience our ties as developmental, passing through stages […] We navigate membership, participating, observing, and observing our participation […] We learn insider argot and new codes for behaviour. As we deepen our ties, we face challenges, conflicts, and losses. […] One day, finite projects—and lives—come to an end, and we must "leave the field."' (Tillman-Healy, 2003: 732).

I found the work of Spradley and Mann (1975), which is an ethnography of a bar from a waitress's viewpoint, demonstrating the rules and culture of a bar and power distribution informally established there, quite inspiring for the interpretation of my bar case study. In my work, I had a chance to observe the functioning of the bar as a member of the network, aiming for an '*immersion* in others' worlds in order to grasp what they experience as meaningful and important' (Emerson et al., 1995: 2). The insider aspects of the bar's materiality have been disclosed to me. I have been to the 'staff only' areas of the bar, was allowed onto a balcony where bartenders would sometimes smoke after the closing time but clients were not permitted, and helped them to turn over the chairs at the end of the evening. Also, I could observe the routine social relationships of the Russian-speaking network in the bar. They offered me drinks for free, shared gossips and jokes, and let me hear the sometimes unpleasant comments about the owner, her son, and non-Russian-speaking visitors of the bar. I followed the requirements of ethnographic fieldwork to 'share firsthand the environment, problems, background, language, rituals, and social relations of a more-or-less bounded and specified group of people', for a more rich and complex account of the studied culture (Van Maanen, 1988: 3).

I found ethnography an effective way of studying social life, because it attends to it as constituted by ongoing and fluid processes, and is sensitive to the emergence and dynamics of meanings, understandings and interpretations shared by the people (Emerson et al., 1995: 4, 14). This sensitivity allowed me to see friendship as a process, not as a static picture. It was a means for initial understanding of the values and sociocultural specifics of friendship, often through personal experience of such relationship. The benefit of ethnographic research was the gathering of first-hand information on sociality. This experience gave me some ideas about what to expect from Russian-speakers' attitudes to compatriots in general, compatriot friends, and some 'Others'. Next, it also prompted me to expand the scope of research for understanding the different ways of functioning of social relationships among different kinds of Russian-speakers. While ethnography resulted in a detailed analysis of one particular network, it became clear that the bar network could be just a part of someone's range of relationships. Therefore, I switched the focus from a network to an

individual, and planned a set of interviews to explore how a variety of social connections can develop for different kinds of migrants.

5. Interviews

The interpretation of data from ethnography was an anchoring point of the research in the way in which it made me use certain methods for further stages and integrate certain cases and concepts into analysis. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I conducted two series of semi-structured interviews. The first 25 focused on the constitution and dynamics of people's personal networks and their relationships with compatriots. The next 10 interviews concentrated on the topic of relationships with non-Russian-speaking Londoners, which spontaneously arose in many of the previous interviews and therefore was considered important enough to receive special attention for a complete account of migrants' sociality. The strategy of inquiry that I used was semi-structured life-world interview. It is defined as 'an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena' (Kvale, 2007: 8). The particularities of methods in each stage will be discussed in the next two sections of this chapter.

The two consecutive sets of interviews meant that the second evolved from the first when a recurrent theme occurred as an important aspect of the general topic of migrant sociality. That is, the second stage assisted in enriching the initial concepts with fresh data on the basis of comparison (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 9). The comparison which the respondents from the first stage made between relationships with Russian-speakers and with Others prompted me to the need for analytical comparison of different directions of migrant sociality. Therefore, the second stage was planned, aiming to focus on exploring the relationships with Others.

Respondents with different backgrounds and social statuses were selected for the interview sample in order to achieve a multifaceted picture of the middling Russian-speaking population, using the snowball or referral sampling technique (See Figures 1 and 2 for a map of my sample). I had one repeat interview with a respondent from the first sample before embarking on stage 2, which reflected my intention to probe the sensitive issue of exploring racism and identify the tactics which would be helpful in

approaching it carefully enough. The other ten interviews were with new respondents. However, I tried to choose similar kinds of respondents for the second stage in order for the results to be comparable with the first 25 interviews. As the study started with a participant observation in a Russian bar, it was one of the principal initial sources of respondents. Another source was existing Russian-speaking acquaintances. Some of the informants were found through professional contacts. Finally, a few were randomly 'picked up' in non-research-related circumstances, when I needed representatives of social groups different from those present in the sample. The research was carried on until the saturation of information was reached[5]. The schedules for interviews are included in the Appendix.

My strategy of seeking informants corresponded to the various ways of meeting compatriots in London normally used by Russian-speaking migrants, described in chapter 4. That is, I used my existing social networks, was often introduced to 'friends of friends' who could later become my respondents, and occasionally started snowballing from encounters with people that 'just happened' spontaneously in different circumstances (see Figure 1). Some of these random encounters were particularly fruitful: for example, after I ran into my ex-classmate from Russia, whom I have not seen for about ten years, one evening in Waitrose, I was introduced to a big social network of Russian undergraduate students who enthusiastically contributed to my research.

The interviews were conducted in Russian and lasted between 30 minutes and two hours. Some of the respondents invited me to their homes, and were quite hospitable and accommodating. Two interviews took place at my own home, when it seemed easier for people who happened to be around and had spare time to visit me. Some were conducted in cafes and one in a pub. Two conversations took place outside: taking a walk with a Ukrainian mother and her child, and interviewing a student on the

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[5] I have conducted 35 interviews with migrants from the countries of the former Soviet Union, focusing on the meanings and dynamics of social relationships that were a part of their life in London. Among my interviewees were 22 women and 13 men, aged 20-45, with the biggest proportion of those in late 20s. All of them were first generation migrants, having lived in London from two to 12 years (see Tables 1 and 2 for a summary of the sample and a set of short biographies).

university campus. Usually, interviews were held one-to-one, apart from two cases when I met Russian-speaking couples. In the first case, I spoke to migrants one by one, in the second situation, they were simultaneously engaged in conversation.

5.1. Interviews on friendship

In the first series of interviews, I was determined to find out about migrants' relationships, particularly friendships, with other Russian-speakers. The interview schedule was partly built upon the main topics such as how migrants' social networks were constructed, the circumstances in which they met compatriots in London, what were their common activities with friends, and the personal values of friendship with compatriots. This part of the interview was covered largely by a non-structured narrative from the respondent. The second part followed a structure. A particular technique that I used was questioning migrants about the constitution of their mobile phones' contact lists. I asked people about the proportion of the numbers of Russian-speakers and non-Russian-speakers in these lists, and then suggested they describe briefly how they met Russian-speakers and what kind of relationship they sustained. In other words, I asked for a structured account of how their social networks formed, which included the temporal stages of their proliferation and spatial origins of these networks' constituents, the dynamics of these processes, and the actual situations and people who might have promoted the development of relationships. Migrants, thus, told me a number of stories about Russian-speakers they knew. My respondents mostly were curious about this approach and willingly recounted their histories of acquaintance with compatriots, trying to remember the details, recalling stories associated with certain people, and staring in surprise at some long-forgotten contacts.

This approach was quite helpful because people did not just rely on the selectivity of their memory while accounting for their contacts. It allowed adding a degree of structure to the interviews, and showing a multiplicity of ways of getting and staying connected with each other. Also, it helped to demonstrate that contacts with Russian-speakers can have different degrees of closeness: while talking about a contact from the phone, a respondent would start describing his/her history of acquaintance, defining the person as 'my best friend', 'a person I've met once or twice', 'my neighbour, we're not very close', 'my client' and so on. Discussing friendship in a less

structured way, as I realized, sometimes could lead the respondent to general and speculative responses. But by using this technique, I managed to examine very particular components of people's perceptions of friendship. In other words, this did not allow them just to confine themselves to saying that 'friendship is very important', but made them describe their own relationships with a few particular people, uncovering the concrete embodiment of this importance.

Most of the respondents agreed to tell me the stories of their acquaintance with particular people from their phones' contact lists. However, there were a few people who for some reasons would not commit to the method. They could have been suspicious of disclosing their contact lists for some reason, or too lazy to talk about the whole list of Russian-speakers, especially if it was a long one; they could have recently bought a new phone, or simply forgotten the phone at all. In these cases, seeing that convincing and trying to make them interested did not work or did not make sense, I tried to engage them into a life history interview without referring to their phones, framed around the sequence of events and encounters which involved post-Soviet migrants in the lives of my respondents' since their arrival to the UK. Such narratives provided similar information in a less structured way. Also, there were two people who said they did not have any Russian-speaking contacts and therefore no relationships with compatriots. In these cases, I asked them to tell more about their past, which eventually disclosed that they actually knew some Russian-speakers but these relationships were not intense enough, although they had been more involved into Russian-speaking communication in their first years in London. On the whole, my research strategy was quite flexible in this respect, adapting to the feelings of migrants about disclosing their networks constitution.

The transcribed interviews, thus, were texts that included personal narratives and a number of structured stories which formed the main part of analysis. At the end of this stage, I had a vast collection of accounts of acquaintance and friendship with Russian-speakers. In the process of analysis, I manually coded the interviews (see Appendix). Starting with open coding as identifying the initial concepts, I then categorized them by trying to group around more general categories and went through the interviews again in order to 'fill' the content of the resulting categories. I used both constructed codes (formulated myself on the basis of social science literature), and in vivo codes (taken

from respondents' expressions), such as 'mentality' (Flick, 2009: 309). Then, in the process of axial coding, I selected the most relevant categories and examined the links between these and codes, elaborating them on the basis of the evidence from the interviews. Next, through selective coding I tried to identify the core categories and build up a story.

The first interviews, thus, allowed me to find out the different ways of establishing social connections with compatriots, to understand the variety of the degrees of closeness with them, and to concentrate on the accounts of dynamics and values of these relationships. However, the respondents' non-structured narratives also brought up some concerns about their relationships with diversity as an integrative part of their sociality in London. That required additional research.

5.2. Interviews on living with diversity

The idea of having some extra interviews was prompted by the some unexpected themes that steadily kept appearing in the course of my interviews. While I was initially talking to people about their relationships with compatriots, I noticed that the majority were mentioning non-Russian-speaking Londoners in their stories, usually in a form of a comparison. Besides, one of my observations in the bar was related to the construction of power relations between Russian-speaking members of the social network and non-Russian-speaking clients and bartenders. Moreover, I often heard racist, nationalist, and homophobic statements from my informants and acquaintances on the everyday basis, as well as the reflections on getting to know and enjoying particular kinds of Otherness. That is, the previous interviews demonstrated that migrants' sociality is inseparable from the wider range of social relationships and attitudes among these people and other Londoners. Considering that, I decided to ask people about their ideas of living with Otherness in the conditions of super-diversity. Using the snowball technique again, I recruited ten more people.

The last ten interviews were conducted using a different schedule (see Appendix), where I specifically enquired my respondents about three main conceptual issues: their perceptions of diversity in everyday life, their relationships with and thoughts about 'Others', and the dynamics of these. While talking about the perceptions of diversity required mainly descriptive accounts, answers to the questions about

relationships with other Londoners were supposed to be more judgemental. In fact, these interviews were touching upon a very sensitive issue, questioning people about their views that could be regarded as socially unacceptable. That is, I had to be very careful in formulating my questions, if I did not want to receive polite conventional responses like 'nationality does not matter, all people are all right'. However, I did receive such responses, usually at the beginning of my inquiry and from people I met for the first time. I tried to make migrants talk about certain events in their lives that would be examples of their own attitudes and their dynamics, rather than engage into abstract speculations. Most commonly, a question that would help the respondent to start his/her reflections on particular issues of intercultural relationships was 'In your opinion, are there any activities that are better done together with people of certain nationalities or ethnicities?'

I had to be inventive in choosing my words, because I did not want to push the respondent to any answers, or make him/her reserved. I tried not to mention any ethnicities or nationalities first and let my respondents direct themselves. I would ask additional questions about certain nationalities or ethnicities only after they have been mentioned by the informant. I already knew that Russian-speakers, especially those from certain social groups, almost universally tend to dislike certain ethnic groups. However, I could not ask a respondent 'Why don't you like Indians?' even if I was almost sure that was the case. If the migrant appealed to the presumably general attitudes of Russian-speakers, I would ask 'Why do you think some people don't seem to like Indians?'

The ways in which respondents were carefully avoiding risky statements are described in more detail in chapter 8: briefly, two main elusive tactics of my respondents included using general terms in talking about unacceptable views ('Many Russians are racist...') and verbal stress on denial of such views while talking about oneself ('I am not racist, but...'). The sensitive nature of this research drew particular attention to the respondents' choice of words, their slips of tongue, euphemisms and metaphors. On the whole, as I noticed, people find it harder to speak about the negative aspects of their social relationships, in comparison with the first series of interviews on the generally positive topic of friendship. But the last ten interviews were a necessary part of the whole research, and despite the small number of respondents and some

struggle to avoid the slippery ground of sensitivity and political correctness, they supplied valuable data that completed the image of sociality of Russian-speaking migrants in London. As with the previous set of interviews, I analysed these through gradually identifying and refining codes and categories (see Appendix) and making a story which filled in the conceptual category 'Russian-speakers vs. Others' which emerged at an earlier stage.

Eventually, these interviews led to a refinement of the whole conceptual framework of the study, including accounting for migrants' social practices as a part of urban sociality, and their agency in the processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization occurring within the diversity of London. They were an integrative part of the whole study, and the new knowledge provided by them was a reflection of the flexibility of qualitative methods I used. One of the main ideas of qualitative research is the clarification and interpretation of meanings through the intensive research process (Dwyer and Limb, 2001: 7). Changes in respondents' narratives can make an interview a learning process because of new meanings arising in the course of the study (Kvale, 2007: 13). As a researcher, my openness to potential unpredictable situations and new ideas has shaped the whole approach of the research as a view from different angles on people who engage in different relationships on multiple levels of their social lives.

A critical reflection on mine and my respondents' positioning and the ethical quandaries of this qualitative study also pointed towards some problematic connections between the actual conduct of research and effectiveness of concrete methods. It might have seemed easy to conduct interviews in Russian with Russian-speakers, but it did not prevent from some difficulties with getting access, establishing rapport, and questioning the validity and completeness of some of the respondents' accounts. Collecting the data in the bar case study, in particular, was different from gathering information via interviews, especially when these interviews were essentially one-off meetings. Even though many of my interviewees were my acquaintances, or 'friends of friends' already at the time of research, the richness, sincerity and openness of their narratives could always be questioned, because it depended on a variety of factors – from the circumstances in which the interview was conducted to the nature of our relationship. But what makes me think that the data is reliable is that the categories which emerged from multiple accounts tend to form a coherent picture of

migrant sociality, and while different narratives may depict different aspects of it, there are points where these images of sociality overlap, coincide, and become interconnected.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I outlined the methods that I used for researching the sociality of Russian-speaking Londoners. I have introduced the conceptual framework of transnational urbanism, 'middling' transnationalism and the critique of methodological nationalism that determined and shaped my choice of strategy of approaching, observing, and talking to people. I have described two particular strands of my fieldwork, which included a participant observation in a Russian bar and two series of semi-structured interviews with migrants. These methods were chosen as most appropriate for studying a relatively new, small but constantly growing, socially diverse and spatially disperse part of the migrant population of London, which is not available for large-scale structured research, and is not well represented in British migration literature. My fieldwork process and dynamics correspond with the ideas of studying friendship of mostly 'middling' Russian-speaking migrants by observing and talking about their everyday lives, as a localized set of informal relationships that have both local and distanciated origins. This was meant to help understand how migrants shape and sustain their social networks, how they build relationships across the borders and locally, and how they may find themselves incorporated into the super-diversity. The time spent in close communication with my informants also developed my critical awareness of the ambiguous relationships among compatriots. This increased my attention to migrants as participants of particular London's social processes like racialization and cosmopolitanization, and as subjects whose sociality is not limited by notions of ethnic or national attachment. Overall, my research strategy, despite some possible flaws, was flexible enough to account for the aspects of sociality that were meaningful for my respondents, point to those which could have been initially missed out by me, and do some additional exploration whenever there seemed to be a gap in the research knowledge.

In the course of the study, the ideas of the continuity existing between different kinds of informal relationships of migrants were gradually developed. As a result, I could

approach migrants as agents of different sets of relationships: as members of social networks, as individuals engaging in relationships of different degrees of closeness, and as participants of a wider set of urban social relationships within London's diverse population. These research strategies were complementing each other and helped picturing the complex and multilayered patterns of migrant sociality.

The practicalities of this research processes will be also revisited in chapter 10, which will conclude this thesis with some post-fieldwork reflections. The fact that I was a Russian-speaker and that I aimed to develop and maintain friendly relationships with my informants, particularly in the bar case study, was helpful in the conduct of this study. However, at the same time, neither 'Russian-ness' nor 'friendliness' have unequivocally determined the success of the study. The reflections on the ambiguity and ethical problematic of these are the topic of the final chapter of this work, which will attempt the reflexive analysis of positionality and 'insider' dilemmas in qualitative research. Meanwhile, the next section of this work will try to disentangle the complexities of migrant sociality, concentrating on the origins, cultural meanings, significance and limits of friendship.

Part 2. Community

Introduction

If anyone had to guess Galya's origin, he most probably would not guess right. Her English is perfect: just in case, she can easily imitate Cockney accent. She remembers several people thinking she is Australian, and not believing when she told she was Russian. Her Russian, at the same time, is not different from native. She is cheerfully and artistically swearing in both languages all the time.

Galya has spent almost all her life travelling, as her father was an Aeroflot (Russian airlines) pilot. She has lived in London since she was four – that explains her perfect English. She lived in Moscow, Japan, London again and Moscow again, where she got her degree in Sociology; Bulgaria, Germany and France, where she worked as a project manager; and all the time she used to come to London to visit her boyfriends and friends, or attend various courses. Once she was in Moscow with her English boyfriend (her current husband) and decided to visit a British education fair. She applied for a course at Chelsea College of Art and Design, and was successful. After graduation she has been working as interior designer in a small firm, being the only Russian there.

Galya met her first (and, by and large, best) Russian friend in London, Alina, in Chelsea, where both were doing their degrees. Alina remembers:

> '…I was sitting there among all other students – we had some kind of an introductory meeting, and our teacher suggested to introduce ourselves, to get to know each other. And she said she was Russian. And after that, I was sitting there and she approached me – "Let's go for a smoke!" Just that, without even saying hi. We were the only Russians on our course…'

Since then, they have been best friends. Galya recalls when they used to live just across the river from each other, and from time to time 'almost lived at each other's'. Through Alina, she met several other Russian-speakers.

However, before getting to know her best Russian friend, Galya did not make any attempts to communicate with compatriots, although she often heard Russian speech in the streets and generally had an opportunity to get acquainted with migrants. Her Russian communication in London is restricted to a small social circuit. One sector of it is represented by her family back in Moscow. Another consists of the people she met

here through Alina, almost all of them coming from middle-class or quite affluent backgrounds. 'We swear in Russian with Andrew, my husband, but he does not say anything apart from that', she concludes her reflections on her communication with compatriots.

Having Russian-speaking friends, as the example of Galya demonstrates, does not necessarily mean sustaining the previously existing ties from the home country. Friends can be made here, on the spot, if one is lucky enough to encounter an appropriate person, but it is equally possible that friends will not be made. One can deem only compatriots as true friends, or be quite open-minded, cosmopolitan or even indifferent in the choice of close social relationships. However, there is something that makes Russian-speakers a little bit more special for migrants from the former Soviet Union. Something that makes a seemingly cosmopolitan person not equally attracted to everyone, which is routinely described by respondents as a shared sense of Russian-ness, similar mentality and other general terms implying common cultural and linguistic background. This sense of sociality is not all-encompassing – meeting a compatriot does not necessarily mean you are bound to be friends.

While Galya's relationships with her kin include relatively regular cross-border communication and travel, her local London-based social network which is a more immediate part of her routine life, is different. Russian-speaking friends are just a part of it, and there were no pre-existing connections between them that would have motivated their acquaintance and socializing. In other words, her sociality as a migrant is based on the intentions which are formed largely in the local circumstances, and are more particular and more complex than the ideas of belonging to a national community or receiving diasporic support. How can this complexity be disentangled? The idea of this section stems from the theoretical reflections outlined in chapter 1 of this work, seeking to answer this question. Following the need for a detailed and careful approach to transnational practices, consideration of heterogeneous character of migrant populations and attention to 'middling' kinds of migrants, here I aim to analyze the ties and connections that may inform migrant sociality in different ways. I argue for approaching Russian-speaking migrants as a stratified community consisting of small interpersonal networks brought together by friendship.

This section includes three chapters which will unpack the affordances and limits of migrants' social ties. To start with, in chapter 4 I will focus on the ways in which Russian-speaking migrants form meaningful social connections in London, and explore how connectivity with compatriots can be framed within migrants' understandings of the routine functioning of social life in the city. In chapter 5, I will concentrate on social networks that form as a result of negotiation of a variety of local, transnational, mobile, long-existing and randomly established ties and connections, and examine the functioning of these social networks in the social conditions of London. Finally, in chapter 6 I will look at the limitations of the development of migrant communities, critically assessing the potential of common background as a basis of communality among diverse migrants in a diverse city.

Chapter 4. Meeting Russian-speakers in London

1. Preface

I n chapter 2, I have described the multiple routes and connections that facilitate the migration of Russian-speakers to London. My respondents to different extents and in combination with different other motivations relied on friendship ties which shaped the decisions and practices of their move. A section in chapter 1 briefly outlined the sociocultural specifics of post-Soviet friendship as a moral value, an exclusive achievement and a protection in the face of uncertainty or threat. As this work follows the arguments of theorists warning against reification of ethnic/national community (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003), and acknowledges that there is a wide range of social interactions that are much more specific than 'ethnic networking' (Bunell et al., 2011: 9), in this section I seek to explore the particular role of friendship as such specific way of relating to each other. Thus, while I have already described the social structure of Russian-speaking migration and the physical and social routes bringing them to London, in this chapter I will focus on the variety of ways in which migrants can connect to each other locally in London. Precisely, I will analyze what happens when Russian-speakers meet each other in the city, how and why personal contact can be prompted (or not), and how this kind of connectivity is framed within migrants' understandings of the routine functioning of social life in London.

2. 'It just happens'

Viktor is a tall, deep-chested guy with his head shaved and tunnel piercings in his ears. He is driving his car, playing with his Iphone, smoking and constantly talking to strangers outside – other drivers and pedestrians. The car stops at the red lights, Viktor turns his head to the right just to say cheerfully to another driver 'Hey man, how are you, you all right?' The guy mumbles something; Viktor contentedly nods and hits the accelerator.

Viktor depicts himself as an extremely sociable person who cannot live without communication and attention, being in a state of continuous active interaction with the people surrounding him.

> 'I might even not be able to speak a person's language, even if he does not speak English, we will find common language. If he wants to understand, we will be able to have a talk. "Tienes ojos bonitos", I can say something in Spanish. A couple of good phrases, like this "you have beautiful eyes"'.

Viktor is 21 years old, he came to London from Kiev, Ukraine, more than two years ago. He is a driver in a car hire service at Marble Arch, and lives in Hackney. Initially, he came to London because his father was already here. 'And then, if not London, where else would I go?' rhetorically questions Viktor. The father is not his only relative residing in London: his uncle and his son, Viktor's cousin, three years younger than him, are here, too; as well as his godfather with a wife and two children, with whom Viktor has very warm relationships.

Getting acquainted with people is not difficult for him. The constitution of his contacts is rather mixed, with Russian-speakers prevailing: in the contact list of his new Iphone he has now around 60 Russian-speakers and 40 other people (previously, he had two separate phones for Russian and non Russian speakers; there were 480 people in the former). Viktor started meeting Russian-speakers initially through his cousin who introduced him to his friends, visiting the occasional gatherings of Russian-speaking youth in Green Park and engaging into other mutual activities, often connected with drinking.

> 'I started hanging around with people [*tusovatsya*], and the core of my acquaintances concentrated around my brother, because they were people whom he knew. Then gradually other "movements" started, I met more and more people. But I am very sociable, I told you. I always engage into conversations with people, and people stick to me – and I enjoy it'.

Some of his acquaintances were initiated by rather pragmatic motivations, based on some small services and reciprocity. As Viktor is a driver, several times he was asked to help somebody with transportation. In most of these cases, Viktor's circuit of contacts expanded and developed through the channels of already existing acquaintances. They introduced new people to him, facilitating their communication in informal circumstances, passed his contact information to others if recommending his services to them. At the same time, it is not so uncommon for Viktor to start new acquaintances from scratch, which usually happens in the street or in public places.

'Sure you can recognize a Russian. It happened many times to me. Let's say, a person is walking down the street, I address him in Russian…I can see that he is a Russian-speaker, don't know how, but I can see through him. I start talking to him straight away. He is stunned. And that's it, we begin a conversation. […] It is so common for me. I often talk to [Russian] girls in the centre like that. Why not? I'm driving my car, see a couple of young pretty girls – why not to approach then and say something nice? They are flattered, and you are pleased. And then, something might come out of that…'

Viktor does not have time to cook at home, so he eats out almost all the time. Sometimes he drops by to a small café between Chiswick and Hammersmith. The place is officially Italian, but the owners are Ukrainian and Viktor's old friends. He met the owner Lyonya through his other friend, and since then he frequents the place, eats borscht and chats with the staff. And it is from Lyonya that Viktor hears some gossips about other customers, among them about Vera. Viktor has not met her personally, but knows that she is from Moscow, has a little son and lives nearby.

Vera is another frequent visitor of this café, a 35-year old researcher, who lives in Chiswick, with her husband John and one and a half year old son Sasha, in their own flat. Her acquaintance with Lyonya started not via the channels of personal communication, but rather out of spatial curiosity – one day Vera just popped in to the café which is in her neighbourhood, just to discover that the place is run by people speaking the same language with her and of similar origin.

'I visit them quite often, even if it is just for a cup of coffee. Gradually, they decided to step aside from all these Italian dishes, and now they are cooking borscht, and whatever else. Well, Russians frequent them. They do it from under the counter – I mean, they do not have dressed herring [*selyodka pod shuboi*] in the menu. On Tuesdays, they serve cutlets [*kotlety*] …I usually do not eat such fatty food, but I thought – ok, let's try your *kotleta*. Of course, it was delicious…So, I often drop by for another nice chat'.

Casual, unplanned, spontaneous acquaintances with random compatriots like Viktor's flirting with pretty girls or Vera encountering a Ukrainian owner, out of the blue, in a supposedly Italian café, are rather common for the Russian-speaking inhabitants of London. Quite often people initiate such contacts exhibiting a specific curiosity, based on the practical implementation of their skill to recognize people of post-Soviet origin in the streets. That is, for example, how Masha, a 32 years old housewife of Jewish origin from Moscow, and mother of a six months old son, met Vera, Alla and Marina.

'With Vera, I could tell that she is probably Russian, but not so straightforwardly. Because despite she has a Slavic face, she is rather toned down – no bright clothes or aggressive make-up. She could be Polish. I saw her in the market with her son, who had such a cute hat with little ducks. And I asked here where she had bought that hat. I asked in English, and when she replied, she had a very strong accent. I asked – are you Russian? And yes, she was from Moscow. We started talking…'

Vera herself gives a similar account of this encounter.

'Yesterday in the market, there was that girl. She looks at Sasha's hat and says – oh, what a pretty hat, where did you get it? I look at her and she seems a bit…strange. It turns out that she is from Moscow, too, and lives in Chiswick as well. I did not express much enthusiasm in the conversation, as it was early morning, and I was quite sleepy… but she was very active. Speaking very adequately, and constantly blah-blah-blah…She even helped me with the pram. And took my phone, too'.

This way of involvement into communication with Russian-speakers is a sort of 'l'art pour l'art', a perfectionist practice of polishing one's personal mastery to recognize compatriots. Marina, a 32 years old Latvian shop assistant, working on perfume counter in a big Boots at Bond Street, has a habit of recognizing Russian-speaking customers by appearance and asking them where they are from. By doing this, she is not aiming at achieving new friends, but rather entertaining herself – in fact, she keeps in touch only with a couple of such acquaintances.

'As I started working, I learned to…see Russians, I started talking to them, and just out of interest, I'm asking them – where are you from? Yes, that's what I do when I hear the customer's accent. […] Just like that. Not for hanging around with them [tusovatsya], it is random guessing. Hit or miss'.

Public places like parks, markets or public transport are generally common spaces for such spontaneous interactions to occur. It usually starts with a guess about the post-Soviet origin of the potential interlocutor. Language and accent are another hint helping to recognize a Russian-speaker, as well as are certain features of the appearance.

'I often notice men's attention in the tube. As if they feel a compatriot in me. Once I was on the tube and there was a man sitting and looking, looking, looking at me. His colleague got off earlier. And then he said rather loudly a couple of phrases in Russian or Ukrainian, for me to pay attention to him…He had his wedding ring on the right hand, so I thought he was Ukrainian. We talked for a while. He said he worked in that area, and I said I was a nanny in

that area. It was a non-committal acquaintance, we just exchanged information – where we live, how we live, how much we pay for the rent – technical questions'.

<div align="right">(Viktoria, 39)</div>

The use of certain public spaces implies similarities in people's current life positions. Shared experience in general can easily promote acquaintance. For example, children and all activities related to looking after them are one of the things that very often facilitate acquaintances, especially among women, leading to their access to particular social networks and friendship groups (Ryan et al., 2007: 12). Having kids of similar age provides another common ground for communication, in addition to language and origin. Masha recalls meeting Alla in a children's clinic:

> 'There was another mother sitting next to me, and she had a funny baby. And she also had English with a funny accent. I asked where she was from, and she replied she was from Ukraine. Again, the conversation began'.

Kids can be relatively active facilitators of interaction themselves. When Russian-speaking children go to the same school, it is very likely that they will become friends themselves and initiate the communication of their parents. Moreover, this pattern of socializing, based on children's curiosity and interest to Russian-speakers, sometimes expands over the boundaries of interactions in certain institutions where kids and grown-ups are brought together by a formal purpose like education. Children feel free to express lively interest to others if they hear them speaking the same language, and don't feel any barriers to make a move and start talking to a person. This is how, for example, Nadezhda, a 45 years old housewife from Russia, living in Dagenham, met one of her friends.

> 'I met my Ukrainian friend in the park, our children were playing there. Her husband is Nigerian, and the children have darkish skin. It was funny when her daughter heard us speaking Russian, approached us and asked – are you Russian? I say, yes. She says – oh, I am Russian too! And she is a black girl. Then she told her mother, and that is how we met'.

Such relatively spontaneous encounters are quite common for all my respondents, and nearly all of them had a few friendships that developed from them. However, most of such encounters seem to be casual and non-committal, like for Viktoria. In fact, while most of the people acknowledge the extensive presence of post-Soviet migrants in the

UK, and the high probability of encountering compatriots almost anywhere in the course of their everyday activities, meeting Russian-speakers becomes taken for granted, perceived as one of the usual features of super-diversity. In this regard, acquaintances 'just happen' for many of the respondents:

> 'As I told you, I did not aim to find Russians. When I came to London and now – I gladly communicate with people of different nationalities, I am interested in them. But it just turned out that way – eventually, very often you do not choose people to be around you, your friends. Really, maybe the reason is that there are so many Russians in the UK, especially students. But it occurred to me that I mainly socialize with Russian-speakers'.

> (Karim, 22)

Often, contacts occur when people are brought together by common activity – occupation or hobby; or at a single event, like a party or a conference. Aleksandr, a 23 years old guy from Russia, who has just finished his Bachelor, recalls how he met the majority of his friends.

> 'When I was doing my Foundation Course at Stratford, we had a big company of Russian-speakers. [...] Lucya, for example [his girlfriend] – I met her there, five years ago, at the very first day. There was a meeting, I don't remember, something like an induction. The rest of them – I met them in the classes, we exchanged phone numbers.

> I: Did you just hear a person speaking Russian and talk to him?

> R: Not always, you just can see that the person is Russian, immediately. But speech also matters'.

Doing work for others is also a way of establishing connections, like in the case of Seryozha, who keeps a number of a car service's owner:

> '...met him through my former landlord...once I came to him with my car, and that's it, and since then...me and my friends, we all are his regular customers, because he is good at it'.

Nadezhda, who is a big fan of Sahaja Yoga, is regularly practicing meditation and visiting classes. At these classes she met a lot of her current Russian-speaking friends. She has been practicing Yoga years before she moved to London. The classes she is attending are not aimed only at Russian-speakers. However, this activity has brought her quite a few companions of the same origin. English courses are, too, a common

place to find new acquaintances among the people who might share not only origin, but also difficulties with dealing with the British culture and strategies of overcoming these difficulties (i.e. attending the courses). In all these experiences of encountering compatriots, though, Russian-ness is not recognized as an ultimate aim of communication. It goes in line with the argument of chapter 7, which gives an account of migrants' perceptions of diversity. As much as the super-diversity is a multiplicity of cultures, languages, ethnicities and nationalities encountered daily, other Russian-speakers are also its routine part. And while many of these people's social positions and mobility motivations fit into the 'middling' (Conradson and Latham, 2005) or 'lifestyle' (Knowles and Harper, 2009) migrant patterns, the meaningfulness of being in contact with compatriots for them is assigned with an almost aesthetic value, being circumstantial and free from obligation of diasporic communality.

3. Looking for Russian-speakers

At the same time, there are still many people who articulate a clear intention to look for Russian-speakers. These intentions may be underpinned by quite pragmatic motivations. For some, this is connected with job issues. One example is Viktoria, who works as a nanny only for Russian-speaking or mixed families. Another migrant, Seryozha, 24, from Belarus, addressed Russian media in London looking for a casual job, and a Russian mathematician has found him through the ad:

> 'I posted an ad in a Russian newspaper about transportation services, and he called. I drove him. Since then, he called a couple of times; he needed a piece of advice on some household issues. Today he called again…'

While these migrants were looking for compatriots concerning work prospects rather than company, their formal acquaintances often become connected with some extended sociality – Viktoria, for example, became quite close to Vera and her son. Conversely, companionship of FSU migrants can sometimes be pursued as a means of achieving something practical:

> '…I registered on one social website, and indicated in my profile that I was from London, not from Bournemouth. And I was deliberately seeking for [Russian] boys from London. Because I already wanted to move to London. Because I was bored in Bournemouth…[…] At the end of the day – if I had not met my former

boyfriend via this website and moved to live with him, how the hell would I
have moved to London?!..'

<div align="right">(Nastya, 28)</div>

However, there seem to be much more people who look for Russian-speaking
company without such rational purposes – rather, for the sake of sociality with
compatriots per se:

'From the very beginning I had this kind of attitude, I was inclined to get
acquainted with Russians, I don't know why. Maybe it is possible to explain it
rationally, but my soul was always asking for Russian-speaking socializing'.

<div align="right">(Yasha, 25)</div>

For some, getting in touch with Russian-speakers happens naturally and almost non-
reflexively, as soon as they get to the UK:

'I was very active in terms of Russian communication. Basically, it was enough
to meet one person in the beginning...[...] I didn't see anything wrong in it. I did
not have a desire to assimilate. It seems like you don't really have to! [...] I
mean, I am British. But my circuit of informal communication has always been
Russian'.

<div align="right">(Vladimir, 40)</div>

The taken-for-grantedness of the presence of FSU migrants in the city is something
that migrants acknowledge, and choose the degrees of involvement into these social
networks. Many people's narratives indicate that they find hanging around, talking and
discussing sensitive issues with, listening and confessing to Russian-speakers different
from communication with the other Londoners. Therefore, they may aim for
companions and friends with a similar way of thinking and seeing the world (they often
use the term 'mentality'). Encounters with Russian-speakers with possible consequent
communication take place in the public spaces of London:

'… You'll never spot a Russian-speaker in Russia [like you do it here], and it will
never become a reason for starting the conversation with him.[…] And here it
supports you in a sense, the fact that both of you already speak Russian. And
no one will ever be surprised that you are getting at him. You can meet some
random Russian-speaking person in a park, and make him your friend…'

Alina here points to the importance of London as a certain locality that by itself may prompt the communication among compatriots united by the migrant status. In fact, the same people would have perceived each other as strangers and would not have had the slightest intention to approach each other in a park back in Russia. However, the fact that both of the same people are Russian migrants in London seems to provide incentives for starting a chat. In other words, their mutual possibly marginalized in some aspects positions in London, in conjunction with common identities embodied in shared language, history and culture, often become sufficient reasons for initial sociality.

4. Expanding networks

The actual procedure of meeting compatriots, especially when it comes to meeting a group of them, often occurs with someone's help and guidance. Most commonly, the contact between Russian-speaking migrants is initiated or facilitated by a third party – another Russian-speaker, a common acquaintance. That is how, for example, a social network was formed around the bar M., owned by a Russian and run by mostly Russian-speaking staff. The group included bartenders and their friends – regular customers. A new person coming to the bar usually knew someone from the group who served as his guide and introduced him to the others. This social network serves as a conductor for new members of the community:

> 'Nastya is relatively new in this company. She was working in Gaucho, and there she got acquainted with another Russian waitress, Sonya, who knew Vika [who worked in the bar for 2 years]. So, Sonya invited Nastya to a party at Vika's home. That's how Nastya came to us [later, Nastya started working in the bar, too]'.

(Nadya, 24)

While describing their personal networks, the interviewees recognise that most of their friends and acquaintances have been introduced to them by someone. Vladimir, 40, an IT specialist, recalls getting in touch with a Russian scientist even before actual moving to London. He met him soon after arrival, introduced to his own friends and colleagues, and helped the proliferation of Vladimir's social network:

'Literally in my first weekend here, I found myself in Hampstead Heath, in a park, in Russian company, drinking some wine...I was very warmly embraced'.

In some cases, help in obtaining Russian-speaking companions is provided across the borders:

'Inga is my Latvian friend from Hungary… […] when I moved to London, Inga was worrying about me being here alone…and she facilitated my acquaintance with many of her London friends. Thus, for example, I met Christina, who is my close friend now, we go to tango classes together'.

(Firuza, 34)

In fact, meeting Russian-speakers in London for many of the respondents has initially started from some already existing social ties, often linked to their place of origin. Expanding their social networks may be an uneven process: not all meetings result in friendships or regular contacts, and not all encounters are equally valued. In other words, being a part of a Russian-speaking network does not seem to be a universal aim for migrants. However, there seems to be a special role assigned to London in different ways of meeting compatriots. London may prompt acquaintances that would not have happened in the similar circumstances back in home countries. Here, sharing common or similar origin, language and cultural background, in conjunction with being currently socially, psychologically, culturally or legally marginalized as a migrant, often makes people approach each other. This follows the discussion of chapter 1, where (post)Soviet friendship was presented as serving as a refuge from the external threats (Shlapentokh 1984: 218). Rabikowska (2010: 291) underlines that a certain 'complex of (in)equality' among migrants can increase their need to be recognised as a unified group, and national identities (in her case, Polishness) may offer 'a desired degree of coherence to be countered against the host culture'. At the same time, London is reflexively recognized as a place with an abundance of post-Soviet migrants. This, in turn, makes people free to decide whether they need or want the company of compatriots, and selectively construct their social networks, knowing who and where the Russian-speakers are and either getting in touch with them or just passing by.

Above all, there are relationships with friends from home countries that are much cared after, significant, and sustained across borders. Long-term friendships are a part of almost any migrant's present social network. Quite often, such relationships are

inseparable from a person's mobility patterns, mobile themselves, and active despite time and distance. The final part of this chapter will focus on such transnational origins of friendships, exploring their persistence in contrast to usually more superficial 'local' encounters.

5. Transnational friendships?

In chapter 1, I discussed the growing research interest in studying migrants' social relationships that are not confined to kinship (Conradson and Latham, 2005, Bunnell et al., 2011), and not bounded by neighbourhoods and local communities (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003, Ryan et al., 2008). A special role is assigned to transnational friendships, considering their dynamic and spatially dispersed character, as well as the significance of its 'sustaining and inspirational aspects' (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 301). In the accounts of Russian-speaking migrants describing the constitution and dynamics of their social networks, relationships with old friends from back home are often the first to be mentioned. If many of these people seem to be contemporary 'middling' migrants, how transnational are there social networks then?

Quite often, the value of friendship is paralleled by migrants with that of kinship, which invokes parallels with transnationalism studies frequently concentrating on the latter. Friendship seems to be another kind of social bond, the significance of which does not decline with mobility. On the other hand, it remains supportive over distance, and can be especially valued in the circumstances of uncertainty produced by migration. Similarly to kinship, such friendships are remarkable in their persistence. Vera, 35, speaks about a long-term relationship between herself and her husband, and another mixed couple:

> 'Oleg is Russian and Becky is from somewhere local. We met them in Moscow in 1996, my husband worked together with them. Then we moved here, and they moved later. Since November, we've seen them three or four times on kids' birthdays and Christmas. My husband is the godfather of their children, and she is Sasha's godmother. We are almost relatives! We do not meet so often, because they live in a place in one hour and a half drive from London. We have a meal together, with wine usually, and sometimes go to the church – godparents…'

Generally, equaling friendship and kinship implies the high level of interpersonal trust that is central to close relationships. Shlapentokh (1984: 222, 226) argues that friends

for Soviet people at some point may start to compete with relatives as objects of close relationships. Also, the contrast between kinship and friendship lies in the individually selective character of the former and its reliance on mutual sympathy (Kon, 1987). Karim, 22, reckons Russian-speaking friends as a kind of replacement for family support, especially important for young migrants like him:

> 'We are creating a kind of our own small family...[...] and I am actively working on keeping this family of mine. If I meet a good person and after a while understand that I can trust him – I will try to keep our friendship'.

In some sense, the role of friendship and acquaintance turns out to be similar to that of kinship in transnational discourse. But there are important distinctions here. Bunnell et al. (2011: 2) note: 'while friendships may at first appear to be strongly correlated with social networks based on kin and location – class, nationality – or on embodied materialities – race, sexuality – they cannot be mapped off them; friendships are neither determined a priori nor reducible to such networks. Rather it is the tracing of friendships through the affective social worlds that people inhabit that reveals a new dimension to the social'. While usually transnational relationships with kin represent social connections between certain localities (i.e. London and 'home'), non-kinship-based informal relationships seem to be more flexible and do not have to be fixed to a place, often being mobile themselves. Its moving force might be not so straightforward, meaning that people do not usually move to London just to join their friends; but what makes these relationships distinct is their ubiquity and flexibility. Long-term close relationships with few people from home countries are sustained over distances, taken care of, and continue being significant when re-established in London – even if the person is quite reluctant to socialize with compatriots in general. The examples of friendships transplanted to London among the respondents are multiple and occur in the lives of migrants of any social position, income, age, gender or legal status. Evgeniy, 43, a property consultant for wealthy Russians, hardly had any really close relationships developed with his clients, but his few 'real friends' include someone from the past:

> '4 years ago, a person whom I have not seen for 20 years contacted me. In 1985 he was my old university friend. He found me through friends in Germany, and

we met here in London. He has become a wealthy businessman in Russia. And he liked it here so much that he decided to live here. […] He lives in the same house with me now, I helped him to buy a flat. And he is my closest Russian-speaking person here'.

Another example is Maxim, an illegal Belarusian migrant in his mid-20s, who used to have a friend in Belarus. The friend came to the UK and opened an office of his IT company. The business went well, but he was feeling bored and lonely, so he decided to bring his friends here. He suggested some of them to come here, and helped those who agreed to obtain a business visa, with invitations issued by his company. That is how Maxim turned up first in Glasgow, and then moved to London.

Friends often provide additional emotional support for newcomers and make the process of getting to London go smoother. Alina, 28, landscape designer, when she just came to London in 2006 and knew nothing about living here, stopped at the flat of her mother's friend's daughter Nadya, who had already been in London for a couple of years. They continued being good friends since then. Again, relationships with immediate family members can constitute an integral social field with friendship: both relatives and friends care about the migrant, help him/her in various ways, and worry about him/her being alone. In the case of Firuza, in a similar way to how her friend helped her to find friends when she moved to London, her sister helped her restore contact with lost childhood friend:

> 'Oksana was my childhood friend. We have not seen each other for 15 years or so. And somehow my sister in Dushanbe finds her on a social website, and it turns out that she lives in Dublin. That's not London, but we see each other sometimes'.

Sustaining relationships with old friends coming from the same place with the migrant is rather widespread, and could be considered as transnational. While kinship as a common object of transnational studies is usually considered in the context of enforcing the links between life in the host country and life back home, friendship in the discussions with Russian-speaking migrants seemed to be a relationship that is almost equally supportive and valuable, but more mobile. It is less tied to linking localities but rather reinforcing the relationship itself locally, and often it as flexible as the individual himself. Its border-transcending potential is often linked to the actual mobility of a person. Such friendships are usually persistent, helpful, and long-lasting.

However, these relationships usually comprise a small part of the whole personal network of a migrant: 'real friendships', as they call it, are few. As well, despite distance and time may not make the relationship less close, they easily make the actual communication less regular. In other words, the transnational connections between people often exist rather in an implicit way when they are in different countries, and emerge or re-emerge into an actual relationship – with regular face-to-face communication, mutual activities, and helping each other in matters of everyday life – only after these connections are physically relocated to London. This goes in line with what has been said about meeting Russian-speakers: being in London as migrant may reinforce the need to socialize with people of the same background, but such communication can remain superficial and occasional. Since trust is one of the main criteria of friendship, Soviet people preferred to have as friends those whom they have known for a long time (Shlapentokh, 1984: 244, 1989: 176). That is why the relationships with someone who used to be one's friend back home are given a second life in London. Thus, only some features of these friendships, after careful consideration, can be deemed as transnational. Apart from that, Russian-speaking migrants, as diverse as they are, seem to express quite diverse attitudes and act in different ways in respect to socializing with compatriots. New friends achieved through network proliferation, overwhelming presence of random and spontaneous acquaintances, and even reluctance to meet with compatriots are all featured among migrants.

6. Concluding thoughts

Eventually, this discussion points that Russian-speaking migrants in London constitute a loosely connected community of small social groups. For many of them, expanding their social networks either in London or across the borders is not a priority, but rather a random, casual, spontaneous practice. New network formation is quite passive: it 'just happens'. The presence of other post-Soviet migrants is perceived and negotiated as a routine part of super-diversity, and engaging with it is flexible to different extents, often being a feature of 'lifestyle migration' (Knowles and Harper, 2009) rather than a necessity or obligation. Most crucially, the configuration and development of migrants' social networks is not principally and universally centered on belonging to a national or

ethnic community. In general, Russian-speaking migrants are not universally transnational: people maintain different amounts of cross-border connections. While friendships can be transplanted from 'home', reconstructed and sustained – and their significance is not contested – these ties are usually few, and do not necessarily imply regular and intense communication across borders. That is to say, transnational friendships are present among Russian-speakers I interviewed, but paying attention to the details of these bonds reveals that their transnationalism in many cases is only partial. There is a variety of ways of being connected to each other, and London is a social space where these connections are negotiated, resulting in the formation of migrants' personal networks. This localized functioning of friendship networks of Russian-speakers in the city is in the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 5. The foundations of social networks

1. Preface

In the previous chapters, I have brought in the exploration of friendship ties of Russian-speaking migrants in London as particular relationships influencing people's mobility on its different stages, having a special, historically conditioned, sociocultural value, and being engaged into and flexibly negotiated as a routine part of the city's diversity. Theoretically, this discussion supported the recent argument of geographical literature (Conradson and Latham, 2005, Bunnell et al., 2011) that friendship has to be researched as a relationship informing mobility patterns in its own ways, and should not be reducible to the bonds of kinship, neighbourhood, or ethnic/national community. As a next step, if a personal community is assumed to form as a result of a negotiation of a variety of local, transnational, mobile, long-existing and randomly established ties and connections, there is a need to explore the functioning of these social networks in the localized spaces of London. What are the conditions and other relationships that migrants' social networks' binding force is building upon? This is the question this chapter will try to respond.

2. 'The meeting place cannot be changed'

'After all, we are lonely here. All of us.'

(Nadya, 24)

Considering informal sociality and interpersonal ties as an important factor shaping and supporting the community, the fieldwork for this study started with a pilot ethnographic research of a Russian bar in London and the small community of Russian-speaking migrants regularly gathering there. The study was looking at the ways sociality and friendship ties among migrants are created, sustained and reproduced in a certain space.

The bar M. where that research took place is not an explicitly Russian-style bar in its interior design, cuisine and drinks. Its 'Russian-ness' is based on the origin of a group of

people whose everyday life in London is to some extent connected with the bar, and on the specifics of social interactions taking place there. The members of a social network that has emerged in the bar are bartenders, ex-bartenders, regular visitors and some friends of all these people.

> 'When you come to M., you will probably meet someone Russian. Even if they are not friends of staff – it is very easy to make acquaintances there, I mean, everybody is sociable and if they see you are Russian – it is very likely that a conversation will occur.'

> (Nadya, 24)

Even a Russian-speaking customer who is in the bar for the first time, having noticed that the staff speak between each other in Russian, will apparently start talking to them. The topic of such conversation would not be something special – the client might ask where the bartender is from, how long he/she had lived in London, how he/she finds it - the questions which any other curious, talkative or drunken customer could ask. But the conversation will occur in their native language, which makes the customer feel much more comfortable. A bar, apart from its other roles, is a place for lonely people seeking communication, understanding and support. The opportunity to speak a native language can be a source of support per se, sometimes regardless of the topic. In fact, the desire to speak a native language might be a good reason to come to the bar, as some of the migrants told me. The bar is the place where one can find familiar sociocultural identities. Here, the conversations are started, acquaintances made, contacts established, social group shaped and sustained. Eventually, friendships are developed.

What brings migrants together in the bar often is described as a feeling of social marginality and loneliness, and an opportunity to escape it for a while. This was implicitly mentioned in chapter 4 while explaining why migrants can be attracted by the opportunity to talk to fellow migrants – precisely because these are usually in a similar, often marginalized, structural position. Social ties and communication with other migrants play an important role in this process. The bar is usually referred to as a traditional meeting place, but its role goes far beyond that of a meeting location in a straightforward manner. It is a place where Russian-speakers run into each other, but also where friendship bonds are continuously being established and sustained. A

typical dialogue often occurs between people: 'By the way, where did you meet N? - In M. - Ah, of course. This is the place where everybody meets'. *The meeting place cannot be changed* is a name of a popular 1979 Soviet TV series. At the same time, this is the phrase which is often cheerfully uttered by a Russian-speaking migrant entering the bar and seeing his companions seated there.

The bar is a junction connecting a vast and disperse network of migrants. It occupies a unique position in the life of a number of Russian-speaking migrants. Non-Russian clients are mostly those who work or live nearby. The bar is a convenient place for them to have a drink at the end of the day without bothering about making long distances to get back home afterwards. Despite the fact that all of the Russian-speaking regulars live relatively far from the place, they more or less regularly make a long trip. The bar is a specific place for them, which is worth the effort of traveling. They find there something they are not able to find in a typical English pub round the corner. This 'something' is neither some special sort of alcohol, nor generally attractive interior, nor opportunity to meet celebrities – but it is probably something that could be called 'home from home' (Mass-Observation, 1987: 133) - a close relationship between the pub and the drinker, a 'state of affairs in which they are part of an institution to which they belong, like the members of a political organization to their party, or a congregation to its church'. The bar provides migrants with such feeling of belonging, in a double sense: both to a community of co-nationals and to a community of friends.

Working in the bar, generally, is not just a way of earning money – it is a whole lifestyle, certain habits, and of course everyday communication. In particular, communication with Russian-speaking colleagues and customers is crucial for many bartenders. One former bartender recalls her period of work in M. as 'almost a whole life', remembering people and memories related to them. There is a community of Russian-speaking migrants formed and sustained by the feeling of relevance to the bar, which functions mainly as a centre of communication and support.

> '[…]Dasha [Belarusian bartender] has just finished her shift and is sitting at the bar, having rest and drinking coke. She looks tired. Tells me that she is exhausted after working for three weeks without weekends and is going to work like that for one week more.

- This week was very successful for M. I mean, at the beginning of the week we were told that we have to make a certain amount of money. And we all were like – well, ok guys, let's do it! And we have already done it, and it's only Saturday. Eventually, this week will probably be a record for the whole history of M. But you know what? Nobody ever says thank you. We've been working so hard, and absolutely no appreciation. That's Rita [the owner]. However, I never ever woke up in the morning with a feeling that I don't want to go to work! It's always interesting to me, always. Despite I work so much, despite it does not give me much money, despite the lack of gratitude. I like this work, and that's because of the company, my friends who work here.

- Do they support you?

- Oh yes, they do! That's the main reason why I work here… Well, Rita knows that not everyone will agree to work in these conditions. So she forgives many things to us. For example, we drink while working. Obviously, she knows it, because she's watching the cameras. But sometimes we can't work without it. After the whole day working I feel that I do not recognize people and do not understand what they ask me for. In these cases, a drink helps'.

Another excerpt is from an interview with a Russian regular:

'It was funny on Boxing Day, on December 26. It turned out that the majority of people [Russian-speaking friends] left London, and those who could not go home, clearly, stayed here. For example, all of my friends left and I was here completely alone. Everybody left, even my flatmates. So, I could only go to M., and I went there. And all the people who were sad and lonely came that evening, so that there was a whole line of Russians sitting along the bar. Just poor sad people who could not go home due to some circumstances, and very upset that they had to celebrate New Year here…you know, such depressed people…[…] And they felt better. Me too…I think I did not even spend a lot of time with them, as I came actually to collect something…But I remember there were a lot of them, sitting, chatting, some were working and speaking with them. And I liked that. I was happy for them'.

The bar as a 'meeting place' is not only a physical place where a Russian-speaker inevitably encounters compatriots, but also a social space, where one comes to see friends. Friendship with compatriots seems to play a special role for these young post-Soviet migrants. It helps them cope with the feeling of marginality in London, be it a result of exploitation of their labour, or a feeling of loneliness and spleen. It supports the argument outlined in chapters 1 and 2: friendship is particularly relevant to contemporary migrants, precisely because, in spite of globalization trends and increased easiness of international travel and communication, migration is still a source of different kinds of problems, restrictions, and uncertainty for many people. However, friendship has a strong potential of reducing the negative effects of these

complications. But why exactly is having migrant Russian-speaking friends particularly helpful or considered as such?

3. Priorities of Russian friendship

Friendship, as a close relationship between individuals, has much to do with personal qualities that exhibit themselves in the interactions. Despite the diversity of this migrant population, its inner segregation and different degrees of involvement of Russian-speakers in the networks of compatriots, my respondents' best friends predominantly turn out to be Russian-speakers. Ryan et al. (2007), White and Ryan (2008), Eade et al. (2006), Wills et al. (2010) observe the high reliance and trust of Polish migrants directed at very specific groups of friends, family and acquaintances, simultaneously with distinguishing these from the wider ethnic 'community'. I have asked my respondents what makes compatriots 'better' companions. Similarly with the Poles' narratives, the preferences of Russian-speakers can be quite a rational choice, like in the case of Viktor speaking about his acquaintances:

> 'When you need urgent help in some kind of emergency, like, for example, if you car broke down or you have to go somewhere…not surprisingly, I will not call some Arab – I will call my family or my godfather who is a very nice guy from St Petersburg. Or my father. […] If you want to undertake something [he is talking about drugs], you would better communicate addressing the Eastern side of the map. They are more daring people. The guys from the EU…maybe, they are afraid of everything. Well, I mean it is much easier to come to terms with our people'.

Coming closer to the issues of close relationships, the most complete account of the reason for socializing with compatriots is given by Karim, 22, who points to most important similarities of himself and his mates in their life and migration experiences:

> 'I did not choose them, but I am glad I have this kind of social circuit. Because it is natural and good to have a desire to communicate with your people. With expatriates like you. […] We have a lot in common – same mindset, concepts, same idea of this world. And we have a lot to talk about, like how we all ended up here – and in the same language, accordingly, we have less barriers for communication! Finally, it is all about mentality, isn't it?'

The shared feelings of marginality, as well as the efforts required to build a friendship are explained by Zhanna:

'I'd rather say that my closest friends are Russian-speakers. Firstly, because I've known them for longer time. […] My workmates [non-Russian-speakers] – well, it's just a few months I've been working there, so I would not call them close friends. So, Russian-speakers I've met in London, in the uni, are closer to me. We have similar interests…and problems. Take the visas, for example, or looking for a job. We all discussed these issues and shared our problems and impressions. […] They understand my problems, and…we have similar career plans, similar age, similar interests. For example, the way we perceive the political situation here…anyway, we look at politics differently from others. There is always something that the foreigners will not understand, and will not be interested in…or find it funny…'

(Zhanna, 25)

While relationships with compatriots are prioritized in a migrant's personal network, these interactions are taking place in a wider social space of London. Relationships with non-Russian-speaking Londoners are also negotiated in migrants' everyday lives. Friendship, indeed, can have a protective and supportive role in the circumstances of uncertainty or risk; but seen from a different angle, this can become a differentiating function of this kind of relationship. Russian-speaking friends can be juxtaposed to non-Russian-speakers. For example, the Russian bar in London was described in the beginning of this chapter as a junction of a social network of young migrants from some of the countries of the former Soviet Union. However, social interactions taking place there involve not only Russian-speaking bartenders and their friends. The bar is attended by the Russian owner and members of her family; some of the staff are non-Russian-speaking; also, the majority of visitors are other Londoners who live or work nearby. Power relations play their roles in defining the relationships among people, as well as do their national origin and assumptions about personal qualities. For example, relationships between Russian-speaking and non-Russian speaking staff could be described in terms of friendly cooperation. When new bartenders come to work, the more experienced ones more or less patiently teach them the skills they require. However, the dichotomies of Us and Them are recognizable in Russian-speaking staff's perception of the working team. Expressions like 'those guys', 'non-Russians' draw the border defined by language and nationality. At the same time, certain human qualities shown by non-Russian staff are appreciated and accepted with respect.

'The bar is closed, it's 2 a.m. Katya is sitting on a chair, having a drink after work. She is speaking about Ivan [English bartender] who is somewhere in the kitchen at the moment.

- I like him – although he's English, he works *like us*, 50 hours a week! And he's a nice person.

Ivan returns. Katya addresses him:

- Ivan, I'm saying I like how you work! Really, I enjoy working with you. If I were offered a chance to work only with those who I want, you would have been among these 2 or 3 people'.

Appreciation is clear; but in the expression 'you are like us' the distinction is clear, too. One of the instruments which show and reproduce this distinction and power distribution is the joking practice. Spradley and Mann (1975: 87-101) write about joking relationships as a common feature of relationships between the members of staff, focusing on distribution of power roles between genders. The objects of such jokes are often those who are not members of the community. In a similar way, it happens in the Russian bar.

'Ivan [English bartender] and Andrey [Latvian bartender] are working, and I am sitting at the bar with Sergey [a Latvian bartender who already finished his shift for today and is having rest with a pint of beer now]. There are no new visitors for some time, so Ivan has some rest – pours himself a glass of water and leans over the table behind the bar, sipping water and observing the bar. Sometimes he exchanges a few phrases with Andrey. But Andrey speaks with us more, in Russian. Then Ivan goes to the kitchen or to the phone - he disappears from the bar area. His glass of water is on the table, half full. As he leaves, Sergey has an idea. He bends over the bar and shows us a small bottle of Tabasco:

- Andrey, come on!

Andrey grabs the bottle and pours some sauce in the glass.

- Stir it, come on! The colour is different, he may notice!

Andrey stirs, chuckling.
Ivan returns. He leans over the table again, observes the bar and the people with the same expression on his face. Then he takes his glass, still looking somewhere over our heads. Drinks. Swallows the liquid. Then suddenly a smile appears at his face, he rapidly pours himself a glass of clean water and drinks. The guys burst out laughing and they keep laughing loudly for a while. Ivan is drinking milk from a bottle. He's smiling, he does not look offended'.

The presence of spectators is important for performing this little play. Spradley and Mann (1975) underlined that a bartender will not say any jokes with sexual

implications to a waitress if there is only two of them sitting at the bar before the work starts. Apparently, Andrey would not have any intention and motivation to do anything if other people speaking the same language with him were not sitting at the bar, observing his actions and showing support and approval of it. As a result, a certain distribution of power for this particular setting is confirmed – and this is tied with possession of certain indicators of common identity.

The core of the bar's social network consists of Russian-speaking bartenders and regular visitors. Clearly, Russian-speaking clients are also distinguished from other Londoners. Borders between social roles of bartenders and customers are blurred in case they all are Russian-speakers. A customer might not be charged for his drink, might be served long after the last call and stay until the closure, taking part in sometimes ritual drinking in the company of bartenders after work. The conversations between him and the bartender have a much more personal character, showing the history of their acquaintance and the closeness of their relations. A bartender, in his turn, brings much more personal attitude into the process of his interaction with a Russian client. Bartenders often provide their friends with some privileges, like free drinks. Besides, if one brings in a Russian friend who is unfamiliar to the staff, most probably this friend will get same privileges.

> 'We come to M. with Zhanna […]. Andrey gives us two cocktails for free, then another two […] Andrey is a bit bored, so he spends a lot of time near us, participating in the conversation and giving his opinions on people and events. Every time somebody stops in front of the bar, deciding whether to go inside or not, he makes a tired face, bends forward to me and says with annoyed intonation something like "Nooo, don't come in…Fuck!" He swears a lot when he speaks about work and customers'.

Alcohol helps to support social interactions occurring in the bar, as it is an integral part of a communication process. The practice of drinking, Shlapentokh (1984: 226) notes, is a special domain of friendship, a 'social event in which people can release themselves from various fears and troubles and pour out their souls', which also helps the release of frustration. In the bar, alcohol is one of the indicators of informal relationships between members of this group. While making a drink for a friend, Russian-speaking bartender gets beyond his professional role and becomes emotionally involved into this interaction. Sometimes it is alcohol that shows the distribution of power and draws a border between Russian-speaking regulars and

others: drinks can be served for free for members of the group, they can be served after the last call and even after the closure.

> 'It's after 1.30 – last call has already passed. There are a few customers in the bar, finishing their drinks. An English guy is sitting at the bar, trying to involve me into a conversation. He wants another drink, but Sergey apologizes and tells him they do not serve any more. I've finished my beer a couple of minutes ago. Sergey asks me:
>
> - One more?
>
> I nod. He gives me another pint. The English guy says in a surprised and a slightly offended tone:
>
> - Hey, but she can have a beer!...
>
> - She already paid for it before the last call, – Sergey replies calmly.
>
> I have not. Moreover, I know he will not ask me to pay'.

While relationships with Russian-speaking friends may mitigate negative effects produced by migration practices, they may also hinder the possibility of developing close relationships with other Londoners, or just treating them in an equal way. Indeed, recognizing themselves as a more or less unified group also bears the risk of countering the host culture (Rabikowska, 2010: 291) as external to the group. The problems of attitudes and relationships with other Londoners will be analysed in more detail in section 3. Here, when I focus rather inside social networks of Russian speakers, the implication to be drawn from this discussion so far corresponds with the theoretical considerations of chapter 1. Friendship, indeed, might have a function of protecting its participants from threats from 'outside', and be a relationship which reinforces in the circumstances of, and as opposed to, external control or attempts of intrusion into the personal. But there might be a reverse function: it may affect the construction of the external as different, oppositional and unwanted – particularly, if friendship still has the same connotations produced by sociocultural specifics of post-Soviet society.

4. Concluding thoughts

In this chapter, I concentrated on the social meanings of friendship for Russian-speaking migrants in London. I tried to unpack the conceptual argument of chapter 1, underlining that friendship is an important source of social support when migration

has not become an effortless experience for many people. Underpinned by its sociocultural meaningfulness, as well as higher flexibility and less spatial boundedness in comparison with kinship and neighbourhood relations, friendship among post-Soviet migrants in London indeed is presented as shaping different spheres of mobility by its 'sustaining and inspirational aspects' (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 301). Most notably, it helps them confront the feeling of marginality on different levels. However, the heterogeneity of Russian-speaking migrants in London, and researchers' warnings against taking migrant communities for granted (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003) brings particular attention to the diversity of their sociality practices. Exploring the unifying potential of Russian friendship means also exploring its conditions and limitations, which is the aim of the following chapter.

Chapter 6. 'Speaking Russian is not enough to be friends'

1. Preface

In this chapter, I will focus on one of the important aspects of friendship among migrants that has been mentioned in chapter 1. Consideration of the variety of social relationships exhibited by migrants points that a diaspora or a transnational community are not necessarily the ways they have to be connected with each other. There is a range of more specific human interrelations (Bunnell et al., 2011: 9) that can describe migrants' sociality, friendship being one of them. Contemporary migrants, as researchers note (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003, Levitt, 2001, Ryan et al., 2008, White and Ryan, 2008), do not necessarily form tightly bound communities of co-nationals. Earlier in this work, I have presented an analysis of post-Soviet friendship as a socioculturally shaped bonding force, which helps migrants confront the feelings of marginality and assists them in their migration strategies, and is negotiated and selectively relied upon by Russian-speaking migrants in the social spaces of London. It would be an oversimplification to take 'Russian friendship' for granted as an ideal type of migrant relationship, though. In this chapter, I will demonstrate why 'ethnic networking' is not a sophisticated enough term to describe the social relationships of migrants who live in the conditions of 'super-diversity', and how friendship becomes one of the range of the ways of being related to each other.

2. Degrees of closeness

In Shlapentokh's (1984: 233-236) experience of dealing with the consequences of his decision to emigrate from the Soviet Union which was described in chapter 1, his friends were ready to sacrifice other values for the sake of their relationship. However, he also mentions that those of the people he knew that were marked as acquaintances, did not exhibit such universally supportive behaviour. In fact, informal relationships in Russian-speaking discourse may be classified as having different degrees of closeness, and being of different value to an individual. Kharkhordin and Kovaleva (2009: 48-77) provide the initial analysis of the categories of informal relationships that are most commonly separated from friendship. They introduce an 'axis of closeness', which structures the taxonomy of personal relationships. In this

part of the chapter, in order not to overcomplicate things, I will consider two principal categories of sociality representing informal relationships – friendship and acquaintance (*druzhba* and *znakomstvo)*. This is to specify the theoretical discussion on friendship, and to develop the ideas of chapter 4. Navigating through the casualness of Russian-speaking diversity which is also a part of a bigger diversity of the whole city may result in establishing different kinds of social connections.

According to the migrants' accounts, friendship represents a specific domain of relationships, occurring on the basis of informal communication and implying emotional attachment and trust. The core element of 'real friendship' is non-pragmatic, affective reciprocal attitude, as it was specified in chapter 1. The significance of friendship for Soviet and post-Soviet people is high, and 'real friendship' is more or less clearly distinguished from other kinds of relationships. Russian-speaking migrants in the accounts of their social networks give examples of long-term and persistent relationships that they can always rely upon: call their friends when they are sad and lonely, meet up and share some gossip, and discuss any problems. This communication is not just based on common life situations and superficial interests. The issue of values is underlined in the context of long processes of friendship selectivity:

> 'You won't communicate with any random person, will you? We still do choose our social networks. We meet each other, the big world brings us together, and then we are filtered, because you would rather socialize with those who are interesting to you, with whom you have common interests. Common interests like hobbies are even not so important, but common values are. Because if you have different interests, you can argue and have a great time together. If you have different life values, the arguments will do no good'.

> (Karim, 22)

Friendships, indeed, have to be proved as significant relationships, which might involve going through difficulties together, and overcoming problems in the relationship:

> 'My best [female] friend is from Latvia, and the second best friend is from Arkhangelsk, she is in Moscow now. We had such times together! We met at work, then moved in to live together. Then we had a quarrel, did not even want to hear about each other for a while. Then, life brought us all together again'.

> (Polina, 26)

There are numerous narratives stressing that the number of real friends is limited, while a migrant can generally communicate with many people of any background:

'In the uni...the English mainly socialize with the English, and Russians – not necessarily with Russians, but with Russian-speakers. [...] Of course, everyone communicates with everyone, but such...definite friends turn out to be Russian anyway. Well, you cannot have many friends, after all. Maybe 2-3 people maximum. Not many'.

(Aleksandr, 24)

'Close Russian friends, Russian-speakers – 3 or 4 persons. I mean, I know lots of Russians, but close friends, those with whom I often spend my time, go for a walk with them – 4 or 5 maximum'.

(Vanya, 21)

Not all compatriots of those who one meets in London can potentially become close:

'I think there are so many different kinds of Russians here. You can be friends with some, with the others you can just have a chat, a small talk. I simply think I would not be able to find common language with all of them. I like calm, modest people...'

(Vanya, 21)

'The first Russian I met here was a daughter of my mother's friend. I used to know her before in Ukraine, but we were never friends [...] I arrived on Sunday, and she said I could stay at hers, as I had nowhere to go. And she had lots of Russian-speaking friends. It was ok for a few days, but then...I don't know, maybe they were not my kind of people. You know, speaking Russian is not enough to be friends. So I moved to another place, far away from there, and since then we just call each other once or twice a year. Well, we have never been friends anyway'.

(Alla, mid-thirties)

Acquaintances, as these excerpts suggest, can also be people who are generally pleasant and helpful. The attitude to this helpfulness, in contrast, is what defines the difference between relationships. While talking about their friends, migrants almost never start to recite what exactly their friends have done to help them, and what they have done themselves. The mutual supportiveness is taken for granted. This goes in line with the ideas of Bourdieu (1998), who specifies mutual suppression of the economic reality in the base of friendship, and Boltanski (1990, 1999) who claims that real friendship might develop from regular exchange of gifts after the participants of

this exchange start to consciously refuse to calculate the value of goods and services. Effectively, while describing relations with acquaintances, the issues of help and small services in everyday matters come to the fore:

> 'Seryozha is a friend of my flatmate Maxim. He is fun, a very interesting guy, with a great sense of humour. He helped me a lot when I just moved in. He transported my sofa from Ikea, assembled the wardrobe. He is a guy who can and is willing to help people'.

> (Nadya, 25)

Viktor describes the differences between post-Soviet and Western social relations in a brilliant way, demonstrating the importance of 'knowing the right person' in the former:

> 'It is normal. It's just that here you don't need to have an acquaintance, you see. You just pay. And at home everything is sorted out through acquaintances, agree with me. Nobody will ever go to anybody without a recommendation…[…] You need your child to go to the university, to a certain faculty. You don't know the person – so you find someone who knows him. And address him through your acquaintance. I mean, you would not go to him and give him two thousand [hryvni], or how much is it now. If you come and tell him – look, man, I've got a child, here is two thousand, please, help him with the university. He would say – are you sick or what? That's it. And if you do it right way, through your acquaintance – of course, he would say – good morning, how are you? You've got such a wonderful child, you cannot even imagine! You see? And that is why everyone is fine, because everyone has acquaintances'.

> (Viktor, 21)

While this role of informal connections is considered more prevalent in the post-Soviet countries, Viktor and other respondents report the reliance on networks of compatriots in a similar way in London. Viktor regards it as a pragmatic way of survival and a normal feature of a city life:

> 'No one can get lost in this world, because everyone has acquaintances. And equally they address you, you are not an egoist. Everyone is using everyone, and it is absolutely normal in a city'.

Ryan et al. (2007) mention that migrants may rely both on 'strong' and 'weak' ties with their compatriots in the host society. The general ideas of the differences between

friendship and acquaintance that can be taken out from these reflections, first of all, point that friends are a source of moral support, people who worry about you; acquaintances mostly are providing 'tangible' help. Acquaintances practically help migrants' survival in London. This does not exclude a possibility to have a chat with the latter sometimes or have a nice time together at informal gatherings. Usually, friendship means more regular communication, and this communication is more personal. Many informants mention that keeping in touch with less intimate contacts occurs less frequently and often via electronic means of communication like social websites, text messages and phone calls. Another distinction is that a person cannot have many friends, whereas the number of acquaintances can be as big as possible. Friendship also implies long-term relationships, which in our sample are often established in childhood or at much younger age, back in the home country. It takes a while to build a close relationship with a person and realize you can trust him.

Having Russian-speaking friends is highly valued: in fact, the closest relationships turn out to be with compatriots who are either old friends or have proved their allegiance over time in the UK. But not all compatriots necessarily become friends: some remain valued as acquaintances, while others could be not noticed or even avoided. This part of the chapter showed that migrants can frame their informal relationships in different ways. Furthermore, if the Russian-speaking population of London was described as stratified and segregated, there are some actually existing differences between its members that limit the development of personal relationships. Belonging to the same ethnic/national/language community, then, does not provide enough incentives to the formation of social networks. In the rest of this chapter, I will try to disentangle the relationship between the limits and affordances of friendship, and the complex of features underlying 'Russian-ness'.

3. Constructing distances within 'Russian-ness' in the bar

The social network existing in the Russian bar was described in chapter 5 as making it a social space providing young post-Soviet migrants with communication with friends as a source of emotional support and combating loneliness and marginality. However, this network of friends is not all-encompassing. The bar owner's 19-year old son Mitya, who sometimes works in the bar and visits it for a drink, although being Russian of an

age similar to that of the bartenders and their friends, is in a different position in the bar power hierarchy. Being the owner's son, he is probably more worried about the reputation of the bar, than any other bartender, and tries to demonstrate it. Once, a customer who wants to order wine asks for advice. Mitya readily recommends him some wine, delivering a whole speech describing its qualities, giving a detailed account of its taste, pouring a little into a glass and offering it to try. This is the first time I see such service in this bar. Apparently, any other Russian-speaking bartender would have confined himself to saying that the wine is good.

His kinship provides him with additional power resources, but also certain dislike from staff. To be precise, he might not have significant power himself (at least because he is younger than the others). However, he has British citizenship and lives in London with his parents, being a bit higher on the social ladder of London than the bartenders. Apart from that, in everyday functioning of the bar he presents a constant threat of transferring the information about 'inappropriate' actions to Rita, the owner.

> 'Met Nastya and Sergey in M. Andrey and Mitya are working. Someone told me previously that he had a habit of snitching to Rita on all the inappropriate things staff did. If he was not there, Andrey would have given us drinks for free. So, they work out a strategy. Nastya and I go to the shop, buy a small bottle of Courvoisier, Andrey brings out 2 takeaway carton glasses and they pour the brandy in them. Then they close them with lids, bring inside and sip like tea. It's strong, so they ask for Coke and pay for it. As soon as Mitya leaves the bar for a minute, Andrey very rapidly gives Sergey a glass of Jagermeister – it looks like Coke. When the glasses are empty, they go out, pour the rest from the bottle to our glasses and return'.

Andrey is under the influence of Mitya's kinship-based power while he's near – giving drinks for free would immediately be regarded as inappropriate action. But as soon as the surveillance disappears for a short period, Andrey quickly gets rid of this control by doing an improper action. In this situation, Mitya is at the opposite side of barricades. His Russian origin and language does not automatically integrate him into this informal Russian-speaking group, because his personal traits can directly affect the position of others. He is clearly not a favourite: there are scornful jokes told behind the back of the owner's son. In this case, jokes serve to integrate the community of Russian-speaking bartenders further, and set a distance between them and Mitya. Mitya, thus, is in a kind of marginal position – actually being a Russian-speaking bartender, but not being a part of informal Russian-speaking community related to the bar.

The social processes in the bar suggest that belonging to the friendship network is not solely based on the common origin and immigrant status. Russian-speaking migrants demonstrate the intersectionality of complex inequalities based on multiple categories of distinction (McDowell, 2008) including class, gender, age, legal status and other. These parameters often serve as mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. In fact, mutual Russian-ness plays a double role: while being essentially attractive in a fellow Londoner and often prompting acquaintance and communication, as well as arguably providing grounds for mutual understanding in a relationship, at the same time it is not enough on its own to make up a basis of a friendship. Next in this chapter, I am going to unpack the reflections of the divisiveness among post-Soviet migrants in London, and demonstrate what makes migrants' attitudes to each other selective and differentiating.

4. Divisions inside the community

Researchers have recently started to investigate the assumption that contemporary migrant communities may not be tightly bound (Wills et al., 2010, Ryan et al., 2007, White and Ryan, 2008, Rabikowska, 2010). Levitt (2001: 13) writes about the divisiveness and hierarchical nature of social groups constituting transnational communities, when 'long-standing patterns of privilege and access do not disappear merely because they are recreated across borders'. Wills et al. (2010: 111, 132-133) speak about the internal divisions existing within ethnic and national groups of low-waged migrants. Ryan et al. (2007), White and Ryan (2008) and other researchers of Polish migrants, in particular, underline the deep suspiciousness existing among migrants towards compatriots, which, however, takes place simultaneously with relying on the social networks of close people as well as using the compatriots in a wider and more instrumental sense. They use Granovetter's (1973) terms: 'these can be 'strong' ties—the high levels of practical, information and emotional support that many participants received from their Polish friends and relatives. However, they can also be 'weak' ties, dealings with Polish strangers or engagement with formal networks' (White and Ryan, 2008: 1489). The same migrants often expressed strong mistrust to fellow migrants. For Eade et al. (2006: 37), ethnicity thus becomes an ambiguous concept, 'since it can be both a resource for accessing capital, networks and information and a source of disappointment, vulnerability and social class

transgression'. The horizontal ties of ethnic and national identities can be replaced by 'individually constructed vertical class divisions between migrants'. Thus, ethnicity and class conflict is presented as common.

The 'discursive hostility' towards fellow migrants described by Eade and many others is not uncommon for Russian-speakers in London, too. Class arguments are noticeable in these narratives, while another dimension of segregation within this population is underpinned by the historical issues. What makes it more complicated, the shared Soviet past, which is bringing cohesion to Russian-speaking migrants from different countries (Byford, 2009a), and its connections and contradictions with the present, is also a reason for the community divisions, and a reminder of old racist and nationalist ideas of the home countries. These patterns of inequality can be transplanted from home countries and develop under the influence of power hierarchies of London. In the uneven processes of making communities, class, ethnicity and nationality issues are the implications of the establishment of friendship ties. The nature of such selective friendships 'could act as a security barrier against other migrants from their own national group, as well as those from further afield' (Wills et al., 2010: 133).

Class divisions, as some of the respondents observed, are also connected with different levels of engagement into networks of compatriots. Indeed, I have already described the typical reasons of settlement with compatriots as the financial requirements, possible lack of English language command and relaxed attitude to illegality in houses rented out by Russian-speakers in the East London. Other researchers suggest that tight networks of compatriots may foster social disadvantage and ghettoization (Wierzbicki, 2004, Griffiths et al, 2005, as quoted in Ryan et al., 2008: 675).

> 'The labour market requires connections, that's why having local friends is essential. Also, education and language command give more opportunities. That's why immigrants of lower status gather in ghettos. Just because it provides support and safety for them. If anything happens, they cannot rely on the system, because they don't know the system, they are not part of it. Illegal migrants are an extreme example, of course, because they always need networks of compatriots. But if they can play with the system, they don't need them so much. Although it could be useful, but they don't need to try hard…All rich Russians I know in London actively refrain from meeting Russians…because it is partly a reason they came here – to escape from all that'.

In the work of Ryan et al. (2008: 680), the Poles who relied most on networks of co-ethnics were also the most critical of compatriots: 'far from compensating for lower levels of economic capital by producing high levels of social capital, socially disadvantaged groups may be divided, wary and distrustful as they compete for scarce resources'. This argument proved to be true for quite a few of the least privileged Russian-speaking migrants. Nastya, 28, an illegal migrant, for example, has a personal network consisting predominantly of people from the former Soviet countries. However, she often expresses her discontent with different kinds of Russian-speakers in London. Apart from being openly racist and recalling her resentment and boredom from living in Bournemouth,

> '…where there are only Kazakhs and these…from Tashkent…Uzbeks. It was unbearable. They are worse than the Indian people. All these "black" Russian-speakers…'

Nastya also speaks about her unwillingness to associate and be associated by others with what could be interpreted as a stereotypical image of a Russian for a foreigner:

> 'I like those who tend to assimilate more. I think it's better if you come here and try to look like the others. Well, not to look like…but not to stand out, at least! There is nothing good when everybody is pointing at you in the street – "hey, look, she's Russian!" – and Russians are fished out in the streets just like that. Really, from the distance of one kilometer. As for me, I just don't understand those people who listen to loud Russian music in their cars…I don't know, for me it's just horrible…You can determine that she's Russian by her face, by everything. It can be +5 in the street, but she is wearing a mink coat. And all those Dolce&Gabbana and Prada bags. No, I don't like such people'.

This goes in line with Eade et al. (2006: 37), who underline the significance of ethnicity becoming ambiguous when 'through ethnic categorizing by the outsiders, individualistic migrants are being associated with people they would rather avoid contact with'. Avoiding contact in practice, however, seems to be quite easy. As simple as it is to recognise a Russian-speaking migrant for many (a self-entertaining practice described in chapter 4), it is also quite common just to pass by, or pretend you are not Russian – which seems to be a usual way of behaviour, too. Above all, considering the

stratified nature of the Russian-speaking population of London, it can be described as divided into subcommunities that are aware of each other's existence, but often don't care much about others and have little knowledge of each other's lives. Evgeniy, a wealthy businessman, was utterly surprised when he happened to be invited to a leaving party of his neighbour's cleaner. He suddenly found himself in a warm hospitable atmosphere, with a lot of Russian and Ukrainian food, where he socialized with 'a whole stratum of Russian-speaking cleaners', many of whom turned out to have university degrees. Galya, 31, interior designer, on the contrary, recalls encounters with lower class Russian-speakers that ended up not so nicely:

> 'I was moving to my previous flat, and there was that guy, from Lithuania or something, transporting my things. I can't communicate with him, I can't! I just don't know what to say. I was moving, there were two guys, I found them through an ad in a Russian newspaper – removals, blah blah blah. I call them and say – guys, I need to have my stuff moved from Lambeth to this flat, it's ten minutes by car. Well, they come to my flat, look at my stuff to be transported, and say – hey, you are a *bourzhouika* [vernacular derogatory feminine derivative of bourgeois]! Ok…Then, we are going there in their van, and I say – guys, it seems I don't have enough cash. Let's stop by the cash machine, or give me your bank account numbers, I'll make a transfer. And they reply – ha, you can pay us in some other way! Can you imagine? I've never experienced that…my [Russian] girls I've met in the uni are normal people!'

Clearly, there are Us and Them among the Russian-speakers of London. The distinctions can be reinforced by underlining the integrity of these subcommunities rather than that of the whole population. Galya, after encountering rude attitude from a Russian grocery shop assistant, concludes that '*they* don't like anyone'. Vasya, 28, a Russian internet blogger who works in consulting and marketing research, recalls a woman who has attended some meetings of the readers of his blog:

> 'There is a stratum of Russians here, who have too much money, and they hang out exclusively in a Russian community. West London, Chelsea. She was a classic image…spoke good English but felt comfortable among Russians. And she does not want to hang out with the English, I think it is generally typical for this kind of circuit…'

Apart from class-based subcommunities, there are also those based on ethnic and national origins. This particularly relates to the ethnic minorities and people from FSU republics. While Russian was proclaimed as a superior language and identity, the

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Soviet Union was in fact a multiethnic and multicultural state. Thus, for many migrants the Russian-speaking Soviet past is not the only aspect of identity. Again, the internal cohesion of post-Soviet ethnic minority groups in London is estimated higher than that of the general Russian-speaking population. Firuza, 34, from Tajikistan, speaks about the importance of socializing with fellow Tajik migrants in London, regular meetings and celebration of national and religious holidays like Nowruz. She has quite a few old friends from Tajikistan here. Firuza mentions that what brings Tajiks together might be the fact that they are actually quite a small community, and therefore need to keep to each other. Rustam, 23, half Tatar, also brings in the argument of the specific solidarity existing among 'Kazakhs and Azerbaijanis', which does not prevent from socializing with other post-Soviet migrants, but nevertheless they seem to form 'their own circuits of communication'. Speaking about himself, Rustam also acknowledges some thoughts on ethnic solidarity:

'R: I think…Russian, Tatar, it does not matter.

I: If you meet a Tatar here, do you think you will not apriori feel anything special?

R: No, why…Of course I will. […] Maybe just a bit more than I would have felt to a Russian. You understand, a bit. This is just because it would have been a very interesting coincidence, and I know only few Tatars living here. That's why I would feel a bit more pleased, than if I met another Russian who are swarming the place, you know.

I: Has it ever happened to you?

R: Yes, I have one very good friend, he is half Tatar too, like myself'.

While the issues of racism and nationalism will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4, I would like to stress here that there indeed is some ethnic and national 'othering' among Russian-speaking migrants. When Rustam and other respondents say that Russian-speaking ethnic minority migrants generally get on well with Russians, this only applies to certain social networks and situations, usually when people of the same social position are gathered around a common activity. Otherwise, the migrant population includes national and ethnic subcommunities that frequently look at each other with at least suspicion and at most with disdain, which is often rooted in the Soviet past conflicts and nationalism as well as current Russian politics.

'We've had lots of Chechens who recently appeared in our uni. I try not to mix with them. [...] Maybe they are nice, but they are a closed diaspora. [...] I used to be the president of our Russian Society, and I tried to ask them to do something for us, for an international event. I tried to persuade them to dance lezginka. They replied that they would not dance lezginka under a Russian flag, but only if we say they are from Chechnya...so, they would not act as Russians. [...] They think we don't like them initially, and treat us in a similar way, I suppose. They think that we think that they are lower class than us. So they try to resist us and prove they are better. If you ask them to do something, they are like – you don't like us, so we are not going to do anything [...] And they don't really want to study, and they live in this community, and communicate in Chechen, and do not socialize with foreigners...[...] Russians do not stick to each other that much. People from Caucasus, when they see each other, are like – oh, my brother, my dear, although I see you for the first time in my life...'.

(Lera, 25)

In fact, the roots of divisions, as well as the understandings of friendship, are often located back in the home countries' political discourses, social hierarchies and cultural practices. In London, they can be altered, reduced or reinforced. They are dependent on the mutual positioning of the subjects in local hierarchies and existing social networks, and are strongly susceptible to the effects of personal encounters.

5. Affective distancing

The already mentioned research on Polish migrants is rich in examples of negative assessment of fellow migrants' personal qualities. In White and Ryan (2008: 1490), respondents reflect on the issue of envy among Poles: 'Complaining and jealousy are our worst features. If you are happy, why are you happy? You shouldn't be happy', 'Poles are vicious, they can't be happy with someone's happiness; they don't understand that there is strength in the group'. Wills et al. (2010: 111) demonstrate: 'Polish would never help each other...are jealous...would stab you in the back...would just exploit you...one Pole is the enemy of another Pole'. Finally, Rabikowska (2012) presented a paper at the BASEES conference, entitled 'A Pole is like a wolf to another Pole'. Interestingly, quite a few of my respondents, lamenting the lack of cohesion among Russian-speakers, have compared themselves with the Poles who apparently seem to them to be more tightly bound as a group of co-nationals. However, Russian-speakers' narratives are often very similar to those of the Poles, describing the alleged envy, maliciousness and egoism of compatriots. This goes in line with the argument of a multiplicity of human interrelations irreducible to 'ethnic networking' existing among

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migrants (Bunnell et al., 2011: 9). If friendship is an affective relationship, as it was described in chapter 1, then there might be other dimensions of affect that regulate the interconnectedness among migrants, which I will outline in the rest of this chapter.

When I asked my respondents if there were any reasons not to socialize with compatriots, migrants mostly appealed to personal qualities they would reject in a person, often generalizing these qualities as a feature of 'Russian-ness'. In particular, I've heard a lot of criticisms of Russian women. Masha, 32, Moscow-born Jewish by origin, elaborates on the reasons of her dislike of Russian women:

> 'I think, I would have nothing to talk about with them, and we simply would not understand each other […] My mum's friends are Russian, but they are all Soviet. It disgusts me. This parochialism…relationships between women in Russian communities are weird. […] I realize that Russians are victims of themselves…their political judgments…of a certain situation that was in Russia and the Soviet Union – it resulted in a Soviet mentality. […] Emigration is not an easy thing, especially when you are young. I went to a naval academy, when there was a big emigration wave coming to Israel. There were conflicts among youth. Of course, 'Russian whore' was in common usage. For example, there is a Moroccan at school, and he can say – you are a Russian prostitute, what the hell are you doing here, get lost, we don't want to see you here. Unpleasant, but fair! Everyone knows where they stand. But my Russian [female] classmates – oh, Mashen'ka [diminutive from Masha]! Mashen'ka-Mashen'ka…and then I discovered there was so much filth spoken behind my back. […] I'd prefer to be approached face-to-face, called whatever names, told to go to hell – I would know where the person stands. But Russians…I see the relationships of my mum with her friends, who are so lovely, but then hit you from behind your back. […] Russian women seem to be finding common ground out of misery. They feel pity for each other, like: my husband is an asshole – let me feel pity for you. And if you are fine – suddenly there's nothing to talk about. She cannot complain to you in this case, and if everything is great with you, they physically cannot hide their envy'.

This goes in line with the arguments of Hellermann (2006) who analyses social experiences of women of East European women migrating alone to Portugal. She emphasizes the ambiguous role of social networks of compatriots abroad, stressing that they may have negative implications by means of exercising control over women's agency, thus showing the negative sides of the social capital and commodification of relationships. In a similar way, Marina, 32, from Latvia, tries to keep her distance from Russian women:

'The women I've met, honestly, they always need something from you. They always need help, they have problems with documents...I'm tired. Nobody helped me. I was here all alone, no papers, no rights, until Latvia joined the EU. You can meet Russian-speaking women here who are like prostitutes, just fucking around. I try to keep distance, I think they are dishonouring our nation. [...] I'm a talkative person. I can ask something, and then they start with questions – is your man rich, what does he do? Well, what's the matter? And I just say hi and don't mix with them. [...] I've got a family, I can't live like that and socialize with such girls. [...] There are not many girls...good ones – you don't see the good ones. You don't see many good things in life, generally. Those who try to stick to you, if they are desperate about it – it definitely means they need something. One of them was asking me to find her a man, to get married. She was offering me £2,000. What the heck? [...] Although I can't say they are all whores. Any nation has good people'.

Marina who positions herself as a citoyen du monde has never been seeking Russian company, being sceptical about the need to communicate with what seems to be familiar and not as interesting as other cultures:

'You know how it happens, you meet one Russian, and then you move into this area, Russian-speaking or Lithuanian or whatever else. I keep distance from such areas. I love the whole world, I just love to socialize and have a drink. [...] I've been there, I've seen all that. This is not new for me. But it is interesting when you meet new nations and people every day. Different stories and situations. I like that. [...] I'm a world citizen'.

There are other respondents who consciously keep distance from compatriots in London. Evgeniy elaborates on a whole set of reasons for not getting involved into a Russian-speaking community. Although he is a property consultant working for rich Russian clients, he admits he likes architecture more than the people he is dealing with, despite many try to develop a friendly relationship with him.

'Relationships with my clients stress me a lot, to be honest. They are all very rich people – 200, 300 millions...[...] But you can hardly meet a person, who is so successful and really delicate. It stresses me. So many of them are *zhloby* [vulgar people]'.

Evgeniy deliberately does not visit any Russian parties, although people invite him. To a large extent this is related to the remains of his memories of life in Russia (he had problems with authorities because of his Jewish origin).

'...I still have fear. Although I see a policeman here, and I am not afraid of anybody, am I? But fear remains. And maybe because of that...Now they invite me to all these Russian parties, balls, various affairs – and I look at them and

think – how do you know my address? I don't like being in the limelight. I'm not hiding myself, I'm sitting here – but I don't want to know anybody'.

This chapter warns that speaking about a 'Russian-speaking community' as 'unitary collective actors with common purposes' would certainly make a case of 'groupism', much criticized by Brubaker (2004: 8). Objective divisions and subjective assumptions naturalizing certain traits of character of compatriots together form a basis for distinctions existing among Russian-speaking migrants in London. They are not unique in this sense. White and Ryan (2008: 1490), for example, studying Polish social networks, underline that 'the Polish community has grown so large that it can hardly be considered a community at all. Poland has simply spread over into Britain in all its diversity'. They conclude that the enhanced mobility, growth of transnational connections, and generally increasing speed of life in the globalized world led to the condition where 'there is not just a single 'little Poland' in exile, but a multitude of little Polands, as networks rapidly spring up and constantly evolve' (White and Ryan, 2008: 1498). Similarly to the Poles, Russian-speakers usually express strong attachments to close friends and family, and are critical of the wider community. However, the divisions are probably much more numerous and diverse, as the whole Russian-speaking population is much more diverse than the Polish in terms of income, occupation, nationality, legal status, education, culture and religion. In this case, the answer to question 'to be or not to be friends with Russian-speakers' lies in the understanding of the 'Russian friendship' itself. When migrants are significantly socially differentiated, intimate social ties among them are established selectively and carefully: it requires time and effort to acknowledge one as a 'real friend'. Here, I demonstrated that there can be a range of social relationships among migrants which do not necessarily work for an establishment of an ethnic/national community. By doing this, I stressed the negative dimensions of ethnic social capital, networks and friendship that are focused on by few researchers (Hellermann, 2006, Bunnell et al., 2011). This discussion is particularly important because it seeks to the undermine the 'prevailing view that good intentions and shared aspirations always inform gendered migration networks, while 'bad' outcomes reside in the explanatory domain of external actors within migrant routes and destinations and structural inequalities within the global economy' (Bunnell et al.. 2011: 14). In other words, reducing friendship to

ethnic or national community cohesion deprives migrants of their agency in building their social relationships and living in a 'global city'.

6. Concluding thoughts

As I have suggested earlier, friendship is a specific mode of social interaction that gets transplanted from migrants' home countries and makes them distinguish between relationships with compatriots and with other Londoners. Indeed, best friends are predominantly Russian-speakers, and people often speak about the value of Russian friendship that usually cannot be ascribed to relationships with others. 'Russian-ness', or the 'historically-specific sociocultural background' (Byford, 2009a: 55), seems to remain a part of migrants' ideas of participating in certain social networks. However, rather than speaking about a Russian-speaking or post-Soviet migrant community in London, I suggest that relationships with compatriots (as well as with other Londoners, which is the topic of section 3) unfold under the influence of complex structures. These include the intersectionality of class, ethnic, national, gender, age, legal divisions both within the Russian-speaking population and within the wider population of London. The formation of these relationships is also based on affective components assigned to different social ties, and friendship was considered here as one of the main constructive elements of migrant social groups, while at the same time I argued for special attention to be paid to not reducing migrants' friendship to ethnic or national community ties.

Conclusion of part 2

In this section of the work, I explored the connection between a small-scale intimate personal relationship like friendship and the specificity of the formation of a differentiated and loosely knit Russian-speaking migrant population of London. I followed the considerations outlined in chapter 1, arguing for a detailed and careful approach to migrants' transnational practices, attention to heterogeneous character of contemporary migrant populations and focus on 'middling' kinds of migrants. I aimed to analyze the ties and connections that may inform migrant sociality in different ways. I based my ideas on the arguments of theorists warning against reification of ethnic/national community (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003), and acknowledging that there is a wide range of social interactions that are much more specific than 'ethnic networking' (Bunell et al., 2011: 9).

I have demonstrated that in the routes that Russian-speakers follow to get to London, and in their actual lives as migrants, friendship often has a special place. Historical and sociocultural origins of friendship make it a special moral value for post-Soviet people, and often is serves as a means of protection from the effects of marginalization imposed by the circumstances of living in London as a migrant. Underpinned by its sociocultural meaningfulness, as well as higher flexibility in comparison with kinship and neighbourhood relations, friendship among post-Soviet migrants in London indeed is presented as shaping different spheres of mobility by its 'sustaining and inspirational aspects' (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 301). However, the heterogeneity of Russian-speaking migrants in London, and researchers' warnings against taking migrant communities for granted (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003, Bunnell et al., 2011, Ryan et al., 2008) brings particular attention to the diversity of their sociality practices. There is a variety of ways of being connected to each other, and London is a social space where these connections are negotiated, resulting in the formation of migrants' personal networks. The presence of other post-Soviet migrants is perceived and negotiated as a routine part of super-diversity of London, and engaging with it is flexible to different extents, often being a feature of 'lifestyle migration' (Knowles and Harper, 2009) rather than a necessity or obligation.

I claimed here that the configuration and development of migrants' social networks is not principally and universally centered on belonging to a national or ethnic community. There are multiple divisions in this population, and a variety of social ties containing different affective qualities. This makes Russian-speaking migrants I interviewed members of a set of social networks that may have transnational origins, and may reinforce the sense of 'imagined community' – but the establishment and functioning of these are often conditioned by the specific circumstances of London's diversity, which are negotiated locally. In other words, they socialize in a certain way not just because they are Russian-speakers, but more crucially because they are a part of the population of London, with all its interconnections and differentiations. And while interconnections and relationships within this migrant population have been the main focus of this section, in the next part of this work I will approach post-Soviet migrants' as participants of the urban divisions and complex relationships with other Londoners.

Part 3. Living with diversity

Introduction

After focusing on personal relationships inside the community which is a part of a multicultural population of a global city, as a next step, I will approach Russian-speaking migrants' relationships that transcend the boundaries of this community.

After giving an account of London as a multicultural and 'super-diverse' setting in chapter 2, and outlining the sociality within the post-Soviet migrant 'community' in chapters 4 to 6, this part of the work will analyze migrants' relationships with this diversity. Certain features contribute to the construction of 'global cities', as well as to construction of these cities' dwellers. Firstly, in chapter 7 I will investigate migrants' perceptions of the diversity they have encountered in London. Chapter 1 suggested that coexistence of the city inhabitants is problematized by the intersectionality of multiple economic, cultural, political, legal, social patterns of difference, which reinforce the processes of inclusion and exclusion. Migrants, I argued in chapter 1, as a result of enhanced mobility, social differentiations and power inequalities, racialized discourses of both home and host countries, and often limited social contact with the difference, emerge as a racializing agency in the city, as a part of imagining themselves placed within its urban hierarchies. Thus, secondly, in chapter 8 I intend to analyze xenophobic patterns of relationships with 'Others', and elaborate on the shaping of racialization processes among Russian-speaking Londoners.

Finally, in chapter 9 I will discuss the cosmopolitan features of migrants' attitudes to 'Others' and the potential ways of reducing xenophobia. Cosmopolitanization was described in chapter 1 as a gradual and selective process of becoming more open and reflexively accepting the different subject. Among the other aims of my research, I have outlined in chapter 1 the need to understand how this selectivity works, and explore how life in a city like London can modify the attitudes towards Others. I have suggested focusing on migrants and the formation of their attitudes as a crucial element of migration research in times of increased global mobility, diversification of global cities' population and problematization of intercultural communication. Following this, chapter 9 will describe the positive impact of Russian-speaking migrants' immersion into the super-diversity of London on their attitudes to other

nationalities and ethnic groups. I will underline the significance of multiple patterns of social differentiation in this regard, meaningful both for the chances of developing racialized attitudes and for determining the eventual exposure to diversity. Also, drawing upon the importance of studying migrants' social networks in detail, and the special role of friendly relationships for post-Soviet migrants, described in previous theoretical and empirical chapters, I will argue that personal, informal communication with the different subject is a means of developing tolerance and openness to diversity. Altogether, the next three chapters will explore the complexity, dynamics, and sometimes paradoxical character of the sociality practices that Russian-speaking migrants employ in constructing their everyday lives with and within the super-diversity of London.

Chapter 7. Facing Otherness in super-diversity

1. Preface

In part 1 of this thesis, I have described the effects of the contemporary migration situation on the UK and particularly London's population, economy, labour divisions, and social life. International migration to the UK has increased greatly in the past decades, and London is seen as the most attractive place for migrants: the impact of international migration has changed the demographic situation from population decline to its growth (Buck et al., 2002, Hall, 2007). The factors that prompted the increased migration since the middle of 20th century were the changes in the economy, extended market relations and the development of communication infrastructure (Hamnett, 2003, Wills et al., 2010: 5). The highly skilled professionals are attracted by the development of the post-industrial service economy; the less skilled are drawn in by the jobs that bring them more income than back home. London was a place where the changes were most significant, and is now a hub where most of these inflows concentrate. The changes in occupational and income structure induced by the development of service economy are reflected in the diversification of migrants as well as a proliferation of migration channels and migrants' legal statuses (Vertovec, 2007). Super-diversity essentially means the development of much more subtle and multidimensional differences among migrants than their ethnic/national characteristics, due to the appearance of new migrant groups and their high concentrations in London. Migrants differ between and within national groups, and the patterns of differentiation are based on a variety of factors – socioeconomic position, legal status, migration channel, degrees of transnational engagement. It is also resonating with the migration management policies of the UK (McDowell, 2008b: 495). The UK now sees lots of highly differentiated and stratified migrants, where different legal rights assigned to them by migration laws give them additional degrees of difference: between nationalities, some of which are more privileged in their access to the UK, and between those with different skill levels, which to a large extent predetermines migrants' social positions in the country. As a result, the city has a unique vibrant atmosphere that by itself can serve as an attraction and at the same time trigger the development of tensions between different groups.

Empirical evidence is essential for enriching the analytical description of diversity and especially of the potential problems incurred by it. How exactly do people manage living with difference? To start exploring this issue, the primary question that needs an answer is how they can possibly see the diversity, and how the image of London is formed in the minds of those who have to find a way to live there. Being placed into London settings and facing the enhanced diversity of its inhabitants requires a way of dealing with difference as a part of the process of defining one's own place in the city life. New values and solidarities can be formed, while subjects re-position and re-identify themselves: '...adapting over time, dynamically, to immigration and diversity requires the reconstruction of social identities, not merely of the immigrants themselves [...], but also of the newly more diverse society as a whole' (Putnam, 2007: 159). In the new social conditions of London, understanding the implications of the diverse social connections of migrants who are themselves effectively shaping this diversity, has to include the whole picture of in-group and out-group attitudes. In this chapter, I will present accounts of how Russian-speaking migrants see the specificity of London life in the circumstances of increased global mobility, diversification of the global city population and problematization of intercultural communication. This includes perceiving the city and the people surrounding them and living in the same area, possibilities of communication with the others, social norms of handling diversity, and eventual effects of these on the perceptions of identities of others and the self. In a way, this is the account of how people see the particular nature of the city, and the effects of London on themselves.

2. Recognition of 'Otherness' present

To start with, migrants living in a city that is a hub of international migration with a unique mix of people with different ethnicities/nationalities, occupational positions and backgrounds, levels of income, education, legal statuses, routes and circumstances that brought them to London, acknowledge that there is an exceptional degree of diversity that they encounter every day. Amin (1997: 418) describes the contemporary city as 'a variegated and multiplex entity - a juxtaposition of contradictions and diversities, the theatre of life itself. The city is not a unitary or homogeneous entity and perhaps it never has been'. Such diversity can have implications for many aspects of these new Londoners' lives: its existence is noted as a feature of the whole city, at the

same time as there are more local, more familiar and reflected upon expressions of diversity, concentrated spatially around the places they inhabit, and socially – around migrants' important social connections. So, what are the main features of diversity that migrants encounter in their everyday lives?

Perhaps most importantly, seeing London as diverse, as migrants gradually discover, does not necessarily coincide with seeing it all as different and alien. In other words, as they learn to live within this diversity, they may realize that they are themselves part of it. While those unfamiliar with this difference can be wary of it, it does not mean being uncomfortable with it when it becomes familiar, as in the case of Alla, a Ukrainian women in mid-thirties married to an Englishman:

> 'My mother told me: I don't understand how all these foreign things can become familiar. To a certain degree, she is right, this is all alien. But it is strange how it can be quite comfortable with this alien. When I was getting married, she said – are you sure that this is what you want and how you want it? I said – yes, why? She said – I don't understand how you find common language with him [Alla's husband]. I say – why? She says – well, he is a stranger! I say – no! Is that because he speaks English? I speak English, too… It is difficult to understand'.

London is indeed perceived as diverse, and in its diversity there is a place for any person. One does not have to be English to come to terms with it: the city is exposed not as a city inhabited by English gentlemen, but as another 'melting pot'. Quite often, the understanding comes through language practice:

> 'Last year, my sister came to see me here. She stayed for two months. She almost does not speak English, but I cannot say she felt uncomfortable at all. And when she came back [to Dushanbe], the first thing she said was – oh, you don't have to speak English at all there, everyone speaks Russian! It surprised her that she could hear it so regularly in such a huge metropolis'.

(Firuza, 34)

When Firuza's mother came to see her from Tajikistan, she, too, did not encounter any problems. In this case, she found her way through diversity by speaking Farsi.

Localized diversity that people face on regular basis becomes part of their everyday lives. Migrants give extensive descriptions of ethnic and national composition of their

flats, houses, neighbourhoods and London areas. Living in London involves exploring one's neighbourhood, the people who inhabit it, and the organization of public space.

> 'There are different people. Australians, New Zealanders. For some reason, the cafes are mostly being open by Australians. I understood this is quite typical for East London, there are lots of cafes, in Hackney and nearby…Europeans, French, Spanish. Generally, this area is quite Bengali. Most of the population of Tower Hamlets is of Bengali origin, but this did not affect our area [Hackney Wick], it is quite mixed. We have Africans, Germans, English…
>
> I: Do you communicate with neighbours or locals?
>
> R: We say hi. Do not socialize much. Sometimes people invite us…to parties, for example. You come, have a cocktail, say hi, that's it'.
>
> (Tamara, 38)

> 'There are a lot of Russians…not many in comparison with Poles, it's just I was surprised that they, too, found this corner of London [Chiswick]. Mainly, we have French. We have a French school, and I think this is also why some places are opening here – Gerard, Côte, Maison Blanc, a chocolatier…There are not so many things in Hammersmith, for example. […] The Poles are mainly in service jobs. There is a Polish centre, a Polish shop two blocks away from here. They usually come and paint the walls, do the building jobs. We had a Polish nanny who dumped us. We don't have many Indians…if we take our Lydia [cleaner], she lives among Indians [in East London], but we don't have them here. So, mainly English, French, and some Russians'.
>
> (Vera, 35)

As well as recognizing the variety of ethnicities and nationalities, people acknowledge the multitude of class and occupational groups that often fall within the boundaries of some of the former and eventually produce double categories. The taxonomies of diversity include origin and class characteristics: Polish builders, English working class, Pakistani off-license shop assistants or Ukrainian nannies.

> 'There is a whole stratum of Russian-speaking cleaners here. […] Maria was Ukrainian, with a horrible Ukrainian accent. When Natalia went to Qatar, she took Maria with her, and while she was waiting for her visa, she lived in Natalia's flat. Once, she invited me – oh, Evgeniy, I am leaving. I did not know much about her, just knew she was Maria, Natalia's cleaner, we did not have any relationship. And she tells me – I am leaving, my friends are coming, please, come [to the leaving party]. I came. I saw a crowd – around 30 people, and all were nannies and cleaners, a whole class. I chatted with them, they were eating and drinking, the food was very tasty and diverse – *golubtsy* and stuff… Suddenly I understood that at least half of them had a university degree. Half of

them are illegal, living on fake Lithuanian passports with their photos glued in. A whole stratum of illegal migrants who share a room between 3-4 people'.

(Evgeniy, 43)

Evgeniy here got in touch with a social group that he had never been closely connected with, although he knew about its existence. Although they could have been his compatriots, they belong to different social strata, as he admitted himself. A feature of super-diversity is differentiation going along these class lines, even within a national community. The multitude of social groups makes up a compound whole, and it is not uncommon that some parts of this complexity slip from immediate grasp. The 'parallel lives' (Community Cohesion Panel, 2004: 7) led by many Londoners are a representation of the coexistence of many groups and cultures in a global city.

'When I just came, I was asking where Russians live. There is no such area like Brighton Beach. There are good areas and bad areas. Class areas. I see a lot of black people on the bus in my area. But I've never had problems with that…[…] Some might not like them, and they are partly excused by the fact that they have never lived with them and never will. If their paths cross, Russians might have a feeling of dislike. But they do not actually cross. So they can think whatever they want.'

(Vladimir, 40)

'You know, the English[6]…my communication with them is so little that I just could not have any special impression formed about them. They just exist, we kind of coexist, and that's it. I even don't know what to say about them. Absolutely no emotions – neither negative nor positive'.

(Rustam, 24)

However, the same Community Cohesion Panel Report (2004: 7) mentions the risks involved with such parallel existence: 'the ignorance about each other's communities

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[6] In mine as well as some other migration research (Spencer et al., 2007), 'the English' and 'the British' are often described as terms that can be used interchangeably by migrants who do not realize or do not reflect properly on the difference between the two. Being aware of that, I was specifying in my questions to most of my respondents that I was interested in their attitudes to 'white English', appealing to ethnicity rather than to nationality. However, there still could be some confusion in their narratives. While talking about English classmates, some of them could mean British classmates, for example. The terms that my informants used were translated literally, however there is this ambiguity in their actual interpretations that is important to note.

had been turned into fear, and even demonization. The result was intolerance, discrimination and, in extreme cases, violence'. In most cases, wariness about other representatives of super-diversity appears when mutual understanding ends, and the unfamiliar steps in one's way instead of staying in its niche - with its own habits and manners that contains a threat or an impression of threat.

> 'This area is quite dangerous. It is not the nicest thing when you walk around at 12 pm, normally, decently dressed – no short skirts. And they start whistling and shouting something from the cars. Generally, you get used to nobody paying attention to you. So, when you encounter such obnoxious attention…They were mainly Indians or Arabs…Bangladeshi, Pakistani…I cannot say it was a bad area, it was ok. But we lived in a council house. There were lots of people…I was afraid, it was a bit scary area'.
>
> (Lera, 25)

> 'No, it's all fine, but when it is on a distance. But when you walk in a dark street and see a crowd of people who are stoned…asking about your phone, your money…Then I don't like them. […] We need to look at levels of crime in different areas…especially where the majority is…coloured. Well, I don't know the statistics. But I suppose that in Notting Hill the level of crime is lower than in Brixton'.
>
> (Kolya, 22)

Being 'fine on a distance' is assumed to be the general state of things in London, the way it should be. In turn, this state of things requires a special attitude, a way of behaviour generally accepted in this city. By many of my informants, this is described almost as a specific sociocultural norm that is characteristic of London – the way its various inhabitants are distancing themselves from the others on the everyday basis. How are the notions of such mutual positioning implemented in the routine life?

3. 'Nobody cares'

Simmel (1903: 12) while describing metropolitan life and its subjects argues that the 'metropolitan type […] creates a protective organ for itself against the profound disruption with which the fluctuations and discontinuities of the external milieu threaten it'. A city dweller learns to react to a multitude of external events and impressions in a less sensitive and more impersonal way: 'the blasé outlook […] is at first the consequence of those rapidly shifting stimulations of the nerves which are thrown together in all their contrasts and from which it seems to us the intensification

of metropolitan intellectuality seems to be derived. […] This incapacity to react to new stimulations with the required amount of energy constitutes in fact that blasé attitude which every child of a large city evinces when compared with the products of the more peaceful and more stable milieu' (Simmel, 1903: 14). Amin (2002: 17), writing about mixed neighbourhoods, underlines that they are 'communities without community, each marked by multiple and hybrid affiliations of varying geographical reach and each intersecting momentarily (or not) with another for common local resources and amenities'. The multiethnic and multicultural city becomes a space where communication is often superficial and limited. There can be no need to disclose one's identity or even open up for communication at all:

> '…I always stop talking if I hear someone around speaking Russian, I don't want to…
>
> I: You don't want them to know you are Russian?
>
> R: I don't. On the contrary, it is interesting to be incognito and eavesdrop on their conversation…'

> (Vera, 35)

Such accounts of preference of being an unrecognized observer rather than a potentially involved participant of some interaction that might emerge on the grounds of actually existing commonalities are not uncommon. For many Russian-speaking migrants, the more time they spend in London, the less conspicuous they tend to become, primarily about demonstrating their nationality in public spaces. Anonymity becomes a value in itself, an inherent trait of life in London:

> 'Those who have just arrived here and those who have been living here for a long time are different. They change when they come here. But I don't think it is assimilation, they just change […] The newcomers talk loudly. If you are walking down the street and hear Russian speech – it means they are either tourists or just arrived. Russians who have lived here – for a year or two, let's say – they are used to the fact that wherever you are, there are some Russians around. They understand it and don't shout'.

> (Vladimir, 40)

Not attracting attention becomes a habitual way of behaviour to such an extent that sometimes unusual attention disrupts the routine, as it was mentioned above in Lera's quote. In turn, not paying attention – or paying it only to certain issues related to

common experience – also often becomes customary. Fortier (2007: 110) describes living in a multiethnic neighbourhood as 'side-by-side, rather than face-to-face […] neighbours engage in what could be read as an ethical relation of indifference'. In fact, quite a few respondents characterized the general air of London as a place where 'nobody cares'.

> 'I think in London no one is interested in anyone anymore. Not just in me. There are no groups of people who live in a monocultural atmosphere. All Londoners who work here have been working in mixed companies for many years. They are not curious, don't ask questions about other countries. We can talk about mundane things like football. […] Local London things. Although sometimes over a coffee, when we gather with people we've known for many years, we can tell stories, remember certain associations. But they don't try to get inside your soul'.
>
> (Vladimir, 40)

> 'My classmates, I think, don't care who I am. Our relations don't go outside the university, and they are positive. I make an impact in our studies, I think. […] I never ever asked them if they had any stereotypes about, for example, typical Russian family'.
>
> (Kolya, 22)

> 'Life is different here and there [in Ukraine […] Here, no one needs you. They will leave you to live as you want here, but not there. There, they will keep bothering you…'
>
> (Alla, mid-thirties)

Londoners, and especially the English, are often seen as disinterested, polite but distant and closed for deep personal involvement in a relationship (Spencer 2007: 63, Datta 2009). At the same time, the air of assumed indifference towards Otherness becomes taken for granted by migrants as a feature of London. In fact, it seems to be one of the effects of the tacit rules that regulate the social life in the city and that will be described in the next section of this chapter.

4. Unwritten rules of behaviour

Favell (2008: 169-170) notes as a recurrent theme in the narratives of mobile 'Eurostars' the pressure that the city puts on people to live there in a certain way: 'It is

built into the structure of their daily lives, the infrastructure of getting around, the habits of socializing, and the compromises involved in attaining any sort of decent quality of life. Behind London's cosmopolitan front lies the blunt fact that anyone who lives there is forced to assimilate to the ways of the city'. The city is also seen as imposing tacit rules on the lives of Russian-speaking migrants. While learning the ways one should behave in a multiethnic city, as these ways of behaviour are seen amongst other Londoners, my respondents often realize that coexistence with difference may be not unproblematic. As well as describing life in super-diversity as generally anonymous, they see the acceptable kinds of expressing one's attitudes towards it, and gradually learn that the issues of political correctness here can be more topical in everyday life than in home countries.

> 'I could say something improper, but John [husband] would always shun me. I could express some of my observations of someone or some culture, which would be anti-politically correct. But John would tell me…Well, that's all closed chapter now'.

> (Vera, 35)

The traditions of political correctness may be different in the UK and post-Soviet countries. Indeed, a different history, official and popular discourses, social structure of the societies, cultural norms and traditions of socialization, not to mention the different kinds of difference existing in the countries, are responsible for different habits of reacting to, speaking about, or treating the distinctive subject. Effectively, things that could be regarded as normal in one's speech and behaviour in some FSU countries can be deemed as offensive in the UK. As well, what could be articulated in a conversation with a compatriot might not be reproduced while talking to a non-Russian-speaking Londoner. This may lead to some cultural mistakes and misunderstandings in the host country, before the new norms are noticed, acknowledged, and start being followed. Evgeniy tells a story that is based on an almost classic difference in cultural norms of naming the other. In this situation, the perception of a Russian man's talk as racist language by the black couple was grounded in his unawareness of what is culturally coded as racist outside of Russia.

> 'I've had a very unpleasant situation in a restaurant. We were celebrating a deal, my Russian client invites me and my wife [...] I want to drink wine, but [the client insists] – no, let's drink vodka! Well, ok. We drink vodka. The restaurant is

expensive! £300 per bottle. That Russian guy gets loose. There is a table beside ours, and there is a couple, black couple. Don't know, from Jamaica. They stare at us, startled that one can drink vodka like that, by glasses. One bottle, two…I think we drank three then. Me, my wife and that guy. And that guy looks at them [the black couple] and says: Why are these *negry* looking? The woman turns to me: did he say 'nigger'? She asks me in English. I say: please understand, in Russian language the black are not called 'black', they are typically called with a word implying the Negroid race…And I see her nostrils flare. She says: I know all Russians are racist. I say: you shouldn't think of it this way. Well, he really did not mean anything. He was just wondering why *negry* were looking at us. I translate it all to him. He blushes. He is quite a decent guy. And he starts: oh…we need to drink vodka with you! And the two tables unite, in an expensive restaurant, and they start drinking vodka with us. They get totally wasted. Well, who can drink like Russians? […] They get drunk, and we start singing songs…But I think, this situation could have had much worse consequences…'

(Evgeniy, 43)

While the man did not intend to say or do anything offensive, his reliance on his home country's cultural norms resulted in what was perceived as breach of the rules of political correctness in London. In addition, his lack of proficiency in English and desire to drink vodka signify that he is a newcomer, not familiar with the UK society, while Evgeniy knows the norms of both countries and skillfully navigates between them. Such encounters involve a clash of habits and traditions, and serve as an extreme demonstration to the migrants of a certain set of rules regulating the (at least superficially) unproblematic coexistence with difference. Russian-speaking respondents note that they can see the UK society as more 'trained' to be tolerant. Although they acknowledge that xenophobia may well exist in this society, they soon realize that public expressions of it are a taboo here.

'This is all about politics and media. Here, despite all the terrorist attacks, we speak about terrorism, but we do not accuse a nationality. In Russia it is a bit different. Here, the terrorist attacks are not connected with any national group…'

(Vera, 35)

'I: Have you ever noticed attitudes like that [racist] in yourself?

R: My common sense tells me that I should say no…

I: And your honesty?

R: …But exclusively my honesty tells that I also have thoughts of that kind'.

'I simply don't get it. It is prohibited, this racism! But it still exists…'

(Yana, 40)

In fact, it is universally seen as inappropriate to express any kinds of chauvinistic opinions, especially in London, and it is one of the skills required by and developed through the practical operation of everyday life activities of migrants (Knowles and Harper, 2009: 232). Learning to behave in diversity is a part of certain 'social and cognitive skills for pragmatically managing cultural difference in everyday interactions' developed by migrants who admit after a while that 'one can "get used to it", that living in London requires tolerance and that multiculturalism is a fact of life, not an abstract ideology' (Eade et al., 2006: 40). Learning to deal with diversity requires learning to deal with one's own prejudices, too, even if it may be a compromise rather than a genuine reconstruction of the self (Parutis, 2011: 281). While in this chapter I am discussing how people perceive life in super-diversity, rather than how they interact with it, accounts of how one should behave in respondents' narratives often counteract with accounts of their own thoughts. The example is the following quote by a woman who consciously says racist things, and simultaneously admits that this is not the way a 'proper Londoner' must talk. This slippery ground has eventually formed a problematization of race and class relations reflected upon in the next chapter. In other words, unwritten rules exist; but there is much more behind their surface. Such discrepancies between thoughts and publically accepted articulations often involve further problematization of identities.

'A lot of white people [live in my area]. Thank god. Bastards. Sorry! I'm not a racist, but sorry (laughs). I am in London, but such a [dumb] blonde'.

(Galya, 31)

5. Contested identities

Relying on these unwritten rules that manage the coexistence of such a variety of cultures, migrants learn to see things as being 'fine on a distance', and become used to keeping a certain distance from other Londoners. They get used to hiding their identities, particularly national ones. Super-diversity and anonymity in conjunction

lead to another important feature of life in a global city. It goes in line with the discussions of fluid, multiple, hybrid identities (Levitt, 2001, Appadurai, 1996, Smith, 2001) that are prone to constant change as people move through different places and encounters. Identities are understood as 'the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture' (Hall, 1990: 226). Life in London often breaks up the conventional identifications of migrants. Beck (2006: 109) underlines that in contemporary societies 'borders are no longer being drawn solely along national lines'. For many people (at least in their own accounts) it results in realizing the reduced significance of concrete national identity and the emergence of mixed and hybrid identities.

'It does not matter now whether a person is Russian, Peruvian or Nigerian. If only he is a good person. Nationality has lost its sense. I've been abroad for 10 years – studying, working, hanging out with people from all over the world. Looking for Russians is not a priority…'

(Dima, 24)

'I'm not a patriot, I have no motherland. I am not Russian, I already cannot speak normal Russian. I can read books…but not now…'

(Yana, 40)

Uncertainty and fragmentation of personality often arise in migrants' reflections upon their hybridity. As the conventional identifications fade away, new ones do not necessarily take their place, leaving the person in a complicated process of positioning oneself.

'Russia is a more conservative country […] here, there is more individualism, another extreme…They are polar opposites, and you are not yet here, but already far from being there. It is very difficult to understand. […] We have rather blended in, I think. Well, not completely, but we are closer to "here" than to "there". You don't feel yourself Rus…well you do feel yourself Russian, because when people know it, they see you as Russian. But you are much more Russian here, than you are in Russia. We are not Russian in Russia. When we talk to our friends, they are like – whoa, guys, are you Russians or what? We don't share the values…we have a different mentality…'

(Ksenia, 29)

In line with Miller's (2008) description of London as a place where people tend to escape identities by origin and not replace them with anything in particular, over time migrants can find their nationalities less relevant for everyday life in this city.

> 'When I just came here, my family sent me some DVDs in Russian. Once, we came home to watch a movie with my friend. She had been living out of Bishkek for 10 years, but we spoke in Russian. You know, she could not [watch the movie in Russian]. I could not understand it at that point. She said she was more comfortable to watch films in English or French…Now, after five or six years here, I watch films [in English] more and more. I mean, I would buy a Russian film if I have choice, but maybe I don't really want to…not that I don't want, I don't feel the need'.

> (Firuza, 34)

Native tongue and generally the ability to speak other languages gradually become less an instrument of everyday communication (especially for high skilled professionals who do not have many Russian-speakers around them at work, at home, or at the university). Rather, it becomes a kind of 'personal luxury', as one of the migrants has put it; a privilege that distinguishes the individual from the rest, his own special asset that can be used selectively but does not have to be shown off. The importance of such linguistic luxury is often seen as the last resort of conventional identities. It is considered as the hardest thing to give up. Even if life circumstances do not include regular practice of the native language, the possible loss of language skills is often lamented upon, although sometimes this loss is somewhat pathetically exaggerated. In a sense, this can be a way of demonstrating how one has become less of a Russian and more of a Londoner. At the same time, mixed families which are quite common among the people I have met, as small hubs of diversity in the most immediate surroundings of an individual, are often the arenas of much contested language-based identities. Following Bakhtin (1973), language is personally and socially situated, flexible and dialogic, learnt in contextualized social interactions. Communication with partners and spouses often involves mutual learning:

> 'I will teach my [South African] partner Russian. He does not have much time, but I've bought him some books. […] The language is difficult for them, but he has to know the basics, so that he can speak to my parents. […] Of course, I will teach my child Russian, when I have one, and will bring him to a Russian school!'

> (Polina, 26)

The issues of identities become even more complicated when it comes to children. There are people who simply did not have time to teach their children Russian, or did not find it necessary because their own identifications with Russian-ness have already been weak at that time (in my sample, these were two women who had relatively long personal histories of emigration and are Jewish and Latvian by origin). However, migrants mostly try to instill some Russian-ness in their kids, mainly through language and culture. This process does not always go smoothly.

> 'People get married…if your husband is foreign, not English – you still speak English with him, right? The child automatically hears English. […] It is hard to teach my son Russian, I just cannot manage. I had all my fairytales in Russian when I was small. My God, it was so beautiful. Beautiful fairytales, beautiful cartoons. I try to read to Thomas Russian books…[…] I read him these [non-Russian] ones and get angry, I say – this is not an interesting fairy tale…'

> 'I know a woman from Moldavia in my area. I don't know what language she speaks to her daughter, but I think it is not Moldavian [*sic*]. She teaches Russian in a Sunday school, and teaches her daughter too. I thought: maybe let our children communicate? I say, Nadyusha, could you speak Russian to Thomas? Nothing turned out of that, can you imagine! Nothing – they [children] keep speaking English. Damn!'

> (Yana, 40)

Nearly all parents whose children are born and grow up in London complain that the kids' 'Russian-ness' is hard to develop and sustain. Even in Russian-speaking or bilingual couples, and even with a Russian-speaking nanny, a lexicon of a three-years-old may include more English words than Russian. Two of my respondents were upset that their kids did not seem to like Russian cartoons, or watched too much English TV. In other words, attempts to preserve national identity in kids through culture and language are not always successful.

People are affected by diversity in their everyday life in the streets, in the neighbourhoods, at workplaces and schools, at home in interaction with neighbours and family. The point here is that these effects are not always considered as positive, and sometimes they may seem contradicting with or disrupting existing identifications. National identities appear to be most straightforwardly contested: it becomes difficult for many to identify themselves as belonging to a single national category. It gradually becomes a less relevant way of self-identification, and is partially substituted by

postnational (Soysal, 1994) or denationalized (Favell, 2008) ways of positioning oneself. The changing patterns of global mobility, its increasing numbers and resulting rapid diversification of London's population, the persisting and developing problems in intercultural communication described by researchers as well as new ways of getting on with diversity, and the contested degrees and significance of transnationalism inevitably make the relationships amongst many city dwellers more complicated. The complexity is conditioned by an increasing amount of factors that produce differentiation within the city population. Amin (2006: 1021) addresses the urban community 'in the form of empowered neighbourhoods, abundances of social capital, face-to-face contact, and generally the goodness of urban social cohesion' as one of the 'shibboleths of urban possibility', noting that there is too much difference, disagreement and escape to assimilate in a city to call it a community or community of communities. There is a significant diversity of sociality patterns unfolding in the urban life; as well as a variety of factors that hinder the positive development of social relationships. These factors prompting exclusion, segregation, and resentment among Londoners are in the main focus of the next chapter.

6. Concluding thoughts

As this chapter shows, there are certain ways in which people perceive the nature of London in general, as a place with a very special population. It is seen as a space with a multitude of other inhabitants, where some strategies are to be employed in order to organize coexistence. Communication among different kinds of Londoners is often superficial and limited. Certain sociocultural norms of behaviour regulate the routine sociality, often supporting the indifferent attitude to the Other. For those who chose to live in this city, previous attachments, values and identifications may become irrelevant but not necessarily replaced by anything as a consequence. These perceptions, in turn, influence how people react to this diversity and how they interact with it. They are underpinning the actual practices of building relationships of migrants with the different subject in London. The next two chapters will explore the possible strategies of migrants' dealing with the Otherness, and the main issues to investigate are those that become most disputable among Russian-speaking respondents upon encounter with diversity – the complexity of attitudes and behavioural practices based on, or attributed to, national and ethnic identities.

Chapter 8. (Re)emergence of xenophobia

1. Preface

Chapters 5 and 6 suggested that post-Soviet migrants more or less explicitly draw distinctions between relationships with fellow Russian-speakers and with non-Russian-speaking Londoners. In chapter 7, I demonstrated their view of London. This city hosts a multitude of cultures, languages, ethnicities and nationalities. While, in order to become a 'proper Londoner', tacit rules are recognized as necessary to follow and habits of indifference might be picked up, I have mentioned that migrants exhibit an abundance of not-so-indifferent attitudes behind the surface of depersonalized urban sociality. But what is wrong with the diversity, in their opinion? In other words, what turns the Other into the subject to be avoided or even resented, and the migrant him/herself – into the denouncing one? The analysis of xenophobic articulations in migrants' narratives, the exploration of the roots of racialized attitudes, and the focus on reformation and further functioning of these in the social space of London are the issues which will be addressed in this chapter to help answer these questions.

Sergei Dovlatov was a Russian writer of the second half of the 20th century, who emigrated to USA in 1979. There, he co-edited a liberal Russian émigré newspaper and in the mid-80s achieved recognition as a writer, his works being printed in 'The New Yorker'. In one of his letters to a friend in the Soviet Union he wrote that he did not live in America but in Forest Hills, surrounded by seven thousand compatriots:

> 'The milieu is not a refined one, but it is the only one that is acceptable. The Americans are kind, open-hearted, cheerful people, helpful and optimistic, but completely alien. Friendship in the Russian sense with all its violent expressions of emotions, last shirts, quarrels, embraces, and tears is unimaginable here. Everything is based on different rules, on independence, on keeping yourself to yourself, on reserve and self-absorption. The word and the notion "privacy" – that is, in a loose translation, "the private sphere", is for the Americans sacred. It is a coat of armour with which they protect themselves from negative emotions'.

> (Dovlatov, S. Private letter, as quoted in Young, 2009: 54)

In his other piece of writing, a belletristic autobiographical novel, he sarcastically accounts for the attitude of Russian immigrants of his wave:

'Our favourite pastime was scolding the Americans.

The Americans are naïve, unsympathetic, heartless. It is impossible to be friends with the Americans. They drink vodka in microscopic doses. Like from a toothpaste cap...

The global problems do not bother the Americans. Their main motto is – "Take it easy". Not a sign of cosmic sadness!..

When they divorce with their wife – they go to the lawyer. (No way can they outpour their soul to colleagues). They tell their dreams to psychoanalysts. (As if it is difficult to call a friend in the middle of the night). And so on'.

(Dovlatov, S. 1985: 107)

The immigrant wave described by Dovlatov was in a way more homogenous than those who moved to London in the past 10-15 years. The former came from a different country, with a different (to some extent) political system and official ideological discourse, experienced more difficulties on their routes to USA, and were partly Jewish and largely representatives of the 'intelligentsia'. They were running from a regime, often losing their connections with home, rather than relatively freely moving within transnational social spaces. The latter represent almost all social layers of the society in the post-Soviet countries. Although they still come from the places with predominantly authoritarian rather than democratic political systems, migration has become easier and is now less considered as a marginal practice in these countries. But not much time has passed between these two migration waves; and to some extent the representatives of both share what Byford (2009a: 55) calls a 'historically specific socio-cultural background', actualized in their childhood experiences, upbringing, education, engagement with the culture of home country and communication with compatriots. The narratives of my informants turn out to be quite similar to those of Dovlatov's ones. In this chapter, after describing the image of London's super-diversity that migrants face in their everyday lives and thoughts and reflections it invokes among some migrants from former Soviet countries, I will in a more detailed way approach their strategies of dealing with it. In line with my general focus on informal relations, I will look at living with diversity from that point. Here, I am continuing the strand of research on how it is possible to live with and in diversity (Keith, 2005a, 2005b, Amin, 2002, 2010, Datta, 2009) with a particular focus on those migrants who have essentially contributed to the recent making of London's specific demographic nature.

2. 'Irreconcilable' differences

Acknowledging that there is a great variety of different people around them, many migrants realize that coexisting with difference cannot be confined to superficial or merely observational contact. Living in London certainly involves getting in contact with others, at some point. Intercultural communication, as many admit, is not unproblematic, and often people's narratives show the limits that they set for communication with non-compatriots. Groups are thus defined as collections of essentially different individuals, and these definitions may become ethnicized or racialized. In this section, I will discuss how certain differences between people take the first step to being transformed into separating distinctions. Frequently, the language command defines the limits of communication:

> 'Well, the Indians. It's because they…very often speak with quite a strong accent. It is hard to understand them, and it is hard to understand you for them.
>
> I: Do you think that's the reason why [you don't communicate much with them]?
>
> R: Anyway, there is a kind of barrier to our communication.
>
> I: Like misunderstanding?
>
> R: Of course – what's the point in communicating with someone you don't understand?'
>
> (Rustam, 24)

> 'Because it is easier to speak about your personal things, inner thoughts in own language. I mean, I like socializing with Italians, Spanish…But it is easier to talk about personal things, firstly, in my own language, and secondly, there are mentality issues'.
>
> (Lera, 25)

In these and similar accounts, there is a distinction between the possibilities of development of personal relationships with compatriots and the others. Datta (2009: 361) describes the command of language as a specific form of cultural capital, lack of which puts limits on personal engagement with the Otherness for East European migrants. Mutual understanding, if not seen as possible to be achieved instrumentally

by linguistic means, often turns into the impossibility of such understanding emotionally, in a more abstract way. The next step in explaining what may hinder the close relationship with others among many of my respondents was appealing to an almost universal scapegoat – 'mentality issues'. The explanations of this term are blurry and general. Mostly, people asked to elaborate on the topic of mentality explained it in terms of certain social norms and cultural values specific for informal communication and distinctive for different nationalities. Mentality often served as an ultimate argument in claims that some nationalities cannot get on well – or can do it only within limits.

> 'Well, with Russians – yes, it is easier. Because it's our mentality. For example, when you are socializing with the English, it's very different. A little different, their own concepts, views, attitude to life. Maybe they are more closed. Russians are more open, they approach you more easily. And with the English – you try to get closer to them, try to get together, but they don't. So, it becomes hard. Although you can…on a superficial level, no problem. I have quite a lot of English-speaking acquaintances in the uni. But not friends'.

> (Aleksandr, 23)

In different ways, respondents thus make distinctions, positioning themselves and other inhabitants of the city within the categories of 'Us' and 'Them'. However, accounts of attitudes towards different kinds of Londoners too often go far beyond such relatively analytical attempts of reflections upon problems in intercultural communication. The differences between races are naturalized and justified, based on the claims that 'the beliefs, values and practices of different ethnic communities are both distinctive and irreconcilable' (Amin, 2010b: 2). It is not uncommon that migrants' existing preconceptions about ethnic and national otherness add to newly formed prejudices and ideas (Datta, 2009). Consequently, complex ways of chauvinist thinking emerge, the objects of which can be almost anyone – ethnic minorities, white British and even other migrants from the FSU. Quite often, new patterns of prejudices form in the processes of generalization of observations of some of the other Londoners to a bigger ethnic or national group.

In small social networks of some migrants, a person's too intimate relationships or marriage with someone 'not like us' could sometimes be deemed as inappropriate. One of our informants, a 24 years old illegal migrant from Belarus, used to have a black

Canadian girlfriend for a while. His Russian-speaking friends used to make fun of him – 'how do you manage to find her in the dark?' Fortier (2007: 108-109) notes that seeing miscegenation as threatening is an effect of postcolonial historical anxiety about preservation of white femininity as a marker of nation's boundaries. Parutis (2011: 280) gives an example of strong racist language used by East European migrants in respect to racially mixed families. Similarly, such wariness among migrants could serve as a means of protecting the identity of Russianness or whiteness. Dating, marrying, or having children with someone of different skin colour seems to be unacceptable for some Russian-speakers:

> 'Would you date a black or Indian guy?
>
> R: Oh, that's interesting – my Russian friends just recently were asking me the same question. Probably not. […] With a black guy…no. It is still very…unfamiliar. I mean, I have a black friend at work, and it's ok. But there is something…not dislike…I don't know how to put it. I would not have a close relationship with a black guy. Although…if he were mixed race…Brazilian or Mexican – quite possible! They are very cute. […] We were having dinner [with Russian friends] and started talking about guys, as usual… [a question arose] A black guy, no? And everyone was like – no, no. I guess this is too unusual for us. But everyone agreed to a mixed race guy (laughs).'
>
> (Zhanna, 25)

> 'In terms of family reproduction – I'd like to have a white child. And he turned out white. You know, these are subconscious things. I like white girls more, and only then I look at personality. I've never had relationships with other girls…'
>
> (Vladimir, 40)

2.1. Who is 'the Other'?

As this chapter has showed so far, perceptions of differences – primarily ethnic and national – easily slide into emotionally charged 'othering'. Further exploration of these processes requires attending to these social constructs in detail. Who of the members of London's diverse population can be 'othered', and in what ways? This part is an initial attempt to portray the structuring of racialized diversity.

When migrants define the 'irreconcilable' differences between certain kinds of people, they draw a boundary between 'us' and 'them'. They engage in the processes of self-

identification as well as categorization of the Other, where 'each side of the dichotomy is implicated in the other and social identification is the outcome of a dialectical process of internal and external definition' (Jenkins, 2008: 56). Thus, ethnic and racial categorization of different subjects of diversity takes place.

Black people are a common object of racial hostility among respondents who expressed xenophobic views. Wills et al. (2010: 109), describing Polish labour migrants in London, notes the practices of naturalizing and reifying whiteness among them, 'in contradistinction to an inferior "blackness" associated with workers who were variously argued to be "aggressive", "lazy", "criminal", and even "animal". Many claimed that the British preferred Europeans, for their whiteness, to African employees…' Parutis (2011: 279) in a similar way describes East European workers who come to the UK without prior experience of the black community and are challenged when it comes to dealing with black individuals, who are repeatedly portrayed as 'lazy' by her interviewees. One of my respondents, Yana, a Russian phlebotomist from Lithuania, recalls recently quarreling with her Lithuanian boyfriend who said 'all niggers are stupid'. Although her point in this argument was that one should not generalize certain features to a whole ethnicity/nationality, she underlines that black people she has met at work were often 'lazy and cheeky', and she even had to quit a job after having some problems with a black colleague. In fact, later in the interview she slips into the same generalizations she has initially criticized. Her narrative breaks up the British society into two categories – black and non-black, where the former are stigmatized as possessing certain labour-related qualities, which admittedly give the latter the right to label them as inferior. Yana and her partner, eventually, are placed on the same level with the non-black British, according to her reasoning.

> 'Well, no one likes blacks here, no one! […] No one likes blacks - the English, no one. They are not liked because…they are lazy, they just want to come to work, sit their hours there and go home, not to spend a lot of time at work. My partner works where there is only one black person, and I don't know how they still keep him. My partner told me about that'.

> (Yana, 40)

Yana's narrative is quite typical for a 'reasonably prejudiced' person described by Billig et al. (1988: 113). She starts by introducing herself as non-racist, as opposed to her boyfriend, but then she talks about an abstract 'no one liking blacks' which makes this

disliking verbally detached from her personality, and, somewhat controversially to what she said earlier, she seems to use her boyfriend's words as a supportive argument for this 'dislike'. By doing so, she presents racist views as external to herself, and discloses an ambiguity in talking about Others, which was common for most of the respondents.

While Yana talks about race in relation to the divisions in the British society, other respondents' accounts suggest that stigmatization of the black is common for Russians. Evgeniy in the next quote describes how some of his compatriots could not accept and verbally rejected the blackness of his wife, implying that such partnership is inappropriate – somehow continuing the theme of miscegenation addressed earlier in this chapter.

> 'And it is even worse in their relation to black people. They [Russians] arrive here and they start with these utterances like – ugh, there are black people here! I say – oh my god, what's the point…My wife…is more yellow than black, but she is indigenous, khoi khoi tribe. And Russians very often tell me – well, she is not black, is she?! I say – what do you want from me, she is black, the blackest black! […] Once I lost my temper. You are so white, fucking blue blood! In Russia they used to kick you all, you were *zhidy* [derogatory slang word for "Jews"] – and here, look at yourselves, you don't like that he is black! I say, my wife is black, and you try to console me by saying "well, she is not THAT black!"'

> (Evgeniy, 43)

Many Russian-speakers are quite disdainful in their attitudes to South Asian people, particularly Pakistani and Indians[7]. Spencer et al. (2007: 71) describe a similar pattern in attitudes of a wider set of East European migrants. There is a common slang nickname elaborated for South Asians in the informal discourse of Russian-speakers – '*babay*'. It is most often used for people running off-license shops, which, in turn, are called '*babayskii magazin*' (babays' shop). Interesting enough, the word '*babay*' in Russian language has roots in Slavic mythology and means an evil spirit, a bogie, a scary creature.

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[7] While most commonly migrants speak about 'Indians' in this respect, they probably coin with this term a bigger variety of people of South Asian origin. Often they do not really distinguish between nationalities, or between migrants and British citizens of Asian origin.

> 'I think, if you live here for a while, you start to dislike certain nationalities…a bit…for example, Indians. I can't say they are all bad people, they can be nice…But very often they are definitely rude, and you absolutely can't understand what they are saying, and they speak with such a face… like they mean "you are an idiot, what are you doing here?" I mean, if I have a choice in a shop, to go to an Indian cashier or to a Spanish girl – I will go to a Spanish girl'.

(Lera, 25)

In the case of Lera, her dislike of 'Indians' is expressed as an attitude that emerged under the particular influence of her life in London. Similarly to Yana above, she suggests another binary division within the British society, this time between 'Indians' and the rest. The example of a cashier further explains her opinion. She projects her possible impression from encounters with South Asian shop assistants to the whole group of 'Indians'. For her, the way of coexisting with this part of diversity is avoiding it.

The practices of avoiding Londoners from ethnic minorities are not uncommon for such city public spaces of everyday multicultural interaction as shops or buses, when such small acts of avoidance or preference of proximity or contact with a white person may serve as signifiers of disgust (Wilson, 2011: 641). While the English are hardly avoided like that, they, too, quite often are objects of unsympathetic remarks. It reminds of other research on East European migrants who complained about certain personal features of the English (Spencer et al., 2007: 64). In fact, there is a thin line between acknowledging the differences between two cultures that may hinder close communication, and starting to consider the English as inferior to or worse than Russians because of these differences.

> 'In South Africa, I knew one Greek who rented a car, and this car was twice broken into. And here, my acquaintance left his car on a private street, and someone kicked it, so that there was a huge dent, and kicked off the mirror. And I told him, you know, in South Africa they will easily break into your car and rob it. But nobody will ever scratch it. Or, say, violence. All violence in South Africa is financially motivated. And here, they just get drunk in a pub, and here is a pure North European violence, malice. People are malevolent here. […] They say English are polite. For me, they are not polite, it is just cold courtesy. No fucking way they are polite. They are evil. It is all so deep inside them. In Israel, you tread on someone's foot, they swear, and everybody feels great, and leaves in their own directions'.

(Evgeniy, 43)

> 'Historically...the English are not open. You cannot talk [openly in front of them], no. In all nations, there are good, bad and neutral people. But the English are like spies. Like Sherlock Holmes, right? They spy everywhere, on any occasion and on everyone. You know, council even hires people, neighbours...It's in their culture, and it is very bad. At work, no one will tell me that I've done something wrong. They will report to my manager, and the manager will not tell me straight away, she will wait for appropriate situation. [...] It is hard, she looks sooo sweet – like a candy covered with honey. But in reality they are very, very discreet people'.
>
> (Yana, 40)

These accounts represent cultural racism, naturalizing differences between groups as attributed to their cultures, which is represented ultimately as differences between nations (Gilroy, 1987: 60). Evgeniy builds up a sequence of definitions of the 'English culture', from 'polite' through 'cold courtesy' to 'malevolence'. Yana claims that 'spying' and 'discretion' are a universal trait of what she sees as 'English culture', which presumably makes this nation inferior to hers, in her view. In fact, when migrants talk about the white English, it is usually through such attempts to perform a comparative analysis of cultures that the image of Englishness is constructed.

Derogatory attitudes towards people from some former Soviet republics and East Europeans are not uncommon, too – an issue that was partly touched upon in chapter 8. In addition to newly developed opinions on difference, people can 'draw on the racist discourse of their home countries to reinforce their claim to be here, which fostered further resentment' (Wills et al., 2010: 108). Internal divisions are present within any ethnic or nationality group, Wills claims, and migration can further emphasize stereotypes. Researching post-Soviet migrants, I have encountered racialized attitudes of white Russian people towards Central Asians. What is articulated here is the ethnic origin and skin colour rather than the nationality. Nastya here is referring to phenotypical features of some Russian-speaking national groups, using as a reference point an ethnic group she encountered in Britain, which apparently was the greatest cause of her racial resentment.

> '...I would have died in Bournemouth, where there are only Kazakhs and these...from Tashkent...Uzbeks. It was unbearable. They are worse than the Indian people. All these "black" Russian-speakers, ugh'.
>
> (Nastya, 28)

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There is also some nationalist thinking about migrants from the Baltic states, mostly rooted in the past different approaches to the Soviet rule and current strained relations between Russia and these countries, as well as between native citizens of Baltic states and Russians living there.

> 'We were discussing our nanny with Lydia [cleaner] – she says, Lithuanian women are terrible. She says, Polish women are terrible, rotten people. And Lithuanians…and she gave examples…'[8]

> (Vera, 35)

> '...we found another place, at Barking, with a Lithuanian family renting a house from Indians. […] a Lithuanian couple, Renatas who was a terrible nationalist, and his partner. We could immediately feel the hostility. We spoke in Russian. We had to live there for half a year. Confrontations began – for reasons unknown, he would start scandals, and once he called my husband an asshole. We decided we were not going to live with them. Because, you know…even when we were celebrating the New Year [the major secular holiday for the FSU people]…and they did not invite us even symbolically to drink 100 grams. They stay aside from others, these Lithuanians…'

> (Viktoria, 39)

The final nail in the coffin of this problematic relationship, according to Viktoria, was, again, the apparent breach of cultural rules by her Lithuanian opponents. Not celebrating the holiday 'properly' is presented as a reason significant enough to break up the relationships and convince her that her housemates are 'terrible nationalists'. It is particularly interesting that Viktoria, who shares much of Vera's cleaner's views about people from the Baltic states, reasons her apparent dislike of Lithuanians in their suggested nationalism, at the same time being an unadmitted nationalist herself. How come she and other people I have quoted earlier can express such contradicting views?

2.2. 'I am not racist, but…'

I am now returning to the argument of chapter 7 about the acknowledgement of tacit sociocultural norms of political correctness, and the noticed contradiction or even internal conflict between these and xenophobic thought. What one says, to put it

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[8] Vera actually disagrees with her cleaner on the matters of judging about people by nationality or ethnic origin, as it is exemplified in other quotes when she talks about her own thoughts and experience. Here, she was reporting Lydia's speech, nonverbally expressing astonishment and disapproval.

simply, is regulated by the rules of public conduct in London. However, talking about difference may also take place within different publics, and these rules may be applied to a different extent. How does the 'othering' discourse become visible?

Despite a few openly xenophobic statements of some migrants, however, the most common pattern of positioning oneself in relation to the fields of 'Us' and 'Them' is displacement onto others, mostly fitting into the frame of utterances like 'I am not racist, BUT'; or 'Many Russians are racist'. By saying this, people, in their opinion, politely avoid verbal connotations of their personal attitudes with the socially unacceptable picture of a 'racist', or with a general image of 'many Russians', whereas their implicit chauvinism can sometimes be later externalized in more personal reflections on the topic. The extent to which they apply this account to themselves varies from explicit xenophobic utterances through milder slips of tongue to active articulations of anti-chauvinism.

> 'It does not matter to me who the person is. Well, naturally, I cannot say I adore Indian people, hehe. I'm not a huge fan of them. But I think it is the only race. I'm not racist, but I don't like them a bit. I don't know why. They are kind of funny, I think. Maybe I'm not right, of course...'

> (Viktor, 21)

> 'Sometimes, in a conversation, it slips out. Little words, like *indousnya* [derogatory derivative of "Indian"]. Again, I don't know how deep it is inside people. [...] In a talk between Russians, it could slip out. But could he say it in a person's face? Maybe it's just a byword.
> I: So, such bywords occur in a talk among insiders?
> R: Yes. Different insulting words. Well, a person would have been offended if he had a good command of Russian. Otherwise, he would not have understood. The same word "black" can be pronounced with different intonations, attached to good traits of a person – like, "I know that black guy, a friend of mine". [...] They could say such offensive things...for example, it can be dirty in an Indian restaurant. Cockroaches crawling around, that kind of thing'.

> (Vladimir, 40)

In fact, these are examples of 'reasonably prejudiced' opinions (Billig et al., 1988: 112). Billig et al. in their work on ideological dilemmas in the social psychology of everyday thinking underline that very commonly, prejudices are not undilemmatically straightforward but rather there is a dialectic of prejudice. This is why the chauvinist

view may be simultaneously affirmed and contradicted. Researchers have noticed this pattern of self-expression where respondents introduce contrary things with a 'but', willing to appear unprejudiced (Myrdal, 1944, Van Dijk, 1984, as quoted in Billig et al., 1988). Billig et al. (1988: 112) note that such behaviour has to do with more than just sustaining a polite conversation: 'the tag "I'm not prejudiced but…" indicates this dissociation from the irrationalities of 'prejudice. […] Speakers can present themselves and their views as being reasonable, determined by the facts that happen in the world rather than by irrational feelings.' The verbal strategies that my respondents used are similar to those described by Van Dijk (1984, as quoted in Billig et al., 1988: 113): 'They told stories about events which may or may not have happened to themselves, or they formulated their views in terms of abstract generalizations. Both these forms convey the image of reasonableness: the story implies that the expressed belief is based upon external happenings, and the abstract generalization further distances the psychological feelings of the speaker from the expressed conclusion'.

Knowles and Harper (2009: 215), describing the routine lives of British migrants in Hong Kong, underline that despite similar apologetic expressions people use in their speech, there are 'unguarded moments some of the little places where race and empire still matter and make matter'. Expressions of racism are considered unacceptable in the general society. They are not always straightforward, and almost never (among my respondents) result in any kind of open confrontation. Hall (2007: 407) notes that subtle and half-hidden expressions of racism are much more common for London than active performances of it. It goes in line with the perception of diversity mentioned earlier in this chapter, expressed by a general feeling of anonymous coexistence as the most appropriate form of behaviour, without unnecessary personal contact with other Londoners. However, there is much under the surface of the seeming anonymity of super-diversity. Parutis (2011: 272) notes that although discrimination may be subtle and not so prominent in the language used by the employers of East European workers or in the responsibilities assigned to migrants, it could be evident in the looks, tone, and general attitude towards workers. Many parts of diversity are found to be not easily accepted, hard to deal with, strange and alien, threatening or inferior. While it is so common to regard migrants as typical objects of ethnic or national resentment for the general society, this research is

drawing attention to the reverse. If super-diversity is considered to be the state of things in London, migrants are people who are living with diversity and within it, and apparently, as this part of the chapter aimed to demonstrate, this coexistence is not unproblematic. Racialized attitudes easily develop among migrants who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, surrounded by a multitude of cultures, and sometimes being stigmatized by the general population as a threat to their personal wellbeing or the nation-state. Racist and nationalist discourses originating in home countries act together with the effects of heightening mobility, growing power inequalities and social differentiation between people, and restrictive migration policies.

The city with its fluid and changeable nature, described by metaphors of a theatre where different cultural values, economic and political ideologies, and dynamics of social change are brought together (Keith 2005a: 50), or a competing arena of mutable ethnic cultures, a concentration of hybridization and demographic difference (Keith, 2005b: 255), with multiple rationalities and complex subjectivities (Amin, 1997: 419), it can also be a place where identities are revoked and reestablished, hybridization perceived with resentment, and Otherness denounced. The ways in which migrants deal with diversity are reflected in their practices of informal sociality, in their elaborations of who they consider possible to be friends or acquaintances, good neighbours, workmates and classmates, spouses and partners, or simply people who are a part of their daily routines. Here, I am looking at how, upon an individual's personal encounter with other Londoners, attitudes and strategies of behaviour with diversity are given shape, bearing in mind that there might be some preconceptions brought in from the home countries. In this part of the chapter, I have demonstrated that it is not uncommon in migrants' narratives that racialized attitudes are connected with the differences attributed to personal relationships with compatriots and the others. The actual reasons of such problems can be more complicated than just racism. In the next part, I am going to present migrants' own explanations of their xenophobia. This will help understanding the complexity of relationships in a multicultural city, and serve as a pretext to the following part with one of the main ideas of the chapter, where this reasoning will be looked at through a frame of what super-diversity is,

effectively – a variety of people differentiated by many parameters including more than only ethnicity or nationality.

3. Roots and reasons

> 'They are nice and polite people, they always smile and ask "How are you?". Take, for example, the girls from my work, they are all English[9]. But I've lived here for 6 years, and I know they are cold and superficial, and they have no soul – our kind of soul. I don't even know if they express real emotions, or it is just a habit of putting a certain expression on their faces. That's all because of the weather here. It is so shitty, and there are no extreme temperatures like in Russia. Effectively, the English cannot express any extremes in their character, they simply do not have them. Last time I was telling some story from my life to the girls at my work, I was telling it so emotionally and, I guess, in a funny way. They were nodding and saying standard things like "Oh, really?" They looked so mechanical…'

(Nadya, 25)

In this quote that I've chosen as introductory for this part of the chapter, a young middle-class Russian musician is reflecting upon her views on the English. Nadya is blaming them for having 'no soul', attributing this to reasons seemingly natural to her. Again, this is an example of attributing some inferior qualities to the 'English culture' and explaining it with external reasons like 'shitty weather' – without the respondent actually thinking of some other possible reasons why her colleagues did not laugh at her story. In fact, respondents often bring in explanations of their dislike of certain groups, trying to justify the 'irreconcilable' differences between themselves and others. Migrants' existing ideas about difference and habitual strategies of treating it may get further development upon facing a new environment, struggle for better life conditions, and protecting identities threatened by the uncertainties of globalized society. This mix of old and new ideas is reflected in their narratives of explaining the negative attitudes towards some other Londoners. In this section, I will explore how these attitudes can be justified and rationalized by those migrants who express them.

Often, xenophobic attitudes of various kinds have their roots in the past life. These could have formed as an effect of parental upbringing or unpleasant personal contact with some people of different ethnic or national origin. These impressions can remain

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[9] Nadya is talking about the English, not the British here.

very influential even in adult life, as they are formed in the course of primary socialization and sometimes routine social interaction, and serve as important informal contexts of ethnic categorization (Jenkins, 2008: 65-66).

> 'We [Russians] have been told since our early childhood that a black man is a bad man, an evil man. Our parents told that to us, concerning all those dark-skinned Azerbaijani people in the markets in Russia. And this is where the roots of my dislike of all people with dark skin can be found.'

> (Nadya, 25)

> 'I've got a friend who does not like Germans. She thinks they are all fascist. All her four granddads and grandmothers died in the war, because they lived somewhere near Krasnodar. Her mother told her a story how, when she was small, the Germans poured cold water over her granddad and left him outside in the frost…and he died, froze to death. Of course, if you tell this to a child, it will remain for the whole life'.

> (Lera, 25)

Such childhood impressions may concern definite groups of people, however later be externalized to a wider sample of others. In the case of Nadya, her mother's fears about certain ethnic groups were later generalized to a much bigger range of those having similar skin colour. Another respondent expressed her dislike of Muslims in London, while later in the interview it turned out that she has lived in Azerbaijan as a child and witnessed certain gender attitudes in patriarchal society, in addition to the memories of the Nagorno-Karabakh war.

> 'If you are walking down the street, and there is an asshole following you, you know, a bearded guy…not the ones in turbans, but in these kind of caps…and he's saying something to you, and he is looking at you…I don't like that. Or in off licenses…sometimes they do not behave properly…'

> 'I don't like different Muslims. My dad was born in Azerbaijan, being Russian. Grandma and granddad had to be moved to Moscow because of that…[…] I was small, I could speak Azerbaijani, but I never mixed with local kids, because the boys were beating the girls. Can you imagine, everyone in these long dresses, and I am 5-6 years old, and I feel it is weird. There is sandpit, and a boy grabs a girl by her hair and hits her. I was horrified, I was so scared. My parents never scared me, I saw that atmosphere myself, and have never accepted it. And then, the Karabakh war started, and Russians were being wiped out. That's why grandma and graddad live in Moscow…

> (Galya, 31)

In this regard, the longstanding racialized attitudes do not disappear upon meeting the diversity in London; however, it involves facing a variety of nationalities and ethnicities quite different from a variety that one could find in home countries. Sometimes, the development of a migrant's attitudes leads to them finding objects of resentment seemingly equivalent to the previous ones, like in some of the quotes above. Personal histories and childhood memories do not always contain events of immediate negative contact with someone of a different origin that could be used to justify the origins of xenophobia, though. In some cases, the fear or dislike of diversity is explained by the previous absence of contact with the people who the migrants encounter in London. Many respondents note that negative attitudes tend to be more radical among the newcomers and recent migrants.

> 'The newly arrived are often racist. Not spiteful racists, but…It's like in Moscow underground, when there are lots of foreigners and students with other skin colour. People who have just come from the province usually stare and point their fingers. There is no other skin colour, it is not conventional. No history of a mix like London's. My mother-in-law visited me recently, and she was like: "I don't like them…they are all strange…I disdain them…"
>
> I: Why do you think it is so?
>
> R: Historically, because there are no blacks in Ukraine, they don't live there. […] Partly, it justifies people. It justifies that they have never lived close to them and are not going to'.

(Vladimir, 40)

The lack of previous engagement in positive everyday relationships with difference is given as one of the possible explanations of migrants' chauvinism by some researchers. Spencer et al. (2007: 92) suggest that East European migrants' racialized attitudes can be partly explained by lack of contact as well as lack of information about multiculture. Lee (2002: 80-81), analyzing the racial prejudices of Korean merchants in America towards the blacks, similarly observes that the newest merchants may have negative preconceptions despite having had little or no direct experience with black communities: 'even before setting foot in America's inner cities, many new immigrants see blacks as a monolithic racial category, adopting the negative racial stereotypes of the black welfare queen, the black criminal, and the black drug abuser'. In case of Russian-speakers in London, considered as 'justifying' their prejudices here could be not only the absence of a concrete national/ethnic group in home countries (McDowell

2009: 29), but also the implications of often nationalist discourse of the politics, media and public culture there that are more common for recent arrivals and may be approached more reflexively after some time (Datta, 2009: 360). Vasya, 28, and his wife Ksenia, 28, who have been living in the UK for five years, recall Vasya's visit to his former workplace in Moscow, when Russia seemed to him a place more openly racist than the UK:

> 'I felt I did not belong there at that very moment. It was after the Georgian war, two-three months later. I came to my former office, we were all standing in the smoking room, socializing. At some moment, people started talking about Georgians and Armenians. People who were absolutely adequate, I had worked together with them, maybe not the smartest ones, but I had worked with them for two years and a half with pleasure! And a girl asks: "Who is better – Armenians or Georgians?" And I start laughing quietly at that moment…And everyone is like: "What are you asking! Of course, Armenians are better!"
>
> R2: And if you tell this story as a joke [to a Russian from Russia], they don't get it.
>
> R1: They start explaining why Georgians are bastards and Armenians are better…'

Reflecting on the issues of attitudes to difference, Vasya, alongside many Russian-speakers admits that he used to be more suspicious or disdainful of difference in the beginning of his life in London. However, existing attitudes do not uniformly change for the best, and they change in different ways towards different nationalities or ethnic groups: migrants' narratives demonstrated that it is possible to 'learn' to dislike particular kinds of Londoners as well as to learn to express tolerance. But for many respondents the feelings of newcomers are essentially expressing the rejection of the unknown, the unfamiliar, and therefore seemingly frightening or inferior.

> 'I have observed, it is classic – when they just come here, or they are tourists, they are like "Oh, you've got so many Indians!"
>
> R2: [mimicking startled intonations] "And so many blacks, damn! I'm afraid of walking in the streets!"
>
> R1: "What the hell are the Indians doing here at all?"
>
> R2: "How can you possibly live in this area?"
>
> R1: "I was in a taxi with a driver in a turban today! And with a beard, oh my god! I am thinking to myself – can he drive at all?...No, he drove me fine. He even spoke English! He had such English…"

R2: "I don't' understand a word of what they say!"…like this'.

'If you look at British women[10]…(laughs). Two of my friends came to visit me once. We are on the tube, and they are discussing everyone very straightforwardly. I tell them – don't forget there is a big Russian-speaking population in London, you are talking like that, and that girl you are discussing might be Russian! And they go on [mimicking disgusted intonations]: "Damn, there is not a single pretty girl here. Boys are ok, handsome. But girls are a nightmare. What's that – trainers and a backpack?"

R1: "Does she have no money to dress up?"

R2: "Couldn't she apply makeup, at least?"

R1: "How can you call it "going out" – no hair styling, no makeup!"'

(Vasya and Ksenia, 28)

The physical or phenotypic differences between 'Us' and 'Them' are usually the first to be noticed when facing the diversity. Visibility of difference 'reinforces racist classification as a salient factor in every social interaction' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992: 136). It happens that national clothes and specific cuisine smells (not to mention skin colour) are articulated by Russian-speaking migrants as main characteristics of their objects of dislike, and sometimes as a separate reason for resentment. Amin (2010b: 8) notes: 'phenotypical racism relies on sensory – especially visual – signals which, when indexed as proxies of race, spark distinctive judgments of people whose differences are considered essential to their identity'. Among Russian-speaking migrants interviewed, women in particular tend to consider those who wear certain kinds of headwear or clothing as dangerous: there is Galya talking with a feeling of disgust about 'bearded guys in these kind of caps', and Lera who brings into her argument about fears of living with Indians, Pakistani and Arabs quite a complex picture of relationships between different kinds of migrants. This reveals that such attitudes are not straightforwardly racist, but are being formed on a basis of a wide range of issues including gender relations, cultural and probably religious differences, and patterns of forming a migrant community. Intersectionality, a concept introduced in 1989 and much used in feminist theories (McDowell, 2008b), is explained through an image of a woman of minority group in a city navigating within the crossroads of multiple forms of oppression (Yuval-Davis, 2007: 13-14). Gender, ethnicity and class

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[10] The respondent most probably implies 'English' women, or 'white British'.

are not acting separately but are mutually constituted by each other in the complexities of urban inequalities.

> 'First of all, they had national clothes. In terms of cultural assimilation, they did not express anything like that, they live in a closed community. Women almost do not speak English. At the same time, men are quite free, they do not limit themselves…But there is safety. It is not exactly racist, thinking like that about Arabs and Indians. But they keep their women untouched till they marry…which means they can bother the others. You wouldn't want that'.

(Lera, 25)

Yuval-Davis et al. (2006) argue that understanding the ways different social groups treat each other involves complex politics of belonging encompassing citizenship, identities and emotions attached to them. The dangers that the Otherness is seen to be carrying in itself often cause the generalization of the Otherness and attributing dangerous of inferior characteristics to a whole national/ethnic group. On the other hand, it may often prompt seeing oneself as a representative of a vulnerable group. Some respondents acknowledge that the unusual, unexpected, or even threatening behaviour they have encountered is not directed at them because of their nationality. However, there are cases when racialized attitudes develop reciprocally, in response to what may seem like, or is actual discrimination on the grounds of nationality or language.

> 'My Moldavian friend has English neighbours with a daughter. Her daughter was socializing with their daughter of the same age. Everything was fine…until one day, in the beginning of this school year, the [Moldavian] girl was transferred to the other class. They used to go to the same class with the English daughter. The English parents said – sorry, we cannot socialize with you. The girl cannot socialize, because her parents don't like foreigners! And they forbade her. They were three friends, one Russian-speaking girl and two English-speaking. And the neighbours told my friend – we cannot communicate with you, because our friends, the parents of the other girl, don't like it. And the girl was put into another class! My friend was shocked. She said – there are a lot of blacks in this class, it means it is a step lower than the previous one'.

(Yana, 40)

Uncovering the origins of xenophobic attitudes through migrants' narratives often shows that the Other can start being racialized when it seems to be inferior, unpleasant, or threatening. In this regard, for migrants I've spoken to, the other side of

facing super-diversity is also seeing Londoners not only as different but as incomparable and unequal subjects. While growing income inequality has attracted attention as a major feature of London (Hamnett, 2003, Buck et al., 2002), differentiations among Londoners are more complex and multilayered. Amin (1997: 419) underlines that the multiplex heterogeneity of contemporary cities make distinctions between 'social', 'political', 'cultural' and 'economic' more problematic. McDowell (2008b: 491) writes about intersectionality as 'the compex inequalities that result from connections between gender, class, ethnicity and other dimensions of identity in the making of subjects'. Dimensions of difference intersect: quotes demonstrate that construction of the Other as a despised subject employs a variety of factors. 'Complex intersectionality produces subjects who are coded as inferior through the operation of numerous binary and categorical distinctions that are, through discursive practices, made complex, but also challenged, resisted, altered and transformed' (McDowell, 2008b: 499). Learning to live with difference involves constructing and reconstructing hierarchies of Londoners, and including oneself in these hierarchies. In the following part of the chapter, I am going to discuss how positioning oneself and others within these groupings is inherently connected with the emergence of racialization.

4. Constructing hierarchies of Otherness

Gliroy (1987: 40) underlines that since the evolution of cultural racism, the British order of racial relations has become 'more subtle and elusive', with less apparent notions of superiority and inferiority. The constructions of intersectionality as differentiation based upon a multitude of interconnected factors, as McDowell (2008b: 496) notes, 'are produced and maintained through practices that operate at and across different spatial scales. These practices include ideological assumptions, multiple regulatory systems, structures of power and domination and spoken and enacted everyday practices in multiple sites, operating at both conscious and unconscious levels and open to contestation and renegotiation'. Migration management policies produce and reinforce hierarchies of migrants in access to rights in the UK and to labour market (Wills et al., 2010, McDowell, 2009). These policies, economic changes that led to them and reformed the labour market structure, and an increase of international migration resulted in the UK now having not only highly differentiated

but also stratified and unequal population. Different legal rights assigned to people by migration laws give them additional degrees of difference: between nationalities, some of which are more privileged in their access to the UK, and between those with different skill levels, which to a large extent predetermines migrants' social positions in the country. Nationality/race also involves the development of stereotypical attributes that become institutionalized through segregation and segmentation (McDowell, 2008b: 496). Class, gender, age, skin colour, language, nationality, legal status, emotions attached to identities and other parameters all work together in the processes of grouping and segregation, inclusion and exclusion. Categorization, classification and identification are processes closely related to the production of 'groupness' as well as racial, ethnic and national boundaries and distinctions (Brubaker, 2004: 68). Creating hierarchies is a way of structuring the life in the conditions of super-diversity, as well as defining one's own place in it.

Russian-speaking migrants, as well, construct their own hierarchies of nationalities and ethnic groups, based upon labour segregation, class system in the UK, and migrant status of others. They include themselves in these rankings, too. Consequently, attitudes towards other people reflect their relevant positions in constructed hierarchies. Yana's story about her Moldavian friend's problems mentioned at the end of the previous section demonstrates it: the woman was struck by the apparently discriminatory treatment of her child by the English parents, however she was also angry with the girl having been put in a 'worse' class, where the assumption that it was 'a step lower' was concluded from the fact that there were more black pupils. If we come up with rankings of the Others, what are its implications and risks for living with diversity?

The practices of 'sorting' others have complex sources, and they always include racial issues, as Amin (2010b: 6) notes:

> '…codification and institutionalization are the staples of racial legacy, stretching their tentacles across time through visual and literary cultures, state practices of human categorization, pedagogical traditions, myths of nation, community and belonging (and their opposites), inscriptions in everyday technologies of social ordering (from measures of personhood and well-being to housing and social mobility calculations), and the long sedimentations of public culture – always putting a face and particular attributes to the racialized other at home or abroad, always concerned with the cartographic allocation of race'.

There are different criteria that make people decide on their attitudes towards ethnicities and nationalities. Often, some personal traits of character are assigned to certain groups. The ones who generally are found at the bottom of hierarchies, according to these generalized accounts of alleged malevolence, are Indians and Pakistani. In the following excerpt, gender aspects of communication are coming to the surface again, and emotions attached to the identifications of 'Us' and 'Them' become crucial for constructions of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2007: 11).

> Alena is doing a Master. She is studying bilingual children: doing interviews and working in a Russian Sunday school. She tells me about the high levels of racism among other teachers. These women, especially the older ones, demonstrate racial intolerance in everyday talks. An informal conversation with teachers that occurred recently over tea and cake. Talks about *"chyoren'kie'* [literally translated as "blackies", colloquial diminutive]. Alena asks: who are "blackies?" Women distinguish between ethnic groups, claiming that *"negriki* [literally from Russian: little Negroes, not intended to be offensive], they are all right", "they have normal attitudes to women" while Indians and Pakistani are worse, "greedy, insidious, tend to cheat". Alena mentions that *"negriki"* can be different; many of them have had British citizenship for a few generations, but she does not receive a comprehensible reply. An aged woman, who has lived here for quite a few years, also demonstrates low level of tolerance, motivating it: "I've been here for a long time, I do know this". Younger women closer to Alena's age [mid-20s] are quite tolerant. There is an Azerbaijani woman who says: it all depends on a person. Alena does not notice any intolerance towards the Azerbaijani: "she speaks Russian, it means they accept her as one of them".

'Us' and different kinds of 'Them' are thus placed in ranked positions within the person's wide social network. These rankings are then projected onto the social structure of London, assigning labels of acceptability or unacceptability to national and ethnic groups. While a person could be considered superior to one group, at the same time he/she can feel vulnerability in comparison with the other. The following quote from Tamara, who works in a charity providing legal aid to migrants, attempts to explain the roots of such hierarchies imagined by many Russian-speakers:

> 'Being an immigrant and treating other immigrants in a certain [racist] way…I think it means that subconsciously this person considers himself better than other immigrants, and acts as if he deserves more. Because of certain immigration restrictions for people not from the EU, they perceive it as a kind of insult. Like, I am so good, and I am working here – but they are limiting my opportunities and not those of the others…

> …They do not actually hate the others. I think they rather despise them, regard them as less civilized, less human than themselves.

I: Do you think they are imagining a kind of ladder?

R: Hierarchies, yes…Notably, the English are not liked because they are on the top of this food chain, and so various disadvantages are assigned to them – either real or imagined ones. But a Russian-speaker wants to see himself at least somewhere around there, maybe one level below. He acknowledges the supremacy of the English or some other EU migrants. But he would not give way to those who came from…some kind of Pakistan or whatever it is. Funny, if you think about it".

(Tamara, 38)

This quote suggests that the migration policies have a significant impact on the formation of racialized attitudes of those who are subject to these policies. The differentiating treatment of nationalities by these regulations, in addition to people's existing notions of inferiority and superiority, gives way to exacerbation of the feelings of inequality. The complex inequalities among the population of London can produce problems with placing oneself within this unequal social structure. Keith (2011), discussing the multicultural diversity of London's East End existing simultaneously with the BNP's largest gains in the city in the 2006 local elections in Barking and Dagenham, points at the city's 'increased segregation generated by the existing forms of competition for and access to public and private resources and opportunities in housing and the labour market'. Particularly because Russian-speakers are migrants, it may add to a feeling of insecurity and promote resentment based on imagining some kind of unfair competition between oneself and the others. Eade et al. (2006: 39) note that East European migrants assume the presence of a hierarchy of belonging in Britain, where whiteness could be an 'asset'. The inequalities are complex, and their patterns may add up. Lee (2002: 17), for example, exploring merchant-customer relations in America, notes that racialized interpretation of interaction are likely to occur when the customers are black, poor, and have faced discrimination previously. The feeling of inequality, Rabikowska (2010: 291) notes, draws migrants into an inferiority complex which they continuously try to overcome, and can increase the significance of ethnicity and nationality as 'a desired degree of coherence to be countered against the host culture'. The following aggressive quote by an anonymous female migrant was taken from an internet forum of a Russian social network. The topic of this thread, initially, was 'What is it that you don't like in London'. Immediately, most of the comments started somehow mentioning the dislike of ethnic

minorities. When I joined the thread asking people why exactly they did not like the people they've mentioned, one of the answers I've received was strikingly similar to infamous Emma West[11]'s racist rant:

> 'I find these pseudo-intelligent pacifist comments a-la "come on brothers, we are migrants too" funny. God, we all know that. But it does not prevent us from not liking the newcomers who have pushed the native population out of London. Indians and Pakistani are like that grey squirrel. I don't put myself on the same level with Somalis – I don't wear a shapeless garment and a cap, and I don't carry a knife in my sock. I know the language, and most importantly, I respect the country and its way of living. No one feels better because of the presence of lots of black lazybones – what good did they bring in? Getting kicked in a dark street by a horde of porcupine cubs? Multiculturalism – what kind of argument is that? This diversity is good only when it sits in its own countries and sings its national songs. You have come to England – take off the loincloth, put on trousers, learn English, and go to the factory! I don't know who finds cute these hags in burkas who look at the world with one, non-bruised eye, or herds of Indians sweeping everyone from the pavements, but I think they are an anachronism dragging Europe back to the Stone Age'.

Again, this person is employing the strategy of 'reasoning' her racism: she acknowledges her own migrant origin, and in a way of self-defense tries to portray 'them' as an external factor threatening 'us'. Herself is imagined then as a part of 'us': 'they' are a danger and a nuisance to 'us', to the development of 'our' country, and ultimately to the future of 'our' Europe. But 'us' that she imagines here seem to be surprisingly monocultural, and her argument looks similar to what one would expect from a BNP supporter. Multiculturalism is not imagined by her as a possible way of living.

In Wills's et al. (2010) analysis of new migrant divisions of labour in the UK, growing divide between EU and non-EU workers is described as reinforcing the ethnic divisions of labour. Eastern Europeans (mainly Poles) are portrayed as articulating 'a sense of superiority over their non-European colleagues on the basis of a "European" identity constructed around an extended European Union, and underpinned by issues of race' (Wills et al., 2010: 108). In addition, migrants are relying upon their position within

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[11] Emma West is a woman who made racist comments to passengers on a tram in Croydon in November 2011. Having a child on her lap, she was shouting abuse at other passengers and complaining about ethnic minorities living in Britain. The incident which was filmed by one of the passengers and uploaded on Youtube, was viewed by millions of people.

London's labour market. The person whose account is presented above felt fine in respect to anyone studying and working with her, being negative to those who were, in her view, exploiting the UK labour market and welfare state, and putting at risk the Western culture and urban safety issues. There is the emotional dimension of the politics of belonging played out in this utterance: 'belonging is taken for granted, until it seems threatened, and then, its articulation plays a central role in the various discourses of the politics of belonging' (Yuval-Davis, 2007: 11). Despite being a migrant, the person feels herself fitting into London's social, cultural and economic life better and more deservedly than the racialized others. Amin (2012: 120) warns about the emergence of a new lexicon of insiders and outsiders in contemporary Europe, settling as a sorting mechanism, and involving majorities as well as minorities and settled migrants. Racialization patterns become place-determined: Asians seem to be most depicted as annoying and dangerous by many Russian-speakers, similar to what occurs on a broader scale of the whole city and British race relations policy in general concerning Asian minorities (Cheong et al., 2007: 32). Keith (2005a: 162) notes, '"Asian" (or Bengali) gangs in the contemporary East End are regarded as the prime sources of risk of urban violence. This has developed to such an extent that at times it supersedes previous concerns over black male criminality associated with motifs of mugging or civil unrest'. The positions of different minorities have shifted in contemporary Britain: Muslim Asians are seen as Other, while the 'black' are regarded as rather assimilated (Fortier, 2007: 109). The city itself, its spatiality plays an important role in the negotiation of multiplicity and difference (Amin, 2006: 1012). Migrants follow the racialization trends of London in the processes of forming their attitudes towards diversity. It could be interpreted as an attempt to define one's own position within the host society, 'to secure their status in the majority group by overtly expressing their dislike of the inferior minority' (Tajfel, 1981, as quoted in Philip et al., 2010: 666).

Not in such radical ways as in the last quote perhaps, but migrants' accounts often provide images of themselves and others as parts of social hierarchies of the UK and particularly London. This is a way of negotiating one's position within the power hierarchies analyzed by some researchers of East European migrants (Datta and Brickell 2009, Parutis 2011). Datta and Brickell (2009) discuss how Polish migrants

construct their superiority in relation to English builders, appealing to the versatility of their embodied skills, work ethic, artistic qualities, and finesse in their social interactions on the building site. Their discourses reflect a 'complex politics of identification that engages with the intersections of nationality, whiteness/Englishness, ethnicity, gender, and class' (Datta and Brickell, 2009: 460). Also, in these racializing discourses there is a place for old-fashioned biological racism, and more often these days, cultural racism. The discursive positioning of migrants within the hierarchies as opposed to some subjects of diversity and imagined in proximity with others makes them active individual agents in the social spaces of London.

Through 'vernacular habits with long historical roots of reading racial and social worth from surface bodily differences' (Amin, 2010b: 4), the diversity is being structured, and the depictions of difference are often naturalizing inequality. It is an effect of what Amin (2010b: 6) describes as an 'interplay between institutional legacies and human sorting instincts in the face of excess, variety and the unknown, to demarcate territory – an interplay that keeps similarity and difference, inside and outside, safe and threatening, as racially coded and, in turn, maintains racial hierarchy as the filter of social evaluation'. Hierarchies are being constructed and reconstructed along different lines, when 'supposedly natural difference in capacities and needs' (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992: 18) ascribed to different social categories. Xenophobic attitudes developed by migrants reflect their own social positions in London and the ways in which these are juxtaposed to the social structure of the city, and signify the activity of their own racializing agency. In the following part, I will look at the connection between the social positioning of 'Us' and 'Them' and racialization of the Other.

5. Migrants: racializing agency

Knowles and Harper (2009: 17) underline that migration 'provides critical exposure to difference in proximity' and circulates the operational surfaces of race and ethnicity, combined with other categories like class, age, and gender. In fact, it is not so surprising that Russian-speaking migrants turn out to express limited tolerance and openness to difference, upon sudden immersion into diversity and with limited experience of positive relationships with the different subject. Xenophobic attitudes

can originate in home countries and be transplanted to the UK, when they initially appear under the influence of the 'banal nationalism' in the discourse of the media and public culture of home countries, as a feature of everyday life, routine and unnoticeable 'flagging of the nation' (Billig, 1995). Coming from the societies with little[12] tolerance to difference that is now implicitly supported by the state and the everyday culture, as well as with much less diversity, many migrants find themselves not at ease with some parts of London's multicultural, multilingual and socially stratified population. Differences among 'Us' and 'Them' can be naturalized as justifying the inferior, dangerous, or oppressive traits attributed to certain types of Londoners. The problems are also reinforced by the non-EU migrant status of most of the Russian-speakers: this can add to the feeling of vulnerability and invoke another dimension of social competition as a reason for ethnic/national resentment. The intersectionality of multiple characteristics constituting super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007) and functioning as a basis of complex hierarchies imagined by Russian-speaking migrants, when being reflected upon by respondents, discovers the compound nature of racial and national prejudices. For example, the Other can be categorized as dangerous not just because he has darker skin and wears unusual clothes, but because exactly this type is presented as inherently connected with obnoxious or abusive behaviour towards women. Another kind of Londoner can be tagged as morally inferior or less culturally developed because some representatives of it use different cultural codes and do not practice what is considered polite and appropriate in what is perceived as migrants' culture. Distinctions thus become emotionally charged: 'reserved' Englishman turns into 'cold as frog', 'Indians' are coined as creepy creatures from fairytales. Emotional labels are attached both to phenotypical traits and cultures. These practices of categorization demonstrate the ways in which race and ethnicity function 'without the existence of ethnic groups as substantial entities' (Brubaker, 2004: 13).

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[12] While internationalism was officially promoted in the Soviet Union, it did not actually function universally. Because of the institute of residential registration, minorities were tied to their home republics, and only big cities like Moscow and St Petersburg had relatively diverse populations. Russian nationalism was also strong at that time, while since the break-up of the Soviet Union it has become more and more unambiguously supported by the state policy in Russia, and Russian media which now often uses hate speech. Today's Russia exhibits a complex combination of imperialism/neo-Eurasianism, Russian ethnic nationalism, biological racism and Christian Orthodox nationalism (Kozhevnikova and Shekhovtsov, 2009).

In more than three years that I've been involved into communication with different Russian-speaking migrants in London, too often to be random I came across narratives and thoughts where diversity seemed to be not only different, but oppositional and taken for granted as unfriendly. However, not all of the diverse population is equally stigmatized, and not all of Russian-speaking migrants stigmatize it to the same extent. In fact, among the 35 people I've interviewed and more of those who became my informants in participant observation case study, the degrees of xenophobia noticeably differ. That is to say, there is a definite trend of despising South Asians in the stories of many people about themselves and their friends – but there are also stories of pleasant friendly relationships formed at some point with Indian colleagues. There is wariness of Black Londoners and antagonism to the very thought of a Black partner – but there are also accounts of favouring Black Londoners over Indians, as well as actually Black husbands and wives. Universalizing racism would be incorrect: attitudes towards Otherness are not fixed and are prone to change over time. Understanding how othering develops in a multicultural city, I argue here, needs precise attention to the questions - who is othering and who is being othered, as well as – what is the relationship between the two? The distinctive characteristics of these subjects have to include much more than ethnicity or nationality, as it is one of the key features of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007: 1029).

Balibar and Wallerstein (1991: 49) consider racialization 'a historical system of complementary exclusions and dominations which are mutually interconnected', connected with the social structure of the society, labour divisions and stratification. Their idea is that 'the constructed 'peoples' – the races, the nations, the ethnic groups – correlate so heavily, albeit imperfectly, with 'objective class' (Balibar, Wallerstein, 1991: 84). Individuals are being racialized depending on different features, real or attributed, and social positions of both sides play an important role in forming the prejudices. Listening to my respondents, I very often realized that the racialized 'Them' are seen as inferior because of class relationships and distinctions that are projected onto ethnic or national origins.

> At a gathering of a Russian networking organization [mainly oriented at business community] I am having a brief talk with the head of this organization. Asking her about her opinion on Russian-speakers' relationships with other Londoners and possibly negative attitudes towards some of them. She

unhesitatingly tells me: Indians have a reason to be disliked, they are doing service jobs and the quality of their service leaves much to be desired. Gives an example of her recent problematic communication with some Indians at BT. I ask: what about other Londoners, for example, white British? She declares that the English behave awfully, especially working class. Gives an example of her recent holiday with a friend [outside of the UK]: they were appalled with observing several drunken English in a bar.

This woman draws racialized conclusions, and, as many other respondents, attempts to explain Russian-speakers' (and her own) chauvinism with reasons seeming rational to her. But her experience of communication with the nationalities she describes is apparently limited to such superficial contact with certain groups. In forming the attitudes towards 'Them', ethnicity/nationality is often replacing 'Their' social position: 'racism at times works by a process of substitution, a coding of phrases and terms which conveys racist meaning without specific reference to explicitly racist beliefs' (Keith, 2005a: 30). Then, social hierarchies are viewed as the hierarchies of races or nations, placed in the social space of London, and emotionally tuned as rankings of socially worthy and unworthy, more and less deserving, inferior and superior, and eventually 'good' and 'bad'. By some, it is seen as a natural, albeit place-specific, order of things in contemporary society:

> 'In Russia, we discriminate certain nations from the CIS – Tajikistan, Turkmenistan…We have our image of nationality inside our state. When we come to Europe, these nationalities are not the same here. But there are others. As in the whole Europe, in the UK now there are prejudices about Polish, Indians – nationalities which come here in big numbers to earn money, and work as builders, porters…'

> (Lera, 25)

Balibar and Wallerstein (1991: 34). note: 'if there are no Blacks or too few to play the role, one can invent "White niggers"'. Individuals are constantly being racialized, gendered and classed in a metropolitan city, and Lera's quote contains an attempt to justify the taken-for-grantedness of inferiority of some groups that stems from social divisions in any place – in Russia or in the UK. She does not even make a distinction between two groups which have very different histories as migrants in the UK. In Philip's et al. (2010) study of attitudes of American Indians towards African Americans, those who were more negative towards the Black believed in the existence of differences between social groups as part of the 'natural order', which was connected

to growing up within the value system that facilitates 'the adoption of beliefs that are consistent with negative attitudes towards groups who are of perceived lower status' (Philip et al., 2010: 667).

Keith (2005a, 2005b) links the global transformations of the contemporary societies with the increasing urbanization and concentration of cultural difference in metropolis that gives birth both to 'discrepant cosmopolitanisms and virulent racisms' (Keith, 2005b: 39). Racialization processes taking place in London are as complex as the concept of super-diversity itself, as well as they are multidirectional. This city population contains not only Black and White, or high-skilled and low-skilled: it includes also people who are West European and East European, legal and illegal, from the former colonies and former empires, having a university degree but doing low-paid jobs, highly educated and multilingual but heavily restricted by visa regulations, police registrations and limited access to employment. In chapter 2, I analyzed the features of super-diversity; in this chapter, I have brought in the implications of this super-diversity for the actual relationships among the city dwellers. The new patterns of international migration to the UK, particularly settling in London, have brought in some concern about the East European newcomers to the public (Spencer et al., 2007: 66), researchers and policy-makers, questioning 'the current hierarchy of suitability and appropriateness between new A8 white Europeans, older migrants, people of colour and British BME workers' (McDowell, 2008b: 34), and disrupting 'the conventional race relations (paradoxically plural) binary framing of BME ('black and minority ethnic') and 'white' communities' (Keith, 2005a: 177).

Keith (2005b: 253) notes the flexibility of racial identities and the metropolis itself, which subverts the 'conventionally narrated notion of the 'receiving society' defining 'racial groups' through forces of racialization in the crucible of the metropolis'. I have specifically underlined in this chapter that in today's London, with its much bigger variety of more subtle distinctions between people than there used to be several decades ago, and with its mixing of cultures, there is not only a racializing host society and racialized newcomers who are conventionally 'framed and thus metaphorically locked into limited possibilities spatially, socially, culturally and academically' (Tolia-Kelly, 2008: 282). Amin (2002: 4), analyzing the street confrontations which occured in 2001 involving Asian youths in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, mentions that the

triggers for these were not only the street and electoral visibility of the BNP and racialized accounts of events given by media, but also the anger and frustration of the Asian youth by their life circumstances and marginalization. In the context of this research, this means that migrants and ethnic minorities have agency that sometimes slips away from the public attention: 'They are much talked about, but they do not speak' (Les Back, 2001, as quoted in Amin, 2002: 4). However, this agency may have negative implications. Migrants who are commonly clichéd as strange and alien, in a multicultural city can take part in the processes of othering typical for this place, even if they belong to a vulnerable group themselves.

6. Concluding thoughts

In this chapter, I have argued that migrants are actively participating in the urban processes of racialization, relying upon their previous experience of treating the different subject, discourse of the home countries, structural factors like migration policies and labour market divisions in the UK, and personal experience of encountering the everyday multiculture. My approach was based on focusing on the relational and processual side of racialization, ethnicization and nationalization (Brubaker, 2004: 11). Following some feminist authors (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992, Yuval-Davis, 2007, McDowell, 2008b), I underline the intersectionality of parameters according to which the subject is being othered in different ways - considered as dangerous, unworthy, inferior, or just appalling – and conclude that racialization is often a judgmental naturalization of social difference, applying racial labels to social inequalities, but also a way of settling one's own place within social hierarchies. Here, I was developing the argument of chapter 7, where I have depicted Russian-speaking migrants' perceptions of London as a social space densely populated with different people, where communication is often superficial and limited, and previous attachments, values and identifications may lose their value. In these conditions, facing the unfamiliar can easily invoke a feeling of antagonism, and various factors (gender, behavioural, cultural, linguistic, occupational, educational) are being employed to construct hierarchies of acceptability of the Other. Producing taxonomies of difference that are constructed in relation to oneself's position as a reference point, the migrant emplaces him/herself within the social structure of London's diverse population – as he/she sees it. The risks of racialization are connected with the

emotional attachments of negative attitudes, related to common naturalizations of inferiority, stereotyping and generalizations. London's city space is a perfect ground for development of such attitudes, with a multiplicity of people from all over the world, to various degrees expressing allegiance to a multiplicity of nation-states across the borders of the host society, as well as occupying their own niches in social, cultural and economic life of the city. However, the everyday interactions taking place in a city are often complex: Fortier (2007: 110) underlines 'the multifaceted nature of living with difference, where desire, tolerance, discomfort, and violence intermingle'. In the next chapter, I am going to focus on the ways of developing tolerant and open attitudes to difference, and analyze the social implications of the possibilities of cosmopolitanism.

Chapter 9. Cosmopolitan attitudes: Chances for positive dynamics

1. Preface

In chapter 1, I argued for approaching migrants not as an isolated community, but as a socially diverse part of an even more diverse city. I have suggested that mobility, as well as sometimes sustaining, reinforcing or promoting xenophobic stances, can also help in developing the capacities of openness and inclusiveness in communicating and building relationships across cultures, ethnicities, nationalities and languages. A global city like London has been described as a place where both cosmopolitan and xenophobic attitudes and relations may function in sometimes paradoxical combinations. I have described cosmopolitanism as a way of dealing with diversity in a city while acknowledging but not naturalizing the difference. Also, becoming more open to seemingly foreign, non-local things and people can be gradually developed through cosmopolitanization, in the course of everyday exposure to the heterogeneity of the society. This is what I will focus on in this chapter. I have already mentioned in chapter 7 the tacit rules of conduct that regulate London's social life, at least on its surface. People indeed learn to regard some public expressions of their thought as appropriate and others as unsuitable. At the same time, previous chapter showed how national identities still re-emerge as a differentiating and stigmatizing force. However, what I am going to discuss here includes a deeper reorganization of the self towards not just behaving 'properly' but actually being open to the Otherness and accepting it as different but not as inferior, dangerous, or unworthy. How do migrants start to accept the different subject?

2. Becoming cosmopolitan

What is the connection between cosmopolitanism and social relationships in a contemporary multicultural city like London? Keith (2005a: 39) provides a structured definition:

> '...the sign of the cosmopolitan shelters many different shades of meaning. In its most banal articulation it speaks to the straightforward empirical diversity of routes of arrival and roots of origin of the populations of today's major cities. At another level of description it points towards a different way of seeing the city, an acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of contemporary social reality, recognition of the uncertainties of identity and the uneven inscriptions of

gender, sexuality, class and faith on the social body. Yet more normatively still, the cosmopolitan, both in its Kantian origins and in some contemporary invocations, can be seen to invoke a philosophical and moral stance. Less a descriptive vocabulary than an ethical project, cosmopolitanism in some of its most recent theoretical renditions in political and cultural theory becomes a way of resolving the moral questions that arise from the attempt to reconcile different kinds of difference'.

Cosmopolitanism as a way of dealing with diversity and building a positive relationship with it is discussed in literature, perhaps rather conceptualized theoretically than explored empirically. In this chapter, I will try to show how cosmopolitanism can be achieved in practice: what can prompt, at least, tolerance to difference, and ultimately the development of actual positive relationship with someone different.

The processes of becoming more cosmopolitan have been described in literature. Beck (2006: 19) describes cosmpolitanization as latent, unconscious or passive cosmopolitanism 'which shapes reality as side effects of global trade or global threats such as climate change, terrorism or financial crises. My life, my body, my 'individual existence' become part of another world, of foreign cultures, religions, histories and global interdependencies, without my realizing or expressly wishing it'. Latham (2006: 97) writes about becoming cosmopolitan as a process of cultural globalization, in a context of 'internal reorganization of social life engendered through the reality of greater diversity'. Glick Schiller et al. (2011: 400) focus on cosmopolitan sociability defined as 'consisting of forms of competence and communication skills that are based on the human capacity to create social relations of inclusiveness and openness to the world. […] an ability to find aspects of the shared human experience including aspirations for a better world within or despite what would seem to be divides of culture and belief'. This kind of sociability signifies a personal engagement into communication with the Other where differences between people are acknowledged but not stigmatized. The development of positive ways of living with difference has been discussed in the literature (Amin, 2002, 2006, 2010, Keith, 2005a, 2005b, 2011, Fortier, 2007). Often, these reflections are framed within urban space: thus, Amin (2006: 1012) explores the possibilities of a 'good city imagined as an ever-widening habit of solidarity built around different dimensions of the urban common weal. […] The result is the city that learns to live with, perhaps even value, difference, publicise the commons, and crowd out the violence of an urbanism of exclusionary and

privatised interest'. The everyday negotiations of difference are place-specific and situated, 'weaving in emotions and precognitive reflexes formed in bodily, 'material and virtual encounter (Amin, 2010a: 1).

3. Everyday diversity

As I have demonstrated earlier, many of the migrants I've interviewed admit that the time spent in London, the prolonged experience of interaction with different people, has changed their attitudes towards diversity for the better. Quite a few of them note that they used to be 'more racist', 'more homophobic' in the beginning. In a way, the transformation is related to the perception of London as a multicultural arena of everyday hybridity, where identifications on the grounds of ethnicity or nationality are losing their sense, and people lean towards postnational perceptions of the selves as well as Others, which was described in chapter 7. In these circumstances, personal qualities are presented as coming to the fore in the interaction.

> 'You know how it happens, you meet one Russian, and then you move into this area, Russian-speaking or Lithuanian or whatever else. I keep distance from such areas. I love the whole world, I just love to socialize and have a drink. […] I've been there, I've seen all that. This is not new for me. But it is interesting when you meet new nations and people every day. Different stories and situations. I like that…[…] I'm a world citizen.
>
> You know, normal people, who do not offend each other, and claim nothing. I like that, we are friends then.
>
> I: So, one just has to be a good person..?
>
> R: Yes, and that's it. Does not matter if he is black, white, blue, or Japanese, or Indian'.
>
> (Marina, 32)

Marina has been living in London since 1998. She has had two English-speaking partners and two children since then, and very rarely communicates with Russian-speakers. She has been involved in close personal interactions with Otherness for many years, and is among those of my respondents with the most cosmopolitan mindset. She and people like her demonstrate what Beck (2006: 10) calls banal cosmopolitanism, which is 'manifested in concrete, everyday ways by the fact that differentiations between us and them are becoming confused, both at the national and

international level'. The significance of personal contact is much underlined as a means for developing positive attitudes and relationships. In a world on the move, Knowles and Harper (2009: 240) note, 'fitting in and forming connection across multiple planes of difference are indispensable skills'. Philip et al. (2010) regard it as a factor shaping the attitudes of one ethnic minority in USA to another, based on Allport's contact hypothesis: 'as knowledge about another group moves from the unknown to the familiar and interpersonal, individual attitudes towards that group will become more positive and accepting' (Allport, 1954, as quoted in Philip et al., 2010: 657). While it has to be admitted that not all contact necessarily immediately results in positive attitudes, it has the potential of gradually deconstructing stereotypes. Clayton (2008: 263), observing inter-ethnic relations in Leicester, underlines that 'encounters beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood have the capacity to unsettle ideas of difference established elsewhere, particularly when they are of an intensity and duration which enables other forms of solidarity and identification to be established'. Wills et al. (2010: 137) notes that some of London's recent economic migrants had learned to be more tolerant of difference through living and working in London. Among my respondents, those who had relatively long previous emigration experience - of living in London or other countries – seem to be generally more tolerant than more recent arrivals. Rustam, a UCL graduate of mixed Russian-Tatar origin, for example, came to London in 2007, having lived in Marbella since 2001 before that – which he describes as being 'like London [in terms of diversity] – it seems that there is a relatively small proportion of Spanish people living there'.

> 'Since my childhood, I've been put in environments with many different cultures, and I think, I have this kind of tolerance developed. I don't look at people as representatives of a race or a state'.

> (Rustam, 24)

The contested identities and the loss of nationality's significance described in chapter 7 are an effect of living with diversity, as well as they are providing a way of living with it. The openness generated by enhanced personal contact with the different subject essentially increases awareness and reflexivity on one's position within the diversity. As I can conclude from the narratives of my informants in this section of the chapter,

diversity is accommodated as a part of one's everyday life, when the subject regards hybridity, mixity, and non-fixed self-identification as mundane. This often involves critical reassessment of the existing ideas, what Datta (2009: 360) describes through an example of one migrant as 'an inward reflexivity of his national history, and hence of his own identity - one which is deeply rooted and at the same time inherently global'.

> 'Some people have traveled a lot. My acquaintances have lived in France for a long time, then moved here, and are not limited by anything [in their views]. There are people who realize the multiplicity of their own roots, for example – Russian culture, Jewish roots, let's say...'

(Tamara, 38)

Consequently, for migrants who get used to diversity, those who seem to be different are acknowledged as equal participants of this mundaneness:

> 'Yes, you know, I came from Siberia, we do not have any Indians or Black people there. But I did not have any negative reaction to them [in London]. [...] I was just interested, curious – what kind of people they are, what their interests are. And then it turned out that we all are the same. There is nothing to be afraid of, they are not weird or whatever. Maybe, I am such a non-contentious person. But nothing bad has ever happened. I simply saw that people from different countries are absolutely similar. [...] Of course, we may have common moments with Russian-speakers – things that we remember from childhood. The British also do have these, they remember things from childhood, TV shows...they may like different food...But generally, there are no significant differences. Tastes, clothes style – maybe. But we all like to discuss guys, we're all the same. We watch the same movies...'

(Zhanna, 25)

How does this fit with the argument of the previous chapter? I have described earlier how migrants naturalize the 'irreconcilable' character of differences between themselves and other Londoners and how chauvinist thinking develops on the basis of people's existing notions of difference and under the exposure of the city's social hierarchies. I underlined that xenophobic ideas may develop in the view of social inequalities constructed on the grounds of intersectionality of multiple social characteristics. At the same time, in this city, according to my respondents, there is an observable ethics of not paying attention, not noticing, and not exposing the national/ethnic self, as well as eventually downplaying its role as a facet of identity.

The acknowledgement of diversity's presence becomes an inherent part of everyday life. Thus, London, as a result, plays two contradictory roles in regard to the construction of mutual existence. It may reinforce the national and ethnic identities and cause their blurring and hybridization, at the same time. With such a complication of identities, there are hardly any pure racists or cosmopolitans among migrants. Rather, the social life in London is a fluid and dynamic combination of contrasting trends of racialization and cosmopolitanization, both of which affect people to different extents in different times and places. In the rest of this chapter, I will focus on the causes and dynamics of the processes of cosmopolitanization.

4. Dynamics of change

I started chapter 7 with a discussion of how diversity stops feeling alien when migrants finds themselves part of it and find in it something familiar. How exactly does such routinization of diversity happen? Exposure to diversity seems to have a beneficial effect on intercultural relations on the level of everyday life – not immediate, but rather gradual. Lee (2002: 81), in her study of relationships between migrant merchants and black customers in America, mentions that the more time the migrant merchants in America spend there, regularly interacting with black customers, and realizing the inner diversity of the others in ethnicity, class and character, the less stigmatizing they become in regard to blacks as a group: 'as merchants come to know their customers as individuals, they soon recognize the diversity of their clientele, and this erodes the negative stereotypes of race and class. Furthermore, the process is dialectical; black customers also come to recognize that the merchants are individuals, not just racial and ethnic categories'. It can take a while to learn to deal with difference, and this process often goes through the practices of informal communication.

> 'When I came to Switzerland, it was difficult to get used to the new atmosphere, new social groups, I was really feeling the odd one out. But when I came to London, I was already experienced. And I initiated the contacts. Because I knew I did not want to live alone. It did not matter – Russian, not Russian. If I lack Russian communication but have the other – that's one thing. But if I have no communication at all and feel lost and lonely – that's completely different.'

(Karim, 22)

McDowell (2008a, 2008b, 2009) notes that the production of differentiations is a dynamic process, where constructed differences and inequalities are prone to change and alteration. Subjects previously considered inferior can be rediscovered as people whose differences do not matter as much as they used to. It often happens when they change their positions from observable others to members of immediate social networks. In these cases, 'irreconcilable' differences discussed in chapter 8 start to fade away.

> 'A lot has changed in my attitude to Indians, by the way, because of my work. We have a whole team of them, and sometimes they come to our office. My attitude has changed for the best, because they are all fun and interesting guys.
>
> I: Young professionals, like you?
>
> R: Yes, yes. You know, they help me a lot, and are very open, more lively...very interesting'.

(Zhanna, 25)

> 'About blacks. Thomas had a birthday, and I was thinking for a long time – to make a party or not, and finally decide to make it. I thought, I would invite his friends from the kindergarten. One week before the party, I invited 6-7-8 people. But only two came. Only two black kids. It means, they are actually more open, more sociable. The white British did not come...'[13]

(Yana, 40)

Datta (2009: 363) describes a very similar situation in her paper on developing of working-class cosmopolitanisms among Polish builders in London. When the only kid who came to a builder's daughter's birthday was her Afro-Caribbean friend from school, this contributed to the development of her father's openness. It was extended under the influence of friendship. In fact, becoming cosmopolitan has a lot to do with informal relationships. The Other as a person becomes accommodated as an interesting interlocutor, a companion helping to fight loneliness, a mate to have fun

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[13] Earlier in this work, I have quoted Yana's thoughts about black Londoners, where she (although claiming at first that she was not prejudiced) evidently expressed prejudiced attitudes, trying to rationalize them by referring to the presumed opinion of the British ('no one likes blacks') and views of her partner, as well as naturalizing certain traits of character as 'typical' for the black. Later in the interview, she continued the polemics with herself. She was describing this situation in a surprised tone: the black kids' (or their parents) behaviour disrupted at least some of her negative preconceptions. Her narrative in general is an example of how unsettled and contested the attitudes towards difference can be, and how they undergo constant reconstruction.

with, and, ultimately, a friend. Then, such internal and personal cosmopolitanization can be the first step to accepting the broader Otherness:

> 'That's why I like it here, although it all started back in Kiev. The Polytechnic [Institute] was very international. That's why I like different cultures. You get on well with some and not so well with others, understand some and some not. But my closest friend was Brazilian, half Italian, half Brazilian. At some point, you stop thinking who they are. They are just your friends, and you feel good with them'.

> (Alla, mid-thirties)

Amin (2012: 28) stresses the significance of friendship as the key element of the politics of care in the society of strangers: 'friendship allows new intimacies to be struck and sustained, new worlds to be imagined and desired, through a relational dynamic of co-cultivation, mutual regard, and affinity between unexpected allies. [...] Any venture into new alliances and allegiances – including with the stranger – requires an affective link, one that can be nourished by openness to fruitful exchange with the unknown and distant'. This is how the solidarity with the Otherness can become possible.

5. Social contexts of cosmopolitanization

Migrants are talking about their everyday encounters structuring and modifying the constructions of difference and relationships with it. What are the conditions that can promote cosmopolitan sociability? Social interactions in a city life involving dealing with ethnic differences and similarities are embedded into wider social processes. As much as racialization is often based on the intersection of different social characteristics, gradual cosmopolitanization can also be conditioned by social factors. Amin (2002: 17) regards interethnic relationships as related to neighbourhood circumstances, linked to socioeconomic conditions and cultural practices in a locality. He notes: 'coming to terms with difference is a matter of everyday practices and strategies of cultural contact and exchange with others different from us. For such interchange to be effective and lasting, it needs to be inculcated as a habit of practice (not just co-presence) in mixed sites of prosaic negotiation such as schools, the workplace, and other public spaces […]' (Amin, 2002: 21). Elsewhere (2012: 39) he points that 'the micro-practices of creative forms of joint endeavour (remembering

that many other forms, which deskill, divide, alienate and fuel animosity, have no such yield) have clear implications for strategies of social inclusion'. Clayton (2008: 264) suggests that the power relations, cultural baggages and experiences brought into situations by its participants should be taken into consideration while assessing the possibility of intercultural dialogue. Datta (2009: 355) underlines the role of migrants' subjective locations within power hierarchies, their nationalistic sentiments, and 'the social or cultural capital that they are able to mobilize under the specific circumstances of their interaction in highly localized everyday contexts'. My research, following these ideas, suggests that coming to terms with diversity is a gradual process that is often conditioned by everyday interaction with it. There are also two important points relevant to these processes. Firstly, racialized attitudes can tend to reduce when migrants start to interact with the Other in their immediate social networks and develop friendly relationships. Secondly, such communication usually takes place within a certain social group, space, or strata, meaning that patterns of sociality with and within the diversity are socially conditioned:

> 'It [your attitudes] depends on who you socialize with, because…at my work, for example, it's all fine. We are all international, that's why where you are from doesn't really matter. From this or that country – 'oh well, ok'. There's nothing like – 'aaah, she's Russian [annoyed intonation]'

> (Zhanna, 25)

Social networks in which migrants participate seem to play an important role in shaping and modifying the attitudes to difference. As well, it is connected with 'the spaces of communication sustained by state discourse, media commentary, educational practice and popular culture [where] are traced the contours of nation and community, the meanings of belonging, the duties and rights of the stranger, the stances towards the world, the purities and impurities of community', and which shape the friendships and aversions towards the Other as well as involvement into imagined communities (Amin, 2010a: 12). These are the things which influence the processes of racialization as well as cosmopolitanization. However, there is no universal rule which would determine the development of openness and tolerance: 'other than engineering endless talk and interaction between adversaries as well as providing individuals chances to broaden their horizons, there can be no formula, since any intervention

needs to work through, and is only meaningful in, the context of situated social dynamics' (Amin, 2002: 14).

6. 'Us' and 'Them': questioning the dichotomy

It may seem that involvement into social interactions with compatriots and with the others can be reversely related. Policy-makers, as Fortier (2007: 113) observes, when the problems of building cohesive communities in multicultural society arise, can be concerned about 'outer-local attachments': 'Migrants' detachment from roots is seen as a necessary condition to the process of establishing strong local ties: '"cling[ing] to some past life'' (Home Office, 2001a, page 18) or ``the burden of `back home' politics'' (page 20) are discouraged as counterproductive to community cohesion'. Wills et al. (2010: 132) note that personal networks of compatriots often provide social capital necessary for survival, and 'while this assisted the migrants involved, it could have the unintended consequence of reinforcing exclusion from British society'. Favell (2008: 123) mentions that migrants' inclination to avoid, or at least 'cultivate indifference' towards compatriots is a good test of cosmopolitanism. However, I will explain that the connection between attitudes to compatriots' communities and Others should not be taken as a straightforward one.

The share of compatriots among one's close people or stronger self-identification as part of national community do not seem to play a straightforward role alone. In fact, Philip et al. (2010: 666) in their quantitative study underline the complexity of ingroup/outgroup attitudes, arguing that an individual's strong identification with his or her own ethnic group alone does not necessarily result in the derogation of an outgroup. Putnam (2007: 144) claims that in-group attitudes and out-group attitudes need not be reciprocally related. In a similar vein, Ryan et al. (2008: 680), drawing upon Putnam in their study of Polish migrants' social networks, discovered that the Poles who relied most on networks of co-ethnics were also the most critical of their compatriots, differentiating between the close circle of friends and relatives and the general population of Polish migrants in the UK. Working with migrants myself, I have seen and heard stories about quite different combinations of personal networks' national constitutions and attitudes to diversity. Hence, I am arguing for the complexity and selectivity of migrants' social connections, where the issues of close

relationships are crucial for defining a person's position within and attitudes towards the diversity. Rabikowska's (2010: 294) discussion of her own and others' works on Polish migrants in the UK underlines the sometimes seemingly paradoxical critical or resentful attitudes towards both the host culture and the home one. In this respect, she concludes: 'migrants want to be like others and want to be different, hence the negotiation of their identities must convey contradictions'. Evidence from these research demonstrates the existence of a feeling of collective identity empowering migrants in the context of the host culture (Datta 2009, Eade et al., 2006), while simultaneously 'their understanding of belonging or exclusion is based on individual expectations and experiences which blurs the "purity" of the collective and denies its fixedness' (Rabikowska, 2010: 294).

Datta (2009), exploring the development of cosmopolitanisms among East European construction workers in London, approaches these cosmopolitanisms as multiple and dynamic constructions of getting to terms with difference in localized spatial contexts. They are neither confined to the 'elite' version of cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2002, Hannerz, 1996), nor to its perception as a practical strategy of survival (Werbner 1999, as quoted in Datta, 2009: 353). She underlines the transient and complex nature of migrant's relationships with diversity, dependent on 'their transnational histories, nationalistic notions of gender, race, and ethnicity, and subjective positions of power that are operationalised in and through the everyday places in a global city' (Datta, 2009: 367). Migrants can be simultaneously distanciated from and engaged with the 'Others', and this goes in line with the depiction of contemporary Europe as a crossing of transnational networks, 'a space of longings rooted in myths of origin and tradition, as it is a space of cosmopolitan identities and attachments, and hybrid geographies of cultural formation' (Amin, 2012: 125). Multiple versions of cosmopolitans are produced in specific conditions of London: 'for East European migrants, cosmopolitanism is neither a cultural project, nor just a survival strategy, but a complex mixture of cultural, ordinary, banal, coerced, and glocalised cosmopolitanisms that are enacted under different spatial circumstances of interaction, subjective positioning, and physical proximity' (Datta, 2009: 367). In this regard, taking into account the role of socioeconomic, cultural, gender, behavioural, legal, and other distinctions that contribute to super-diversity and often underlie the constructions of

racialization, at the end of this chapter I suggest that there can be a positive connection between close personal relationships like friendship or companionship and the dynamics of attitudes to difference. The cosmopolitanisms of Russian-speaking migrants, too, are embedded into the processes of social interaction with the Otherness within localized diversity of London. The boundaries between 'Us' and 'Them' become blurred, and as the identities and attachments shift, such binary divisions may become less relevant for explaining and structuring sociality in the city.

7. Ambiguous images of Otherness

As I wrote earlier, there are hardly pure racists or cosmopolitans among the Russian-speaking migrants I have interviewed. Rather, these people are constantly negotiating the processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization taking place in a multicultural city. This city provides them with opportunities of communication with the Other but also makes an impression of imposing rules of superficial contact, is perceived as having its own tacit sociocultural norms regulating the everyday sociality, and may deconstruct the existing values and identifications but not necessarily replace them with anything.

Recent migration literature (Keith, 2005b, Datta, 2009, Datta and Brickell, 2009, Rabikowska, 2010, Glick Schiller et al., 2011) underlines the ambiguous and sometimes contradictory ways in which migrants combine rootedness and openness. Nayak (2010: 2389) in his paper on emotional politics of race notes: 'concepts such as `parallel lives', `social exclusion', or `community cohesion' - powerful as they are - appear to overlook the emotional connections of being and belonging and the ambiguous ways in which multicultural intimacies and visceral hatred coexist. Conflict and conviviality are performed and worked through `on-the-ground' and `in-the-moment'. They may as well be performed in the concrete social situation of the interview, which can invoke the emotional experiences of encountering, living with, avoiding or socializing with the Other. And as well, the ambiguity shows up in the interviews.

Some people who are quoted in this chapter of the work were also quoted earlier, in the chapter on racism. Evgeniy, who has an indigenous South African wife and fervently criticizes his compatriots who express any chauvinistic ideas, at some point bursts into ungrounded emotional statements about the English. Yana, the 'reasonably

prejudiced' (Billig et al., 1988: 113) migrant, uses a common frame 'I am not racist, but' and attempts to explain her attitudes with external factors like presumably natural qualities of the racialized group and attitudes of the other people. But in the next chapter, she apparently reports the change of her attitude, when she discovers that people from the group she was prejudiced about are actually good companions. The examples are many: the interview is a dynamic conversation, based upon people's experiences which are diverse and charged with different and sometimes contradictory emotions. This is not uncommon in research on sensitive issues like racism: people 'may be caught in the dilemma of possessing contrary ways of talking about "them", drawing upon opposing themes of tolerance and prejudice, sympathy and blame, nationalism and internationalism. In this sense their discourse, and indeed their thinking, possesses a dilemmatic quality' (Billig et al., 1988: 117).

One conversation which took place during the bar fieldwork period struck me most, as a representation of simultaneous engagement with and disengagement from the Otherness. My respondent Nadya was elaborating about the Pakistani, engaging in a very chauvinist speech. Finally, she went on criticizing 'their' sexual abilities. I asked why she had made such conclusions. She replied that she had had an affair with her Pakistani flatmate. In fact, research on racism can obviously be potentially disturbing for the researcher (Kobayashi, 2001: 64) who nevertheless has to try and make sense of what respondents say. But often, it was not only people's xenophobic comments that could shock. Rather, it was this kind of paradoxical combination of attitudes. Also, I noticed that people felt freer about talking about their attitudes and relationships, and particularly about emotions invoked by these, when I was doing the ethnographic part of research, and when I was interviewing my long-term and relatively close acquaintances. Hitchings (2012) claims that 'people can talk about their practices': that is, interview is a valid and valuable method of studying simple mundane practices. Is racism a common part of the routine life? Probably not straightforwardly – it is a much more sensitive, unspeakable and background theme. That is why, perhaps, some of the respondents were just too preoccupied with being polite and pretending non-chauvinist. However, those with whom I had more or less friendly relationships, usually talked about their views more openly, and more emotionally. In these circumstances, being in a close relationship with respondents provided a more vivid picture of

migrants' attitudes towards diversity. That is to say, there clearly were methodological implications of the conduct of the study for the results achieved. In the final chapter of this work, I will provide an analysis of those.

8. Concluding thoughts

In this chapter I have discussed the possibilities of development of open and tolerant attitudes towards ethnically and nationally different Londoners among Russian-speaking migrants. These processes occur gradually, and their dynamics is usually based upon migrants' reflections on accepting the difference and building equal relationships with the Other. Cosmopolitanization is connected with the everyday exposure to and communication with diversity. It takes place within the context of socially differentiated structure of London population. The expansion of migrants' social networks and the inclusion of the Other is conditioned by these social differentiations. Both racialization which was addressed in previous chapter, and cosmopolitanization form a complex of social processes that function sometimes paradoxically simultaneously in the city. I argue here that coming to terms with diversity in general, as a feature of London and a broad characteristic of the globalized and hybridized society, often stems from individual, informal, mundane interactions with some particular socially and spatially localized elements of this diversity. This links the conceptual frameworks of cosmopolitanism and migration in a global city with the empirical focus on personal networks and values of friendship for those who inhabit such a city.

Conclusion of part 3

I n part 3 of this work, I have explored Russian-speaking migrants' perceptions of life in a multicultural city like London, and focused on the development of attitudes to difference as well as strategies of dealing with it. Having analyzed the features of super-diversity in the second chapter, here, based upon the results of empirical research, I have brought in the implications of this super-diversity for the actual relationships among the city dwellers. I am concentrating on relationships of Russian-speaking migrants and other Londoners, following the concerns about intercultural relationships brought in by the influx of East European migrants to the UK (McDowell, 2008b, Keith, 2005a). I started chapter 7 presenting accounts of how Russian-speaking migrants see the specificity of London life in the circumstances of increased global mobility, diversification of the global city population and problematization of intercultural communication. This includes perceiving the city and the people surrounding them and living in the same area, possibilities of communication with the others, and eventual effects of these on the perceptions of identities of others and the self. London is often recognized as a place with a multitude of other inhabitants, where some strategies are to be employed in order to organize coexistence, communication is often superficial and limited, and previous attachments, values and identifications may become irrelevant but not necessarily replaced by anything as a consequence. These perceptions influence how people react to this diversity and how they interact with it, particularly the complexity of attitudes and behavioural practices based on, or attributed to, national and ethnic identities. The risks involved are connected with seeing Londoners not only as different but as incomparable and unequal subjects.

If super-diversity is considered to be the state of things in London, those who immediately constitute it should be also given voice, because they have become an essential part of the global city. Coexistence with difference is not unproblematic: racialized attitudes can develop among migrants who find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, surrounded by a multitude of cultures, and sometimes being stigmatized by the general population as a threat to their personal wellbeing or the nation-state. I have underlined in chapter 8 that in today's London, with its variety of more subtle distinctions between people than there used to be several decades ago, and increased

mixing of cultures, there is not only a racializing host society and racialized newcomers who are conventionally 'framed and thus metaphorically locked into limited possibilities spatially, socially, culturally and academically' (Tolia-Kelly, 2008: 282). The research showed that migrants who are commonly clichéd as strange and alien, in a multicultural city can take part in the processes of othering typical for this place, even if they belong to a vulnerable group themselves. In chapter 8, I have argued that migrants are actively participating in the urban processes of racialization, relying upon their previous experience of treating difference, discourse of the home countries, structural factors like migration policies and labour market divisions in the UK, and personal experience of encountering the everyday multiculture. There is a multitude of parameters according to which the subject is being othered in different ways - considered as dangerous, unworthy, inferior, or just appalling. I conclude that racialization is often a judgmental naturalization of social difference, applying racial labels to social inequalities. Social hierarchies are being viewed as the hierarchies of races or nations, placed in the social space of London, and emotionally tuned as rankings of socially worthy and unworthy, more and less deserving, inferior and superior, and eventually 'good' and 'bad'. Producing taxonomies of difference that are constructed in relation to one's position as a reference point, thus, the migrant emplaces him/herself within the social structure of London's diverse population – as he/she sees it. The risks of racialization are connected with the emotional attachments of negative attitudes, related to common naturalizations of inferiority, stereotyping and generalizations. London's city space is a perfect ground for development of such attitudes, with a multiplicity of people from all over the world, to various degrees expressing allegiance to a multiplicity of nation-states across the borders of the host society, as well as occupying their own niches in social, cultural and economic life of the city.

In this work, I explore the ways in which migrants deal with diversity in their practices of informal sociality, in their ideas of who they consider possible to be friends or acquaintances, good neighbours, workmates and classmates, spouses and partners, or simply people who are a part of their daily routines. I was looking for empirical evidence of the development of cosmopolitan sociability (Glick Schiller et al., 2011), by means of a personal engagement into communication with the Other, where

differences between people are acknowledged but not stigmatized. My research suggests that coming to terms with diversity is a gradual process that is often conditioned by everyday informal interaction with it. Racialized attitudes can tend to reduce when migrants start to interact with the Other in their immediate social networks and develop friendly relationships: the research shows the gradual positive impact of Russian-speaking migrants' immersion into the super-diversity of London on their attitudes to other nationalities and ethnic groups. Also, such communication usually occurs within a certain social group, space, or strata, meaning that patterns of sociality with and within the diversity are socially conditioned. Taking into account the role of socioeconomic, cultural, gender, behavioural, legal, and other distinctions that contribute to super-diversity and often underlie the constructions of racialization, in chapter 9 I suggest that there can be a positive connection between close personal relationships like friendship or companionship and the dynamics of attitudes to difference. Life in a global city may lead to gradual cosmopolitanization and reduce the levels of xenophobia. Latham (2006: 97) writes that 'cosmopolitanization implies an internal reorganization of social life engendered through the reality of greater diversity'. There are certain prerequisites to it, and they are based on factors contributing to diversity of contemporary cities' population, like social class, cultural background, legal status, previous experience of encountering difference and the level of immediate personal contact of the person with the Otherness in the city. In encouraging mundane interaction as well as 'providing individuals chances to broaden their horizons', the context of concrete social situations should also be taken into account (Amin, 2002: 14).

Eventually, the transience and flexibility of identities include the fluid and changeable attitudes and attachments. The cosmopolitan perspective, as well as the maintenance of ethic/national ties and identities can take place simultaneously in the everyday lives of migrants in a global city. 'Inflected through the spaces of the city, both the creativity of processes of hybridization and creolization and the enduring scars of raciology and pernicious intolerance can be seen as simultaneously realized rather than juxtaposed' (Keith, 2005b: 269). Both the positive and negative sides of migrants' interactions with other inhabitants of the host society have been largely overlooked in literature that mainly focuses on the mainstream attitudes towards migrants and migrants' own

psychosocial experience of not-belonging, exclusion and marginality (Tolia-Kelly, 2008, Philip et al, 2010). What is missing from these debates is the sociality that migrants develop, the ways in which they construct and reconstruct relationships with others – both cosmopolitan and racialized ones. Glick Schiller et al (2011: 400) consider both rootedness and openness as coexisting and constitutive elements of the 'creativity through which migrants build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks'. Learning to deal with difference is a complex and dynamic process, and patterns of differentiation include a whole range of factors – ethnic/national origin, position in the labour market, gender, language and other. This is why I follow Brubaker (2004: 11) in thinking of ethnicity, race, and nation 'not in terms of substantial groups or entities but in terms of practical categories, situated actions, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects, and contingent events. It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization, and nationalization as political, social, cultural, and psychological processes'.The focus on migrants and the formation of their attitudes, I suggest here, is a crucial element of migration research in the times of increased global mobility, diversification of global cities' population and problematization of intercultural communication.

Chapter 10. The beginning and end of a beautiful friendship: ethical issues in the ethnographic study of migrants' sociality

1. Introduction

T his is the final chapter of the work on informal social relationships amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London,[14] in which I return to methodological questions and consider the practicalities of studying friendship. It contains some post-fieldwork reflections on the methods used in the study, and discusses the implications of social relationships among Russian-speakers as a topic of research for the relationships between the researcher and the researched in the conduct of fieldwork. I was prompted to write this chapter thinking about the drawbacks of doing qualitative research with a diverse set of people, trying (or having) to become a part of their lives, and listening to what turned out to be emotional accounts of their lives. I remembered one of dozens of fieldwork cases involving an emotional interaction between myself and one respondent. As soon as I started to describe the situation, I realized that I had not mentioned it in the research diary. Something was preventing me from elaborating the topic. Too personal, either for me or for the other participant of the situation? What if she reads my paper? And, more importantly, does this case have anything to do with my study of friendship, or with the pitfalls of an actual relationship? Can the emotions produced by one's friendship with respondents be counted as part of the research outcomes, or do they relate to me as a person only?

Ethnography is connected with social relationships unfolding in the context of the exchange of information, and the personal involvement of the researcher (Agar 1980). 'The researcher cannot conveniently tuck away the personal behind the professional, because fieldwork *is* personal' (England 1994: 249). I understand 'ethically important moments' as 'difficult, often subtle, and usually unpredictable situations that arise in the practice of doing research' (Guillemin and Gillam 2004: 262). This chapter aims to analyze the ethical drawbacks of qualitative study done by a researcher with an implied 'insider' position, drawing on the example of Russian-speaking migrants in

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[14] This chapter is based on a book chapter (Malyutina, D. (2012) 'The beginning and end of a beautiful friendship: ethical issues in the ethnographic study of sociality amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London', in U. Ziemer, ed. *East European diasporas, migration and cosmopolitanism*. Routledge, London) that I wrote after making a presentation at CEELBAS workshop 'Research Ethics and the Practicalities of Doing Fieldwork in Russia, Central and Eastern Europe' at UCL in 2010.

London. It presents an analytical representation of relationships with respondents and a personal account derived from the fieldwork. First, I approach the issues of establishing relationships with respondents, concentrating on the researcher's positionality. Secondly, I focus on the problems posed by particular relationships, and conclude with discussing the limitations of doing qualitative research with a presumably 'insider' status. The key points of this chapter are, first, that ethnographic research on migration, especially when done by a migrant researcher, can benefit from feminist traditions, particularly on the issues of reflexivity, positionality and power inequalities. Second, I support the feminist argument of making the downsides of the research relationships clear, and argue that building a relationship with respondents is in itself a way of practically studying a community. Finally, I claim that belonging to the same national/ethnic community can be helpful for the research; however, being close to respondents does not make one an insider, as a whole range of differences exist between the researcher and respondents.

2. Reflexivity and positionality in qualitative research: feminist approach

Following feminist geography, this chapter attempts to 'try and make more visible the mystery that is the research process', without 'drawing a veil over the implications of [the researcher's] own position' (Rose 1997: 309; McDowell 1992: 403). If we are studying friendship by means of ethnography, and want to develop reflexivity, we should make visible the relationships between the researcher and the researched and the implications of these for the relationships in the migrant community. The main body of literature I rely on includes writings on qualitative research and ethnography (Agar 1980; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Denzin and Lincoln 2005) migration and transnationalism literature (Conradson and Latham 2005a, 2005b; Glick Schiller *et al.* 2011; Vertovec 2007) works on Russian migrants and Russian friendship (Byford 2009a; Kharkhordin 1999, 2009; Shlapentokh 1989); and feminist geography (England 1994; McDowell 1992; Rose 1997).

Participant observation, as opposed to interviewing, requires continuous involvement of the researcher in the life of a community, and often implies developing friendships. In my case, it was even more complicated because I often personally experienced friendship while also researching it. While maintaining close friendly relations with the

informant can give access to deep layers of personal information, specialized knowledge, and richer communication, it can bias the ethnographer's interpretations, as a researcher's role is gradually replaced with that of a friend. Judging respondents from the point of view of a friend may influence the accuracy and validity of research. Keith (1992: 553) mentions that moral, political and ethical considerations that structure the context of research 'involve instant judgment in the field and rationalization of such judgment in report: […] the representational accuracy of the report is structured by the moral (politico-ethical) assessment of particular situations'. Hence the double risk: judgment in the field may bias your interpretation; personalized interpretations may bias the academic representation of your work.

The issue of power inequalities often arises in feminist research (England 1994; McDowell 1992; Rose 1997). The researcher's position is connected with the production of knowledge about others, and the risks involved imply that knowledge obtained via this kind of power cannot be considered universal. A way of reducing overgeneralizations is 'making one's position known, which involves making it visible and making the specificity of its perspective clear' (Rose 1997: 308), which involves a reflexive approach both 'inward' towards the self of the researcher, and 'outward' to her research and the world. Reflexivity can help to avoid essentializing the distinctive qualities of the researcher, and think critically about the research process (Guillemin and Gillam 2004; Robertson 2002). However, agnostically admitting that these researched can never be fully understood as they are different from the researcher, Rose (1997: 317) underlines that the research process is a 'fragmented space, webbed across gaps in understandings, saturated with power, but also, paradoxically, with uncertainty'. Reflexivity is considered a tool for making the asymmetries visible, but not for removing them (England 1994: 250).

The insider-outsider question has been a problematic topic in social sciences (Agar 1980; Merton 1972), and is particularly relevant to migration research and feminist geography (Abu-Lughod 1991; Ganga and Scott 2006; McDowell 1992; Mullings 1999). Defining the researcher's position as an insider or an outsider is difficult, and the relative benefits of either definition are disputable. Sharing the same nationality with the respondent is in most cases not enough to be considered an 'insider', as social status includes other criteria that may make people reject an insider status – class,

gender, age, legal status, marital status etc. Also, the 'insider/outsider' binary 'is not only highly unstable but also one that ignores the dynamism of positionalities in time and through space' (Mullings 1999: 340). Considering the historically produced and contested nature of cultures (Clifford and Marcus 1986: 18), and cultural identity being 'not an essence but positioning' (Hall 1990: 226), defining one's own niche in a certain community can be far from straightforward.

This discussion points to the idea that qualitative research implies the researcher's personal involvement in the lives of her informants. Extending the researcher's social position outside the boundaries of a professional role brings to the fore not only the issue of power inequalities between them, but also the transience of positions. Hence the problems of identifying one's position as insider or outsider: the multiplicity of socioeconomic, cultural, generational, legal, gender and other differences require reflexivity to be employed throughout the research in order to constantly analyze and redefine one's positionality. Although attempts to be reflexive cannot possibly make us understand the respondent completely, they are helpful in pointing out the differences between the participants of the interaction. This discussion leads to an idea that feminist approach to research can be helpful for qualitative migration studies, particularly in methodological and ethical questions.

3. The beginning

As it is clear from the earlier chapters, this research faced the issue of studying friendship in a diverse and stratified 'community', focusing on the constitution of migrants' personal networks and relationships inside them. Chapter 3 presents the methods I used: ethnography and semi-structured interviews. While I have already described the processes of data gathering and provided conceptual and practical rationale of conducting fieldwork the way I did it, this chapter deals with post-fieldwork reflections on some of the ethical issues that arose in the course of participant observation and interviewing.

The fieldwork in many cases led to informal relationships with Russian-speaking migrants: hanging out with them, visiting each other, eating out, drinking, and chatting. My ethnographic observations of the others' interactions and personal experience of becoming a part of a certain community showed that initially, a person's

status of Russian-speaking migrant promotes the establishment of intersubjectivity. Sociality developed on the basis of common cultural background and language; those who do not possess these characteristics can be discursively and practically distinguished from the community. This was more evident in a bar study where most of the respondents were lower-status migrants, and less true for more educated, legal migrants with higher incomes and stable occupations.

Usually, the researcher's status of a Russian in London helped – at least, in the first stages of establishing relationships with respondents. Conversations with migrants at the start were connected with finding commonalities, which promoted the development of trust, and eventually the informant giving more personal and confidential information.

> R:…Are you from Moscow yourself?
>
> I: No, I am from Novosibirsk.
>
> R: From Novosibirsk? *Ooh, I love you, my dear*…People from Moscow are like Londoners. If they cook, they cook, say, only three portions. If I cook, I make a huge pot. You can eat two-three portions, and something will be left. My friend Natalia from Moscow often invited us. She was like – I've cooked four portions. I say – why wouldn't you make more? – What would I do with it? – Well, put it in a fridge!… […] *And you are from Novosibirsk…I've been there. One of my clients*, who is more or less *like my friend*, comes here once a year – *he's Siberian*, from Krasnoyarsk. We go to a restaurant. I've met his friends, they all are great guys. […] *My father is from Siberia.* […] And as a Siberian, he has this wide generous soul [*shirokaya dusha*], only he drinks too much…He went to Nizhny Novgorod after his divorce with my mother. It was in 1989, you probably were not even born…
>
> I: I was three years old at that time.
>
> R: So you were born in 1986? Oh, *I went to the army in 1986…'*.

(Evgeniy, 43)

This excerpt, first of all, accounts for the inner diversity of the Russian-speaking migrant community in London. Evgeniy specifies people from Moscow and criticizes their stinginess, in contrast with presumably more generous people from Siberia. He distinguishes between clients who can approach the category of a friend, and the rest of them. A big part of his reflections on relationships with Russian-speakers is lamenting about the vulgarity of his clients (Evgeniy is a property consultant for

Russian millionaires) and his reluctance to engage in close relationships with them. Navigating through accounts of diversity, he manages to find similarities between himself and the researcher (italics). First of all, he parallels the researcher's origin with his experience of dealing with people from the same region of Russia; then, he remembers visiting her place of birth; next, he brings in the arguments of friendship and kinship connected to that certain place; finally, he sees a connection between two remarkable events in the lives of himself and the researcher. Although there was not much in common between us, apart from a mutual friend – his neighbour and my former colleague - similarities are constructed by the participant(s) of the interaction, facilitating the communication (for him) and the interview (for me).

Geographies of pre-migration life are often invoked in conversations between new acquaintances. Such hitherto 'invisible links' to the same city or region of origin helped a lot in getting access to respondents. Spatial closeness of places of origin usually implies the existence of specific common knowledge, common acquaintances and similarities in life experiences. My longest ongoing friendly relationship with an informant was marked by finding out about the same region of origin at the first meeting. My language teacher turned out to be flatsharing with 'a Russian guy from a city whose name I would not be able to spell, as yours – maybe you are from the same place?' who happened to be from the same city and same school with me, and ended up as a respondent. One sequence of interviews and observations started from me bumping into my former classmate in Waitrose, getting involved with his network of friends and picking up more informants. Sense of 'imagined community', or 'community of sentiment' – 'a group in which members are tied with collective sense of imagination and begin to imagine and feel things together' (Appadurai 1996: 8) were central to the fieldwork, where the links to the same places provided an additional feeling of commonality.

However, things would have been too easy if all the research connections had been simply established just because you speak the same language and come from the post-Soviet space. Russian-speaking migrants' reluctance to communicate was noticeable with some categories of people. Introversion, suspicion, and refusal were also a part of the empirical research. Agar (1980: 59) regards suspicion at the initial stages of research a normal part of ethnography, as 'the ethnographer is asking for trust without

yet having earned it'. In most cases it was related to social differences between the researcher and the researched. In the following example, it eliminated my chances of interviewing a potentially interesting respondent:

> 'I was sitting in the bar and chatting with Nadya. Suddenly, Rita came in. She was a bit drunk already, cheerfully ordered a glass of white wine and sat beside me. She was in a perky talkative mood, and immediately started a conversation. From discussing the mundane topics like weather and 'how-are-things', however, the conversation soon became more aggressive. First, she informed me of her disapproval of my eyebrow piercing and expressed a firm opinion that I should have it removed. Then, she switched her attention to my beer and told me that a girl should not drink Hoegaarden. After a while, probably after getting more drunk, she remembered what I told her when I first presented myself as a researcher. Rita embarked on accusing me of coming "from there" and getting a place with a scholarship in a university: 'While my son could not pass the exams, could not get a place as good as yours - people like you come from your small cities in Russia and get it just like that! You are wasting the taxpayers' money, you leeches! Bugger off, go back to your Russia and do your research there! I will never give you an interview!' I was trying to stay (or at least look) indifferent during her outburst, although what I really wanted to do was pour the rest of her glass of wine over her head. I was calming myself down with thoughts like 'She is an aging alcoholic, with an unlucky personal life and no professional self-realization, in a deep crisis and unsatisfied, there is no point in getting sensitive for me…'. She finished her fiery speech and her wine and left the bar. The bartenders looked at me with compassion. 'Don't take it personal, that's Rita. She is always like that – saying stupid things, then feeling sorry, then getting drunk again…'.

This situation made me think about my behaviour as a Russian-speaking bar visitor and a researcher, and the possibility of contradiction between these social roles. Her arguments related to me as a person; however, my reaction was conditioned by the requirements of my study, as I kept reminding myself that I need that place and need not be in conflict with anyone there. Feminist theory notes that researchers are also affected by the research process, as all of the participants of interaction are involved into mutually constitutive social relations (England 1994; Rose 1997). Neglecting the researcher's emotions would be dangerous, as they inevitably influence the interpretations of social situations (Widdowfield 2000). As a person, I felt I have been treated undeservedly. As a researcher, I felt surprised – she was the first Russian I have met who was explicitly aggressive towards another Russian (who, by chance, happened to be me). It was after that situation that I realized I started to empirically prove for my sample what has been outlined in the literature (Levitt 2001; Wimmer

and Glick Schiller 2003) - the Russian-speaking community, as any other, is not and does not necessarily have to be a tightly knit group of compatriots feeling affinity and solidarity towards each other, and its internal homogeneity and boundedness, and even its transnationalism should not be overstated.

Being of the same ethnic/national origin with respondents was helpful in most cases at the initial stage of research: it promoted access and the development of trust. Further communication unfolded with a search for similarities or differences between us. Following feminist tradition, I made clear not only my success in getting in touch with informants, but also my failures. I argue that all sides of the research interactions should be accounted for. Building relationships with respondents, as an implementation of research methods, in itself is a way of practically studying the community, apart from listening to narratives and observing sociality. Meanwhile, having more or less defined my place in the relationships with respondents, I went on to research and experience friendship - the kind of attitude that does not only bring, but also keep people together.

4. 'The beautiful friendship'

I have outlined in part 2 of this work that Russian-speaking population of London is constituted on the basis of everyday personal interactions in small social networks. Friendship for many Russian-speakers is not always about connections they had before moving to London. The establishment of new social ties may be spontaneous, often with an undeniable special value assigned to such friendships. At the same time, relationships are socially stratified and selective. 'Real friendship' with compatriots often implies long-term relationships, and it is common for it to be established with those who have links with the same place of origin. However, migrants often expressed indifference or even reluctance to expand their personal networks while they are already in London. On the whole, this migrant group is described as characterized by fluidity of its boundaries, high degree of social stratification, and different extents to which migrants rely on their community (Byford 2009a).

My own Russian-ness informed my relationships with my informants, and blurred the difference between the social roles of interviewer and respondent. After the process of self-representation has been fulfilled, another issue arose – how to build relations

with the informants? The problem is one of defining the level of closeness to the research participants, 'an intricate process of identifying spaces and times when it was desirable for me to be an "insider", and situations when it was more desirable to be an "outsider" to the social group under inquiry' (Mullings 1999: 343). Certain strategies described below were employed by my respondents, promoting my inclusion to their groups and making me closer to the insider position.

1. *Categorization of Russian-speakers*. Russian-speaking respondents projected their existing taxonomies of possible friends/acquaintances on the researcher. Their dispositions were partly discovered through the way they treated me – as a representative of a certain category of Russian-speakers in London. Marina, for example, tries to keep distance from other Russian women, as encounters with them did not work out well for her:

> 'The women I've met here…they always need something from you, they have to prepare some documents, have problems… […] Those Russian women you meet here are prostitutes, you know, they just fuck around. Some of them, at least. I try not to socialize with them, they are dishonouring the nation. […] I have my family, I cannot live like they do. Maybe I just do not see nice girls? Well, you generally see less good things in life. Those who stick to you are desperate for something. One of them was asking me to find a man for her, so that she could get married. She was offering me £2,000…'

She was less suspicious of me for a number of reasons. I did not resemble the Russian-speaking women who tried to 'befriend' her during the 12 years of her life in the UK:

> 'I cannot say that all Russian girls are whores. You don't look like one. You are cool. My cousin is a great girl, too. And Masha is nice and kind. So, I cannot say bad things about everyone…'.

(Marina, 32)

2. *Mutual activities as a way of distinguishing from non-Russian-speakers*. My fieldwork in many cases led to the expansion of the researcher/researched relationship to some non-research related interactions. It posed an ethical question; if what I was doing and talking about with migrants could be counted as research, and whether the information obtained in this way could be counted as ethically pursued and appropriate for academic publications. Oakley (1981: 55) underlines that these problems, generic for qualitative research, are greatest when there is least social

distance between the interviewer and the respondent – especially when they belong to the same minority group.

One of the things not approved by the UCL's ethics committee guidelines but frequently turning up in the course of fieldwork was alcohol. While interviewing at respondents' homes, at some point I would notice the respondent getting out a bottle of wine and pouring two glasses. Refusing did not work, sounded impolite, and could make the balance between us more unequal – firstly, because we would end up being in different states of mind if one of us would be drunk and the other not; secondly, because perceptions of communication while drinking and sober differ in degrees of informality. Engaging in the same practice *with* the informant, however, served as an ice-breaker. Respondents became more relaxed, and the conversation lost some of its formality. Professional roles in this interaction started to fade away, and the respondent perceived the researcher much more as just another Russian than an academic. It gave a chance to explore the development of a relationship from the inside. For example, earlier in this work I quoted an excerpt describing a situation when I was offered a drink by a Russian-speaking bartender after the closing time and for free, which made angry an English customer. I concluded later in the analysis of these fieldnotes:

> 'Sometimes it is alcohol which shows the distribution of power and draws a border between Russian-speaking regulars and others: drinks can be served for free for members of the group, they can be served after the last call and even after the closure. Alcohol is one of the indicators of informal relationships between members of this group – while making a drink for a friend, the Russian-speaking bartender goes beyond his professional role and becomes emotionally involved into this interaction'.

By getting involved in the studied group's social practices, the researcher becomes initiated into the group members' lifestyle. The ease of such involvement and the disposition of the migrants' to socialize with the ethnographer, however, are not universal. Feeling accepted at the bar (where most of the migrants were young and did not occupy high socioeconomic positions) was more achievable than making a similar relationship with people ten years older than me, with higher incomes, married and with families.

3. *Initiative of inquiry.* Another way of making the interaction more informal is the respondent taking the initiative in his/her hands. Sometimes, the informant tried to take control of the research process, expressing his views on the sampling, interview procedure, and analysing the results. Of course, he/she has his/her own ways of doing that, presumably more effective than mine.

> R: Yes, considering your research, I can find you a lot of people to speak to.
>
> I: It would be appreciated, actually…
>
> R: How many do you need?
>
> I: Around five people would be nice.
>
> R: Hehe, do you need five *nice* people?
>
> I: No, I am saying it *would be nice* to interview five more. They could be bad, I don't mind.
>
> R: There's no point in interviewing bad people. Some Georgian – what would you need him for? Ha!

> (Viktor, 21)

As well as 'contributing' to the research process like this, respondents commonly take on the role of interviewer, starting to ask questions interesting for them. It interrupts my own series of questions, and is at least confusing. It can be regarded biasing for the interviewing practice, but frequently emerging in the course of study and problematic to avoid. However, the feminist research approach considers it normal to answer the respondents' questions, as it promotes a less exploitative attitude, and builds rapport (Oakley 1981:47).

4. *Background knowledge*. Question-asking is one of the most common practices of qualitative research. It is at this moment when the researcher's presumably 'insider' positioning strikes back. As a member of the group, you are not supposed to ask questions about most basic, or very specific, rules of behaviour. Being of the same origin, you are supposed to know that. Questions about such 'common knowledge' issues are received with embarrassment. At best, the replies are confined to general descriptions: 'How do you recognize Russian-speakers? By appearance, by face…well, *you know all that*'. At worst, people start quoting your work they have googled before meeting you, giving a condensed account of your own thoughts.

I: So, who lives in your area?

R: I think you wrote somewhere that in this country Russian-speakers do not try to settle together. You know all that. When I came here, I've been asking people where Russians lived in this city. There is no area like Brighton Beach….

(Vladimir, 40)

Even if the researcher already knows how the things he wants described usually happen – from her own experience or from others' stories – the task of representation implies the necessity of getting the information from the respondents' narratives. The researcher has the responsibility of representing the lives of the studied group to an academic audience, which largely does not share the origin and cultural background of the researcher and migrants. The person doing ethnography finds herself in an ambivalent position, with one foot in academia and another in the sample. Keith (1992: 551) writes about a crisis of representation 'in terms of the relation between subject matter and narrative to the cost of consideration of the relation between representation and audience'. Considering the audience as part of the research process, and the imposition of the authorial interpretation of the 'Other' is another issue of power relations.

I described how certain features of Russian-speaking migrants' informal socialising interact and counteract with the research practice. The informants' initiatives to erase borders between themselves and the researcher sometimes become manipulative. The inclusion of the researcher by informants included comparing her with the respondent's images of compatriots, engaging in the same activity, practically or discursively distinguishing her from non-Russian-speakers, role-switching by means of asking her questions, and assuming that she shares background knowledge about the life of migrants in London. All these are also reflections of strategies of inclusion common for socialisation of migrants in the Russian-speaking community. I argue that the bigger involvement of the researcher in the studied community, although it can help get access to more sides of migrants' everyday lives, is sometimes problematic for pursuing the aims of the research. The relationship is taken for granted as a friendly one by respondents and sometimes by the researcher. This taken-for-granted-ness may bias the academic representation of the research.

5. The end

Having briefly described friendships among Russian-speaking migrants, I do not aim to present an idyllic picture of a collective bounded together with affectionate ties. Being a migrant myself did not remove the problems. Differences - socioeconomic, educational, generational, gender, legal, country of origin, marital status - between the researcher and the researched will always find their way out and influence their relationships. I've been accused of various faults, from having nothing to talk about because of being 'all about your science and books', to not calling and not coming to a party therefore 'acting like you are not human'. Russian-ness helped at the beginning, but as the relationships developed, dissimilarities emerged. 'Differences of religion or age or class or occupation work to divide what similarities of race or sex or nationality work to unite' (Merton 1972: 24).

All this made me think about my position among the people I was studying. Abu-Lughod (1991) argues that feminists and 'halfies' – people with mixed ethnic or cultural identity – are the most critical groups for cultural anthropology, able to reconsider the value of the concept of culture by unsettling the boundaries between self and other. At the same time, 'for halfies, the Other is in certain ways the self, there is said to be the danger shared with indigenous anthropologists of identification and the easy slide into subjectivity' (Abu-Lughod 1991:141). The dilemma of a researcher studying her migrant compatriots means positioning herself in both communities and representing subculture as a way of representing him/herself.

Detached involvement (Nash 1963, cited in Agar 1980: 50) is a way of positioning oneself in the course of fieldwork:

> 'One is, at the same time, part of and distant from the community. One struggles to understand with involvement in the society; at the same time, one stands back critically to examine what one has learned. However, this detached involvement – this stepping into and out of society – is a strain in its own right. There are two obvious ways to lessen the strain. Either keep your distance or 'go native'. You keep your distance at the risk of failing to understand the complexities of a human situation different from your own. You go native, but then stop functioning as a social scientist. Actually, real ethnography represents some of both these strategies as the ethnographer moves around the goal of detached involvement'.

The problem of detached involvement is entirely relevant to studying one's own community, especially if it is a minority group. As Agar (1980: 52) puts it, 'while working in your own society, you still have the stress of detached involvement, compounded by the substitution of frequent repeated mini-doses of culture shock in place of the one huge jolt that you usually get in more traditional forms of fieldwork'. Culture shock 'comes from the sudden immersion in the lifeways of a group different from yourself' (Agar 1980: 50) and makes the researcher unable to interpret the things happening around him using his existing knowledge. The confusion can be conditioned by different amounts and combinations of social, economic and cultural capital of the ethnographer and the informant. Some practices are considered normal in one social group but inacceptable for another. Culture shock was hearing from Nastya the story of how she came to London by getting to know a Russian guy from a social website, moving in with him and making him her boyfriend, presented as a suitable way of getting out of Bournemouth. Culture shock was listening to Masha's account of cheating on her husband while loving him and their little son. Culture shock was also desperately trying to find an answer to her question about whether I thought such things should be told to husbands. The inner diversity of the Russian-speaking community showed up again – we behave differently, and nationality did not have much to do with this. Culture shock in this sense was conditioned by differences in our cultural identities that include not only similarities but also 'critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute "what we really are"; or rather […] "what we have become"' (Hall 1990: 225).

Being exposed to a diversity of relationships with different people, and subjugating yourself to their understandings and practices of friendship, puts at risk the researcher's personality. It was even more complicated as I had to fit into different communities. Socioeconomic, cultural, generational, gender and other inequalities became more striking, proving that 'the notion of non-exploitative research relations is a utopian ideal that is receding from our grasp' (McDowell 1992: 408). However, whether I succeeded in taking the role of an insider or not, being closer to this migrant group was certainly useful for the research outcomes. I could see from inside the disjunctures that broke this community into stratified groups. It demonstrated that this

community is highly differentiated, and nationality, ethnic origin or language on their own are not sufficient to bring its members close enough together (Byford 2009a).

I recall being particularly happy when I had just finished my fieldwork. It was done! From now on, I thought, I will spend my time writing up, in front of my laptop in my department, surrounded by English books and socialising with my English-speaking colleagues (among whom, I gladly admitted, there was not a single native Russian-speaker). I wanted to draw the line between the society I've been studying and the society I live in. It was time to detach myself from drug-taking youth and clean kids from good families, mumsies and women of relaxed morals, girls in mid-twenties asking me what fascism was and why WWII started and Russian-Jewish rappers that turned out to be fascist, migrants who were reluctant to talk with me, and those who were looking for my company and were less than appealing to me. Friendship seemed a nice thing to write about, however experiencing many different friendships personally was overwhelming.

In the final part of this chapter, I pointed out how the differences between me and my respondents disrupted or put an end to our relationships, and demonstrated that ethnic/national origin does not provide enough ground for a continuous relationship. Most of the relationships started because of the research; most of it ended not only because research came to an end, but also because of personal issues. This research showed that studying migrants by a migrant researcher poses questions similar to those which arise in feminist geography. Regarding feminine psychology as that of a subordinate group is paralleled with the perception of ethnic minorities (Oakley 1981). How can the mutual positioning of the ethnographer and the respondents be conditioned by their similar origin and status of a national/ethnic minority encountering stereotyped and oppressive attitudes? Even if we consider it as an advantage to (arguably) belong to the same community, it is necessary to look for appropriate ways of representing the life of this community to the academic audience.

My central argument is that belonging to the same community can be helpful in conducting research, however the diversity of this community should be an object of constant reflexivity, and the seemingly easy access to a group should never prove that you are an insider. I support the feminist argument of making the pitfalls and gaps of a

research visible, and claim that practical downsides of a study can turn into or confirm its actual outcomes. By trying to befriend some of my respondents, I was breaking the unwritten rule typical for some migrants, one of the outcomes of my study of informal relationships - the reluctance to make new migrant friends in a stratified community. By trying to detach myself from others, I was breaking another unwritten rule – that of easily established informal relationships and taken-for-granted Russian friendship. But by learning, succeeding and failing to approach different people in the context of personal relationships, I also learned a great deal about how these migrants considered the values of friendship, its social differences, and distinctions between the degrees of closeness. Differences that hinder the establishment or support of trust were also a demonstration of the stratified and segregated character of this migrant population. Eventually, in spite of certain facets of difference and power imbalance between the researcher and the researched, it is possible to make use of reflexive positioning for the research process and outcomes.

Conclusion

T his work is a discussion of sociality amongst Russian-speaking migrants in London. My research aims were to explore migrants' informal relationships, particularly friendship, which is localized in London but has both local and spatially distanciated origins, and the construction and dynamics of their cosmopolitan and racialized attitudes as a part of urban sociality within the super-diversity of London. My thesis has advanced the understandings of contemporary migration to London, critically reconsidered the scholarship on transnationalism, and justified the use of friendship as a conceptual category of analysis of the ambiguities and dynamics of the social and spatial emplacement of migrants' social relationships.

The choice of the research object is explained by a number of reasons. Russian-speaking migrants as the social group I have focused on is a part of a recently emerged and developing migrant population which is historically new to the UK but constitutes a recognizable share of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007). These Russian-speakers are often 'middling' newcomers (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, 2005b), and their mobility is conditioned by the social, economic, and cultural features of London's development. As well, their migrant lives are underpinned by the ambiguity of their power positions as 'lifestyle migrants', for whom the aesthetical motivations play an important role in shaping their decisions and practices of mobility (Knowles and Harper, 2009), but who are, however, marginalized by means of their non-EU status. Russian-speaking migrants were chosen as an object of research because they offer a particularly valuable field for the consideration of social and spatial connections of global migration. In this respect, my thesis is refining the body of research overwhelmed by studies on post-accession East Europeans and low-waged migrant workers, by stressing the different dimension of UK migration of the past decade. Such academic contribution helps eliminate generalizations of East Europeans as socially and culturally homogeneous group of people, as well as contributes to the growing body of research on 'middling' migrants. This kind of focus is necessary for adequate representation of the understudied sides of the multiculture, for a generally balanced migration scholarship. I chose Russian-speakers as a diverse population described as big enough but not cohesive enough to form a community, in order to get a deeper understanding of how migrants' social networks operate in practice, assuming a great

differentiation of networks in their spatial organization, their dynamism, and different resources, support and values provided by informal networks.

In the concluding section of the thesis, I will, first, provide a summary of the conceptual arguments and criticisms, and results of empirical work that I have written about in the three main parts of the work. Secondly, I will outline the original contribution of my research to academic knowledge. I will argue for the significance of my study for the emerging body of research on 'middling' migration and transnationalism. Then I will consider the manner in which my research advances the understanding of contemporary migration through the focus on friendship. Next, I will outline the contribution of my work to the research on intercultural relationships in a super-diverse city, the risks of racialization and the development of cosmopolitanism. Finally, I will specify the ways in which my study provides methodological insights for the qualitative research on migration.

1. Thesis summary

Part 1 focused on the important theoretical themes of my thesis, described London and its Russian-speaking population as an object of research, and introduced the qualitative methodologies I used for studying migrants' social relationships. Chapter 1 made an attempt to disentangle the complexity and diversity of contemporary migration and engage into critical conversation with the theories of transnationalism. I relied on the works of the theorists who claim that with the development of migrant studies the notion of transnationalism is becoming overwhelming and loosely interpreted (Portes, 2001, Vertovec, 1999, Smith, 2005, Scott, 2006). Following them, I suggested that the concept of transnationalism has to be approached with a greater attention to individual circumstances of migration, and a consideration of the stratified and heterogeneous character of contemporary migrant communities. I supported the claims to critically rethink migrant communities as groups (Eriksen, 2002, Brubaker, 2004) and focused on the relational aspect of migrant ethnicity, which encompasses the often simultaneous malleability of the ethnic boundaries and rigidity of concerns about presumably ethnic determinants of the qualities of social groups. I stressed the need to pay more attention to 'middling transnationalism' (Conradson and Latham, 2005b, Blunt, 2007) and approach not only the top and bottom of the social strata but

rather 'ordinary people' who constitute a growing share of today's migration. These migrants usually belong to 'middling' positions both in the countries of origin and in the host countries, and in their mobility endeavours, economic considerations are not the only or the primary, while 'aesthetic' motivations play a significant role which makes some researchers call them 'lifestyle migrants' (Knowles and Harper, 2009).

I argued that the place of a migrant group in a city, the dynamics of its development, and the degrees of its transnationalism has to be analyzed through a range of people's informal relationships and personal networks that may be situated in different locations and that play an important role in mobility patterns. The transnational element of migrant sociality, as well as the ethnic one, should not be overestimated: social ties with compatriots, whether local or cross-border, should not be absolutized. In these claims, I specifically underlined the role of friendship as a kind of relationships that is not limited by more fixed kinship or neighbourhood ties (Wellman 1979, Wellman et al 1988, Ryan et al., 2008) and has a significant potential in inspiring and sustaining mobility (Conradson and Latham, 2005a: 301), and is a specific human interrelation irreducible to ethnic or national solidarity (Bunnell et al., 2011). I also outlined the historical and sociocultural origins of friendship and concluded that it is a special moral value for post-Soviet people, and often serves as a means of protection from the effects of marginalization imposed by the circumstances of living in London as a migrant. In focusing my research interest on friendship, I am adding to the body of geographical research in this field that has recently started to emerge and is still limited, but has a great potential for understanding the functioning of contemporary migration without confining it to the explanations of diasporas or transnational communities, but accounting for its diversity.

Another feature of my approach outlined in chapter 1 is that I stressed the need to pay special attention to the development and proliferation of personal networks of migrants, considering the dynamics of their attitudes and relationships with compatriots and other Londoners, in order to avoid missing on important patterns of urban sociality. The city space offers possibilities for development of both cosmopolitan and xenophobic attitudes, and the increasing diversity of the city populations, labour market divisions, and all numerous patterns of ethnic, class, and gender differentiation brought in by globalization and mobility make it even more

complicated. This work was shaped by the importance of taking into consideration that patterns of migrants' sociality contain both cosmopolitan and racialized elements, can be directed at the migrant community or at the integration in the host society, and eventually be an indicator of transnational engagement.

In chapter 2, I have described London as a geographical and social space where my research took place. It represents a deeper social stratification of newcomers between and within migrant communities, with patterns of differentiation not being limited to ethnicity/nationality (Vertovec, 2007). I directed my attention to increased and diversified migration from Eastern Europe since the EU accession in 2004 and non-EU countries of the former Soviet Union since the beginning of the 21st century, which has contributed greatly to the development of super-diversity. I followed the researchers who draw attention to the role of this migration in London's economy, demographics, and sociocultural characteristics (Wills et al., 2010, Eade et al., 2006, Ryan et al., 2008, Datta, 2009). My work is an attempt to fill in some gaps that these studies leave. Existing research often misses the complexity of these recent migration trends, which gives it a potential of becoming a source of risky generalizations. In the last decade, Russian-speaking migration to UK has become an established trend. Particular features of these migrants in London include the presence of all social layers and occupational categories in this migrant group, a dispersed character of settlement, and sociality patterns that stem from the stratified nature of this migrant group and result in it being a collection of classed 'subcommunities' (Kopnina, 2005), loosely connected with a 'historically specific sociocultural background' (Byford, 2009a). The 'middling' Russian-speakers constitute a big share of people from the FSU residing in London, however they are largely inconspicuous. Their invisibility stems from a lack of academic research on Russian-speakers as a part of contemporary migration trends, their white European complexion, and their socially stratified character, where smaller social groups are living their own lives, rarely engaging in close interaction with other compatriots. In the routes that Russian-speakers follow to get to London, and in their actual local lives as migrants, friendship often has a special place. I argued that the social networks building up this community gain their visibility when one looks at the informal social relationships bringing together compatriots abroad. That is why I aim to

analyze the contemporary unique social conditions of London as these are reflected in and contributed to by sociality exhibited by a group of migrants.

In chapter 3, I have described the particular qualitative methodologies that I chose for the empirical research of social relationships of Russian-speakers. I introduced the conceptual framework of transnational urbanism, 'middling' transnationalism and a critique of methodological nationalism that determined and shaped my choice of strategy of approaching, observing, and talking to people. These, respectively, defined the research strategy through attention to both local and cross-border relationships of migrants, focus on everyday practices of sociality of mostly middle-class migrants, and consideration of inner divisions and intercultural connections of migrants. A participant observation in a Russian bar and a series of 35 semi-structured interviews with migrants were conducted. My fieldwork process and dynamics were corresponding with the ideas of studying friendship of mostly 'middling' Russian-speaking migrants by observing, talking about and taking part in their everyday lives. The bar ethnography allowed me to get closely involved into a routine of a certain friendship network, thus being an effective means for initial understanding of the values and sociocultural specifics of friendship, often through personal experience of such relationship. The first 25 interviews, following a more structured schedule framed around finding out about migrants' relationships with Russian-speakers from their phones' contact lists, allowed to find out the different ways of establishing social connections with compatriots, to understand the variety of the degrees of closeness with them, and to concentrate on the accounts of dynamics and values of these relationships. In the final ten interviews, asking my respondents about their perceptions of and relationships with the everyday elements of diversity, I explored migrants as participants of London's social processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization, and as subjects whose sociality is not limited by notions of ethnic or national attachment.

In the next two parts of this work, I presented the results of the empirical research that contributes to and develops the conceptual ideas of the first two chapters. Part 2, thus, explored the connection between a small-scale intimate personal relationship like friendship and the specificity of the formation of a differentiated and loosely knit Russian-speaking migrant population of London. I followed the considerations outlined

in chapter 1, aiming to analyze the ties and connections that may inform migrant sociality in different ways, and explored the extent to which common ethnic or national origin underpins their social relationships in real life.

Chapter 4 claimed that there is a variety of ways of being connected to each other among migrants. The presence of other Russian-speaking migrants is perceived and negotiated as a routine part of super-diversity of London, and engaging with it is flexible to different extents, rather than being a necessity or obligation. Underpinned by its sociocultural meaningfulness, as well as higher flexibility and less spatial boundedness in comparison with kinship and neighbourhood relations, friendship among post-Soviet migrants in London was then presented in chapter 5 as shaping different spheres of mobility by its 'sustaining and inspirational aspects' (Conradson and Latham, 2005a: 301). In chapter 6 I claimed that the configuration and development of migrants' social networks is not principally and universally centered on belonging to a national or ethnic community. There are multiple divisions in this population, and a variety of social ties containing different affective qualities. This made Russian-speaking migrants I interviewed members of a set of social networks that may have transnational origins, and may reinforce the sense of 'imagined community' – but the establishment and functioning of these were often conditioned by the specific circumstances of London's diversity, which were negotiated locally. In other words, the main point of section 2 was that migrants in a global city socialize in a certain way not just because they are Russian-speakers, but more crucially because they are a part of the population of London, with all its interconnections and differentiations. And while interconnections and relationships within this migrant population have been the main focus of this section, in part 3 I approached post-Soviet migrants' as participants of the urban divisions and complex relationships with other Londoners.

In part 3 of this work, I have explored Russian-speaking migrant's perceptions of life in a multicultural city like London, and focused on the development of attitudes to difference as well as strategies of dealing with it. Based upon the results of section 2, I have brought in the implications of this super-diversity for the actual relationships among the city dwellers. This fits with the concerns about intercultural relationships brought in by the influx of East European migrants to the UK, and corresponds with the

argument of chapter 1 warning that research on migrant sociality often lacks the ability to grasp its multifaceted character and loses the wider picture if it focuses only on relationships within the presumed community.

I started chapter 7 by presenting the accounts of how Russian-speaking migrants see the specificity of London life in the circumstances of increased global mobility, diversification of the global city population and problematization of intercultural communication. The migrants' narratives in this chapter suggested that London is often recognized as a place with a multitude of other inhabitants, where some strategies are to be employed in order to organize coexistence, communication is often superficial and limited, and previous attachments, values and identifications may become irrelevant but not necessarily replaced by anything as a consequence. These perceptions influence how people react to this diversity and how they interact with it, particularly the complexity of attitudes and behavioural practices based on, or attributed to, national and ethnic identities. In chapter 8, I argued that migrants are participating in the urban processes of racialization, relying upon their previous experience of treating the different subject, discourse of the home countries, structural factors like migration policies and labour market divisions in the UK, and personal experience of encountering the everyday multiculture. Social hierarchies are viewed as the hierarchies of races or nations, placed in the social space of London, and emotionally tuned as rankings of socially worthy and unworthy, more and less deserving, inferior and superior, and eventually 'good' and 'bad'. Producing taxonomies of difference that are constructed in relation to one's position as a reference point, thus, the migrant emplaces him/herself within the social structure of London's diverse population, and develops constructions of ethnic and racial 'groupness'. London's city space is a perfect ground for development of racialized attitudes, with a multiplicity of people from all over the world, to various degrees expressing allegiance to a multiplicity of nation-states across the borders of the host society, as well as occupying their own niches in social, cultural and economic life of the city. In chapter 9, then, I was also looking for empirical evidence of the development of cosmopolitan sociability (Glick Schiller et al., 2011), by means of a personal engagement into communication with the Other, where differences between people are acknowledged and not stigmatized, but rather denationalized. I

concentrated on the social contexts of cosmopolitanization understood as gradually coming in terms with the difference (Beck, 2006, Latham, 2006). Taking into account the role of socioeconomic, cultural, gender, behavioural, legal, and other distinctions that contribute to super-diversity and often underlie the constructions of racialization, in chapter 9 I suggested that there can be a positive connection between close personal relationships like friendship or companionship and the dynamics of attitudes to difference. On the whole, I concluded that migrants in a multicultural city are negotiating their positions in the processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization, which often underlie the complex combinations of rootedness and openness they exhibit.

The final chapter of this thesis puts the implementation of my research strategies into the context of the challenges of migrant social relationships as a research problem. It included some reflexive thoughts about the ethical implications of doing qualitative research on friendship by a researcher with a presumably 'insider' position in a migrant group. I argued that belonging to the same community can be helpful in conducting research. However, the diversity of this community should be an object of constant reflexivity, and the seemingly easy access to a group should never be taken to mean that you are an insider. In this respect, I supported the feminist argument of making the pitfalls of a research relationship visible (Rose 1997, England 1994), and claimed that practical downsides of a study can be analytically approached as a useful experience for the research practice. Reflecting on the research process, I realized that learning, succeeding and failing to approach different people helped understanding how Russian-speaking migrants considered the values of friendship, its social differences, and distinctions between the degrees of closeness. Differences that hindered the establishment or support of trust were also a demonstration of the stratified and segregated character of this migrant population.

2. Theoretical and methodological contributions

This research provides important insights for theoretical reflections on transnational migration and studies of the 'global cities', generated by the qualitative study of informal relationships of Russian-speakers in London. London has been approached as a city with a socially, culturally, and ethnically diverse population due to enhanced

migration which contributes to the changes of the social structure, development of global interconnectedness, and problematization of relationships within the everyday multiculture. My work makes an emphasis on the need to explore the recent Russian-speaking migrants and their sociality as new subjects of this diversity. In doing so, I am following the arguments of the growing body of migration literature (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, 2005b, Smith and Favell, 2006, Ryan et al., 2008) to study the routine interactions and relationships of 'middling' migrants and disclose the 'human face' of contemporary migration. Theoretically, this research introduces a way of conceptualizing migrant sociality by using friendship for explaining the dynamics and differences in migrants' social relationships that cannot be fully accounted for by explanations of kinship and common ethnic or national background.

My research on the informal relationship of Russian-speaking migrants in London has sought to make several contributions to the migration studies. First of all, it advances the scholarship on migration and transnationalism. In particular, this work is a part of the body of research on the 'human face' of contemporary migration, 'middling' transnationalism and people's social interactions that make a 'global city' global (Smith and Favell, 2006, Conradson and Latham, 2005a, 2005b). It is developing the critical research on transnationalism and migrant groups by stressing the need to pay more attention to the inner diversity of migrant populations, different structural and personal constraints affecting the mobility decisions and further lives as migrants, and valuable social relationships that are not confined to kinship or neighbourhood. In doing so, I am empirically grounding the researchers' (Portes, 2001, Vertovec, 1999, Smith, 2005, Scott, 2006) mainly theoretical claims for limited applicability of transnational framework to contemporary migration, and demonstrate the social and spatial transience and divergence of people's attachments and social connections through empirically exploring the individual circumstances of migration.

Secondly, my work adds to the body of geographical research on friendship that has recently started to draw the attention of researchers (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, Bunnell et al., 2011). I suggested friendship as a basis of sociality that people build upon while being migrants, and as a relationship that reflects the issues problematic for migration research in contemporary society: the changing patterns of global mobility, its increasing numbers and diversity, new characteristics arguably attributed

to migrants, the persisting and developing problems in intercultural communication, and the contested degrees and significance of transnationalism. By attending to friendship as an individually selective but altruistically valuable relationship, my work tried to avoid the limitations imposed by the traditional for migration studies focus on ethnic/national communities, or cross-border connections with relatives. Such approach allowed for greater flexibility in accounting for sociality practices, and helps to consider a wide range of interrelations with both local and transnational origins that constitute a major part of the everyday sociality, however seem to be underrepresented by most migration studies. Friendship is presented as a research optic crucial for understanding the social and spatial positioning of people in the contexts of global migration.

The third important contribution of this work stems from the idea that both the positive and negative sides of migrants' interactions with other inhabitants of the host society have been largely overlooked in literature which mainly focuses on the mainstream attitudes towards migrants and migrants' own psychosocial experience of not-belonging, exclusion and marginality (Tolia-Kelly, 2008, Philip et al., 2010). What is missing from these debates is the sociality that migrants develop, the ways in which they construct and reconstruct relationships with Others – both cosmopolitan and racialized ones. However, I find it crucial to account for all sides of intercultural relationships that are unfolding within the super-diverse social conditions. Therefore, I underlined in this work that the cosmopolitan perspective, as well as the maintenance of ethic/national ties and identities can take place simultaneously in the everyday lives of migrants in a global city. I followed Glick Schiller et al. (2011: 400) who consider both rootedness and openness as coexisting and constitutive elements of the 'creativity through which migrants build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks'. Learning to deal with difference is a complex and dynamic process, and patterns of differentiation include a whole range of factors – ethnic/national origin, position in the labour market, gender, language and other. The focus on migrants and the formation of their attitudes, I suggest here, is a crucial element of migration research in the times of increased global mobility, diversification of global cities' population and problematization of intercultural communication. I consider this an area that lacks academic interest, but has a great

potential. The direction in which this research can develop is exploring how migrants, as a part of London's diverse population, take part in the urban processes of differentiation as a means of self-positioning and enhancing their identities as 'Londoners'. This work follows the researchers (Keith, 2005b, Datta, 2009, Datta and Brickell, 2009, Rabikowska, 2010) who underline the ambiguous and sometimes contradictory ways in which migrants combine cosmopolitan and racialized views, and by doing so, attends to migrants as agents of the complex processes of racialization and cosmopolitanization.

Finally, my research has important methodological implications for qualitative research of migration. It showed that close relationships between the researcher and the researched developed in the course of ethnography and partly interviews, have important implications, in aiding to achieve a more vivid and emotional collection of data when studying sensitive issues, and in practically demonstrating the features of a relationship studied. However, it also demonstrated the intricacies of migrants' narratives and practices which combine contradicting stances, as well as it required special attention to be paid to the way the relationship between me and my respondents had to be maintained. It has demonstrated the need to carefully consider the positionality of the researcher conducting interviews or engaging in ethnographic study of a community. By doing this, I underlined the relevance of feminist methods for migration research, as a means of studying vulnerable groups, and particularly as a way of drawing the attention to the intersectionality of social, cultural, economic, legal, and other characteristics that may differentiate the researcher and the researched. While I concluded that even the researcher with an implied position of an 'insider' in a migrant community does not necessarily establish rapport in relationships with respondents, the ways in which a research relationship may have seemed to fail, in my case, were also a reflection of the ways in which certain divisions function in the studied group as a whole. Eventually, the reflexivity that was employed in this research, inspired by the feminist literature, helped to see the complexity and diversity of social relationships practiced by Russian-speaking migrants.

Although my findings are centred on the study of Russian-speaking migrants, the research may have broader implications for the studies of 'middling' migration and complex processes of migrant community formation. The approach I used in this work

allows to look at migrants from different angles and at different scales: as individuals engaging in intimate personal relationships with friends, as members of social networks bound with informal social ties with different degrees of closeness, and as dwellers of a multicultural city employing different strategies of communication and treating the Otherness. Through studying friendship and other informal relationships, this work makes it possible to explore migrants as agents who are acting in the urban social space, negotiating the circumstances and creatively selecting strategies of socialization, ending up within a dynamic combination of local and transnational ties.

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Appendix

Interview schedule (1)

Hi! I would like to ask you some questions about the ways in which you socialize with other Russian-speakers in London. I will be recording you, but if you would want me to turn the recorder off, I will do it when you ask. Please speak as you usually do in your everyday life, and feel free to tell me anything you might find relevant to the topic of discussion. If you feel you don't want to reply to some questions, it is fine.

1. Please tell me a few words about yourself. How old are you? Where are you from? How did you get to London? What do you do now? What did you do before? Have you lived anywhere else? Where do you live in London? With whom?

2. Now please tell me about your Russian-speaking communication here in London. Did you know anyone when you just came here? Do you socialize with Russian-speakers a lot now?

3. Do you have any Russian-speakers in your phone contact list? I would like to ask you to go through this list, if that is ok. Can you tell me stories of your acquaintance with each of these contacts? Briefly, I am interested in how you met (when, where, if someone introduced you), how your relationship developed, and if/how you communicate with these people now. If you want to, you do not have to give me the names of people and places and leave them anonymous.

4. Do you have more Russian-speakers or non-Russian-speaking contacts in your phone? Can you tell me how many of each/what's the proportion?

5. What do you think about communication with Russian-speakers in general? Is it somehow different from communication with non-Russian-speakers? Has it changed for you during the time you have lived in London?

Many thanks for your participation!

Interview schedule (2)

Hi! I would like to ask you some questions now. We will talk about your experience of life in London, people you socialize with, and your thoughts about different aspects of London life. I will be recording you, but if you would want me to turn the recorder off, I will do it when you ask. Please speak as you usually do in your everyday life, and feel free to tell me anything you might find relevant to the topic of discussion. If you feel you don't want to reply to some questions, it is fine.

1. *Life history.* When and how did you get to London? What do you do here?
2. *Neighbourhood.* Could you please describe the area where you live? Are there any advantages and disadvantages of the area? What kind of infrastructure can be found there? What can you do there? Can you go to any interesting places? Do you go to local shops? What kinds of people live in that area? What nationalities can be met in the streets? Do you interact with other people and how? Do you spend a lot of time in your neighbourhood? If no, then where?
3. *Accommodation*. In what kind of place do you live? Do you share it? If shared, who are the flatmates (nationality, occupation)? How did you end up living together? What kind of relationships do you have? Do you see each other every day? Do you chat/treat each other with your foods/go out together…? Have you ever shared a place with other flatmates? If yes, what can you say about relationships you had with them?
4. *Social networks*. Who are the people with whom you socialize most of all? Do you have many friends? Who are they? How did you meet them? Do you know many Russian-speakers in London?
5. *Relationships with "Others" (1).* What do you think about the attitudes of Russian-speakers to other nationalities and racial groups in London? Have you ever thought about any peculiarities of this? Have you ever thought of any features of attitudes that could be attributed to the majority of Russian-speakers? If yes/no – what do you think could be the reason of that?
6. *Relationships with "Others" (2).* Do you have friends/acquaintances who are not Russian-speakers? In your opinion, are there any activities that are better done together with Russian-speakers or not? What do you personally think

about people of other nationalities? Are there any particular nationalities you especially like or don't like? Why?

7. *Relationships with "Others" (3).* Can you feel what other Londoners think of you when they know you're a Russian-speaker? Have you ever had conflicts with people of other nationalities?

Many thanks for your participation!

Ethnography codes

'Russian-ness'

- Interior elements

- Origin of staff

- Origin of regular visitors

- Origin of the owner

- Language

Social network

- Frequency of visits

- Informality

- Gossiping

- Mutual activities outside the bar

- Distinguishing between 'Us' and 'Them':

    o Joking practices

    o Selective language use

    o Priorities in being served drinks

    o Staying in the bar after closure

Power relations

- Groups:

    o Russian-speaking bartenders

    o Russian-speaking regulars/former bartenders/their friends

    o The owner (and her family)

    o Non-Russian-speaking bartenders

    o Non-Russian-speaking customers

- Divisions

    o Russian-speakers (staff and regulars) vs. non-Russian-speakers (staff and customers)

    o Bartenders vs. owner/owner's husband/son

Interview codes (1)

Meeting Russian-speakers

- Initial intentions
    - o Random acquaintances ('it just happens')
    - o Consciously intentional contacts
- Circumstances
    - o Contacts facilitated by friends
    - o Contacts at bigger social gatherings
    - o Individually initiated contacts
- Rationale
    - o Pragmatic reasoning
    - o Establishing contacts as 'l'art pour l'art'

Degrees of closeness

- Friendship
- Acquaintance

Spatial origin of relationships

- Established in London
- Established 'back home'

Russian-speaking 'community' in London

- Cohesion
    - o Language comfort
    - o 'Mentality'
    - o Cultural backgrounds
    - o Banal nationalism
- Subcommunities
    - o National/ethnics subcommunities
    - o Class divisions
- VS. 'Others'
-

Interview codes (2)

The city

- Otherness present

    o Sameness and differences

    o Stratification/social classes/groups and collectives

    o Neighbourhood/neighbours/ethnic and national composition of the area

    o Crime/safety

    o Coexistence

- Intercultural communication

    o Spontaneity

    o 'Nobody cares'

    o Anonymity

- Hybridization of identities

    o Reduced significance of national identity

    o Decline of attachment to Russian (films/music/books/food/style in clothes/makeup)

    o Mixed couples/families, children

- Political correctness

Racism

- Evidence

    o Discursive/discreet racism

    o Negative experience of intercultural relationships, conflicts

- 'Irreconcilable' differences

    o Cultural racism

    o 'Mentality'

    o Language barrier

    o Miscegenation

    o Legal issues (migrant status)

- Objects:

    o Divisions among London dwellers: Black, Indian, Jewish, Baltic, English…

- - - - Divisions among Russian-speakers on the grounds of ethnic origin/nationality
- Roots of racism
    - Newcomers' racism
    - Institutionalized/organized nationalism
    - Phenotypical differences
    - Gender issues
    - 'Historical' reasons
    - Racism as reciprocal response to discrimination
    - Crime
    - Childhood memories
    - Fear of difference/unknown
    - Cultural misunderstandings perceived as racism
    - Stereotypes
    - Social group influence

Social class

- Migrant's social position and racism/cosmopolitanism
- 'Other''s social position replacing his/her ethnicity/national origin

Cosmopolitanism

- Positive intercultural relationships/cosmopolitan sociability
- Hybridization/hybrid identities, blurring of national identities
- Dynamics of development
    - Age/time lived abroad/exposure to diversity
    - Regular close personal contact

Ambivalence in attitudes

- 'I am not racist but' (distancing from racism)
- Attributing racism to 'other Russians'
- Rationalizing the naturalization of differences
- Contradictory narratives
- Non-linear dynamics of attitude changes