



Hospitality without Hosts: Mobility and Communities in Africa's Urban Estuaries

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Abstract

New immigrants and the recently urbanised increasingly co-occupy estuarial zones loosely structured by state social policy and hegemonic cultural norms. In these zones, hyperdiversity, transience and transgressions are becoming the norm. Amid the fluidity and fragmentation, novel modes of accommodation are emerging, double helix like, with ever evolving forms of exclusion. Using examples drawn from rapidly expanding African cities, this paper reveals cracks in the conceptual foundations on which integration debates are normally premised. The first is a clear distinction between hosts and guests. The second is migrants' goal of joining a place bound community. The article concludes by outlining a range of emerging communities of convenience— tactical cosmopolitanism, a form of ethnic consociationalism and market-based multi-culturalism—shaped more by pragmatic responses to quotidian challenges in particular sites than political imagination or policy.

The Promise and Premise of Integration

New immigrants and the newly urbanised increasingly co-occupy and construct social worlds loosely structured by state social policy or hegemonic cultural norms. Amid the fluidity and fragmentation of these new gateways, novel modes of accommodation are emerging, double helix like, with ever evolving forms of exclusion. Without dominant values or institutions, these communities of convenience – some cosmopolitan, some conflictual – are driven more by pragmatic responses to quotidian challenges in particular sites than political imagination. Only by purging our gaze of our own normative objectives whether assimilationist fantasy or cosmopolitan utopianism, can we begin to understand these interactions, the conditions producing them, and their potential consequences for our societies and our politics (cf. Skribis, et al, 2004, p. 132; also Beck 2009, p. 2). That is what this paper tries to do.

Drawing on examples from rapidly expanding African cities, this paper help reveal cracks in the conceptual foundations on which integration debates are normally premised. The first is a clear distinction between hosts and guests. The metaphors of hospitality, welcome, and asylum stem from this dichotomy as does the philosophy of Derrida, Kant, Taylor, Bauman, Beck, and much of the more practically oriented, diversity-management literature (see Sandercock 2007, p.17). The second is migrants' goal of joining a place bound community. If perhaps too strong, then the desire and willingness to be fully part of one rooted on their place of current residence be it state or city. In many of the examples described below, cities are as much gateways to global networks and imaginaries as sites in and of themselves.

Much as must reconsider our language of migrants and hosts, so too must we rethink our reliance on a language of national integration. Instead we must at once pan more widely and focus more locally. Such scaling exercises reveal both forms of multi-sited belonging and the complex dynamics and engagements of specific sites where people negotiate multiple, and often conflicting histories and social positions (see Bhatia and Ram 2001). What we see there is confusing and often corresponds poorly with our normative principles however conservative or cosmopolitan they may be. I hope the following discussion provides an empirical basis that can allow our philosophy to begin catching up with global dynamics (cf. Calhoun 2002).

These dual challenges—to the host/migrant dichotomy and the integration teleology—draw attention to the importance of the spatial and temporal dimensions in which in which 'integration' occurs. This is not the first place such an appeal has been made (see Dikec 2009), but this article brings new, African examples to the discussion. In doing so, it surfaces presumptions that often go unrecognised in debates framed solely by 'northern' materials. Broadening the discussion's geographic scope ultimate exposes new forms of sociability and conviviality. These may not precisely foreshadow the future of northern cities, but they open possibilities and dynamics that may yet be realised.

The following pages proceeds through a short discussion of research methods and a more robust discussion of Africa's 'urban estuaries': cities, or parts thereof, where varied migrant trajectories intersect to generate novel forms of social interaction and authority. Having stripped away presumptions of 'integration' as commonly understood, the article concludes with a range of emerging communities of convenience: tactical cosmopolitanism, a form of ethnic consociationalism and market-based multi-culturalism. The final paragraphs speculate on what this may mean for broader theorization mobility and integration, scholarly and policy debates that remain largely bound and blindered by North American and European experiences. While the analogy with African cities are as ambiguous as the findings presented here, the attention I draw to space—highly local

and decentred—informal modes of conviviality and the limited authority of officials offer important lessons for scholars, pundits and planners.

Data, Methods and Approach

This exploratory paper draws on an ecumenical set of data in illustrating patterns of movement and social interaction. Most of the information reflected here stems from migration-related research in Southern and Eastern Africa—beginning with Johannesburg and expanding to Nairobi and Maputo—undertaken between 2002 and 2010. While recognising the severe limitations of available data on migration and urbanisation in African cities, Table One, shows that the cities are comparable on a number of axes. For one, the growth rates are quite similar (and rapid) across all three sites. Despite the similarities, there are also clear and significant differences in the human development levels of the three cities, an indication not only of wealth but a relatively effective proxy for state capacity and economic resources. The United Nations’ 2007 Human Development Index (HDI) ranked South Africa 129th, Kenya 147th, and Mozambique near the bottom at 172. However, the extent of wealth inequality also differs across countries. Given that its wealth is deeply spatialised as a result of Apartheid-era urban planning, parts of the country and sections of every city – including Johannesburg – remain far poorer than the overall HDI score suggests (see Beal, *et al*, 2002; Götz and Simone 2003). It was in those areas where the data were collected.

Table One: Key Statistics for Research Sites, City and Country Levels

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Population 1990 (millions)	1.898	.776	1.380
Population 2025 (millions)	4.041	2.560	5.871
Growth Rate, Percent per Annum (2005-2010)	3.52	3.90	3.76
Human Development Index *	129	172	147
Gini Coefficient of Inequality*	.75	.52	.59

* Data at the national level

Sources: United Nations Habitat, State of African Cities Report 2010, United Nations Development Report 2009 and United Nations World Urbanization Prospects 2007

The survey data used here were largely generated from interviews with 2,211 people in the three cities. These data do not fully represent either the migrant or host populations in any of the sites, let

alone the experience of migration and displacement elsewhere on the continent.¹ Rather, data collection targeted particular groups of foreigners categorized by nationality. With the exception of Mozambicans included in the Johannesburg survey, the team selected groups—Somalis, Rwandans, Sudanese, and Congolese—that straddle the line between purely economic migrants and those who might be considered (in substance, if not in law), forced migrants or displaced persons. Given the lack of reliable statistics on the size of the foreign population, its composition, or, in many cases, on domestic population dynamics in any of the cities, effectively weighting the observation in the data in order to obtain a good representation of the reality is almost impossible.

Table Two: Selected Descriptive Characteristics of City Samples (%)

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Nationality			
Native Born	23.5	32.0	38.5
Foreign Born	76.5	68.0	61.5
Somali	28.7	0	31.3
Congolese	39.0	21.5	34.5
Rwandan	0	34.8	0
Mozambican	31.2	0	0
Burundi	0	36.7	0
Sudanese	0	0	31.5
Other	1.1	7	3.0
Gender			
Male	59.7	72.9	62.1
Female	40.3	27.1	37.9
Age Groups			
18-30	50.1	18.7	58.1
31-40	35.5	46.8	27.7
41-50	9.0	28.4	8.8
51+	5.5	6.1	5.4
Highest Educational Level			
None/some primary	7.1	5.3	19.0
Completed Primary or secondary	70.7	81.3	60.0
Some Tertiary	22.2	13.5	21.4
N	847	609	755

While each of the sites included here is a destination and transit point for domestic and international migration, together they express a diversity of social, economic and political characteristics that provides grounds for modest generalization about cities' estuarial zones. Moreover, they are each destination and transit points for a 'mixed flow' of refugees, immigrants,

¹ The data used here were generated through collaboration with Tufts University, University of Nairobi, and Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo. The statistical analysis included here was either conducted by the author or draws on two, co-authored papers by Landau and Duponchel (2011) and Madhavan and Landau (2011).

circular migrants, and people transiting to communities and cities elsewhere. Table Two provides some key statistics for the three cities. Although these cities are not representative all of the continent's urban centres—and the focus on estuarial zones further limits the data's generalisable—their diversity nevertheless reflect a variety of experiences to afford the basis for the kind of conceptual outline I hope to provide. The appearance of such similar processes in all the cases – including the often anomalous South Africa – further speaks to the importance of these trends and the suitability of the comparison.

Estuaries and Elusive Hosts

Revealing the future of integration demands we parse presumptions behind contemporary debates surrounding migrants and the meaning of hospitality. Only by rethinking the fundamental actors in the integration process—migrants and hosts—can we begin to understand the engagements likely to appear in the coming decades. This is no easy matter as notions of the *xenos*—an outsider defined in law and practice—dates back thousands of years to the ancient Greeks (Westmoreland 2008). In the Grecian schema, and in almost all that have followed, the terms of engagement are to be determined by hosts while *arrivants* choose between compliance or turning back at the border. Somewhat more recently, Kant reflected on the position of the outsider in trying, “to overcome some of the limits imposed by the division of the earth's surface by national boundaries” (Dikec 2009, 5). In *Perpetual Peace*, he outlines two rules of hospitality intended to guide interactions in the age of the nation-state. The specific details of his arguments are not important to us here and have been rehearsed extensively elsewhere (see Brown 2010; Benhabib 2002; Naas 2002). What matters are the actors that occupy his argument: hosts and states. Although Levinas and Derrida famously critique Kant for the limits his ethics place on guests (Westmoreland 2008, p. 8), they nonetheless continue to speak of hosts and guests or variants thereof (Siby 2009, p. 33). Indeed, for Derrida, one of the greatest failings of Kant is the continued power the host exercises in naming new arrivals and placing them within an existing socio-legal or cognitive schema.

For Derrida it proved difficult to comprehend a situation where distinctions between hosts and guests dissolve and the ability/right to structure engagements falter. Perhaps that is not quite fair for Derrida does outline such conditions in describing ‘unconditional hospitality’, a hospitality without limits where ‘A host is a guest, and a guest is a host’ (Miller 1985, p. 221) . But, he argues, such a situation can not exist or be sustained because it ‘turns the home inside out’ (Westmoreland 2008, p. 6). For Derrida, as for Kant, this is impossible to consciously accept as it denies the possibility of knowing who is a host, who is the guest and the various roles we should play.

Moreover, denying hosts the power to set the terms of engagement – or to at least take part in shaping our interaction – denies individual and collective sovereignty; opening ‘up the possibility for contamination in that it calls for no governing body such as a sovereign state or master of a home to establish laws and authority over another subject’ (Westmoreland 2006, p.8). In Hegelian terms, who is the master and who is the slave? On what authority can power be and regulation be founded? A brief look at Africa’s urban estuaries can help to provide some preliminary answers.

As a result failing rural economies, conflicts, material inequalities, gentrification and other urban development programmes, people are moving into, out of and through cities in search of profit, protection, and passage elsewhere. In inner cities, the elite and well-connected are evacuating in favour of gated communities or ‘new cities’ like Nairobi’s Tatu, Luanda’s Kilamba Kiaxi, or (UN Habitat 2008; Briggs and Mwamfupe 2000; Shea 2011; McGregor and Matlack 2010). In their place, rural migrants, international migrants, and the ‘upwardly mobile’ urban poor converge. Elsewhere, once sparsely occupied peri-urban areas have become stations and destinations for people pushed out of the city by high prices and urban ‘development’ and those first coming to it. Other regions rarely match the pace of Africa’s transformations, but these trends are nonetheless global in scope (see Saunders 2011; Singer, *et al*, 2008). In these urban estuaries – the meeting place of multiple human flows—new social socio-economic formations are taking shape.

Much like natural estuaries where tides and rivers create fertile and distinct ecosystems, the mixing and motion of urban estuaries is giving rise to novel socio-political forms. In these zones, ethnic/national heterogeneity and cultural pastiche are often the empirical norms, not exceptions (see Larkin 2004; Mbembe 2001; Simone 2004; and Zlotnick 2006). Among other effects, these forces are generating greater disparities of wealth, language, and nationality, along with diverse gender roles, life trajectories, and intergenerational tensions in both migrant-sending and receiving communities. Through geographic movement—into, out of, and within cities—urban spaces that for many years had only tenuous connections with the people and economies of the rural hinterlands of their own countries are increasingly the loci of economic and normative ties with home villages and diasporic communities spread (and spreading) across the continent and beyond (Geschiere 2005; Malaren 2004; Doug 2000). While we must be wary of speaking in aquatic, agentless metaphors (cf. Maliki 1995), the notion of the estuary helps capture the distinctiveness of a given space shaped by multiple agents bound largely by their transience and marginalisation. For present purposes, the question is how, in such spaces, can we continue to speak of hosts and migrants? Where there are not bounded and identifiable political communities to set the term of engagement, what then might integration come to mean and what form might it take?

Table Three: Percentage of Population Resident in City by Time

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Years Spent in City			
Less than 2 years	24.5	17.5	10.6
Two to Five Years	19.7	21.5	16.3
Five to Ten Years	34.5	40.9	39.6
N	847	609	755

Source: Author’s survey data.

Extraordinary levels of heterogeneity (super or hyper-diversity) and mobility coupled with remarkably low levels of social capital reflect the degree to which the cities in questions are, indeed, devoid of hegemonic cultures or social authority. Turning first to mobility, it is not only the percentage of new arrivals that matters. It is that they continue to move regularly in search of work, secure housing, or to escape raids or violence (see Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004). These regular shifts between rural (or peri-urban) and urban areas and the connections they generate and maintain are a critical factor in slowing the emergence of urban regimes which, rather than destinations, are often stations on an ongoing journey.

For many of those who move to work, the primary motivation is profit and the need to extract urban resources to subsidize the ‘real’ life they live elsewhere. Indeed, in many instances spouses and children remain elsewhere while single men and women earn money in the cities to sustain them (see Table Four). Although urban residents may establish second urban families, in many instances social, ethnic and political ties to rural areas prevent full social integration into urban communities. The intention to retire in the countryside or move elsewhere further limits people’s financial and emotional investments in urban areas. In some instances, significant numbers of the foreign-born population – or non-local citizens – arrive in the city seeking protection from conflict and persecution with the intentions to return home or move on when conditions allow. This helps generate a kind of permanent temporariness in which they actively resist incorporation (Kihato 2009; Landau 2006).

Table Four: Percent of Population Maintaining Translocal Financial Connections by City

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Native Born Local	41.6	55.6	62.3
Foreign Born Local	58.9	26.1	33.0
Native Born Migrant	53.7	54.2	57.5
Foreign Born Migrant	43.3	23.3	8.6
N	847	609	755

Source: Author’s survey data.

For many, cities have, become ‘places of flows’ (cf. Castells 1996) where rooting and local representation is not the goal, although these flows are driven less by global capitalism and international corporations than individual aspirations and street level economic realities. In the myriad of individual and familial projects the burdens and binding that connections and political participation offer are often something to be avoided (Kankonde 2010; Madsen 2004). Given the insecurity of land tenure, the possibility of violence, and on-going economic deprivation, people often maintain feet in multiple sites without firmly rooting themselves in any (Freemantle 2010).

Table Five: Expectation of Residence in Two Years (Percentage)

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Native Born Local	50.0	76.8	75.4
Foreign Born Local	68.9	65.2	44.4
Native Born Migrant	45.0	65.6	69.3
Foreign Born Migrant	43.2	55.5	52.5
N	847	609	755

Source: Author’s survey data.

Religious, cultural or economic, collective participation is a potentially important mechanism for inculcating a sense of common purpose and forging the social connections necessary to suffuse a population with common perspectives, values and ethics. In its absence, it becomes difficult to speak of hosts, guests, or something in between. Amid the transience described above, it is perhaps not surprising that we see so little in the way of social capital or collective engagement. Given the population’s volatility and orientation, social networks are often spread thinly across many people and places. Rather than hunkering down (Putnam 2007) or forming ethnic ghettos, the data demonstrate remarkably low levels of trusts. This not only between ethnic and national groups—a finding we might expect—but within them. Even among citizens in both Johannesburg and Maputo, levels of social capital—trust of each other and public their institutions—are strikingly low. Nairobi offers a slightly more trusting environment, although here too the data reflect deep tensions. Networks of clan, neighbourhood, or coreligionists undoubtedly exist (see Nzayabino 2009), but these are often fragmented and functional, organized without an explicit recognition or sense of mutual obligation to those beyond familial boundaries (see Sommers 2001). Instead, they are often limited to assisting others only to overcome immediate risks or if a corpse needs returning to a country or community of origin (Madsen 2004; Ayiera 2008; Andersson 2006).

Among neither migrants nor the ostensible host population can we speak of a community or set of overlapping institutions that are engaged in a collective project. These may eventually cohere

into some form of widespread norms or implicit sense of a collective enterprise, but given the populations' dynamics and the limited engagement with common institutions, such an outcome seems particularly unlikely. Tables Seven and Eight illustrate the remarkably low levels of institutional affiliations and trust across the three cities in which we conducted research.

Table Six: Organisational Affiliations by City and Migration Status (Percentage)

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Belongs to Religious Organization			
Native Born Local	66.3	73.7	92.0
Foreign Born Local	54.4	56.5	53.0
Native Born Migrant	52.8	72.9	92.8
Foreign Born Migrant	48.8	72.6	20.1
Belongs to Cultural Organization			
Native Born Local	9.0	8.1	24.6
Foreign Born Local	22.2	17.4	4.4
Native Born Migrant	7.4	3.1	20.9
Foreign Born Migrant	6.7	2.6	4.9
Belongs to Credit Association			
Native Born Local	9.0	40.4	39.9
Foreign Born Local	23.3	26.1	9.6
Native Born Migrant	17.6	37.5	32.7
Foreign Born Migrant	13.2	29.5	3.2

Source: Author's survey data.

Table Seven: Perception of Trust (Percentage)

	Johannesburg	Maputo	Nairobi
Have Trust in Native Born			
Native Born Local	75.6	50.7	52.1
Foreign Born Local	11.6	57.9	25.7
Native Born Migrant	77.9	62.5	65.7
Foreign Born Migrant	25.0	33.7	26.3
Have Trust in Foreigners			
Native Born Local	33.3	29.8	22.6
Foreign Born Local	32.9	34.8	27.8
Domestic Migrant	37.4	36.9	22.4
Foreign Born Migrant	41.2	46.3	41.1
Have Trust in Co-Nationals (Foreign Born Only)			
Local	26.6	36.8	49.6
Migrant	48.6	48.6	48.6

Source: Author's survey data

Emerging Communities of Convenience

So where does this leave us? If Bulley (2006:659) is right that, “hospitality requires some notion of an ‘at home’ for its possible performance,” then how do we speak about urban integration or incorporation where almost everyone is both host and visitor and not everyone hopes to stay? Is this the atomised Hobbesian disorder that Kaplan (1994) described many years ago? Bulley tries to address this by suggesting that where everyone is both guest and host, everyone is a hostage – no one sets the terms of engagement and we are all subject to everyone else’s will. Derrida proffers the term ‘hostipitality,’ to connate the hostility such situations of coerced hospitality tend to generate. Hostility and a manifestation of spatially chauvinist rhetoric is certainly one possible outcome. Indeed, at first glance it explains what has been among the most visible reactions to immigrants and outsiders across Africa (see Geschiere 2009). Few in South Africa will forget the 2008 violence in which more than 60 were killed and 120 000 displaced in a melee driven by violent efforts to claim space in the name of one’s ethnicity, political party, or nationality (see Landau 2011). But it is facile to claim that membership always settles to a dichotomous norm of outsider and host with one group seeking dominance over one or more others. Not only do the numbers of actors involved complicate these processes, but such outcomes depend on people seeing both the incentive and means to make exclusive claims over specific spaces and the resources within them. This happens, but it is not always the case; at least not for everyone.

The remainder of this article reviews—schematically given the confines of the medium—the mechanism and ethos we are beginning to observe in these ‘estuarial’ zones across Africa. While this work remains preliminary, it nonetheless reveals important possibilities and avenues for how varied forms of belonging and systems of allocating rights and privilege are taking shape in environments with weak, if any, divisions between hosts and guests.

Religion is the one notable exception to relative absence of social organisation among the populations under discussion. Throughout Europe and Asia, religious institutions have played central roles in binding population to each other and to place (and in excluding everyone else). Where the state has faint influence, they can serve to help generate alternative subjectivities and publics. However, a combination of factors, including the increasing heterogeneity of the urban population, effectively denies the possibilities that religious institutions can serve a similar role in contemporary Africa cities. Among the Nairobi citizenry we surveyed, for example, 65.6% were Protestant, 30.6% Catholic, 2.7% Muslim with only 0.3% claiming no religion. In Johannesburg, the sample was 59.7% Protestant, 18.8% no religion, 14.1% Catholic, and 6.8% Muslim. (The foreign born population in Johannesburg was more evenly divided with 39% Protestants, 28.5% Catholics, 26% Muslims, and

6.3 claiming no religion.) While urban Africans are strongly religious, the denominational divisions within those affiliations—and the often fractured and conflictual relationships among them—can serve more to divide than create a unified network with which to disseminate messages of unity and sanctions to achieve it.

Along with the sheer diversity of competing claims for religion and belonging, the liturgical content of many churches serves to further undermine the possible emergence of a territorially bound or state-centred subjectivity. This is perhaps most visible in the ever expanding pool of Pentecostal churches operating within Africa's urban centres. At one level, these inclusive (often massive) institutions offer the possibility of bridging barriers between various groups. As one Zimbabwean migrant in Johannesburg stated, 'In the church, they help us in many ways, no matter where you come from, they just help you.' While they offer a sense of salvation in the form of 'health and wealth', they are distinctly post-territorial in their outlook. Although there is not space here to reflect the diversity of testimonies and preaching included in even one five hour mass, many build on their strong connections to institutions in Nigeria, Ghana, Congo and the United States. For many of the churches' founders—who are themselves migrants—their current pulpit is merely a place where they can enter a global social universe. In the words of the Nigerian Pastor at the Mountain of Fire and Miracles church in Johannesburg, 'Africa is shaped like a pistol, Nigeria is the trigger and South Africa is the mouth from where you can shoot out the word of god.' For others, they have been sent on a mission to Kenya, Mozambique or elsewhere to help counter post-colonial malaise – including corruption and state oppression—with a message of truth. Moreover, while they may preach tolerance, many of these churches generate a set of translocal and, often, anti-political tenets of belonging. Their fragmentary and often conflictual sources of religious authority further serve to deny the state—or indeed even a single church—the possibility of naming what is good and the direction the collective should follow (cf. Krause 2011).

Religion, at least as described above, provides a mechanism that allows people to be in a place but not off it: to be neither host nor guest. This it shares with a broader pattern that can be termed, 'tactical cosmopolitanism' (Landau and Freemantle 2010). Recognising ascendant forms or exclusion levied against them, migrants draw on a variegated language of belonging that makes claims to the city while positioning them in an ephemeral, superior, and unrooted condition where they can escape localised social and political obligations. Unlike theoretical or 'high' cosmopolitanism, these are not necessarily grounded in normative ideas of 'openness' or intended to promote universal values of any form. Rather, migrants practically and rhetorically draw on various, often competing, systems of cosmopolitan rights and rhetorics to insinuate themselves, however shallowly, in the networks and spaces needed to achieve specific practical goals. These

include, pan-Africanism, human rights rhetoric, and the language of the elite cosmopolitanism: of being global players in the new age. Unlike transnationalism, which is often about belonging to multiple communities – or shuttling between them—these are more ‘decentred’ tactics that emphasise individualism, generality and universality (cf. Pogge 2002; Roudometof, 2005). This leaves them, in Friedman’s words, “betwixt and between without being liminal...participating in many worlds without becoming part of them” (Friedman 1994, p.204. also Simmel 1964, p.98). This cosmopolitanism- especially in its current form – constitutes a form of ‘experiential culture’ (Lamont 2000), but one that has risen from the need to achieve tactical targets rather than being the result of an appreciation of cultural diversity or philosophical consideration.

In Dandora, an estuarial zone to the east of Nairobi, we are beginning to see the foundations of what might, for lack of a better word, be considered a kind of consociational-gangsterism between the Kikuyu-based Mungiki, the Luo ‘Taliban’ and Kamjesh, a resource driven neighbourhood gangsterism racket.² While these groups have been around in one form another for decades, they have gained increased prominence and power in the multi-party era following the end of Daniel Arap Moi’s presidency. During this time they have moved from ‘cultural’ associations to bodies taking on state-like functions: providing security, taxing transport avenues, and regulating access to services and land. What is important for our purposes is the source of their legitimacy. While at least two of the groups (the Mungiki and the Taliban) have ethnic origins, the spaces where they claim dominance as ‘host’ are far beyond the city limits. There have been fights for dominance over urban space in the past, the massive bloodshed following Kenya’s 2007 elections – in which branches of both ethnic groups were directly involved – seems to have encouraged them to reach a kind of accommodation where they jointly manage the suburb. Entry and residence in the area is now allocated less on ethnic grounds than on the basis of what might be called ‘civic extortion’: if you can pay, you can come in and stay. Their ‘right’ to extract these resources comes less from their ethnic foundations than their relative monopoly on the use of force and—critically—their ability to provide a relatively predictable and stable environment for their residents. The system may not be inequitable or universally inclusive and it is most certainly coercive, but the emerging mode of regulation is primarily civic and material, not ethnic. It is tied to place, but one’s entry does not depend (at least not entirely) on where you are from. In this way they look similar to the medieval protection rackets Tilly (1985) famously describes. Under such system, the incentive is to accumulate residents and the resources they can provide regardless of their backgrounds.

² The description of Dandora draws from on-going research by Sharon Mina Olago. The description included here is based on a preliminary field report and interpersonal discussions. For background on Nairobi and the violence referred to in the paragraph, see International Crisis Group (2008).

In Ongata Rongai, a rapidly growing region on Nairobi's periphery, residents are developing a straightforward but nonetheless remarkable means system of regulating access and determining who may reside within the community's boundaries.³ Although technically outside of the city, the settlement's proximity to main transport routes and the availability of land has made it an attractive space for migrants moving out of Nairobi as well as those moving towards it. The land's 'original' inhabitants were Maasai – at least as understood by almost all of the sites current residents—but they have largely evacuated the settlement, selling off their land and taking their cattle elsewhere. In their stead groups from all over Kenya have moved in. While the Kikuyu are the largest group numerically, they by no means dominate the space or make exclusive claims to it. Indeed, no one does. In stark contrast to sites across urban Kenya, there seems to be a remarkably high level of ethnic mixing and peaceful conviviality. Apart from Olekasasi estate which had become the preferred destination for the Somalis (Kenyan and Somali nationals), access to residential housing and business premises appears to be determined almost completely by market mechanisms. In interviews with officials and land owners, they all spoke of the need to ensure ethnic mixing and some level of conviviality. This is not a form of integration managed by the state nor any other identifiable actor.

Unlike Dandora, the Rongai's market-driven schema does not even rely on regular coercive threats to maintain the order. Rather, recognising the dangers of ethnic chauvinism in a space that no one group can effectively dominate, residents have developed a kind of liberal ethos which provides everyone equal access. Here discrimination is not based one's origins, political affiliations or religion, but simply by a willingness to play by local's rules. But these are unwritten and diffuse rules based largely on market principles. Even if free markets notoriously and effectively disguise inequality, power and other restrictions on freedoms, by contrast to deep seated spatio-ethnic or nationalist exclusion, they are achieving an almost American-style integration premised on market participation. By affording opportunities for people to retain ethnic, religious, and extra-local loyalties – both religion and ethnicity remain highly visible in Rongai – residents may also inadvertently be generating a kind of radical multiculturalism, a “pluralisation of possibilities of being on the same territory” (Campbell 1998, p.162). Were he still alive, Levinas (1998) would undoubtedly be pleased at what he would see in Ongata Rongai: if we all are sojourners, he argues, then on what basis can we exclude?

³ The discussion of Ongata Rongai draws heavily from Otieno (2011).

Scaling the Future of Integration

We can learn much by drawing from environments that are unfamiliar and occasional bewildering. The dynamics of Africa's urban estuaries are undeniably complex and their products occasionally extreme and uncertain. Whatever results will only make sense if we begin recognizing that even the language of integration evokes elements of social boundedness and political authority that, if present, may be only fleeting. We see in these estuaries what Derrida termed a 'perpetual uneasiness' (in Bulley 2006, p. 657) where coming to rest, a precondition of a negotiated settlement, is all but impossible. We must also revisit the approach pioneered by the Chicago school to see integration not as something driven by states and policies as if often the case in discussions of European policy (See Spire's 2009, p. 137), but as a set of practices migration and integration from the point of view of those on the move and those within whom they engage, be it where they live, where they are from or where they intend to go.

The examples and data described above give cause to question widely presumed relationships between mobility, cities and membership. As Brettell (2000, p. 98) argues, much work focuses on where migrants come from, where they go and their interactions with communities they meet there. This is important, but such work often relies on anachronistic presumptions: that there is a set destination and that there are bound and identifiable 'host' communities. In an era of almost endless mobility and complex trajectories (cf. Beauchemin and Bocquier 2004, p. 2256), sending and receiving communities and migrants and hosts are often so effectively imbricated that clear distinctions become difficult. People are moving out of city centres, within cities and through them. These movements matter, not just for migrants and planners, but for how we understand the nature and products of their aspirations and interactions. What appears as migrant exclusion and marginalisation to those presuming the city as terminus can become a sign of membership in a despatialised or multi-sited pattern of sociability when viewed from a different perspective (cf. Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2007). It is for this very reason that we must not need to analytical perspective on society that is not immediately bound by geography, but allows us to consider other principles as the basis for integration and belonging.

Whether the forms of membership described above eventually crystallise into enduring and binding modes of accommodation and conviviality remains to be seen. Even while still taking shape, they confirm important facts: that cities are increasingly important generative sites in a globalised era and that integration can no longer be framed in terms of incorporation into a nation-state (see, for example, Collins and Friesen 2011; Amin, 2002; Amin and Thrift, 2002; Purcell, 2003; Uitermark, *et al*, 2005). Instead we must scale our analysis, worming down and scanning broadly. Ultimately,

sociability is formed at the neighbourhood level (cf. Eve 2010) where we can reveal the fine workings of people as they move into and through space, interacting in fear or friendship in their search for fortune and recognition. In examining these sites, what I term estuarial zones, we find echoes of Foner's (2007) work in New York city: specific factors that influence migration and multiculturalism in a particular place in ways that generate a legacy of institutions and social formations that are passed down among population who themselves may come and go. But these formations are not a product of the city alone and a gaze stopping at city boundaries or sending communities misses how global aspirations, trajectories and multi-cited livelihoods shape behaviours in specific sites at particular times. While cities are generating novel forms of accommodation and conflict between people who are both hosts and guests, they too are being iteratively fashioned by people moving into and through them. Through these interactions and engagements – or conscious disengagement from them – the estuary takes shape. .

Calhoun (2002) argues that there's a need for people to philosophically and morally catch up with the global problems and dynamics of the day. Given the multiplicity of trajectories and emic communal affiliations, simply mapping what is emerging is elusive and bewildering; speaking of what should be seems almost foolish. What is already evident is that the foundations for modern 'ontopolitical' or Weberian forms of territorially bounded identity, all preconditions for a Kantian or even Derridian ethics of hospitality, are increasingly cracked and crumbling. The forms of individual or communal recognition that we depend on in talking about integration are often more ascribed fictions than identifiable social manifestations. Without a centralized authority or coercive force to direct an emergent, practical ethics, we see instead a varied range of real and existing multiculturalisms which can piece together stands of cosmopolitanism and communalism; or tolerance and territorial tyranny in ways that have hitherto seemed almost unimaginable. These communities of convenience need not be logically consistent since they make few claims to universalism or, indeed, to an underlying logic. They are practical and pragmatic – if not always equitable – modes of engagement.

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