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EDITOR'S NOTES

Next year will be 15 years since we added English editions to *Lidé města / Urban People* (the journal itself has existed since 1999, and in its first seven years was only published in the Czech language). During these years of maturation, we have graduated into a high-quality interdisciplinary and international journal of urban anthropology, as we continue raising our standards. Part of this process of transformation involves some recent innovations that we initiated last year, which can also be directly or indirectly observed in our new issue (23/2). We have revitalized the journal's Editorial Board of the English editions (with the following new members: Martin Fotta, Miha Kozorog, Izabella Main, Francisco Martinez, Jeremy Morris, and Tatjana Thelen; see all members, including their institutional affiliations, here: https://urbanpeople.cuni.cz/LMENG-23.html), while we also broadened our editorial policies to include "creative and experimental submissions, such as photo essays, formats with forum discussions, and multi-modal ethnography" (see urbanpeople.cuni.cz/LMENG-21.html). In addition, we expanded our communication with various international organizations and institutions.

The resulting new issue includes articles, and a photo essay, by authors from the USA (2), Vietnam (1), and Czechia (3), and covers a wide range of geographical areas and groups of people (Uyghur minorities in Xinjiang, China; Czech and Slovak migrants in the Arctic/Svalbard, Norway; Vietnamese migrants in Prague, Czechia; international tourists and ethnic minorities in New York; and the historical Catholic Church in Brazil). Topically, the new journal's English edition deals with several historical and contemporary social, political, technological, cultural, and natural crises: the COVID-19 pandemic (Jones, Sokolíčková and Soukupová), technologies of state surveillance in China (Wozniak), migrant working conditions and ethnic identity issues in Czechia (Nguyen), attitudes toward national minorities in Xinjiang (Wozniak), and New York (Jones), and historical contradictions between Catholic Church and modernity in Brazil (Kalenda). The texts in the new issue offer rich discussions of different types of contemporary mobilities, ranging from working-class migrations (Nguyen, Sokolíčková and Soukupová), to tourist and lifestyle mobilities (Jones, Sokolíčková and Soukupová), and concomitantly (or separately) explore the issues of place (Jones, Nguyen, Sokolíčková and Soukupová),

online space (Nguyen), and intimate technology (Wozniak), as well as probe the subject of ethnic (Jones, Nguyen, Wozniak), tourist and/or occupational (Jones, Sokolíčková and Soukupová), and religious identities (Kalenda). Finally, some of the contributions also present rich ethnographies of particular cities and towns (New York City in Jones, Svalbard in Sokolíčková and Soukupová), and/or of particular city areas (Prague's Sapa area in Nguyen). These kinds of ethnographies of particular urban places will form a regular rubric of the journal, and thus also already constitute another of its innovations.

I want to express my gratitude to all the people who contributed to this issue with their dedicated work (including all of the authors of the texts, anonymous article and essay reviewers, our language editor, members of the Editorial Board, and the journal's staff members) – a lot of hidden and unacknowledged work goes into this endeavour – as well as to all of the readers who will contemplate, share, cite, and comment upon the content of this issue. And please, do not hesitate to write to us with your comments and questions (find our address on our website), or to send us your valuable contributions for next year's English edition (24/2), starting now.

David Verbuč

PRODUCING AND TRANSGRESSING THE FAMILY: INTIMATE TECHNOLOGIES, STATE SURVEILLANCE, AND CHINA'S UYGHURS

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Abstract: *In China's Xinjiang Province, narratives of counterterrorism and economic development have accompanied heightened regional and national securitization, including the detainment in "re-education camps" of over one million Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities. Government language policies, technological surveillance, mass detentions, and homestay programmes intended to discipline Uyghurs into ideal political subjects enforce and transgress boundaries between the public and domestic spheres. These strategies of banal masked coercion reinforce norms of kinship and privacy while simultaneously enacting violent transgressive control over the subjects those norms produce. In this paper, I introduce the concept of "surveillance of intimate technologies" to convey how such surveillance strategies afford the creation and maintenance of the kinship relations they simultaneously betray. Intimate technologies such as smartphones become sites of sustaining both social ties and surveillance. Surveillance of intimate technologies also takes the form of government homestay campaigns to enlist over one million representatives of the Chinese state to enter Uyghur homes, act as "relatives", and monitor Uyghurs for demonstrations of apparent extremism and subversion. I assert that surveillance of intimate technologies perpetuates fantasies of a private, removed, family space while also destabilizing its logics. These apparent perversions of kinship and family structures at once affirm their "valid" and normative modalities and also maintain the state's appearance as a cohesive actor through demonstration of its reach into a constructed domestic domain.*

Keywords: *Uyghur, China, kinship, surveillance, intimate technologies*

Introduction

> 对这样的人，我们才判刑。他的这种行为，对国家安全造成了危害，党和政府为了教育他，挽救他，才对他判刑，要不然任其发展，就是死路一条、家破人亡。党和政府为了不使其走上毁灭的道路、避免伤害家庭、危害社会，挽救了他、挽救了他的家庭，家属还有什么想不通的呢？是不是应该感谢党？
>
> *For this kind of person, we will simply issue a sentence. His type of behaviour endangers national security. In order for the party and the government to educate him, they sentence him—otherwise, to let it go unchecked would be a road to death, with the family broken up and its members dead and dispersed. So as to not go down the path of destruction, and to avoid harming family and jeopardizing society, the party and government rescues him, and rescues his family; what is there for the family member to still not be convinced of? Should he not thank the party?*
>
> Manual for Chinese Communist Party cadres on homestays with Uyghur families in Kashgar Prefecture, 2018 (translated by author).

In China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, state narratives of counterterrorism and economic development have accompanied heightened regional and national securitization, including the detainment in "re-education camps" of over one million Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities. The Chinese state has utilised the rise in global Islamophobia to justify the surveillance, policing, detention, and colonization of these populations using the language of the Global War on Terror. Government homestay campaigns enlist over one million representatives of the Chinese state to enter Uyghur homes, act as "relatives", and surveil Uyghurs for demonstrations of extremism and subversion. Alongside homestay programmes, technological surveillance is at the fore of tactics the Chinese government uses to enact a sort of banal masked control in Uyghur homes and lives. Government officials acting as "brothers and sisters" as well as the spyware installed in smartphones seemingly reinforce norms of kinship and privacy while simultaneously performing violent transgressive control over the subjects those norms produce. Intimate technologies such as smartphones are essential sites of kinship maintenance for those confronting the "disappearance" of a relative. At the same time, intimate technologies are at the forefront of surveillance and thus

become sites of betrayal for their users. Such strategies perpetuate fantasies of the family and domestic sphere as private and separate from the state; likewise, affirming the existence of the private domain ontologically reinforces the state as a separate domain. Nonetheless, the coercion which accompanies state enactments of family upends the logics of family structure and privacy.

Scholars have compellingly demonstrated how technology such as mobile phones and computers maintains kinship structures and fosters new forms of kinship (Sheller and Urry 2003; Horst and Miller 2006; De Bruijn, Nyamnjoh, and Brinkman 2009; Bell and Kuipers 2018; Lipset 2013; Hobbis 2020), particularly in light of transnational migration (Horst and Taylor 2014) and in socially conservative public contexts (Costa 2016; Foster and Horst 2018; Nooshin 2018). Terms such as "affective technology" (Wardlow in Foster and Horst 2018; Lasén 2004; Silva 2012), "digital intimacies" (Costa and Menin 2016), and "family imaginary" (Robertson, Wilding, and Gifford 2016) demonstrate the ways in which scholars have sought to characterise technologies which mediate emotional experience and social relations. Others have investigated how such technologies enable surveillance, a technological affordance which is often experienced as invasive, transgressive, and even violent. Such surveillance can occur hyperlocally, as in the case of Senegalese transnational marriages, where communication technology creates the constant spectre of migrant Senegalese husbands' "virtual presence" for their non-migrant Senegalese wives, who frequently dread the suspicion and control such technologies enable (Hannaford 2014). Entire populations may experience transgressive surveillance through technology, as in state surveillance and resistance strategies in the Kurdish movement in Turkey (Çelik 2013) and when traversing digital body scanners at US and UK checkpoints (Amoore and Hall 2009).

In this paper, I contend that in Xinjiang, government surveillance strategically undermines Uyghurs' relationships to the intimate technologies they use to situate themselves in society and sustain kinship ties. Surveillance methods which utilise intimate technologies afford some degree of maintenance of social relations while also enabling their large-scale systematic subversion. I use the term "intimate technologies" to refer to tools and systems which are inextricably connected to the creation and curation of a personal self, and which afford the capacity to virtually enact and create intimacies. However, this affordance also imbues them with the ability to subvert and betray those intimacies, rendering their users susceptible to control and intimidation (what Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson [2000] term a "surveillant assemblage").

Intimate technologies include cell phones which maintain ties between Uyghurs in Xinjiang and in diaspora, yet also report users' "extremist" behaviour to state authorities. I also approach government homestay campaigns as a sort of intimate technology, arguing they are a systematic mimesis of often-mundane rituals of social relations and can also betray the intimacies that those rituals produce. Sharing meals and beds with government "relatives" monitoring for signs of subversion and extremism and facing the ever-looming spectre of disappearance (even on the basis of familial relation to an alleged extremist) destabilises Uyghur norms of family intimacy and kinship. Intimate technologies thus have the capability to simultaneously reify and transgress boundaries between public and domestic spheres.

Although the state may pervade everyday mundanities, a belief in its stratification from society (and spatial positionality "above" society) entrenches the perception of the state as a concrete body. Drawing on the work of scholars such as Katherine Verdery (2018), Achille Mbembe (2017), Timothy Mitchell (1999), Ann Laura Stoler (2010), and James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta (2002), I assert that surveillance of and through intimate technologies can obfuscate state and society, experienced as an invasive perversion of family norms; the state's apparent reach into the realm of the domestic renders the state a coherent, singular entity and maintaining its wide-reaching paternalistic dominance.

This exploration is grounded in the conviction that the project of state-making relies upon fixedness and partitioning of social roles to stratify the state and its subjects. John Comaroff (1987) writes that classification is a necessary condition of social existence, while in his concept of "discipline", Foucault notes that citizens gain recognition as political subjects through adhering to and replicating social processes which partition the individuals (as well as the mechanisms of production and administration) into distinct roles (Foucault 1980, in Mitchell 1999, 87). Although the state pervades everyday mundanities, such processes enable the state to appear a static, concrete entity "out there" and "on high" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002) or "statically 'regional' in character" (Sheller and Urry 2003). Mitchell (2006) finds that the production of individuals as isolated political subjects occurs via their regulation within an apparently overarching state structure; their regulation determines their legibility within a society managed by the state. For Mitchell (2006, 89), it is the particular practices of organizing bodies in time and space that creates the "metaphysical effect", the mirage of an apparatus singular and larger than the individuals who comprise it. At the level of the individual within society, then,

failure to be identified in roles which are state-sanctioned – roles that serve to reify the state as an entity in that they adhere to its logics and thus reinforce its power – incurs violent consequences.

Throughout this article, I seek to avoid reinscribing the state as a bounded entity, a singular actor "upon" society (i.e., "the state surveilled Uyghurs"). I am more concerned with how seemingly innocuous relations and rituals within the apparent realm of the domestic may at once sustain kinship while also creating the conditions for coercive systematic oppression. That everyday banalities such as conversation, music-making, and sharing food can be "two-faced" in Xinjiang – maintaining social relations while also betraying their participants by making them appear subversive to the state – renders those banalities potentially treacherous. In other words, I aim to demonstrate how the spectre of the state emerges in practices that are fundamental to kinship, even in those interactions which appear less obviously coercive. Through de-centring the state as a singular bounded agent, I hope to highlight how everyday exchanges and rituals can invoke the state as a phantom presence – as well as how transgressively invasive it can be to unexpectedly recognise the presence of the state within the home.

I have been closely following Chinese policy towards Xinjiang's Uyghurs since 2009, when I experienced first-hand the Chinese government's social media shutdown following ethnic violence between Uyghur and Han populations in Xinjiang. The news of ethnic clashes in Xinjiang as well as its censorship dismayed and fascinated me; as an American high school student studying abroad in Beijing at the time, I was shocked that a government could restrict entire social media platforms, seemingly silence an entire population, and monitor and control its citizens' ability to communicate with each other and the outside world. I remained intensely interested in Uyghur culture and politics in Xinjiang, and in 2014 I had the opportunity to study Uyghur traditional music at the Xinjiang Arts Academy in Urumqi, China, on a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship. The Uyghurs I met, studied alongside, and lived among shared their accounts of the many blatant and concealed forms of oppression and identity control they face in China. These included systematic discrimination rooted in the education system, limitations on their ability to move freely within the province, China, and internationally, and constant monitoring and routine brutality by the police. Even as a visitor, I felt the intimidation and paranoia – the military vehicles with mounted machine guns and armed police stationed behind grated barriers (so they would be able to fire without being attacked themselves) on street corners in the predominantly Uyghur neighbourhood in Urumqi where

I lived are images indelibly ingrained in my memory. Ultimately, my Uyghur music study proved very difficult to undertake, as limits on expression and congregation impeded the Uyghurs' ability to create and transmit art, music, and literature to each other; the barriers to entry for me, a Mandarin-speaking outsider with no Uyghur language skills visiting for just a few months, were even higher.

Since my time in Xinjiang, the political situation for Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities has become increasingly dire. While I, like many scholars of the region, have been unable to return to Xinjiang, I have been closely following the plight of the Uyghurs and writing on the official policies enacted by the Chinese government. Currently, my primary sources of information regarding my Uyghur friends and acquaintances as well as events in the region are the foreign scholars with whom I developed friendships during my time in Urumqi and their communication networks with Uyghurs outside of Xinjiang and China. To a lesser extent, I gained insight from Xinjiang-based missionaries as well as diasporic Uyghurs I have met abroad since my Xinjiang visit. While I do have direct experience in Xinjiang and conduct research in Mandarin and Turkish, I am limited by my lack of Uyghur language skills; thus, English and Mandarin-language scholars, advocates, and reporters mediate much of the material I draw on in this paper. I have also examined Mandarin language articles on Uyghur homestay campaigns from Chinese state media outlets and official Chinese government reports on state policies on Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

In the following sections, I first provide context for Chinese official rhetoric on ethnic minorities using the lens of internal Orientalism to demonstrate how assimilatory policies directed towards Uyghurs reinscribe their ethno-racialization and contribute to their systematic oppression. I then introduce how official discourse utilises narratives of counterterrorism and economic development to justify the disenfranchisement, coercion, and violence Uyghurs experience in Xinjiang. The following section outlines the roles and impacts of technology in surveillance in Xinjiang. Using the smartphone as a case study, I demonstrate how surveillance of intimate technologies instrumentalizes the ways in which the device serves as a tool of creating and sustaining social relations; I argue that such technologies' significant ability to foster intimacies despite geographic distance also imbues them with the ability to betray their users – a betrayal experienced as an invasion which reinscribes the seeming omnipotence of an ever-present state. I then introduce the "Becoming Family" campaigns as

a second instance of surveillance of intimate technologies. Discussing the ways in which state officials insert themselves as "relatives" into Uyghur homes while also monitoring their hosts for signs of subversion, I assert that this mimesis of kinship relations reinforces the notion of a separation between the domains of the state and the domestic; however, that these "relatives" surveil and can recommend the detention of their hosts obfuscates that apparent boundary. This reification and subsequent transgression of family dynamics perverts the social relations that underpin kinship ties, rendering practices of kinship unstable and subordinate to state sovereignty. In presenting these two case studies, I aim to illustrate how the surveillance of intimate technologies in Xinjiang perpetuates the fantasy of family as separate from the state in order to transgress the family sphere and ultimately amplify the power of the state.

Uyghurs and Chinese Government Policies on Minorities

Uyghurs (also written as "Uighurs"), one of the 56 ethnic groups officially recognised by the Chinese government, are a Muslim Turkic ethnic group related to other Central Asian ethnic groups such as Uzbeks and Kazakhs. In Xinjiang, the over 11 million Uyghurs make up around 40% of the region's population; a similar percentage (roughly 40%) of Xinjiang's population is Han Chinese, the ethnic majority which constitutes 92% of China's nearly 1.2 billion people (Toops 2016). Although in this paper I refer to the treatment of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, their experiences frequently overlap with those of other Turkic and/or Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, including Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tatar populations in the region, to whom Chinese government policies on Uyghurs generally also extend.

In the People's Republic of China (PRC), official state discourse on ethnic minorities is assimilatory, promoting national unity and cohesion while deemphasizing distinctions between minority populations. In a speech delivered to the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), President Xi Jinping repeatedly called to action "Chinese people of all ethnic groups":

> It will be an era for the Chinese people of all ethnic groups to work together and work hard to create a better life for themselves and ultimately achieve common prosperity for everyone. It will be an era for all of us, the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation, to strive with one heart to realise the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation (Xinhua 2017).

Additionally, a Chinese government report from 2017 entitled "Studying and Understanding the Essentials and Meaning of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Strategy for Governing Xinjiang" calls for heightened production and poverty alleviation so that "people of all ethnic groups will feel the care of the Party and the warmth of the big family that is the motherland" (Blanchette 2020). Such official rhetoric on ethnic minorities and the nation deliberately negates differences between ethnic groups. Indeed, over the last decade, rhetoric has shifted towards emphasizing an overarching "Chinese national identity" (*zhonghua minzu*) which supersedes separate (minority) ethnicities (*shaoshu minzu*).[1] Moreover, using the language of the family ("Chinese sons and daughters", "care of the Party", and "warmth of the big family that is the motherland") reifies the family as a visible state-sanctioned unit while also subordinating it to the state "family". Failure to observe state-sanctioned norms for creating family (as in the case of Uyghurs attempting to observe the Islamic wedding rite of nikah or expressing discontent with government-led promotion of Uyghur-Han marriage) subverts this hierarchy and thus becomes an act of treason ("illegal marriage" and "religious extremism") (Hoshur and Lipes 2020). The Chinese Dream promotes an ideal Chinese subject acquiescent in his or her non-differentiation and labour contributions and rewarded with economic and domestic stability.

Nonetheless, regulatory policies specifically directed towards ethnicities in China, particularly Uyghurs, affirm these populations' potential for difference; their ethno-racialization animates their imagined potential for subverting the ideal of a unified and assimilated nation of Chinese citizens. Edward Said's (1978) conceptualization of Orientalism asserts that the so-called West seeks to differentiate itself as ideologically and hegemonically dominant by animating the notion of an exotic, wild, and notably inferior Orient. Louisa Schein (1997) posits that the structures and ideology of Orientalism can also be duplicated within societies which are themselves orientalized by the West, a phenomenon

[1] Following the rise of the Republic of China in 1911, its founder Chinese nationalist revolutionary Sun Yat-sen sought to unify its disparate ethnic groups into a single Han *zhonghua minzu* (Chinese ethnic group) (Attane and Courbage 2000; Ryono and Galway 2015). This national ethnic unification took inspiration from Japanese and Russian ethnic policies that sought to categorize all within their national boundaries as of one ethnic identity (Gladney 1992). The current official de-emphasis on distinctions between ethnicities in China has been termed second-generation *minzu* policy. See Leibold (2013, 2016), Elliott (2015), Tobin (2015), and Roche and Leibold (2020) for further discussion of the anthropological, sociological, and political debates that have underpinned this policy shift in recent years, as well as its implications.

she terms "internal Orientalism". Discussing the tendency of Chinese ruling elites to render ethnic minorities culturally consumable through promoting their feminised and exoticized cultural presentation, Schein (1997, 73) characterises the Chinese ruling class (primarily drawn from the Han ethnic majority) as the "'Orientalist' agent of dominant representation" of the nation's ethnic minorities. The ethnic dress, songs, and dances of ethnic minorities as presented in state-sanctioned programming (including televised cultural events, advertisements, and touristic marketing) renders those assigned to these groups as "primitive" and "anti-modern" in the national imaginary. Casting the dominant majority Chinese (Han) Self in relief to this orientalized characterization is central to the Chinese nation-state's project of national development and modernization (Gladney 1994).[2] Discourses of internal Orientalism domestically reproduce the hegemonic structures that elevate certain groups of society as normative and dominate those groups who deviate, deeming them less advanced due to their supposedly bizarre and exotic customs (Dirlik 1996). While the Chinese government vehemently asserts the national economic and security benefits of ethnic unity (*minzu tuanjie*), the minoritization of populations in China calls upon a "logic of enclosure" to divide and hierarchize its population; specifically, it uses ethno-racialization "to identify and define population groups in a way that makes each of them carriers of differentiated and more or less shifting risk" (Mbembe 2017, 35). In China, this ethno-racialization occurs between non-white ethnic groups and is premised not on legacies of slavery, but rather on Chinese internal colonization and global discourses of Islamophobia.

This is not to say that ethnic minorities are invisible in China; however, their state-sanctioned visibility frequently confines them to exoticized, feminized, and domesticized modes of representation. One of the most visible state-sanctioned performances of ethnic difference occurs on the annual New Year's Gala, an internationally broadcast four-hour national television special featuring songs, dances, skits, and speeches. Tuning into the special is a ritual for many Chinese in China and abroad, and in 2018 the special drew an audience of around 800 million (Gladney 1994, 95; Chutel 2018). Many of these performances feature

[2] Schein (1997) describes internal Orientalism as a bidirectional process, discussing the ways in which members of the Miao ethnic minority population participate in their own orientalization as a way to exercise control over their own commodification and curation of their cultural traditions. By contrast, it is important to recognize that in the current oppressive conditions in Xinjiang, Uyghurs are unable to "constitute a distinguishable voice" to control their cultural representation in China (Schein 1197, 91–92).

heavily costumed representations of China's designated ethnic minority populations (frequently beautiful and exotic young women) singing and dancing.[3]

Writing about the presentation of Han and ethnic minority dance in the earliest years of the People's Republic, Emily Wilcox has called for scholarship on Chinese ethnic groups to look "beyond internal Orientalism", arguing that minority dance practices did not present minorities as erotic, exotic, or primitive but rather served to support official efforts towards promoting state multiculturalism and an egalitarian society (Wilcox 2016). Wilcox asserts that the treatment and reception of minority dance from 1949– to1954 demonstrates the high status awarded to minority culture and how China forged a national identity composed of many internal ethnic groups.

Looking "beyond internal Orientalism" in the current moment, however, obfuscates how colonialist attitudes animate Chinese government policies and forcibly circumscribe Uyghur identity-making practices through the intimidation and detention of their culture bearers. In addition to the detainments and imprisonments of Uyghur pop musicians and cultural intellectuals, Elise Anderson (2020) discusses the disappearance of Uyghur performing arts events and the "civil society" they enabled by creating space for Uyghur linguistic and cultural expression. She notes that well-known Uyghur performers have released songs in Mandarin praising Xi Jinping, the CCP, and China, and that "the more 'Western-style' and modern a singer is, the safer they seem to be" (Anderson 2020). The ongoing eradication of Uyghur arts spaces and detention and imprisonment of Uyghur arts practitioners starkly contrasts with the celebration of multiculturalism and promotion of equality and collaboration Wilcox observes in early ethnic minority dance practice in the PRC. Moreover, Dru Gladney (1994, 93) notes that Han Chinese objectification of ethnic minorities parallels "the valorization of gender and political hierarchies in China" and serves to de-ethnicize and empower the Han majority. As Amy Anderson and Darren Byler (2019) have compelling demonstrated, in recent years, Chinese

[3] Internal colonialist tendencies in China may be seen to extend beyond the state's efforts to modernize and control its own domestic "frontier regions" to regions and populations abroad, where it has undertaken substantial investments in development. For instance, African nations in 2019 received $2.7 billion USD in foreign direct investment from China, and from 2000– to 2019 committed to $153 billion USD in loan agreements with Chinese financiers (Chinese Africa Research Initiative). The 2018 New Year's television special broadcast drew international criticism for featuring a Chinese actress in blackface with artificially large buttocks playing the role of an African praising China, as well as a black actor playing the role of a monkey (Chutel 2018).

official policy has shifted from exhibiting exoticized Uyghurs for public Han consumption to coercing them to deny their ethnic difference and mimetically enact rituals of mainstream Han life (a process they liken to metaphorically "eating Hanness").

Uyghurs thus find themselves caught between the rhetoric of pan-ethnic unity and the reality of political oppression (in the name of assimilation) which attempts to erase but effectively reinscribes Uyghur difference. State policies which directly target Uyghur self-presentation, language use, mobility, religious expression, and cultural practices thus contribute to Uyghurs' ethno-racialization. This ethno-racialization also fuels systematic discrimination by utilizing reductive descriptions that represent Uyghurs as primitive, traditional, dangerous Others whom the (Han) Chinese public must subdue and rehabilitate to fully realize the dream of Chinese modernity and development. As such, Uyghur ethno-racialization contributes to the central government's larger political agenda to quell forces that would compete with national ideology as a uniting factor, such as individuated ethnic minority cultural identities and religion in the political realm. Tracing legacies of colonization by Western imperial powers as well as the Japanese Empire during its "century of humiliation" (Callahan 2004 in Kaul 2020), China nurses what Nitasha Kaul (2020) terms its "moral wound". She identifies the "postcolonial error" of presuming that having been colonized renders non-Western nations too virtuous to be colonizers. She asserts that countries like China seek to exercise the same economic and political dominance they once experienced at the hands of their colonizers while also believing themselves "immune to the possibility of playing the role of colonizer in [their] own peripheries" (Kaul 2020), a phenomenon which, in the case of Xinjiang and Tibet, Dibyesh Anand (2019) deems "colonization with Chinese characteristics". Furthermore, Ann Marie Leshkowich and Carla Jones (2003, 284–85) discuss the internal encounter with the Oriental in China, writing that "the result is a sanitized encounter with an imagined Asian 'other' that serves the interests of multinational capital by both generating profit and erasing, subduing, or containing alternative, potentially more threatening, aspects of cultural and racial difference". Internal Orientalism of Uyghurs in China therefore no longer relies upon commodifying their difference for Han consumption (Anderson and Byler 2019); instead, it undergirds policies which deprive them of their autonomy. The Chinese government exploits this difference to render Uyghurs dangerous, justifying their mass detention and deriving profit from the labour they perform in re-education facilities.

Representing Uyghurs as Different and Dangerous

While Xinjiang is presently under Chinese administration, conflicts over control of regional hegemony span centuries. In 1955, following the 1949 establishment of the PRC, the CCP government established the geopolitical area today known as Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Gladney (1998, 11) writes that the Chinese state's official recognition of a Uyghur nationality in 1954 (among 55 others currently recognized in China) cemented their minoritization, particularly as the state implemented a "practice of integration through [Han] immigration" beginning in the 1950s. The dilution of the Uyghur population has continued as Beijing has subsidized Han migration to Xinjiang (contra Chinese policies that severely limit Uyghurs' ability to move freely within and outside the region and country); in 2018, Han Chinese constituted 39.8% of Xinjiang's population (as compared to 6.7% in 1949) (Zenz 2020). The Belt and Road Initiative, Chinese national campaigns of infrastructure development and investment initiatives spanning East Asia and Europe, have fuelled increased policing of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Such projects have included the construction of special economic zones and railways, energy pipelines, highways, and streamlined border crossings beginning in 2014 (Steenberg and Rippa 2019). Byler (2018a, 194–195) notes the disillusionment of Uyghurs who migrated to Xinjiang cities to escape increasing forms of poverty in rural areas; these migrants discovered that urban ethno-racial discrimination inhibited their ability to find gainful employment (as Han settlers owned and staffed most private companies) and benefit from economic development enriching Han residents in the region.

State-orchestrated Han migration and assimilationist strategizing combined with uneven development favouring Hans have fuelled ethnic tensions that have been erupting in the form of violence and "terrorist incidents" since the late 1990s (Ryono and Galway 2015; Roberts 2020). In the government crackdown after a riot in the town of Ghulja, one in every ten men from the area disappeared due to officially unacknowledged arrests and executions (Roberts 2020). In September 2015, at least 50 people (mostly Han) were killed in an attack at Xinjiang coal mine attributed to "knife-wielding separatists", while in June of that year at least 18 were killed when Uyghurs attacked a traffic checkpoint with knives and bombs in Kashgar (Roberts 2018). The year prior saw a mass knife attack at the Kunming city train station in Yunnan Province, in which 29 people died and at least 130 were wounded; the event was officially

blamed on Uyghur separatists from Xinjiang and referred to as "China's 9/11" (Jacobs and Buckley 2014).

Since the September 11 attacks in the US, China has co-opted the language of the "War on Terror" to describe its management of Uyghur citizens. Narratives about securitization are fundamental to official rhetoric and state policies on Xinjiang (Goodman 2017; Harris 2018; Roberts 2020). Despite the attack, Uyghur exiles and activists contend that the Chinese state "never presented convincing evidence of the existence of a cohesive militant group fighting the government, and that much of the unrest can be traced back to frustration at controls over the culture and religion of the Uighur people who live in Xinjiang" (Goodman 2017; Harris 2018). Nonetheless, discourses of global Islamophobia gave valence to Chinese state justifications for marginalizing its Uyghur populations (Brophy 2019). The conflict in Syria and Chinese Uyghurs' participation in ISIS (up to 5,000 Uyghurs, according to the Syrian ambassador to China in May 2017) reinforced Chinese state discourse about the importance of domestic counterterrorism efforts, particularly the need for state intervention to stave rising separatism and religious extremism (Goodman 2017). Dana Carver Boehm (2009, 61) notes that assimilationism in China has paradoxically "strengthened ethnic identity and united traditionally adversarial groups" and that "China's efforts to squelch religious identity have added a religious character to the insurrection".

A vision of Uyghurs as strictly disciplined subjects of the Chinese state has emerged from various policies enacted over the last five years. Indeed, state-circulated discourses about repressive chauvinist fathers, impoverished backwards villagers, and fundamentalist jihadists, combined with systematic disenfranchisement and policing of Uyghur bodies, creates the conditions for realizing subversive alternatives to the ideal Chinese subject. Following counterterrorism legislation passed in 2015, the Chinese government introduced laws banning virtually all Islamic practices including beards, veils, certain Islamic names, marrying using religious but not legal procedures; these laws also prohibited having too many children, an offense punishable by forced abortion (Roberts 2020; Smith Finley 2020; Zenz 2020).[4] Bilingual language policies have given way to bans on Uyghur language instruction and materials in the classroom at all education levels (Qiao Long and Yang Fan 2017; Dwyer 2005).

[4] The original text of the law passed in 2015 is available in Chinese at http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/npc/xinwen/2018-06/12/content_2055871.htm and is available in English translation at https://www.chinalawtranslate.com/en/counter-terrorism-law-2015/.

An anonymous interlocutor told me in 2018 that at the Xinjiang Arts Institute in Urumqi, the leading conservatory for Uyghur traditional arts and music (and where my interlocutor and I both studied Uyghur language and music in 2014), vocal classes teaching *muqam* (a form of Uyghur music featuring narrative songs) are now taught by Uyghur teachers to Uyghur students in Mandarin, and surveillance cameras have been installed in the classrooms to ensure compliance. Jian Ge (2016) notes that "the much greater symbolic capital that the 'legitimate language' Mandarin Chinese carries enables its native speakers to have easier access than the native Turkic speakers to jobs in the labour market", echoing sentiments I heard from Uyghur interlocutors in 2014 that they were assumed to be less linguistically competent than their Han counterparts and suffered hiring discrimination. Wenfang Tang (2015) also points out that while Western observers cite economic inequalities between the Han and other ethnic minority populations, "such inequality and the subsequent ethnic tension are a result of China's state-sponsored affirmative action programs [benefitting Han citizens], and particularly the failure of its language policy". Economic equality and prosperity are thus touted as rewards for linguistic performances in the workplace, the school, and as I will discuss later, in the family.

Perhaps the most contentious state policy on Uyghurs has been their mass detention in facilities whose existence was initially denied by the Chinese government, and then officially acknowledged as "vocational training centres". Uyghurs and foreign observers have referred to these as "concentration camps", sites of "mass incarceration", "internment camps", and "re-education centres" (U.S. Congress 2018). Chinese state media's reference to these facilities as vocational training centres speaks to a "civilizing process" of the incarcerated which disqualifies prisoners' own accounts of their treatment and creates "physical and administrative distance between public and prisoners that ... meant that the latter came to be through of as essentially 'different'" (Pratt 2011, 227–228). Substantial (albeit officially unconfirmed) numbers of Uyghurs have been sent to these facilities, with estimates ranging from 500,000 to "millions" (Human Rights Watch 2021); an estimated 15.4% of the Turkic and Hui minority populations (including Uyghurs), or roughly 1.8 million people, have experienced detention in Xinjiang (Zenz 2019). Gene Bunin (2019) notes that although re-education centres have received the greatest attention from international media outlets, policing of Uyghurs (and other Turkic ethnic minorities) extends beyond the scope of these mass detention camps; he emphasizes that local police, forced labour facilities, hospitals, prisons, community correction centres,

orphanages, and death itself render Xinjiang the "world's largest prison". Bunin (2018), a scholar formerly based in Xinjiang who created an online platform (Shahit.biz) to record volunteer testimonies of Uyghurs and other ethnic minority people who have been disappeared, writes, "Witness reports of life inside the camps and detention centres have told not only of unhealthy living conditions, but also of regular violence, torture and brainwashing" (Bunin 2018). Official and unofficial sources also report that detainees learn Mandarin, disavow religion, and memorize and recite slogans declaring loyalty to China and the Chinese Communist Party (Harris 2018). Bunin (2018) discusses the manner in which Uyghurs obscure their discussions of disappearances:

> When talking about the situation in Xinjiang, it is standard to use euphemisms. The most common by far is the word *yoq*, which means "gone" or "not around". "Do you get what I'm saying?" a friend asked me once, as I tried to figure out what had happened to a person he was telling me about. "That guy is *yoq*. He's got another home now". The phrase *adem yoq* ("everybody's gone") is the one I've heard the most this past year. It has been used to describe the absence of staff, clients and people in general. When referring to people who have been forced to return to their hometowns (for hometown arrest, camp or worse), it is typical to say that they "went back home". The concentration camps are not referred to as "concentration camps", naturally. Instead, the people there are said to be occupied with "studying" (*oqushta/öginishte*) or "education" (*terbiyileshte*), or sometimes may be said to be "at school" (*mektepte*).

The use of the phrase *adem yoq* to describe the situation in Xinjiang (alternatively translated as "there are no people") linguistically removes the agent of a person's disappearance. Describing the situation as more of an organic condition than a causal event via non-acknowledgement of any actor reveals fear of the consequences of attribution. Green (1994, 227) notes that "Fear thrives on ambiguities ... The spectacle of torture and death and of massacres and disappearances in the recent past have become more deeply inscribed in individual bodies and the collective imagination through a constant sense of threat ... Fear, the arbiter of power – invisible, indeterminate, and silent". The relatively safer solution of *adem yoq*, represents an internalized process of nominalization and passivization which avoids confronting the physical act of abduction and quells the impulse to inculpate any other besides the self. Additionally, the use of language of the everyday and domestic to hint

at a person's true whereabouts masks and normalizes state oppression, yet also implies the state's transgressions into domains imagined as boundaried. Byler's (2018a, 200) discussion of a Uyghur politics of refusal perhaps offers a more optimistic reading of "*adem yoq*", an epistemic disobedience in which "tactics of refusal are grounded in alternative epistemologies that exist prior to the knowledge system of the state". In this case, failure to attribute Uyghur disappearances to the state creates the conditions to enact a mode of Uyghur belonging and recognition, an imagination of Uyghur sociality that also maintains plausible deniability of the threat of state violence. This gives an additional valence to Haggerty and Ericson's (2000) conceptualization of the "disappearance of disappearance"; beyond technological surveillance rendering anonymity impossible, fear of retribution for acknowledging the coercive conditions of such surveillance leads Uyghurs to discursively disacknowledge ("disappear") the disappearances they confront.

Surveillance of Intimate Technologies and the State

The policing of Uyghur bodies in Xinjiang relies heavily on artificial intelligence and surveillance technologies; investment in surveillance technology in the region, including biometric data collection, CCTV cameras, and "information transmission, software and information technology", totalled 13.6 billion RMB (2.03 billion USD) in 2016 and was scheduled to reach 24 billion RMB (3.58 billion USD) in 2017 (U.S. Congress 2018). Such technologies include hand-held scanners that extract and analyse contacts, photos, videos, social media posts, and email from smartphones (Hoja 2017). Although the Chinese government already required the collection of bio-data (including blood samples and a 3D image of themselves) from Uyghurs applying for passports, under a Xinjiang-wide initiative in 2017 all of the region's residents between ages 12 and 65 were required to submit to physical collection of DNA samples, fingerprints, iris scans, and blood samples (Human Rights Watch 2017). Such efforts parallel the "digital dissection" Louise Amoore and Alexandra Hall (2009) assert that bodies undergo at body scanner checkpoints at US and UK borders. They emphasize "the violent tendencies of these technologies, which emerge from the processes of abstraction and disintegration, and the effacement of personhood" and similarly resemble "previous attempts to locate deviance in bodies" (Amoore and Hall 2009, 449). Efforts to immobilize Uyghurs greatly expanded in 2017, as that year a mandate enacted in 2016 requiring Uyghurs in

Xinjiang to turn in their passports to local authorities was extended to include Uyghurs across China (Wong 2016; Hoja 2017). Additionally, video cameras with facial recognition software track residents' movements, knives are chained and labelled with serial codes registered to their owners, vehicles are equipped with GPS trackers, and frequent checkpoints scan Uyghur residents' irises and phones (Goodman 2017; Harris 2018).

In Xinjiang, smartphones are an essential technology used for processes of location, including literal location of missing relatives, as well as situation of the self through contact lists, Uyghur language social media groups, religious texts, photos of oneself with friends and family – information that affirms one's relations to others within a society. Harris and Isa (2018) have discussed the ways in which Uyghur WhatsApp conversations about faith, politics, and identity contribute to Uyghur self-fashioning. In this context, the smartphone is a device that affirms one's own processes of identification with kinship groups, and enables the maintenance of kinship ties across great temporal-spatial distances; on the other, in this context of biometric data collection, facial recognition software, and spyware, imbuing a smartphone with personal data also transforms one's geospatial, physiological, and psychic location in an kinship group into quantifiable evidence of transgression, as these locations lie beyond the space demarcated by the state for its society.

While the smartphone may be an object inalienable from daily life in Xinjiang, it is also an object of betrayal, an intimate technology whose mediation of social relations enables the state to weaponize their articulations. Mandatory spyware installed on these devices reports to authorities Uyghurs' contact with foreigners (including Uyghur relatives just over the border in Kazakhstan, for instance) and the harbouring of supposedly subversive and extremist materials (including prayers and quotations from the Koran and seemingly anti-Chinese Communist Party statements). The brand and operating system of a smartphone also determine the extent to which it can be penetrated by software and devices that seek out unauthorized content. Apple iPhones made for the international, non-Chinese market (although notably still made in China) are equipped with an operating system that protects the user's data from such sweeps, while iPhones designed for the Chinese market and other brands of smartphone that run Android operating systems are highly susceptible to such infiltration (Byler 2020). A woman from the Kazakh ethnic minority in Xinjiang whose relatives had been taken to re-education camps recalled how her iPhone had protected her from being detained herself: "If it was a Huawei phone, they could have

found things ... [The police] asked me, 'Why are you using this phone?' They said I should be patriotic and get a Chinese phone" (Byler 2020).

With more over one million Uyghur people detained in facilities that those who have been able to leave have termed "concentration camps", friends and family members of the detained rely on electronic communication devices to learn about their whereabouts and condition. Ironically, the discovery of communication with those outside China via police checks and mandatorily installed spyware is grounds for detention in such facilities. Moreover, as the Chinese state heightened smartphone surveillance, many Uyghurs opted to either solely use a non-smartphone or to strategically switch between using a smartphone and non-smartphone to thwart monitoring of their communications and data; subsequently, the current normative expectation that a person engages in social relations using a smartphone rendered not carrying a smartphone worthy of suspicion (Byler 2020; Anonymous 2021).

When technology serves as both the means for maintaining relationships as well as the means by which those relationships are betrayed, how are we to regard surveillance in the realm of the technological? Reflecting on her fieldwork experiences in Romania in the 1970s, Katherine Verdery (2018, 293) draws a contrast between the interpersonal surveillance conducted by the Securitate (the Romanian state security force) and high-tech surveillance. She notes how the former is labour-intensive and reliant on instrumentalizing human relationships in contrast to high-tech surveillance, which "does not rely on undermining people's social relationships to control them but instead simply maps those relationships to discern potentially treacherous patterns" (ibid., 293). Indeed, many aspects of high-tech surveillance rely on reducing humans to aggregated data points locating them both geospatially and in a network of social relations; in more democratic contexts, users may imbue personal technology with this information about themselves, while in the absence of human and civil rights protections (as in Xinjiang) a government may obtain personal data through systematic and coercive means.

Verdery (2018, 7) asserts that organizations such as the Securitate seek out an underlying reality of individuals based on both post-modernist conceptions which posit the self as unstable as well as modernist assumptions that initial appearances are unreliable. She finds that the surveillance state enacts control through partitioning individuals into unified roles; whether in 1970s Romania or today's Xinjiang, there is a contrast drawn between the governed and a government which surveils that society's members. It follows that delimiting the

multiple roles individuals may have in both "society" and the "state" is of paramount importance in surveillance. By contrast, Verdery calls attention to the multiple identities (researcher, spy, married woman, single woman, Romanian, foreigner, etc.) constructed for her as those around her surreptitiously observed and interpreted her appearance, actions, and discourse. One finds similar entanglements in identities in Xinjiang that complicate one's demarcation as either part of society or the state, governed or part of government, or part of the dominant or minority group, whether in the case of the Uyghur policeman who joined the force in an attempt to prevent detention, or that of the Han Chinese Uyghur rights activist detained for voicing opinions against the mass incarceration of millions of Uyghurs. Verdery (2018, 292) comments that identities ("targets and spies") are not people, but "functions", highlighting their mutability and multiplicity, and importantly, their simultaneous existence in one individual. This multiplicity resonates with Ferguson and Gupta's (2002, 991–992) assertion that the state and society are not separable, but rather that the state is comprised of "bundles of social practices"; categorizing people into separate identities is a technology of governance that produces the apparent autonomy of the state (Mitchell 1991, 84). Recognition of the numerous fragmentary identities any one individual has in relation to countless others is a move towards "unmasking", revealing the state as a performance that obscures its own abstraction (Verdery 2018, 284).

Just as people may take on multiple identities or functions in relation to others, in Xinjiang, surveillance of intimate technologies destabilizes the notion that these technologies are singular in their functions. Moreover, surveillance methods which utilize intimate technologies afford some degree of maintenance of social relations while also enabling their large-scale systematic subversion. While Verdery (2018, 293) has argued that high-tech surveillance is simply a tool of mapping and does not instrumentalize personal relationships in the same way as other means of surveillance (as mentioned above), I contend that instrumentalizing the information that one uses to locate and affirm oneself in kinship relations is an essential aspect of high-tech surveillance in China. Indeed, Verdery's characterization overlooks the ways in which interpersonal and high-tech methods may go hand in hand to strategically undermine people's relationships to the intimate technologies they use to situate themselves and uphold ties of kinship across time and space.

While the smartphone itself may not substitute for the physical presence of one's relatives and friends, as an intimate technology, it appears to mimetically

protect the kinship rituals which maintain its user's sense of belonging and connection; however, in doing so, it also creates new vulnerabilities for its user and thus sabotages demonstrations of one's loyalty to the nation. In this way, the smartphone mimics the multiple functions of an individual: the act of communication with a daughter (which enables one's own recognition as a mother) may simultaneously create the conditions for the daughter to become an unwitting informant whose act of recognition of the mother destabilizes the social order which makes the relationship meaningful. Put differently, smartphone surveillance instrumentalizes the process whereby a Uyghur's recognition of a relative as kin animates the kinship relationship, but also simultaneously renders both visible as potentially subversive to the state (and thus also subversive to the kinship relationship itself).

Just as an individual can take on multiple identities through various social relations, so too can surveillance be variously interpreted as targeting an oppressed population or protecting the populace. The multiple functions of the smartphone (its simultaneous capacities to affirm and betray social ties) recall Achille Mbembe's (2017, 23–24) discussion of surveillance and the security state given the rise of greater technological capabilities. He writes that "the citizen is redefined as both the subject and the beneficiary of surveillance, which now privileges the transcription of biological, genetic, and behavioural characteristics through digital imprints". Foreign news reports on surveillance in Xinjiang decry a security state which not only invades but destroys personal privacy; reports from China extol the work of the government in protecting its citizens from extremism (embodied in portrayals of uneducated, rural, religious, traditional, Muslim Uyghurs) and bringing them into a modern age of economic prosperity.

Moreover, in the context of Xinjiang, the overtness of high-tech surveillance simultaneously enhances the apparent strength of the state over society; however, its pervasiveness within the banality of communication practices shines a light on the "infinitesimal mechanisms" that create the spectre of the state (Mitchell 2006, 89). The "state" emerges not just in moments of overt regulation, bureaucracy, and boundary-making, but notably also in how Uyghurs experience "double consciousness" as the threat of physical displacement and violence coerces them to constantly evaluate themselves both from the perspective of minority position as well as from the perspective of the dominant power (Anderson and Byler 2019). Daily rituals and interactions in which Uyghurs must make choices about how they consume, self-present, and communicate become potent sites of experiencing the sensation of a phantom state alongside

more overt instances in which the "state" appears to be invasively entering from the outside. Here I am reminded of the Uyghurs who wished to retain religious knowledge stored on phones but feared retribution for its discovery, and so hung bags of SD cards in trees in the hopes that they could one day reclaim them (Byler 2019). "As a result, the objects of surveillance become daily life, the space of relationships, communication (notably through electronic technologies), and transactions" (Mbembe 2017, 23). Reflecting the information individuals invest in their personal technology, smartphones sustain feelings of connection and identity in spite of geospatial distance; at the same time, the self-affirming information they contain is strategically used to confirm categories of difference and enact psychic and physical violence on those outside the desired "society" of the "state".

"Becoming Family" in Xinjiang

Since 2014, the Chinese government has enacted policies to mobilize over a million Chinese civilians to conduct homestays with Uyghur and other Muslim minority families (Byler 2018b). There have been three waves of long-term homestay campaigns. The first wave of 200,000 CCP members occupying homes in Uyghur villages came in 2014 as part of the campaign "Visit the People, Benefit the People, and Bring Together the Hearts of the People".[5] In 2016, as part of a campaign called "United as One Family",[6] 110,000 civil servants (officially referred to as "relatives") occupied homes of Uyghurs whose family members had been sentenced to prison or killed by police (sometimes for durations of one year or longer). This campaign was extended in 2017 as the "Becoming Family" campaign, with over 1.1 million civilians being dispatched to conduct week-long homestays in Uyghur homes; these visits were frequently paid to the extended families of Uyghurs who had been sent to re-education detention camps (Byler 2018b; Yang and Aldak 2018), and highly mediatized on state news outlets.

Uyghur families are expected to consent to hosting the government "relatives", who may variously see their work as a patriotic duty to "civilize" their hosts or as a tedious obligation otherwise incentivized with the promise of promotions upon completion of their assignments (Byler 2018b). "Relatives" are

[5] In Mandarin, "访民情、惠民生、聚民心" (*fang minqing, hui min sheng, ju minxin)*.

[6] In Mandarin, "结对认亲" (*jiedui renqin)*.

instructed to search for materials that signal disallegiance to the state, recording infractions and recommending detainment for those who commit them. Evidence of religious or extremist affiliations can take the form of a Uyghur questioning the origin of meat offered by a "relative" to determine whether it is halal, refusing to drink alcohol or smoke, possession of religious texts, and having foreign social media platforms or contacts in one's communication devices (Byler 2018b). In such situations, as Costa (2016, 79) notes, "It matters less what people really do, but more what people are seen to be doing". Punishments for these disloyalties to the Chinese state are not limited to their perpetrators, as detainment of those who have been found guilty of some crime frequently extends to the relatives of those who have demonstrated disloyalty; furthermore, the threat of disappearance of one's family members in Xinjiang looms over Uyghurs living abroad who do not wish to return or testify to state oppression of Uyghurs.

Nonetheless, Chinese government representatives conducting homestays with Uyghurs does not simply conflate the public and private, but rather reinforces that distinction while simultaneously transgressing the boundary. Homestay campaigns in which civil servants and civilians occupy Uyghur households with the explicit purpose of acting as "relatives" and monitoring them for misbehaviour perpetuates the notion of stratified spaces of the domestic and the state. Mitchell (2006, 88–89) notes that treating the household as an element internal to population effectively enables both the process of acquiring information and the creation of a boundary between state and society. The homestay is therefore experienced as a government official's coercive invasion into a private sphere of family life. At the same time, the obligation that both host and guest regard one another through speech and ritual as "relatives" renders these boundaries unstable and produces the conditions for their obfuscation. Reporting by Chinese state media makes clear delineations of domestic activities; articles and photographs illustrating "relatives" making food and sleeping alongside Uyghurs recall Levi-Strauss' (1969, 59) observation that strangers forced to dine together creates a "tension between the norm of privacy and a fact of community". In drawing a line between the state and the home, the Chinese government perpetuates the myth of the domestic as apolitical, thus asserting what Stoler (2010, 173) terms "a kinder, gentler colonialism" (Butler 2002). The explicit knowledge that these "relatives" are surveilling the families into which they have inserted themselves, however, indicates a purposeful perversion of family dynamics; indeed, many Uyghur parents bemoaned how the presence of government "relatives" undermined their authority in their own homes (Byler

2018). By sending party members deemed kin into Uyghur homes to act out fantasies of family life and identify disloyal elements for punishment, the power of the state is enacted through destabilizing any power that may be vested in the family, subordinating family structure to state sovereignty.[7]

Beyond material and ritual signifiers in the boundaried domestic realm that betray Uyghurs "true" loyalties, "relatives" observe whether children use Mandarin in the home and question children about the private behaviour of their family members to reveal whether the family's devotion to the state is genuine or "two-faced", reifying the idea of children as malleable innocents (Anonymous 2018; Byler 2018b). Uyghurs residing in Xinjiang have instructed their own children living outside China not to contact them lest authorities discover evidence of foreign contact (Byler 2018b). Many Uyghurs who reside outside Xinjiang find themselves facing an impossible choice: to remain abroad and avoid certain detainment may likely entail detention and harm to their kin in Xinjiang, while to return would bring that fate upon themselves (Anonymous 2018; Byler 2018b). Others with permanent citizenship outside Xinjiang face similar retribution for reporting on disappearances and abuses of Uyghurs in Xinjiang (Goodman 2017). Performing kinship ties thus not only becomes an arduous task, but also a liability for subjecthood and survival within China. Family is thus made fragile. That one's own kin can render one's freedoms as a political subject vulnerable casts each potential practice of kinship a potential betrayal.

A feature article from a Chinese state media outlet showcasing the success of re-education initiatives which place Uyghur children in state-run boarding schools vividly conveys the transgression of a state-demarcated boundary between the political and the domestic (Yue Hongbin and Cao Kun, 2018). The story centres on Ayzola, a Uyghur girl who is sent away from her rural village in Xinjiang to study in Urumqi, the provincial capital, and is paired with Communist Party cadre Liu Chenxiao. (From the article, it is not possible to confirm whether Ayzola's family voluntarily sent her to Urumqi, or, as with many Uyghur children in Xinjiang, state authorities removed her from her family and placed her in a state boarding school for "child welfare".) The

[7] While in this investigation I am primarily concerned with the ways in which government-led homestays transgress the apparent boundaries of private family life and subvert kinship ties to oppressive effect, it is important to note that the dynamics of kinship relations and exchanges in Uyghur society in relation to Han society also undermine the success of efforts to foster inter-ethnic unity. This exploration is beyond the scope of the current article; however, I recommend the interested reader consult the writings of Byler (2018a), Steenberg (2021 & 2014), Steenberg and Rippa (2019), Tynen (2019), Grose (2020 & 2019), and Smith Finley (2013) for closer consideration of these topics.

article praises Liu for caring for Ayzola as her own daughter: she buys her shoes, comes to parent-teacher meetings as her "mother", takes her on outings with her own biological daughter, and invites Ayzola's biological family to come visit their daughter in Urumqi. Moreover, in the article Ayzola refers to Liu and her husband as "mother" and "father", commenting that when Liu invited Ayzola's biological family to visit Urumqi for Chinese New Year, she had two sets of parents around her and was very happy (Yue Hongbin and Cao Kun 2018). Towards the end of the article, the author references a letter written in Mandarin from Ayzola to her biological parents:

> 信中写道 : 爸爸 , 妈妈 , 我在学校一切都很好 , 请你们放心。刘妈妈经常来看望我 , 对我非常好。我现在还有了一个新名字 , 叫'杨心琪'。这是刘妈妈给我起的名字 , 琪的意思是美玉 , 寓意美好。我会努力学习 , 不辜负两位爸爸妈妈的期望。
>
> *She writes in the letter: Dad, Mom, everything at school is going really well, please rest easy. Mother Liu often comes to visit me, and she is very good to me. I now have a new name, "Yang Xinqi". This is the name Mother Liu gave me, qi means jade, and the implied meaning is very beautiful. I will work hard to study, and to not disappoint the hopes of my two fathers and mothers.* (Translated by author.)

Ayzola represents the ideal Uyghur subject – celebratory of her new Han name and identity, celebratory of the most iconic holiday in China, and celebratory of the parentage of the Chinese state. She pledges commitment to working hard and benefits through gaining material and psychic stability. While she remains in touch with her Uyghur family, her testimony in absentia is instructional for them, a signifier of a Uyghur's greatest possible success and the omnipotence of the state in establishing its subjects' hierarchy of loyalties. This enshrinement of Ayzola reveals the Chinese state's fear of kinship originating outside its domain; it further underscores that Uyghur family structures pose challenges to state regulation and subordination of the domestic sphere it has demarcated. "Becoming Family" campaigns' mimesis of family relations tyrannizes Uyghurs' performance of them. Just as surveillance of smartphones endangers the relationships these intimate technologies sustain, homestays and re-education initiatives which imitate family dynamics instrumentalize the often-banal rituals that underpin the maintenance of kinship, ultimately destroying the intimate functionality of those rituals to the relationships they are intended to support.

Figure 1. Original caption: 阿依佐拉和'刘妈妈'的合影 ("A picture of Ayzola and Mother Liu"). Source: Tianshan Wang (Yue Hongbin and Cao Kun 2018).

Figure 2. Liu (wearing a traditional Uyghur hat and scarf) and Ayzola's biological father. Original caption: 刘春晓和阿依佐拉的父亲吾拉依木的合照 ("A photo of Liu Chenxiao and Ayzola's father Urayim"). Source: Tianshan Wang (Yue Hongbin and Cao Kun 2018).

Conclusion

In Xinjiang, ethno-racialization of Uyghur and ethnic minority populations manifests as threatened and actual physical violence enacted against supposedly subversive individuals. At the same time, surveillance strategies which both produce and transgress family dynamics reify but also obfuscate divisions between state and society as well as public and private domains. These strategies of banal and masked control reinforce norms of kinship and privacy while simultaneously enacting control over the subjects whom those norms transgress. Smartphone surveillance and state-led homestay campaigns with Uyghur families perpetuate fantasies of a private, removed, family space in contrast with a concrete state entity, which appears to invade this sphere and undermine these relations. Producing and destabilizing logics of family structure and privacy appear as perversions of kinship and family structures which at once affirm their supposedly valid and normative modalities, and also serve to maintain the state's appearance as a cohesive actor through demonstrating its reach into the domestic domain.

In this article, I have introduced the concept of "surveillance of intimate technologies" to demonstrate how the often-banal means of creating and maintaining social relations becomes a primary site for experiencing state control and intimidation. The intimacies these innocuous yet essential intimate technologies afford render their transgression particularly insidious and invasive. The fundamental role smartphones and rituals of family life play in establishing kinship contributes to the sense that surveillance of such intimate technologies is hidden or invisible; however, that this "invisible" surveillance is explicitly coupled with the overt threat of violent consequences in the case of subversion demonstrates the dual role of invisibility and visibility in producing an ever-present state. Much as Verdery (2018, 289) describes the Romanian Securitate in the 1970s and 1980s, we can understand state surveillance in Xinjiang as "not somehow 'above' society in the apparatus of the state but inside it, with tentacles that [creep] into people's social relations in generally destructive ways". The ways in which intimate technologies enable the instrumentalization of social relations to render entire populations vulnerable reveals how Chinese state authority in Xinjiang is significantly based upon a colonization of sociality (Verdery 2018, 290). While physically coercive means of control in Xinjiang have drawn the greatest international attention and outcry, this exploration seeks to expose how state power also emerges through managing and ultimately destabilizing kinship practices. As Uyghurs in China and in diaspora continue to seek ways to sustain

social ties in the current conditions, it remains to be seen how and to what extent they may adapt their use of intimate technologies to empower their own sociality.

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CZECHS AND SLOVAKS IN SVALBARD: ENTANGLED MODES OF MOBILITY, PLACE, AND IDENTITY

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Abstract: *The article is an anthropological study of how Czech and Slovak nationals reflect on their lives, work, and explorations in Svalbard. We ask what kind of Czech and Slovak "presence" in Svalbard can be documented ethnographically, and what can we learn from people's stories about the context in which their lives unfold. We profile four people as representing modes of relating to Svalbard (the globetrotter, the home-seeker, the pragmatist, and the sportsman), and complement this with a summary of findings distilled from the data created through various methods. Pre–COVID-19 pandemic, there were a few hundred Czechs and Slovaks who travelled to Svalbard every year, thanks to its accessibility, but also because of other reasons: research, tourism, and employment in the service industry. In line with studies contesting delineated identities such as "tourists" or "researchers", we discuss factors resulting in practical repercussions of visiting and/or settling in Svalbard. Citizenship and residential status, type of employer and work contract, and language competence have implications regarding the living possibilities and personal rights of Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard. Mapping ethnographically the lives of these people in Svalbard confirms some findings of earlier studies on tourism, transnational identity, and lifestyle mobility. Czechs and Slovaks come to Svalbard attracted by the place's appeal, which ranges from the Arctic environment and adventure, through tempting job opportunities, to establishing a potential "home" there. Relatively young, educated, skilled, and affluent Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard develop notions of place and identity shaped both by global processes and local specificities.*

Keywords: *Svalbard, Czechs, Slovaks, mobility, identity, tourism, place*

Introduction

Svalbard is a locale that embodies numerous paradoxes of our times (Saville 2019). This Arctic archipelago is an epitome of entangled cross-scale changes (Hovelsrud et al. 2020), which are increasingly becoming crises.[1] It is known for warming up faster than the rest of the planet, drawing the attention of scientists (Hanssen-Bauer et al. 2019; Moreno-Ibáñez 2021), politicians (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2015–2016; Westgaard-Halle and Eskeland 2020), journalists (*BBC* 2021; Kennedy 2021), and tourists (Deutsche Welle 2019). In the pre–COVID-19 pandemic world, it was also an example of overheating (Eriksen 2016) as related to tourism (Saville 2019; Saville forthcoming). The industry was growing fast, changing life in the few small settlements (Hovelsrud et al. 2020; Vlakhov in preparation), trying to find a way to create synergies with, rather than clash with, environmental management (Kaltenborn et al. 2020; Viken 2020), and altering human-environment relations (Kotašková forthcoming; Andersen forthcoming). Zooming into the "capital" of Svalbard – the town of Longyearbyen – issues related to escalating social inequalities and the dominating discourse of Norwegianization (Sokolíčková forthcoming-b) were pronounced before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the area in March 2020, and has only gotten more visible and urgent since then (Zhang et al. in preparation).

This article investigates how the lives of Czechs and Slovaks unfold in contemporary Svalbard. Anthropological fieldwork (Watson 1999) enabled us to generate data that we scrutinize to understand the ways in which our participants reflect on their mode of being in Svalbard, and on their reasons for visiting and/or settling in Svalbard. The purposes for choosing the narrow focus on Czechs and Slovaks living in or visiting Svalbard are multiple. First, the interest in the Arctic is growing globally and the Czech Republic forms a part of this trend, having recently also unsuccessfully applied for observer status on the Arctic Council (MZV 2021). Our perspective, however, is different from

[1] The research project of Zdenka Sokolíčková was financed through the grant CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0.0/18_070/0009476 *(bo)REALIFE: Overheating in the high Arctic: Qualitative anthropological analysis*, funded by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of the Czech Republic, and the University of Hradec Králové. The host institution of the project, the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Oslo, participated in the project through the mentorship of prof. Thomas Hylland Eriksen. The research stay of Eliška Soukupová was financed through a scholarship covering fieldwork-related costs awarded by the Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové.

that of political scientists; the point of departure is not to argue about why any national presence in Svalbard is important (Padrtová and Trávníčková 2017) or worrisome (Pedersen 2021), but to explore what kinds of Czech and Slovak modes of being and travelling exist there.

Second, a part of the data we present in the article arose from fieldwork conducted in Svalbard by one of the authors, who at that time was an undergraduate student with a vivid interest in the locale but was limited in language competence. Using only the Czech language (and taking advantage of the compatibility with Slovak language) was a limitation in terms of skills, but it also was a positive factor regarding access to participants. Without any previous assumptions about the importance of the ventures of Czech and Slovak nationals in Svalbard, or about our own work, this article aspires to be an example of humble ethnographies (Saville 2021).

The article is structured as follows. After setting the stage and introducing the locale, a methodological section follows which is dedicated to explaining how we generated the data that serves as the basis for our analysis. We then present four ethnographically documented modes of relating to Svalbard, and complement this with an analysis of the data section. We are interested in factors that shape the lived experiences of our participants visiting or living in Svalbard, and scrutinize how their identities are formed in this process, where they collide, and how they interact with place. The pandemic is a context that turned out to be decisive both when it comes to making some issues more visible, and as a game changer sui generis. The last section of the article then presents a discussion of the findings and issues emerging from our research.

A Brief History of Svalbard and Longyearbyen

The relatively large archipelago of more than 61,000 km2 is situated between 74° to 81° north latitude, and from 10° to 35° east longitude in the Barents Sea, about halfway between northern mainland Norway and the North Pole. The territory was discovered in the late 16th century by the Dutch explorer Willem Barentsz. During the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Dutch, British, French, Russian, Danish, and Norwegian settlers inhabited the archipelago temporarily to work as sealers, whalers, trappers, and walrus hunters (Avango et al. 2011). Whaling faded out in mid-19th century, and a few decades later large coal deposits were discovered (Arlov 2003). The end of the 19th century can also be seen as the start of tourism on Svalbard (Viken 2020).

By the turn of the 19th century, Norwegian, British, and American interests in the no-man's territory started clashing (Hacquebord and Avango 2009; Avango et al. 2011). World War I created a rupture and Norway, an independent nation-state since 1905, took advantage over the powerful European countries recovering from the conflict. Norway succeeded diplomatically in drafting and signing the Spitsbergen Treaty in 1920, which came into effect in 1925 (Arlov 2020). The document, nowadays known as the Svalbard Treaty, has no analogies whatsoever; its goal was to ensure peace and environmental protection through Norwegian governance, granting citizens of countries that ratified the treaty the right to access Svalbard. It bans activities with warlike purposes and protects the rights of signatories in terms of fishing, hunting, and gaining mineral resources (Svalbard Treaty 1920).

Czechoslovakia acceded to the treaty in 1930 and Czechia, its successor state, considers itself bound to the treaty (MZV 2021), as does Slovakia. It was Norway and the Soviet Union that established the costly coal mining industry and kept it running, and during the 20th century several settlements were founded on the archipelago (Arlov 2003). Longyearbyen was one, founded in 1906 by American "cruise tourist" John Monro Longyear. Ten years later the Norwegian mining company Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani (called only Store Norske since 2020) bought the town (Hovelsrud et al. 2020).

Skipping the period during which Longyearbyen was a predominantly Norwegian company town with a minimal number of international residents, seeds of major changes came with the opening of the airport there in 1975. That made the island of Spitsbergen accessible year-round and resulted in the political decision to support tourism development (Næringsdepartementet 1974–1975). In the late 1980s, tourism became a promising industry in Svalbard while the international research activities became more prominent there (Hovelsrud et al. 2020). The decade of 1980s is also the most distant point in time that some of our participants, especially those involved in scientific projects, can recollect.

Research activities started to develop systematically in the 1960s in Svalbard (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2015–2016), but it was the opening of University Centre in Svalbard (UNIS) in 1993, and its fast expansion after 2006, that changed life in Longyearbyen. In the pre-pandemic world, the website of UNIS informed that the institution accommodated almost 800 students yearly.

Since the late 1980s when the settlement had about 1,000 mostly Norwegian inhabitants (Næringsdepartementet 1990–1991), Longyearbyen has

developed into a modern town of about 2,400 residents, economically dependent on the Norwegian state as it has always been in the past, but also relying on global tourism (Vlakhov and Olsen forthcoming). About 35% of permanent residents who are not Norwegian citizens mostly work in the spheres of research, tourism, and related services (personal communication with an employee of the Norwegian Tax Administration Svalbard, August 2020; Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2015–2016). The offer of services such as healthcare and education is limited in Svalbard, while a social security system for Svalbard residents does not exist at all, all due to Svalbard having a lower income tax than mainland Norway. These limitations mean that the town attracts mostly young, physically fit, and employable people.

The Past and Present of the Czech and Slovak Presence in Svalbard – Or is There Any?

Linking the Czechoslovak – now the Czech and Slovak – presence to Svalbard is somewhat paradoxical. People from an inland area of Central Europe have no firm geographical or historical bond to the high latitudes, even though some solitary polar adventurers were attracted by the region, such as Austro-Hungarian explorer Julius Payer (Payer 2019 [1872–1874]). Together with others, he is currently portrayed as a representative of the "Czech footprint in the Arctic" (MZV 2021, 2). Payer's name now marks a house in Longyearbyen purchased by the University of South Bohemia in 2016 that was recently renamed the Czech Arctic Research Station. Also famous is Josef Svoboda (born 1931), a tundra botanist now living in Canada whose name is incorporated in the title of the Czech research infrastructure being recently developed in Svalbard (Czech Arctic Research Station 2020).

Czech scientific infrastructure and activities in Svalbard drew the attention of Norwegian political scientist Torbjørn Pedersen, who commented with a slightly demeaning tone on the Czech "national posturing" there:

> Czech researchers from the University of South Bohemia operate what they refer to as the Czech Arctic Research Station, initially two steel containers and a flagpole sitting on the shore next to the former mining town of Pyramiden. Over the last few years, the Czech station has been expanded to include a house in Longyearbyen and a field camp in Billefjorden, all decorated with Czech flags and an explicit national affiliation (Pedersen 2021, 9).

As more people travel to Svalbard in general (from 6,000 visitors in the 1970s to more than 140,000 visitors in 2019, according to Visit Svalbard, personal communication, and Saville, forthcoming), Czechs and Slovaks are no exception. Pre-pandemic it was possible to reach the archipelago within six hours from Prague, paying about 8,000–14,000 CZK (300–540 EUR) for a round trip.

To speak about a Czech and/or Slovak community in Svalbard would be an exaggeration. While there are some pronounced minorities in Longyearbyen, such as the Thai minority (ca. 140 people; personal communication with an employee of the Norwegian Tax Administration Svalbard, August 2019) or the citizens of the Philippines (ca. 100 people; same source), Czech and Slovak residents are scant. In August 2019, there were 15 citizens from Czechia and five citizens from Slovakia in the local population registry.

While the scientific activity of people affiliated with Czech research institutions in Svalbard is being commented on, the growing influx of travellers from Central Europe (in pre-pandemic times), or the few who decide to settle down in Svalbard and become permanent residents remain unnoticed. The question remains as to what kind of presence of Czechs and Slovaks can be documented ethnographically in Svalbard, what their reasons for travelling to and/or settling in Svalbard are, and what these people's stories tell us about the multidimensional identities they develop in Svalbard. Czechs and Slovaks living in or visiting Svalbard are not a representative sample of Czech and Slovak populations in general. Their mobility is grounded in their lifestyle preferences: they are relatively young, educated, and affluent, corresponding well with the specificities of the place.

Methodology

This article is based on anthropological fieldwork experience and data generated by two authors. Zdenka Sokolíčková spent 24 months in Longyearbyen from 2019–2021, while Eliška Soukupová visited Longyearbyen for four weeks in the summer of 2019. The four weeks of fieldwork was part of a bachelor's thesis project by Soukupová with the title (in English translation) *Czech "Arctic Explorers": Anthropology of Tourism in Svalbard in the Context of Globalization* (Soukupová 2020), conducted under the supervision of Sokolíčková.

We are drawing our analysis upon data that we created independently from each other. The results we present in this article combine our intersecting

research interests about the motivations and identities of Czech and Slovak nationals who visit Svalbard and/or live and work there. Some of the processes contributing to the accelerated speed of change in Svalbard (such as the impacts of climate change, or the growing industry of tourism) were a significant context of the fieldwork there up to spring 2020. Only Sokolíčková experienced the pandemic-related crisis in the locale in 2020/2021, and followed its impacts on the participants whose stories are narrated in the article.

Formalized research methods used during the fieldwork in Longyearbyen were semi-structured and narrative in-depth interviews, and participant observation. Soukupová also used an online questionnaire to reach out to a larger group of Czechs and Slovaks who had visited Svalbard in the past. Apart from the final set of questions asking about age, occupation, and number and length of stays in Svalbard, the interviews of Soukupová included questions about the motivation for coming and staying in Svalbard, and about the expectations, impressions, and observations regarding the impact of tourism on the place, as well as reflections over one's own engagement with the place. In the case of researchers, Soukupová asked questions regarding researcher and tourist identities. The interview guide of Sokolíčková consisted of questions regarding feelings of "home", motivation for coming and staying, and perceived changes in environment and society during the stay(s).

Our dataset includes interviews with almost all Czech and Slovak residents (excluding children) of Longyearbyen as of August 2019 (ten interviews). These people are employed in tourism (guides, bartenders, chefs, waiters, or waitresses), or they work as researchers, or technicians providing support to scientists. We also conducted interviews with 39 Czech and Slovak non-residents. The group includes 9 people who came to Svalbard primarily for a seasonal job in sectors such as research logistics, maintenance, or film production. We also interviewed 13 people who came to Svalbard on a fly-in/fly-out basis because of engagement in scientific activities (as students and researchers) and 17 people who declared their trip to Svalbard was not work-related.

We received the online questionnaire from 4 seasonal workers, 18 people involved in scientific activities, and 12 visitors to Svalbard with no work experience there. The data gathered through the questionnaire was an important complementary tool for the bachelor's thesis. Because of limited compatibility with the qualitative data that both authors gathered in person, the results of the questionnaire are presented here only in terms of statistics (e.g., age average or length of stay). In total we were in touch, personally or through email, with

83 nationals of Czechia and Slovakia who either lived or visited Svalbard in the year 2019, with the vast majority of our interlocutors (over 90%) being Czechs.

We transcribed and coded the interviews, and we analyzed them in the section "Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard: what we have learned from encounters in the field". A crucial factor in our work was nevertheless the intense contact with our key participants, whom we met repeatedly in Svalbard, and the generosity of the people who enabled us to take part in their everyday activities, be it at work or in their free time.

The ways our own lives got entangled with other Czech and Slovak nationals we met during our fieldwork in Longyearbyen are manifold. They range from rather formal one-time meetings taking just a half an hour, through more intense encounters followed by occasional phone calls and emails, to regular contact including family time spent together and even partnership. For Soukupová it was her first fieldwork experience abroad, in an unknown but attractive location. The research was conducted under the guidance provided by Sokolíčková, but Soukupová spent most of the time in the field on her own. Sokolíčková contributed with following up on the stories of the key participants entangled in the research topic while she was living in Svalbard with her family .

Our materials thus consist of quantitative data collected though an online questionnaire (in this article used only as a statistical backdrop), formal transcribed interviews, and written and audio field notes taken after informal gatherings. But also included are elusive memories and interpretive contemplations of both authors, as related to the topics uncovered during the fieldwork. After we started to analyze our materials "on a rolling, iterative basis, shuttling back and forth from different sources over the course of the research" (James 2013, cited in Saville 2019, 577), we decided to first introduce the reader to four types of micro-universes of Czechs and Slovaks who encounter Svalbard in different modes. These narratives are inspired by Zygmunt Bauman's (2006) types of postmodern personalities – the tourist, the flâneur, the player, and the vagabond. While Bauman discusses general postmodern archetypes, we choose to narrate the actual stories of three Svalbard residents and one non-resident. We characterize these as a globetrotter, a home-seeker, a pragmatist, and a sportsman. The choice of these characters is justified by three factors: (1) They represent different modes of interaction with Svalbard that can be documented ethnographically among Svalbard residents and visitors regardless of their country of origin; (2) They consist of individual stories and are as such unique, but we also see them as typical within the pool of our participants, meaning that

we present them as individual profiles with distinguishable common traces; 3) All four participants belong to those people that we have met repeatedly in Svalbard and stayed in touch with throughout the pandemic.

We derive the labelsof globetrotter, home-seeker, pragmatist, and sportsman from the most apparent features about their engagements with Svalbard, as presented in their own narratives. In the case of the globetrotter, the most crucial aspect that came out from interviews was the aspect of constant mobility and a sort of restlessness. The home-seeker represents people who cannot "let go" and whose emotional bond with Svalbard makes them uneasy if unable to live there. The pragmatist also declares a strong affection towards the place, but their reflection over life and work in Svalbard is rational and not idealized. The driving force of the sportsman's interest for Svalbard is the joy of physical outdoor activity in the Arctic environment. Anonymization is challenging when working in small settlements. We have sent the manuscript to the selected participants mentioned in the "Why Svalbard" sections and asked them to comment on the way we frame their statements and narrate their stories, and to give us consent, which they did, amused and flattered as they were by the article.

Four Modes of Encountering Svalbard

Why Svalbard I: The globetrotter's adaptability[2]

Dan was a complete novice when we first met him about two months after he arrived in Longyearbyen. He is an adventure-seeker in his late twenties; he has life experience in another Nordic country and came to the idea of moving to Svalbard through an acquaintance. "When I was reading about it, it seemed to me like a unique place where you can experience a lot of extraordinary things. So I thought I'd like to try it out. We live our lives only once [laughter]". He supposed it would be difficult to get a job here, but he was offered one instantly. One day toward the end of the dark season, his plane landed in Longyearbyen. "I realized I am not at all experienced enough to live in this environment. And that's also what I like: I have to adapt to a completely different extreme than I am used to". It took him a month to find his way and decide whether he wanted to stay or not. Dan felt the one-month period of adaptation to Svalbard was quite lengthy by his standards – he has been moving around the globe a lot and it

[2] All information and quotes in this section come from two interviews with the author (12 March 2019 and 20 April 2020) and from later informal meetings.

never took him "that long" to get used to a place. He arrived there directly from Southeast Asia, from being in "beach mode: "I was drinking from a coconut with a straw and suddenly I am here in the darkness [laughter]".

When asked about his feelings of attachment and belonging to Svalbard, Dan chuckles: "I think I will start considering myself a local once I buy a snowmobile". When we met again one year later, he was a proud snowmobile owner, but he still did not label himself a local. "It's hard to tell what a local person does. [...] Since the place is governed by Norway, to know Norwegian is an important asset. [...] As long as you don't speak Norwegian, you can't fully be part [of the community]". Yet he states that he "fell in love with the island and is now convinced that he wants to stay longer, although not all year round". He also points out that what keeps him here is the nature and not "the drinking culture". "You need to be connected to nature in order to be happy". He was socializing with other Czechs and Slovaks a lot, but also had international friends.

Dan initially experienced how tense the housing situation was in town, both in terms of high demand and high prices, but after a while his employer offered to rent him a decent flat. "I just need a bed and a shower. [...] One of the reasons I am here is for a good salary, and I manage to save [money] on this that I can invest in quality outdoor clothes, equipment, and gaining skills". In spring 2019, Dan thought the decisive factor would be how well he coped with polar days and nights, and the relative isolation and small size of the town. He felt that for his career it was important to speak Norwegian. In spring 2020, he confirmed that working for a large company with branches worldwide holds many doors open for him, and sticking with the company could enable him move around the polar regions. His motivation to learn Norwegian somewhat faded as he realized seasonal work in Longyearbyen does not require it. Polar day, isolation, and the size of the settlement turned out not to be a problem. For the dark season, which is the slow season for tourism, he headed south anyway.

He worked in catering services, but soon started considering becoming a guide. He worked as a shore excursion guide in the summer of 2019, taking cruise ship tourists on easy hikes around Longyearbyen. Just before the COVID-19 crisis hit Svalbard, Dan finished the basic Svalbard Guide Training Course and signed freelance contracts with two major companies in town. When the pandemic started Dan was waiting for the situation to clarify, supported by the unemployment aid that the Norwegian Work Agency provided to laid-off workers. He set himself a deadline in late May/early June 2020 to decide what

to do next. He believed many other globetrotters who were in a similar situation did the same. Leaving for good was not an option, and Dan was convinced he would be back for the high season at some point. In spring 2021, there was no job to come back to in Longyearbyen. He was frustrated by the chaotic situation in Czechia and had no concrete plans to return to Svalbard. "I will wait until it settles down a bit and then I will see".

Why Svalbard II: The home-seeker's resilience[3]

Adam needed a break after his studies and came to Svalbard for a summer job. He found the nature breath-taking.

> I missed the place awfully. [...] I left but my mind was still here. The next summer I thought, "I need to come back, just for a week or so, to process everything here, and then I can move on as planned". And then the plane landed, I saw the rocks and felt like, 'Oooh, I am home' – it almost scared me a bit]laughter]. [...] And then when I was leaving, I was full of impressions. I had the feeling I have to formulate my thoughts somehow into one sentence that I can easily recall. Because when you land in Oslo, everything disappears. When you see the trees and the city, Svalbard is suddenly just an idea, like when you read a book but a long time ago. And what came out was that I had to move up here for sure.

Adam is highly qualified and has a university degree, but since it was not possible to find a job where he could use his expertise, he started guiding. When asked about his motivation to live here, he thinks aloud: "I have always been looking for ... I used to live in [a big European city], which I found small and boring so my plan was to move to a larger metropolis". But when he saw the strange little town where people from 53 countries get along, he felt Longyearbyen was actually the most cosmopolitan place he's ever lived. "Maybe I am a typical example – somebody who meets the Arctic once and can't let it be".

Adam stays all year round and feels that identifying with the place and considering oneself local always needs to be contextualized. Compared to seasonal workers, who arrive every year for a certain period of time, his universe seems more connected to location. But only recently he realized he needs to "synchronize his feelings" about actually settling down in Svalbard. Adam does

[3] All information and quotes in this section come from an interview with the author (5 July 2019) and from later informal meetings.

not exclude the possibility that he will live on the island in ten years, but given how unstable both his job and his housing situation are, he admits planning is difficult. In his early thirties, he doubts that he can continue long-term with the same physically demanding job he has now. "But I cannot imagine moving away from here. After a long time this is the first place ... I don't feel the need to travel anywhere else at all". Sokolíčková: "And what makes this place so special to you?" Adam: "I don't know. There is something about it. It's in the middle of nowhere, but at the same time it is a focal point". Strangely enough – according to Adam – he is very interested in what is going on in the community, which he never experienced in his earlier homes. He does not speak Norwegian and jokes about his laziness, but he realizes there is a "bubble of Norwegians" in Svalbard you never can enter without knowing the language.

Adam has focused mostly on his work, and he has not been meeting many other Czechs and Slovaks. He doesn't feel much of a difference when meeting a Czech person compared to meeting people from other countries.

> Wow, there is another Czech over there, let's introduce each other, he is Czech, me too, and it's always like 'well, hi', 'well, hi', and we gaze at each other like idiots for five minutes. I don't engage in this. The Czechs I met here I did not specifically seek out, but rather I met them through an activity. [...] I live next door to the Czech research station, but I have never been there. Like what am I going to do? Just knock and say, "Hi, I'm Czech"? That idea hasn't crossed my mind once in the three years I've lived here.

During an informal conversation we had at a later point, Adam corrected this statement, and said that he became more aware of and acquainted with other Czechs and Slovaks in town.

During the coronavirus lockdown in spring 2020, Adam was patient. He believed he could wait for a year or so to see what happens. He expected many people enjoy the sunny spring on the island and leave in the summer, but for the summer he planned to stay "home" in Svalbard. Throughout the year of the pandemic Adam managed to keep working despite the drastically limited numbers of tourists coming to Svalbard because of the global situation.

Why Svalbard III: The pragmatist's immersion[4]

Petr visited the archipelago for the first time in the early 2000s, left, and returned many times, eventually settling down with his international family about eight years ago. He is in his late thirties and has a stable job as a scientist.

> As I always say, we are all tourists here. Just some of us for a somewhat longer time. Somebody for a few years, others for a few days, others again for a few decades. All in all there are no locals here. And I am here now because of work. [...] But of course I like Svalbard. That's why I keep coming back. [...] If I feel at home anywhere – then it's in Svalbard.

In Svalbard, Petr switches between several partially interconnected local sub-communities: the international "tribe" of researchers, the subculture of parents with small children, the small network of Czech and Slovak friends, and the people gathering around his favourite sports activity – floorball. He acknowledges there is the de facto criterion of staying for six months in a row there if you are to be considered a resident in Longyearbyen, "but it's not that easy because there are people who spend a lot of time here and still they are not part of the community. I think the language makes a difference. [...] There is a clear segregation when it comes to the Norwegians and the foreigners". His Norwegian is fluent.

When asked about how he relates to the place and reflects on its developments, he clearly sees that if environmental consciousness is given precedence,

> the easiest thing would be to move everybody away from here. Our CO_2 footprint per capita is higher than anywhere in the world, even higher than in Qatar. [...] But people want to live here, some are here almost as locals – not quite, but almost – and geopolitically, the Norwegians want to have something here. Maybe in 20 years, when ships will be going over the North Pole to Asia, the harbour has to be here.

When Petr speaks about Svalbard, he seems confident about having the necessary local knowledge in order to get things done and live a smooth life: "You need to know the right people".

[4] All information and quotes in this section come from an interview with the author (3 March 2019) and from later informal meetings.

When kindergartens and schools closed in March 2020 because of the pandemic, Petr left the island with his family, taking advantage of having relatives nearby, which makes childcare easier. Later that year they came back to Longyearbyen and worked mostly from home, but Petr was able to conduct some fieldwork in collaboration with the Czech Arctic Research Station. In early 2021, the family left again for a longer period, but with the intention of moving back before the school year started.

Why Svalbard IV: The sportsman's curiosity[5]

Josef is a sporty medical doctor in his sixties. He contacted us himself, opening his email with the following statement: "I am planning to visit Svalbard for the fourth time in April 2020 and every visit stirs questions in me, ever more questions and rather fewer answers. This regards all the layers of life there, from the social microclimate to the global context". We met Josef only virtually, as he was unable to participate in the (cancelled) Svalbard Ski Marathon due to the coronavirus crisis, and has stayed in irregular email contact ever since.

When applying for an amateur skiing competition in Norway several years ago, Josef saw a banner on the side of the webpage that featured a landscape he could not believe was from this planet. He remembers what he thought in that instant: "I have to visit that place". He discovered the otherworldly images were from Svalbard, and he came for his first ski marathon there in 2016. He returned twice for trips with dogs, sailing, and even balloon flights.

Every time Josef comes back, he is astonished by the cultural and natural richness of the place and community. He admires trappers and people capable of overwintering, feels that learning more about the history and political development of Svalbard is fascinating, and cannot find the right words to describe the nature he experiences in Svalbard. "I have discovered a place where I can endlessly return". He always tried to avoid snowmobiles because this means of transport "does not match the place – when people can get somewhere through a natural movement, with dogs or on skis, they should have the right to get there, but scooters are too invasive. ... That's the downside ... I don't know ... Civilization also always happily brings to remote places what eventually can ruin it all".

[5] All information and quotes in this section come from an interview with the author (23 April 2020) and from later email communication.

Chatting freely about his impressions, Josef admits he was surprised how warm it can get in Svalbard in April: "I took the hardest ski wax with me, and it was melting and around zero when we arrived. That was unpleasant".[6] He also adds he is not sure he has "met a real Norwegian there". Germans and Poles guided the groups he travelled with, they were served by a Czech bartender, and toured a private museum owned by an Italian resident, and he warmly recollects having a brief chat with Mark Sabbatini, an American journalist who has been covering news about Svalbard in English for the last 12 years. He remembers one more person who caught his attention, but we could not identify together who this "robust trapper with long hair accompanied by a huge dog, hanging around in the Fruene café" was. When he sent us a picture we discovered he was talking about Olaf Storø, a well-known local Norwegian artist.

Josef is aware of the vulnerability and ambiguity of tourism, which is in fact being hit hard by the coronavirus crisis: "People live there from tourism and at the same time they go there as tourists, so to speak". In spring 2020, he was sure of coming back in a year's time. Yet the situation did not allow him to pay Svalbard a visit in 2021 either and, in his last email, Josef wrote:

> The European winter is slowly over, the day in Svalbard becomes eternal and also many plans are being eternally lost. The dream of having a glass of polar beer in Kroa is ruined, the flight tickets and accommodation cancelled, the participation fee for the Ski Marathon transferred to 2022. We will see. [...] I wonder what kind of paradoxes arose during your research – regarding people who are disappearing and only the most resilient manage to stay.

Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard: What We Have Learned from Encounters in the Field

When analyzing our ethnographic data, we were interested in understanding the extent to which the presence we mapped ethnographically (1) says anything specific about the engagement of nationals from Czechia and Slovakia with Svalbard, and (2) teaches us something about modes of exploration, life, and work in Svalbard, without any necessary link to our participants' country of origin.

[6] The organizers have been considering moving the event to the third week of April as the weather patterns in late April have recently proven to be too unpredictable.

Free access to the archipelago for citizens of the Svalbard Treaty signatory parties, plus the support of tourism and scientific activities, makes Svalbard attractive and accessible for many, Czechs and Slovaks included. In the four biographies presented above, there are hardly any traces of a strong national identity or pride, which is in line with Vlachová's (2019a) findings about the relatively low national identity and pride among younger, educated, secular, and cosmopolitan people. Instead, our participants highlight the cosmopolitan and international aspect of their life, work, and explorations in Svalbard.

Cohesion among Czechs and Slovaks living and working there does not extend beyond informal networks of friends, and also the town's population is very transient (with a turnover of 25% every year, the average length of stay is four years). Such networks and mechanisms of mutual help, thanks to language intimacy, can nevertheless be crucial in the case of an emergency. The networks work well among the nationals of both countries, as "the feelings of commonality with Slovaks [...] are based not only on the similarity of their cultures and the west Slavic languages that Czechs can understand, but also on unproblematic relations in recent history and the sharing of wider geographical and political space" (Vlachová 2019b, 64), despite the fact that "from 1918 to 1992, Czech national identity was also formed in contrast to the Slovaks and Slovakia" (Vlachová and Řeháková 2009, 255).

Our study says little in favour of the need to investigate further what it means to be "Svalbard Czech" or "Svalbard Slovak"; family life is almost inexistent and there are no formal local ethnic networks or organizations (cf. Dutkova-Cope 2003), only loose and informal small connections among Czechs and Slovaks living in Svalbard. In Longyearbyen, the unique legislation in theory enables people to disregard where they come from. Yet this is not quite the case, and we discuss below the impacts of residential and citizenship statuses in Svalbard. The facts of being or not being a resident in Svalbard, and also being or not being Norwegian (thus not specifically Czech, Slovak, or something else) have substantial implications regarding one's possibilities, rights, and obligations in Svalbard.

When Soukupová started approaching their research participants in the summer of 2019, the aim was to reach out to Czechs and Slovaks engaging with Svalbard in one way or another, without a clear focus on differences between residents versus non-residents in this regard. In fact, we worked with four interim categories of (a) residents, (b) seasonal workers, (c) scientists, and (d) tourists. We were aware the categories were only partially functional, not static

and impermeable, see Saville's (2019) discussion. There are indeed Czechs and Slovaks who came first to Svalbard as tourists, then returned for a seasonal job, and eventually stayed as residents. Scientists, too, fall into the categories of both residents and seasonal workers (such as students, or fly-in/fly-out researchers and technicians). In addition, scientific research in the Arctic sometimes includes activities perceived as straightforward scientific (e.g., sampling on glaciers) just as much as activities more related to the logistics of larger Arctic research (e.g., coordination of transport), which again could qualify as seasonal work. The categories mentioned above thus served us only as an initial tool for exploring the field.

The COVID-19 pandemic made the boundary between residents and non-residents more pronounced. In the case of our Czech and Slovak participants, according to the strict travel regulations in place by the time of this article's submission, only residents were allowed to enter Norway from abroad. They could travel further to Svalbard after a 10-day hotel quarantine on the Norwegian mainland, and presenting a negative virus test at the airport before boarding a plane heading to the High Arctic (status as of 30 March 2021). The person we name the pragmatist – being part of the local system, with a stable job and a connection to the Norwegian mainland – could travel (although with limitations) and was the least vulnerable. The home-seeker cautiously stayed in Svalbard and did their best to survive the crisis with the limited resources available. The globetrotter will not consider coming back before the chances are high enough that a pre-coronavirus lifestyle can be maintained. The sportsman has to renounce their dreams; international tourists are not expected to return to Svalbard en masse anytime soon.

Residency is thus one of the most significant factors that impacts the lives of Czechs and Slovaks in Longyearbyen during the pandemic, together with the type of employer and work contracts they have. A stable job in science and a Norwegian employer means the most security and freedom. A stable job in tourism and a Norwegian employer means limited security, yet still enough manoeuvring space for resilience. A seasonal job in tourism implies little flexibility and, even if formal residency might enable the globetrotter to return, the situation is too unpredictable and work conditions too precarious to take the risk. The sportsman, despite the wish to come back to Svalbard and support the ambiguous tourism industry economically, has no manoeuvring space whatsoever and has to accept the improbability of returning to Svalbard in the near future.

On the following pages, we first present our findings related to the residential and citizenship statuses of Czechs and Slovaks living in and visiting Svalbard, then we move on to an analysis of our data regarding their lives and identities connected to the specific place, and to hierarchies of power, before moving on to the discussion section.

Residents

The majority of adult Czech and Slovak residents living in Svalbard (both in total and among our participants) were male, and their average age was 35. The motivation of the Svalbard residents to move to and stay in Svalbard were manifold, but the one mentioned most was an interesting job opportunity, sometimes accompanied by a lucrative salary. This makes Czechs and Slovaks a typical example of non-Norwegian migrants to Longyearbyen (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security 2015–2016). It is a group of people who have travelled a lot before and they enjoy discovering new places. A common feature was also the desire to escape a fast-paced modern lifestyles full of endless possibilities – some of them flee from the stressful need to choose among too many goods/hobbies/schools/shops/places/etc. and waste their lives commuting.

The size of the settlement is seen as positive: "This is just an aquarium, but an extremely beautiful aquarium" (personal communication with a Czech guide, 15 July 2019). Services available do not play a decisive role, but sports facilities such as a sports club or fitness centre are popular among Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard. It was often mentioned that life in Longyearbyen means you accept living in a "bubble" or a "cocoon", and feel detached from what is happening in the outside world (e.g., as many have told us, people living in Svalbard tend to ignore news that is Svalbard irrelevant). However, the pandemic was a game changer in this respect.

Another typical motivation is the prospect of living a life closer to nature, Arctic nature and landscapes in particular. This is a common preference among Longyearbyen residents (Kaltenborn 1998; Longyearbyen Lokalstyre 2013). There are segments of the population for whom an accessible and attractive natural environment does not play a major role when considering settling down in Longyearbyen, such as migrants from Thailand (Jensen 2009), or more recently the Philippines (Sokolíčková submitted for publication). According to our experience, Czechs and Slovaks are closer in their views regarding Svalbard to Norwegians, people from Nordic countries and other Europeans such as

Germans, but a study of reasons for coming and staying among the various groupings in Longyearbyen's population has yet to be undertaken.

Several of the current Czech and Slovak residents came only to work for a few months but eventually stayed much longer. All our participants with residential status see Longyearbyen as their temporary home and they are aware of the local limitations related to life expenses, job opportunities, or services such as healthcare and education, as well as local limitations related to them being non-Norwegian. These people perceive Svalbard as an easily accessible place if choosing the High Arctic. Primarily or secondarily, they all have jobs that are available in Svalbard thanks to the high level and speed of international mobility.

Non-residents

The group of seasonal workers living in Svalbard was diverse and included both people coming back repeatedly and first-time visitors. People we met were staying for various periods of time, between two weeks and six months. They worked as drivers or skippers or were part of a film team. This group was also predominantly male, with an average age of 46 years among our participants.

In the group of scientists we included senior/junior researchers and students without residential status. Most were affiliated with the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czechia. Students who came in order to collect samples/data necessary for their research often were in Svalbard for the first time, and the length of their stay was about two to three weeks. Junior and senior researchers were often re-visiting, in some cases for their thirtieth time, and they stayed from two weeks up to three months. These participants were predominantly female, with an average age of 38 years among senior scientists and 25 years among early career scientists. Longyearbyen is rarely the place where they spend most of the time, and they often move around the island using the Czech research vessel *Clione* or they settle in Petunia Bay at the Czech research base Nostoc. When asked about their motivation to come to Svalbard, the rational interest in natural science comes first, often combined with the pull factor of accessibility in terms of transport. For the students, experience with Arctic fieldwork is an important driver.

We identified tourists as people who declared no work-related motivation to visit Svalbard, which was also determined by the fact the fieldwork took place in July when no business trips (such as company meetings, team building events, or conferences) take place in Svalbard. In 2019, 564 guest nights of Czech nationals

and 238 guest nights of Slovak nationals were registered by Visit Svalbard (personal communication with Visit Svalbard employee, 30 March 2021).[7]

Interviewing tourists was hectic, as they often had little time for interviews in their travel schedules; the length of their stay varied between eight hours and eight days. The camping site near the airport was a convenient place to advertise our research project with a small flyer; Czech and Slovak visitors use the camping site a lot in the summer, as it is much cheaper than accommodation facilities in town. The group we interviewed stretched across age categories, from young adults to elderly people. Our participants from the tourist group were predominantly male, with an average age of 38. A substantial number of our participants were attracted by Scandinavian/Nordic landscapes and Svalbard was a natural step on their discovery path. They were looking for adventure, extraordinary locations, and unique nature, and fitted therefore in the profile of average Svalbard visitors (Saville 2019; Viken 2006). Yet we also met people who came in order to "take a few pictures", who "just bought cheap flight tickets" or were accompanying a partner, but otherwise being uninterested in Svalbard themselves. One participant was keen on urbex activities (exploration of manmade structures, e.g., abandoned industrial ruins). Only one person mentioned seeing a polar bear as the main attractor; the vast majority humbly admitted they would love to see one, but they were able to appreciate the beauty of the environment even without spotting the "Arctic icon". Accessibility and good infrastructure was a key factor for choosing Svalbard.

Entangled lives and identities

We argue that the national/ethnic identity does not bear major significance for our resident participants, but being non-Norwegian does play a role. Recent developments in Svalbard, e.g., the closure of the local bank or the suggestion of the Norwegian Ministry of Justice to take away voting rights from non-Norwegians who have not lived in mainland Norway for more than three years will also impact Czechs and Slovaks living in Longyearbyen. These residents' identities are largely transnational, meaning that they have ties and interactions linking them to other people and institutions beyond the borders of a nation-state (Vertovec 1999). What is interesting about the bond to Svalbard

[7] The numbers only include people who use commercial accommodation facilities during their stay, thus researchers hosted by the Czech Arctic Research Station, or people using Airbnb are not visible in the statistics.

is that it cannot be considered as a link to a nation-state; our participants seem to have a strong place identity related to Svalbard, but not always to Norway. Their transnationalism can be understood in Steven Vertovec's terms as a type of "'diaspora consciousness' marked by dual or multiple identifications [...] of decentred attachments, of being simultaneously 'home away from home'" (1999, 450). Vertovec (2001, 573) further claims "many peoples' transnational networks are grounded upon the perception that they share some form of common identity, often based upon a place of origin and the cultural and linguistic traits associated with it". There exists for Czechs and Slovaks visiting and living in Svalbard a bond with their respective native countries as places where their friends and relatives live or where they can speak Czech or Slovak, alongside a bond with Svalbard. The fact that they share this multiple identification with others in Svalbard further encourages them all to connect to each other. In the case of Czechs and Slovaks living in, working in, and exploring Svalbard, we see their identity in Svalbard as defined by their affinity with Svalbard, the status of their residency there, and by being non-Norwegian (often accompanied by not mastering Norwegian language). These factors impact identities of many people in Svalbard, which helps create numerous connections and networks among transnational migrants there.

Occupational identity is another important angle of our analysis. The backdrop for our reflections of the intersecting identities of our Czech and Slovak participants is Samantha Saville's (2019) article in which she examines collisions, collaborations, and confluences of tourist and researcher identities in Svalbard. According to Saville, "the categories of 'researcher' and 'tourist' are shown to be messy, fluid, and indistinct" (574). The aim of her study is to "critically consider the boundaries between researcher and tourist identities", and to "disrupt existing knowledge hierarchies" (ibid.).

In our investigation of how Czechs and Slovaks live in, work in, and explore Svalbard, the permeability of the tourist and researcher identities was an important aspect to consider. We have seen that some of our participants engaging in scientific activities are open to such a disruption of hierarchies: "I actually don't know if it is possible to separate [being a scientist and being a tourist] at all. [...] When you go somewhere, you have a look, learn something, feel where you are" (personal communication with a junior Czech researcher, 17 July 2019). Yet others disliked even being asked about whether their motivation to come to Svalbard was exclusively job-related: "I am not a tourist, I would take that as an offence" (personal communication with a senior Czech researcher, 13

July 2019). Most of our non-resident participants we categorized as seasonal workers admitted there was a touristic aspect to their trip. Based on our fieldwork experience when talking to non-resident seasonal workers from other countries, we assume there are fewer collisions between seasonal worker and tourist identities. While some who identify as scientists reject identifying as (also) tourists, despite the fact "scientific endeavours in Svalbard are strongly connected to tourism activities" (Saville 2019, 577), it is a legitimate motivation for seasonal workers to visit Svalbard if they are temporarily employed in the tourist industry, construction industry, or in research logistics as technicians (e.g., in boat maintenance).

Saville explains this kind of clash between tourist and researcher identities through a hierarchy of power and status:

> There is a clear hierarchy of these scientific and touristic roles in Svalbard. Natural scientists operate with high budgets, enjoy a relatively prestigious position in the public consciousness, and have social power. Conversely, tourists are generally looked down upon as nuisances by residents at least, yet are an important source of revenue all the same (2019, 580).

Our findings add another dimension to this: it is not an improbable scenario that a non-resident natural scientist becomes a resident, and gets a job either in research/education or tourism, or that a tourist returns, this time to get employed in tourism or research. The factor of residency, and the factors of type of employer and precarity stemming from the type of work contract impact the type of occupational identity, and social status, while also having practical repercussions. Saville quotes her research participant's ruminations regarding this topic: "The worst we know about is tourists. The best is people living here. In between you have visitors" (2019, 581). There are numerous nuances in between different types of identities, and our Czech and Slovak participants experience them and bear also the consequences of diverse, fluid, and impermeable identities related to Svalbard.

As we show in the four biographies and also in the summaries of findings about residents and non-residents, the identities of Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard are to a large extent typical for particular social strata. They are predominantly young, physically fit, educated, and affluent, "flexible specialists", as Halcrafee (2012, 213) puts it, performing "a privileged form of mobility [...] between the two poles of tourism and migration" (Janoschka and Haas 2014, 1).

This profile fits optimally the specificities of the place where, in the light of the Norwegian government's strategy, people with special physical, mental, or economic needs present (in Mary Douglas's terms) a "matter out of place" (Ree 2021; Wiersen 2021).

In addition, Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard confirm that travel, leisure, work, and migration are not distinct phenomena, but they rather overlap as they also destabilize the notions of "home" and "away" (Cohen, Duncan, and Thulemark 2015). Relative affluence and the search for a better life (Benson and O'Reilly 2009) is also a rather common trait among the Czech and Slovak lifestyle migrants that we met in the field.

Discussion

Mapping ethnographically the modes of being and travelling of Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard confirmed some findings of earlier studies on tourism (such as tourist preferences) and identities (such as transnationalism, lifestyle mobilities, or intersections and frictions regarding researchers vs. tourists). Czechs and Slovaks living in Longyearbyen do not form a delineated community as, for example, Cohen (1985) understands the term. It rather is a loose and partially deterritorialized network of friends and acquaintances (Amit and Rapport 2002). They know about and interact with each other, but only to a certain degree as globetrotters come and leave, while home-seekers and pragmatists are more stable. People who have a job-related interest in the Svalbard's Czech research infrastructure as technicians collaborate more tightly and they meet each other in their free time, while Czechs and Slovaks employed in the catering services also are likely to be acquainted. The same is valid about guides. All these very small groupings interact in an informal manner, but they can serve as important networks in case of any sort of emergency (such as housing shortages or need of short-term work opportunities). This might also be the case about other quasi-communities in Longyearbyen, such as people of Latinx origins, people from Thailand, or the Philippines, but each of them will probably bear specific traces. Ethnicity/nationality might not be the most influential factor of socialization and attachment in Svalbard; our study shows that residential and occupational status, work conditions, social class, age, ability, and relation to place play a major role. To understand mechanisms that foster interactional patterns among non-Norwegian groups of people living in Longyearbyen, further studies are necessary.

As Czechs and Slovaks residing in Longyearbyen are rather a new phenomenon, the level of them being inserted in local power structures and community networks is varied, and in most cases limited. Norwegian language competence is perceived as key for some aspects of life in town (with raising children in Longyearbyen as a significant factor), but some might still evaluate it as superfluous. The importance of mastering the Norwegian language for non-Norwegians, and the impact its knowledge has on their life, work, and travels in Svalbard is a fruitful path to follow.

When it comes to life in Svalbard (thus beyond the settlement of Longyearbyen), Czechs and Slovaks see their ability to move around the archipelago in various ways (e.g., by snowmobile, dogsled, or boat) as an important aspect of their experience. An appreciation for Arctic nature plays a crucial role for most of them, even though some only discovered their passion for the Arctic after they settled down in Longyearbyen, being originally attracted by a job opportunity. It would be interesting to further understand differences in experiencing and appreciating Svalbard, and relevant factors including language, culture, or social class.

The factor of residency plays a major role when it comes to the actual possibilities and rights of Czech and Slovak nationals in Svalbard (and their obligations such as taxes, which we have not investigated). The crisis triggered by the pandemic made these aspects more visible (e.g., in terms of eligibility for unemployment aid or travel restrictions, or access to early vaccination). More knowledge is needed about the phenomenon of residency in Svalbard (who is a resident, why, and for how long), the legal requirements regarding permanent residence (which needs to be elsewhere than in Svalbard), and how people in precarious employment conditions manage these kinds of limitations. In our study, we have documented another dimension to the interaction of research vs. tourism identities, namely there is an hierarchy impacting lived experience, ranging from stable jobs in science through comparatively stable jobs in tourism to unstable jobs in tourism.

The sportsman – whom we never met in the field, but only on the screen – disrupts the image of Czech and Slovak tourists that emerged from data gathered during the summer season (using the cheapest accommodation facility, staying for a short time, with superficial knowledge about the destination, visiting for the first time and not planning to come back). There might be Czech and Slovak visitors who return to Svalbard, prefer to stay for a longer period, and who declare a high level of genuine interest in the place. This could be a possibility, but it remains to be established in future research.

Our data contains hints about senses of place, "an overall or global concept of how a person relates to and feels attached to a place, [...] a complex affective bond to a place of variable intensity" (Kaltenborn 1998, 173) and attachments to place declared by Czechs and Slovaks living in, working in, and exploring Svalbard. They are attracted by the place's uniqueness, the beauty of the environment, but also by the possibilities the place offers to them, be it in terms of work, social life, or travel.

Apart from Pedersen's (2021) succinct characterization of Czech "national posturing" in Svalbard (see above), we know little about how Czechs and Slovaks whose lives unfold for varied periods of time in Svalbard reflect on their national identity and the (geo)political significance of their activities in Svalbard, and how they are perceived in this regard by others. Our observations from the field do not extend beyond the somewhat stereotypical image of Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard as being easy-going, flexible, hardworking, skilled, and a comparatively cheap workforce.

Finally, Saville's (2019, 2021) writings that we quote in the article are highly reflexive. She refers to herself when writing the following: "There are also similarities in tourist and researcher motivations in coming to Svalbard. All share, to some degree, a romantic affinity with the character of the modern explorer, seeking to satisfy curiosity, escape the routines of everyday life for risky adventures, and in the process test their character" (Driver 2010, in Saville 2019, 581). It would be wrong to distance our observations regarding people living in and visiting Svalbard, including ourselves, from the representation of the curious explorers looking for (among other things) adventure. Also, the identities of the writing ethnographers are multidimensional, and our motivations to visit, sense, experience, and understand people and places are mingled.

Conclusion

The article displays modes of Czech and Slovak "presence" in Svalbard. Pre-coronavirus, there were likely a few hundred Czechs and Slovaks who travelled to Svalbard every year, many of them to visit without any work-related purpose, but also numerous early career and senior scientists affiliated with Czech research institutions. The small group of Czech and Slovak residents in Svalbard seeks jobs in research, tourism, and the service industry.

Through four biographies, we narrate different stories of engagement of Czechs and Slovaks with Svalbard. Our subjects enhance and enjoy the

international and cosmopolitan aspect of Svalbard, but citizenship status, residential status, language competence, and type of employment influence their lives, even more visibly during crises such as the pandemic. Through telling Czech and Slovak people's stories about their adaptability, resilience, immersion, and curiosity about Svalbard, we show different ways of inhabiting Svalbard and also different ways in which Svalbard "inhabits" people's identities. The specificities of Svalbard, such as the distinct legislation, the accessibility of the archipelago, or the Arctic environment shape the types and influx of people who come there. We have few arguments to claim that the lived experience of Czechs and Slovaks in Svalbard is coloured by their ethnic/national identity, and our data – created before and during the pandemic – shows other impacting factors. In a broader context, we see a link between the social worlds of our participants and global processes that foster transnationalism and lifestyle mobilities. More locally, we see how different positions in various hierarchies of power (e.g., language, citizenship status, residence status, social class, age, ability, work) determine the lives of Czech and Slovak residents in Svalbard. Our study also presents findings in line with previous studies on issues such as tourist preferences or interactions between tourist and researcher identities. In the post-pandemic world, whenever both scientific and tourist activities in Svalbard rebound, not everything might continue as it was before. The Norwegian government is tightening the grip both regarding conditions for non-residents travelling to Svalbard (e.g., in terms of a possibly higher tourist tax, stricter rules for renting and using guns, or limited accessibility to Svalbard's vast outdoor areas), as well as regarding the conditions for non-citizen Norwegian residents living in Svalbard (e.g., in terms of voting rights, job opportunities, or the availability of services). These factors will likely also impact Czechs and Slovaks living in Svalbard, their notions of place, and their identities.

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FROM ANTAGONISM TO ADAPTATION: CATHOLICISM AND MODERNITY IN EARLY REPUBLICAN BRAZIL (1889–1930)

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Abstract: *This study examines the complex relationship between the Ultramontane Catholic Church and different forms of modernity in the context of the Brazilian First Republic (1889–1930). While the adjective "modern" turned into a discursive weapon to label and reject all kinds of criticized phenomena in Brazilian society (from "modern" literature, arts, theatre, or dances to "modern" – meaning secular – education), the representatives of the Brazilian Ultramontanism fully embraced scientific arguments and the mantle of progress, even adapting to certain aspects of the ideology of modernity promoted by their liberal competitors.*

Keywords: *Ultramontanism; Catholic Church; modernity; liberalism; Brazil*

Introduction

Ultramontanism as the dominant institutional form of 19th-century Catholicism has been persistently portrayed as staunchly rigid and "anti-modern" – standing firmly in opposition to the rapid societal, economic, and of course political changes initiated by the 1789 French Revolution, the subsequent Napoleonic Wars, and the liberal revolutions both in Europe and in its newly independent colonies.[1] For instance, Robson Filho and Felipe Araújo (2020, 1) described the

[1] This article was written as part of the project PRIMUS/19/HUM/13, "Arab Revolutions: Historical Sociology Perspective", supported by Charles University in Prague.

"relationship between the Catholic Church and modernity – in its most varied aspects, theoretical, technical, and practical" as being in "conflict at least until the Second Vatican Council". Paula Montero (1992, 90) also argued that "it was only since the Second Vatican Council [...] that the Catholic Church became capable of reconciling itself with modernity".

Such interpretation is hardly surprising. After all, this was precisely the way the Catholic Church presented itself to the world at the very latest since the pontificate of Gregory XVI (1831–1846): as a defender of the often (re)invented "traditions" and a tireless critic of the so-called "errors" of the modern world that were so eloquently identified and condemned in the notorious *Syllabus of Errors* published in 1846 by Gregory's successor, pope Pius IX (1846–1878). Catholic intellectuals and Church figures who sought to reconcile Catholicism with the nascent modern society were either purged or distanced themselves from the institution. At some occasions, they even created alternative church organizations, today commonly known as "Old Catholic" churches, especially after the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), which strengthened almost absolute papal powers, internal centralization, and anti-liberal rhetoric.

It could indeed be argued that the Ultramontane Church proudly assumed everything that Catholicism was accused of by the radical Enlightened philosophers and their 19th century successors, liberal freethinkers – it opposed "evil freedoms" of speech, thought, press and religion, denounced rationalism and certain scientific breakthroughs (especially Darwinism),[2] and strived to reconnect the Church and the State. Oded Heilbronner (2000, 468) calls this a "closed in" mentality, even using the metaphor of an intellectual Ultramontanist "ghetto" where opposition to modernity was used to "buttress" the imaginary walls of this church and solidify shared Catholic identity across the national borders. He writes:

> The ghetto was partly created by the hostile surroundings, but also partly by the Church itself, whose leadership thought it could make use of the above social and political manifestations [such as Catholic sports, welfare, and charity associations, political parties, or trade unions] to create a unique Catholic-ultramontane environment (Heilbronner 2000, 470).

[2] For the early Catholic reaction to Darwin's theory of evolution, see Artigas, Glick, and Martinez (2006).

A similar view of Ultramontane Catholicism as a "walled village" was expressed by Gabriel Daly (1985, 776–777), who argues that "in the period between the two Vatican Councils the Catholic Church resembled a village encompassed by a high wall which separated the villagers from the surrounding jungle", in order to preserve "classical and medieval culture which, outside its walls in the surrounding terrain, had long since yielded to the advancing jungle of post-Enlightenment life and ideas".

Many scholars have tended to go as far as to openly characterize the Ultramontane Catholicism as "backward", surviving especially in economically underdeveloped areas,[3] thus clearly painting the contrast with the "modern" non-Catholics (especially Protestants in German, British, and partially American contexts) that embraced the spirit of the era. This general notion can be traced at least to the Max Weber's classics *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and *The Sociology of Religion*, both of which painted Catholicism as trapped in ritualist, magical, and pre-modern practices and dogmas (Turner and Forlenza 2020).

However, I believe that the relationship between the Ultramontane Church – even at its most "reactionary" point – and modernity was significantly more complex than the caricature of the complete opposition that was so often employed both by the liberals and by the Catholics themselves. In this article, I attempt to examine the often-schizophrenic Catholic attitudes towards modernity (or rather modernities, as discussed further) on the particular example of the Brazilian Catholic Church during the First Republic (1889–1930).

This is the first period in Brazilian history when the Roman Catholic Church lost its dominant position of the "state church" that it had enjoyed ever since the Portuguese colonization – and that it kept even after Brazil achieved independence in 1822 (Neves 2011). In 1889, however, a military coup – later misleadingly called a "revolution" – overthrew the emperor Pedro II (b. 1831–1899) and installed a republic openly inspired by liberal and secularist ideas (Mello 2009). Two years later, the Republican government adopted a new constitution that definitely stripped the Catholic Church of the status as the official Church of State and promulgated relative religious freedom.[4]

[3] Heilbronner (2000, 466) himself writes that – in the German context – "the Catholic population tended to concentrate in backward areas – areas that, for most of the 19th century, industrial changes had passed by, areas that only toward the end of the century were connected to a railway".

[4] Some non-Christian religions such as the Spiritists remained frowned upon and the practicing of this religion was theoretically punishable by the 1890 penal code as a "crime against public health" (see Gomes 2013).

This radical break with the past put the Catholic Church in Brazil belatedly in a position similar to what it experienced in many European countries decades ago. But it also liberated the Church hierarchy from the tight grip of the royal control, shifted the decision-making from the emperor to the pope, and gave strong impulse to intellectual activities, especially the Catholic press that was supposed to be in the forefront of Brazil's spiritual reconquest.

In my analysis, I mainly rely upon what was published in the Catholic officially sanctioned press (or *boa imprensa* – literally the "good press") regarding different aspects of modernity, specifically on three of the most influential journals – *Mensageiro da Fé* from Bahia (published twice per month), and the magazines *A União* and *O Apóstolo* from Rio de Janeiro (published weekly). As these magazines published official documents and statements made by the Church hierarchy both in Brazil and Vatican but at the same time included countless opinion pieces written by the leading Catholic intellectuals from this period, I believe they provide reasonable insight into the internal discussions over the Catholic relationship with modernity in the Brazilian context.

Modernities

Terms such as "modernity" and "modern" have obviously been rather controversial and used to mean very different things.[5] This is reflected in the Catholic press, which ascribes to them both positive and negative connotations, strongly depending on the context, as it is possible to see below. While the scholarly discussion on the meaning of "modernity" has been endless subject of debates ever since the 19th century, for the limited purpose of this article, I am referring to "modernity" as two distinct (even though on many levels interconnected) phenomena.

First and slightly less controversial is the sort of "objective modernity" – in Polanyi's (1985) words, "the great transformation" – that could be described as series of technological, social, economic, and political transformations experienced by numerous countries including Brazil over the course of the "long 19th century" and originally stemming from the first Industrial Revolution. These changes included varying degrees of industrialization and urbanization, breakthroughs in almost every area of scientific research, the rise of globalization,

[5] See, e.g., Anderson Perry's (1986) useful distinction between "modernization", "modernity", and "modernism".

organizational and administrative rationalization, and many others. While it is possible to debate the pace and social/geographic distribution of these radical changes, few would dispute that they indeed occurred,[6] and contemporaries debated them and reacted to them, sometimes with a sense of excitement – and sometimes with considerable fear.[7]

I am referring to the second phenomenon as "liberal" or "ideological modernity", which arose from the legacy of Enlightenment and the French Revolution and was explicitly formulated by 19th century liberals. Since a number of its principles continue to define our notion of "liberal democratic" societies and regimes, some scholars (e.g., José Casanova, 1994) tend to simply see them as defining features of the transformation to modernity. However, I agree with Talal Asad (2003), who emphasizes ideological and largely Western-centrist underpinnings of the process of modernization, describing this phenomenon as "a project or rather, a series of interlinked projects – that certain people in power seek to achieve" (ibid., 13).

In the 19th-century and early 20th-century context, these projects included endeavours to implement expanding number of principles such as various forms of democratic participation, universal rights and freedoms (such as freedom of religion, conscience, speech, and press), and secularism with the central, unifying idea of human "progress". Protagonists of liberal modernity perceived history in linear terms, inevitably moving towards modern, more rational society in contrast with the "pre-modern", irrational past that the new and modernized society seeks to overcome and even forget as part of the intellectual "dark ages" (O'Malley 2018).

Secularism is such an important constitutive component of this ideology that it has been sometimes referred to as "secular modernity". Religion – and in the Western context particularly Catholicism with its miracles, transubstantiation, and other phenomena depending on belief and not on rational conclusions – has been considered responsible for a large part of the alleged irrationality of the old regime, from spreading "superstition" and magical practices among the general population to providing divine authority for absolute monarchs. As such, it is perceived as an obstacle to progress that must be removed from the public sphere by means of education and legislation (Asad 2003). For religion to be tolerated, it must be pushed away into the private sphere; in words of

6 See, for example, Clark 1986.

7 For a thorough examination of modern technological anxiety, see Mokyr, Vickers, Ziebarth (2015).

Casanova (1994, 40), "indeed the privatization of religion is essential to modernity". Religion has also been generally perceived to be historically obsolete and doomed to eventually disappear due to the inevitable expansion of science and rationalism.

As Gordon Graham (1992, 185) explains:

> The general theory of secularization [...] brings with it two important features entailed by the fact that history is a progressive development. First, the decline of religion is inevitable – it is a phase through which human beings have passed and which they have outgrown. Secondly, the decline of religion is desirable – in leaving religion behind we discard more primitive beliefs and practices and move to more enlightened ones.

Of course, the objective and ideological forms of modernity can never be entirely separated, especially in spaces colonized, contested, or threatened by European and American expansion since the Industrial Revolution. Belated industrialization and the formation of nation-states in some of the non-Western countries, for example, would have probably not happened in the same manner if they would not had been pushed by local reform-minded elites inspired by the ideology of Euro-American liberal modernization – and also had there not been the perception of a threat of those countries that achieved technological advancements earlier.[8]

Brazil certainly belongs to this group, since its political elites loudly decried the alleged "backwardness" of their country compared to the leaders of the industrial world, mainly United States, United Kingdom, and France (Patto 1999). They considered the slow pace of modernization in Brazil as a threat to its sovereignty, reason for widespread poverty, and source of national embarrassment on the international stage. When looking for those responsible for the sorry state of Brazilian affairs, they blamed the dominance of the Catholic Church, the legacy of the Portuguese colonization, and eventually the political system of monarchy (ibid.).[9]

[8] The modernization in the Ottoman Empire would be a typical example of this case (see, for instance, Burçak 2008).

[9] Brazil was the only long-standing monarchy in all of Latin America. Haiti also had self-proclaimed emperors between 1804–1806 and 1849–1859; and Mexico between 1864–1867 under the ill-fated rule of Habsburg Maximilian I.

While even the monarchy, especially under the emperor Pedro II, ostentatiously embraced the mantle of "modernization" in terms of material and technological progress,[10] modernization clearly became the dominant political ideology of the Republican revolution in 1889 and raison d'être of its very existence – Maria Tereza Mello (2009, 15) went as far to declare that the "Republic was the Brazilian name for modernity".

After all, it was at this time when Brazil adopted its famous motto "Order and Progress" (*ordem e progresso*), written on the new national flag, this time not referring simply to the progress in the sense of material improvement and adaptation of modern technologies (even though these were certainly significant part of the regime's self-legitimization), but to a much broader program of transformation of the Brazilian society, such as "rationalizing" (i.e. secularizing) education, the enactment of religious freedom for Protestants and Spiritists, and the abolishment of privileges.

Nostalgic but Not Regressive

I begin the analysis by dealing with the Ultramontane attitudes towards the "objective" modernity. Yes, the Catholic press both in Brazil and in other affected countries times and times again expressed longing for the good old Ancien Régime as a period of harmony between classes, orderly rule of monarchs sanctioned by God's grace, and high moral standards, as apparent from the following article written long decades after the fall of the empire:

> [The Church and the State] shared the same aspirations for the entirety of three centuries. They built the Fatherland together, as brothers, making arts, combining their hard effort, building one nation. They were united in peace, helping each other to build. And they were strong in war, victorious together. They wrote one and only history, a glorious, splendid history. The history of Brazil (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1927).

But the nostalgic rhetoric hardly coincided with any real intentions of restoring the previous status quo, even though the Catholic Church labelled itself as the

[10] Pedro II attempted to project image of a benevolent and modern ruler inspired by European constitutional monarchies, passionate for bringing material and scientific progress (e.g., railway and electrification) to Brazil (Barman 2012).

last guardian of traditions. This is especially true in Brazil, where the Ancien Régime was extremely hostile to the Ultramontane ambitions since Brazilian emperors held unprecedented control over the Catholic Church as part of the so-called "royal patronage" (*padroado régio*).

Padroado, dating to the times of Late Medieval Portuguese monarchy, enabled the Brazilian emperor to name bishops, control religious orders, and pre-approve any papal directives – privileges that Pedro II used so extensively it led to major conflict with the bishops loyal to Rome known as Religious Question (*Questão religiosa*) in the 1870s (Souza 2013). In fact, it is now clearly established that Pedro II intended to enact strictly anti-Catholic legislation similar to the Republican reforms – but from the position of power and sovereignty over "his" Brazilian Church that could hardly oppose his directives (Leite 2011).

For this reason, the Catholic hierarchy both in Brazil and Rome initially saw the Republican coup d'état as an opportunity to free itself from the monarch's tight grip and achieve organizational independence. And even though it later reversed its stance to idealize the previous regime as unifying Church and State, its imagined "return to the past" actually imagined completely different set of mutual relations – one based both on the Catholic Church's independence and on its leadership in moral and religious matters. This model, proposed peridocially in the Catholic press, did not even require return of the institution of the monarchy as the republic was proclaimed to be equally suitable political regime for it (Aquino 2012).

A similar nostalgia was on occasion expressed for the pre-industrial, agricultural society that was still partially preserved in the countryside – and Catholic journalists tended to criticize the immigrants coming to the large cities for leaving behind better, simpler lives closer to the Christian ideal of poverty (see, for example, *Mensageiro da Fé* 1915). But at the same time, the Catholic press recognized the importance of material and technological progress for the society as a whole and increasingly focused on the workers as an important sector of society that needs to be Christianized and their living conditions improved (without fundamentally changing the capitalist model of relations between the workers and their employers).

Rather than attempting to recreate traditional society and reinstate the traditional state model, Ultramontane Catholicism wholly embraced new opportunities provided by the modern transformations and can be even perceived as a product of modernity itself. Organizationally, the very creation of a unified, global Church that sought to centralize decision-making into the hands of

the pope and his apparatus, eradicated any sorts of significant local liturgical practices and instead imposed "standardized" cults (e.g., Cult of the Sacred Heart, Holy Family), and the mirrored centralization of nation-states that is so intricately connected with the 19th century modernity (O'Malley 2018).

The openness of the Church to modern, transformational technologies is even more apparent, as the Brazilian Catholic journalists did not shy away from pointing out:

> They claim that the Church is not in line with our times. But what is it opposed to? To the machines running on steam, to the works of electricity, to archaeological excavations, study of hyeroglyphs, to X-Ray, radio, airships, or airplanes? The Church has never condemned any of these things. In contrary, it has lauded all the conquests of the human spirit (Do Carmo 1914).

Ultramontane Church itself masterfully employed modern technologies to mobilize masses and communicate with the outside world. After Pope Gregory XVI, who famously banned railways in the Papal States, his successors embraced modern technological tools, most importantly the press (or the so-called "modern pulpit", as Catholic journalists called it – see, e.g., *Mensageiro da Fé* 1913c), telegraph, and later radio. The press especially played a crucial role in communicating and promoting the outcomes of the First Vatican Council (1869–1870), which was paradoxically cantered around condemning various aspects of modernity. Other modern tools of mass mobilizations have been massively employed since the pontificate of Leo XIII (b. 1878–1903), such as lay associations of women or workers, leagues to push for specific causes (e.g., so-called Leagues for Morality in Brazil),[11] periodic Eucharistic congresses on national and transnational levels, Catholic political parties, and even banks.

All these tools were also used in Brazil and embraced by the local Church hierarchy – although typically with a delay both compared to Catholics in more developed countries (United States, United Kingdom), and also later in regard to its own ideological and religious competitors in Brazil, from secularist liberals, to Protestants and Spiritists. Establishing a successful Catholic press, for example, turned out to be continuous challenge for the hierarchy, having to catch up with other religious groups after being tightly controlled during the *Padroado* regime. Luckily for the hierarchy, their effort was significantly

[11] *Ligas pela moralidade* campaigned against alcohol, gambling, and "excessive" fashion.

boosted by foreign friars coming to Brazil mostly from Germany and Italy to revive religious orders that brought with them new technologies and established coordinating and fundraising organizations such as the Centre of the Good Press (Amaral 2011).

Organizational reforms that connected Brazilian Catholics to the Ultramontane Church also arrived late, after the monarchy was overthrown and the state ceased to meddle in religious affairs. This institutional restructuralization in order to strengthen the Pope's control, known in Brazil as "Romanization" (*romanização*), was however undertaken swiftly, as can be demonstrated by the number of dioceses. While in 1889, there were only 12 dioceses for the entire Brazilian territory, their number rose more than fivefold until 1930, including 20 new dioceses in the first two decades of the "Old Republic" (Gomes 2008). Reforms also included reorganization of the religious orders and congregations that were effectively suffocated by Emperor Pedro II's ban on admitting new friars in 1855, the introduction of European devotions, and new missionary activities into Brazil's interior, and searching for additional sources of fundraising (Aquino 2012).

Internal reorganization also included financial and organizational support for mobilizing lay organizations of youths, women, and workers, based especially on Italian and French examples that finally came under the unifying umbrella of the Brazilian Catholic Action (Ação Católica Brasileira, or ACB) in 1935. In this way, the Brazilian Catholic Church caught up with modern forms of political organization and leadership that were successfully employed by other distinctively modern ideologies both home and abroad, from socialism to fascism,[12] and in the 1920s and 1930s achieved significant presence on the domestic political scene (Gomes 2008).

In the Name of "Progress" and "Science"

Accepting and even actively utilizing modern technologies is only one of the numerous instances when the Ultramontane Catholics appropriated important elements of the "objective" modernity. On other occasions, nominally "conservative" Catholics adopted this rhetoric, legitimizing their cause in Brazilian society based on promising "progress" while commonly using the support of (pseudo)scientific arguments and scientific authorities.

12 In Brazil, the local variation of Fascism was called "Integralism" (*integralismo*).

"By its very nature, Catholicism is a powerful force of progress", argued *Mensageiro* in an article tellingly called "Progress and civilization are inseparable from the Christian moral and religion", stressing that "Catholicism and progress are intimately interconnected" (Coriolano 1919). Interestingly, Catholic authors are not referring merely to some sort of moral progress – but to actual *material* progress of both individuals and the country, as these would in the Church's view certainly benefit from embracing Catholicism.

> If we were religious people, we would have a strong, prosperous, and well-organized Brazil because our leaders would finally begin to implant order. And once these leaders would be men conscious of their religious purpose, there would be no more instances of disobedience, lack of organization in everything, unscrupulous management of finances and national property, lack of order in allotments, arbitrary behaviour of the government officials, and little education among the people, especially religious instruction (ibid.).

On other occasions, Catholic media stressed the prosperity achieved by the nations that embraced political Catholicism (such as Belgium, which allegedly became one of the most advanced nations precisely because of the dominance of the Catholic Church), while the anti-Catholic governments brought their nations into a dire material situation (see, for instance, *A União* 1913).

The Brazilian Catholic press fought also quite vigorously against being called "obscurantists, backward, and fierce" by their enemies – in other words, against being anti-modern and anti-scientific (see *O Apóstolo* 1890). Countless articles were published to defend the Catholic Church as perfectly rational and more than compatible with contemporary science.

For instance, in an article titled "Is the Catholic Church Still for Our Times", *A União* was keen to convince its readers that the Ultramontane church fully embraces science – but only the "true science", not the "so-called modern science, founded upon impious ideas and hypotheses of ungodly scholars" (Do Carmo 1914). The author of this text basically monopolizes science for Catholicism by claiming that all the great scientists believed in God. *Mensageiro da Fé* even provided this common argument with statistics, compiled by a certain Dr. Dennert in Germany in 1895:

> Between the 16th and 17th centuries, 79 out of 81 leading scientists were believers. In the 18th century, only 5 men of science were atheist or indifferent to religion.

> And in the last century, a famous century of enlightenment and a century of science, 124 out of 169 of the most important scientists believed in God. Only 12 were atheist and 27 didn't hold any religious view (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1908b).

By distinguishing between a "real science" based in faith in God and an acceptance of his almighty power, and a "fake science" misguided by atheism and personal moral flaws of the individual scientist, Brazilian Catholics attempted to navigate the delicate balance between fully embracing the practical conquests of the modern era while also defending all the traditional beliefs questioned by their rationalist opponents, such as miracles.[13] Most importantly, it enabled them to discard any theory that (at least at that time) seemed to contradict Catholic theology, perhaps most importantly Darwin's theory of evolution, which became a frequent target of mockery and criticism in the Brazilian "good press".

"If perhaps some of our readers are aware of being descended from an ape, we do not intend to question him any further because we prefer not to meddle in family issues", wrote an anonymous Catholic journalist in 1913 in an extensive piece published in order to refute the evolutionary theory (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1913b). While using moral arguments against the theory, such as criticizing the alleged "materialism" of its proponents and calling them the "apostles of humans' animalization", he mostly used again the "science" argumentation by claiming that "many more scientists refused it than accepted it" – and that among those who supported the theory, there were "almost no first-rate scientists" (ibid.).

Rather than merely appealing to faith- and moral-based arguments, the Brazilian "good press" commonly used arguments based on science to prove their point, thus using exactly the same strategy as their ideological opponents that claimed to be the true representatives of the modern era and accused Catholics of being backward and anti-modern. Science-based (and obviously in many cases, in retrospect, *pseudoscientific*) arguments were used in almost every cause important for the Brazilian Catholics during the First Republic – for instance against proposals of legalizing divorce, as apparent from the following article from 1907.

> The divorce manifests all the signs of degeneration, as demonstrated in the most recent German statistics. [...] In Saxony, the number of suicides is five times

[13] For specific defence of miracles, see, for example, *O Apóstolo* 1900.

> higher among those divorced than among the rest of the population. In Bavaria, this number is six times higher. In Prussia, among one million married women, there are 61 suicides – and 348 cases of suicide among one million divorced ones (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1907b).

While statistics (as shown above) were an especially popular tool for their argumentation, Catholic journalists also often used references to scientific authorities, such as certain "American sociologist Anne Rogers", which helped them to argue why European marriages were generally happier than the ones in the United States – reason was, of course, accessibility of divorce in the US (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1908a). "Experts" were used in order to support arguments against gambling, alcoholism, and even "modern dances",[14] but probably none of these appeared more urgent than the arguments against one of the principal religious competitors of the Brazilian Catholic Church at the time: the Spiritists.

The preoccupation with Spiritism is quite specific for the Brazilian context, both because of its strongly religious (and specifically Catholic) appeal and because of its prevalence in Brazilian society;[15] in fact, even today, Brazil has by far the largest Spiritist population worldwide, and Catholics continued to wage campaigns against it long after World War II.[16] Brazilian Spiritists specifically claimed to be the modern version of Christianity, deprived of all "irrational" elements,[17] thus directly challenging the Catholic Church. Furthermore, local Spiritists appealed to the educated (i.e., literate and therefore eligible to vote) sections of Brazilian society that the Catholics deemed essential to regaining religious hegemony.

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14 So-called "modern dances" referred to here in particular are the tango, the maxixe, and the foxtrot. Scientists allegedly considered these to be a "major threat to the survival of the human race" (Zeca 1924).

15 Teles de Menezes (1825–1893), probably the most important figure of early Spiritism in Brazil, called himself "Catholic by birth and faith" and initially envisioned a constructive dialogue with the Catholic Church (see Machado 1983, 89).

16 The Franciscan Boaventura de Kloppenburg (1919–2009), originally an immigrant from Germany, as the bulk of the Brazilian Fransciscan order by the beginning of the 20th century was, became probably the most famous Catholic opponent of Spiritism. He became the face of the last significant anti-Spiritist campaign in the Catholic press during the 1950s and authored several books about the subject (see Isaia 2005).

17 Quite paradoxically from today's point of view, communication with the spirits of the deceased through mediums was presented as scientific and cutting edge, using modern technologies such as electricity.

In order to deal with the "Spiritist threat", the Brazilian "good press" used traditional arguments linking their practices to summoning demons and worshipping the devil.[18] In contrast with this acknowledgment that Spiritism involves some sort of real communication with the underworld (even if with demons, not with the actual spirits of the deceased), however, the Catholic press often ridiculed the Spiritists as charlatans and used scientific "proof" to discredit them. Arguments included describing Spiritism as a dangerous addiction, similar to cocaine and alcohol (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1924). But certainly the most common argument was the claim that there is an inherent link between Spiritism and clinical insanity, which was also supported by the statements of esteemed Brazilian doctors (unsurprisingly usually of Catholic faith), including the head of the National Asylum for the Insane (Hospício Nacional de Psychopathia) in Rio de Janeiro, Juliano Moreira.

Statistics from his asylum allegedly showed that the "majority – in fact frightening and shameful 90% – of their patients diagnosed with insanity had Spiritism as a direct cause of their misfortune" (Soares 1926). The same author in a latter article used the 90% statistic not only for Moreira's asylum but for all such institutions in general, adding that this "heinous sect" should "not be tolerated in our days, in our 20th century, the century of enlightenment" (Soares 1929). The direct reference to enlightenment and modernity is striking not least because this was precisely the line of attack used to criticize the Catholic Church, including by the Brazilian Spiritist press itself, which typically presented its cause as modern, enlightened, and even (pseudo)scientific (Isaia 2007).

Ultramontane Church and the Liberal Projects

Decoding Ultramontane attitudes towards the *ideological* modernity is slightly more puzzling, confused by combative rhetoric from both its liberal proponents and the Catholic intellectuals that seemingly stood in opposition. The link between the ideology of modernity and the very identity of the Republican regime was obviously noted by the Brazilian Catholic hierarchy and quickly felt in practical terms after the Church was separated from the state, first by a decree in 1890 and then definitely by the 1891 constitution. To the Brazilian

[18] See, for example, a pastoral letter of the Northern Brazilian bishops from 1916, published as *Mensageiro da Fé* 1916).

Catholics, both the liberal rhetoric and more radical liberal policies (including the complete secularization of public education) of the First Republic strongly resembled anticlerical regimes in Europe, especially the French Third Republic (1870–1940) and later the First Portuguese Republic (1910–1926).

As the appeals to "modernity" and "progress" became used in order to push the liberal Republican agenda and frame the legitimacy of the new regime itself, these terms soon began to be employed in an extremely negative light in the Catholic press, basically mirroring earlier discussions in Europe. The adjective "modern" (*moderno/a*) was used interchangeably with "bad" (*mau/má*) when related to literature, theatre, or cinema, meaning basically all production that was not sanctioned by the Catholic Church or produced by Catholic intellectuals. The following lines written by Zeca[19] in *Mensageiro da Fé* in 1919 provide a useful summary of these views: "The modern theatre and modern cinema are adulterous, they are condemnable flirts, skilful thefts, and suicides. They are simply a long series of all the human illnesses in which on rare occasions appear a glimpse of decent sentiments" (1919).

"Modern education" then referred to secularized state education, in the words of the Catholic journalists, as "school without God" (*escola sem Deus*) (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1907a). While religious education was supposedly "the most powerful instrument of education because it is a force of discipline, a light of instruction, and an efficient basis for the physical care necessary for the development and maintenance of the human body", "modern education" was "dangerous to the youth, who risk to becoming proud and corrupted, only satisfied with material goods" (ibid.).

Secular education was seen as probably the worst, most dangerous and destructive aspect of what the Catholic authors labelled "modern civilization" (*civilização moderna*) – a concept basically synonymous with the liberal political project. In contrast with the Christian civilization that preceded it and that was "based on the cross" (Norte 1916a), modern civilization was characterized by moral decay, anarchy, egoism, and materialism, which made it fundamentally pagan (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1921). Modern civilization produces "modern man", as vividly described in *Mensageiro da Fé* in the following terms:

> Modern man considers himself civilized. He presents himself in gentle and courteous manners, well fed, and well dressed. He does everything to gain money,

19 Zeca is a pen name used by the editor-in-chief of *Mensageiro da Fé*, João Manderfelt.

> takes part in charity just to show off, shows no virtues, and secretly hates religion because it condemns his unconfessable appetites (ibid.).

For this reason, the author of this article concludes that it is necessary for Catholics to "catechize the civilized" and "christianize modern civilization" (ibid.).

In terms of other "modern" proposals, the Catholic Church in Brazil also remained vigilant of attempts by political and social actors to introduce the features of socialism and the women's emancipation movement that demanded additional protections for the rising working class and equal rights for women (such as the right to vote). All these tendencies were at least rhetorically placed in the same category of dangerous "modern" inventions that needed to be countered with supposedly "traditional" recipes, offered by the Church for centuries, if not thousands of years. This unchanging nature of the Roman Catholicism was something highly praised by the "good press" – and even used as evidence of its ultimate truth, for instance compared to Protestantism, which was described on the contrary as fickle and constantly disintegrating.[20]

A closer look at many of these "traditions", however, demonstrate they themselves were rather modern inventions, for instance the Catholic ideal of family. This model envisioned strict division of responsibilities between men (fathers and husbands) and women (daughters and wives) whose "sacred mission" (Norte 1916b) was to get married, produce children, and take care of them – and to provide both emotional and material support to their husbands, including "preparing desirable meals, washing clothes, ironing, sewing, and repairing clothes" (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1914a). As Riolando Azzi (1987) demonstrates, this model was hardly ever present in Brazil until the 19th century, when concubinate and extramarital relations between masters and their slaves ceased to be common. Even later, it only became the norm in middle-class households.

However, the Catholic positions towards these major "modern" issues were not as unchanging as they liked to claim, even in the relatively short context of the Brazilian First Republic. While the reintroduction of religious education into state schools remained perhaps the most important part of the Ultramontane Catholic Church's political program, the Catholic Church and its press eventually accepted and even hailed a compromise when these classes became voluntary and for Catholic students only (Cechetti and Valdir 2016). The very nature of

[20] See, e.g., *Mensageiro da Fé* 1913a.

the hated Republican regime, governed by the elected representatives of a small group of literate voters, was quickly accepted by the Catholic Church, which in Brazil (unlike in some other countries, mainly France) did not really campaign to restore the monarchy. Instead, it adapted to the rules of the political game by first attempting to form local and nationwide Catholic parties inspired by Germany or Belgium and then using its press and special electoral leagues to mobilize the eligible Catholic voters for pre-selected candidates from other mainstream conservative republican parties as the project of Catholic parties largely failed.

The Brazilian "good press" regularly and vigorously appealed to their Catholic readers to exercise the right to vote – and, of course, to use it in favour of Catholic candidates and Church-supported policies. As *Mensageiro da Fé* argued in 1914:

> We cannot cease the front of public life to the enemies of religion. We must work for the sanctity of family, for religious education and the rights of the Church. And this work does not belong to the privacy of home or to conversation between individuals, it belongs to the public space, to the tribune, to the press, and to the parliament (*Mensageiro da Fé* 1914b).

Some authors even called exercising the right to vote a "sacred obligation" of "every single citizen" in order to "save the society" from anti-Christian politics (Coriolano 1914). The "modern democratic state" was occasionally criticized for all kinds of flaws, especially for systemic corruption and a lack of proper authority compared to orderly monarchies. But the Catholic Church clearly accepted the democratic republican institutions and adapted to the competitive nature of the limited (and infamously oligarchic) nature of the Brazilian Republican system.

Even in the case of womens' rights and workers' demands, Brazilian Catholics gradually shifted their approach to include more modern interpretation of their doctrine. Although they continued to argue against women's right to vote to the very last moment,[21] Brazilian Catholics acknowledged rising demands for autonomy, eventually writing in favour of women's access to education and giving voice to prominent Catholic women of the era to write their own articles in the Catholic press. These women subsequently helped to formulate what they called "Catholic feminism" – a genuinely modern sounding term!

[21] Women were first allowed to vote in 1932, two years after the overthrow of the First Republic.

This is how influential Catholic journalist, Soares de Azevedo, described this new concept: "Let the Catholic feminism prevail among us, turning women into a mighty agent of the world progress by the enormous influence she exercises over the members of the family where she's worshipped, valued, and respected" (Azevedo 1919b).

Catholic women were also encouraged to participate in lay mass organizations that produced their own journals, facilitated access to literature, organized events, and mobilized against more radical feminists. In Brazil, these organizations included the Women's Alliance (Aliança Feminina), led by prominent poet Amélia Rodrigues (1861–1926), and later the Women's League (Liga Feminina), both founded in the capital, Rio de Janeiro. While "Catholic feminism" pursued modest goals, it was still an acknowledgment by the Catholic Church of a need to provide a feasible alternative to what it otherwise perceived as the dangerous "modern" phenomenon of feminism coming from France and the United States (Azevedo 1919a). It also marked a significant shift from earlier views on women's role in a society that saw no room for education, let alone the political activism witnessed in the 1920s (see, for instance, O Silencioso 1915).

A similar process can be observed in case of the workers' rights, in which case the Catholic Church was obviously (and even openly) reacting to the socialist demands that had penetrated into Brazil since the very beginning of the First Republic – and gained traction in the first decades of the 20th century as industrialism belatedly caught pace. As is well known, the Catholic Church developed its own social teachings, based on Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, published in 1891. There is endless discussion over how progressive this encyclical really was;[22] regardless, its interpretations in the Brazilian Catholic press became more progressive over time, just as did the rhetoric concerning workers' rights.

Texts from the late 19th century, and the first two decades of the 20th century, concerning the workers' question, mostly emphasized the defence of the current social order and the inherent inequality of human beings that could only be alleviated by individual acts of charity – but certainly not changed. As the editor-in-chief of *Mensageiro da Fé* João Manderfelt, writing under one of his many pen names, explained in his regular column:

[22] For a thorough criticism of the progressive interpretation of the encyclical (see Walsh 2012).

> Poverty can never be eradicated. Why? Because its causes cannot be suppressed. The main cause of poverty are vices of the very human nature, corrupted by the sin: laziness, debauchery, drunkenness, gambling, lavishness, carelessness. Both physical and mental suffering are the result of sin and well-deserved punishment for it. It is impossible to eradicate poverty, just as it is impossible to eradicate sin (Bahiano 1919).

The Catholic press also regularly described the moral and spiritual benefits of individual poverty compared to the horrible burden certainly felt by those who were rich because "wealth produces pleasure, addiction, and premature death" (Norte 1915). As the aforementioned editor-in-chief of *Mensageiro da Fé* wrote in 1915:

> Be reasonable! The rich man doesn't wear your ragged clothes, nor does he suffer from your hunger, he doesn't shed your tears, nor does he share the same anxieties. But he sheds other tears, comes through other hardships, and [...] suffers in ways that you will never have to suffer. [...] Oh how beautiful is [...] the life of an uncomplaining poor man who gains a piece of bread with the sweat of his body, he brings this bread to his little cottage, enters, and hugs and kisses and laughs and shares and lives (ibid.).

These attitudes towards poverty and wealth/luxury can be understood as a continuation of the Catholic moral-based criticism of materialism and idealization of the simple, poor life to be found in the original Gospels and reproduced by the reformers of the Church, such as St. Francis (after all, *Mensageiro da Fé* was administered by the Franciscans). But at the same time, they could be interpreted as embracing the modern capitalist economic model created and staunchly defended by the Brazilian liberals. In practice, the ideal of the "class harmony" promoted by the Catholics continued the exact same relationship between the factory owners and workers, only slightly alleviated by religion-based measures (e.g., Sunday rest laws). The Brazilian Catholic press in the First Republic remained, for instance, vigorously opposed to the idea of the labour unions.

As social tensions progressed after World War I, however, including revolutionary movements inspired by the 1917 Russian Revolution,[23] even the

[23] Most importantly, the so-called "Anarchist Insurrection" in Rio de Janeiro in 1918.

Catholic journalists began to change their focus – directly targeting readers among the workers and stressing the need to improve their living conditions. One of the most prominent Brazilian Catholic journalists, Soares de Azevedo, went as far as to call for "Catholic revolution" in 1929 – in order to stop the otherwise inevitable "global revolution".

> The workers, the farmers, the lower classes live overburdened by the State's taxes and overburdened by the demands of their employers. The dissatisfaction is widespread. [...] The [threat of] revolution comes from the workers, those miserable victims, this unfortunate anonymous mass, for which there was not a single gesture of care and love. The sweat and blood they shed makes riches for others in such a clear imbalance between rights and duties and even against the most respectable principles of justice and charity. [...] Let's therefore make our own revolution, a revolution of good order, justice, and charity, before the enemies of these principles turn the entire world into a slavish copy of Russia (Azevedo 1929).

I find the Catholic use of revolutionary rhetoric particularly striking, as the Catholic press traditionally described any sort of "revolution" in the worst possible light – and indeed as the beginning of everything that was negative and dangerous about the modern era. The Catholic Church, however, soon found itself fully embracing certain kind of revolution in the 1930s: the revolution that overthrew the First Republic and eventually led to the instalment of the strongly authoritarian regime of Getúlio Vargas (president from 1930 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1954), which built its legitimacy on pushing forward both economic modernization (such as financing large-scale development projects and modernizing infrastructure and industry) and the dramatic improvement of workers' conditions.

Final Remarks

Examples in this article aim to demonstrate that the relationship between Ultramontane Catholicism and different forms of modernity were far more complex than usually portrayed. Brazil during the period of the "Old Republic" served as a sort of case study of this complex and often misrepresented relationship – and while it was in many ways specific (for instance, in the very tense relationship between the "old regime" of the empire and the Catholic Church), as I tried to demonstrate, it was certainly not significantly different than in

other countries. After all, a large part of the Church's agenda was set up by the centralized papacy and only adapted to unique national circumstances.

Rather than accepting the propaganda of both the Ultramontane Catholic Church and its political and ideological opponents that put the 19th and early 20th century Catholicism in direct opposition to modernity, I propose to see this relationship as an evolving form of negotiation and adaptation. Ultramontanism itself was a response to the changing society and culture that adopted numerous features and tools of the forming modern nation-states and modernizing societies and continued to adapt to the challenges of different facets of modernization, including the adaptation of the liberal rhetoric and partially even political programs of the liberal modernity.

It was precisely this continuous negotiation and adaptation that allowed the Catholic Church to at least globally survive the demands for further secularization – and in the case of Brazil, come out of the difficult period of the First Republic, founded on liberal and anti-Catholic principles, with an even greater influence in politics and society. The statue of Christ the Redeemer (Cristo Redentor) inaugurated in 1931 on the hill of Corcovado above Rio de Janeiro can be seen as a perfect symbol of this position – and of the Catholic adaptation to modernity – as it represents a technologically superb structure, dedicated to a recent, early-20th-century devotion of the Sacred Heart. Designed in the style of art deco, its contemporaries called it tellingly "the miracle of faith, the prodigy of technology", a "real monument to faith, engineering, and the arts", or the "monument of science, art, and religion" (Giumbelli 2008, 87).

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BREAK TIME EXCHANGES: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF "RESTING" SPACES AMONG THE VIETNAMESE-CZECH COMMUNITY IN SAPA, IN PRAGUE

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Abstract: *This study provides a snapshot of the social lives of primarily first-generation Vietnamese-Czech immigrants, who engage in small-scale merchant business at the Sapa market and cultural centre in Prague. To add to the existing research on the Vietnamese immigrant community in the Czech Republic, the research shifts from studying the immigrant community's identity as business owners to their identities as cultural participants by observing the community's interactions during break times. The researcher utilizes the framework of spatializing culture to focus on how such interactions help socially construct and transform the resting spaces, existing in both the physical and online worlds of the Sapa market and cultural space. This ethnographic study combines participant observation, insider ethnography, visual mapping, and visual and digital ethnography. The fieldwork reveals that the physical and digital rest areas of Sapa help facilitate ethnic identity construction and preservation among the community members.*

Keywords: *ethnography/netnography, online vs offline spaces, transnational community, Vietnamese-Czech immigrants, ethnic identity*

Introduction

Compared to other EU countries, the Vietnamese immigrant communities in the Czech Republic, primarily concentrated in Prague, are among the top five in terms of scale (Fiedlerová et al. 2016).[1] Vietnamese migration to the Czech Republic dates back to the early 1950s, when diplomatic relations between Vietnam and former Czechoslovakia were established. During the first wave of migrants, most Vietnamese came to the Czech Republic as communist cadres selected by the government to go overseas to receive education and technical training. In the 2000s, a group of first-generation Vietnamese immigrant businesspeople bought land previously used for poultry farms on the outskirts of Prague's city centre. There, they established a specific area dedicated to the Vietnamese immigrant community, allowing them to do business and trade, and named it Sapa (Rawitsch 2020). At present, Sapa, a Vietnamese trading centre and market located in Prague 4 – Libuš district of the City of Prague, Czech Republic – comprises 27 hectares.

Past research literature of Vietnamese transnational communities in Czech mainly focuses on the identities of the Vietnamese community members as business owners (Drbohlav and Čermáková 2016). However, this specific approach only allows viewing the Vietnamese immigrants' lives within the commercial and occupational context. The social identity given to the Vietnamese Czech as "immigrants" and as grocery store owners often reduces the members of the Vietnamese community to a stereotype and overlooks other aspects of their identity. Recent studies of immigrants have demonstrated the diversity and variety of adaptation among Vietnamese and other ethnic groups who have creatively reconstructed their migrant lives and identities (Nguyen 2016). Such adaptations would vary based on the cultural and historical contexts of originating and host countries. An example of this is the phenomenon of Vietnamese immigrant families hiring Czech nannies to care for their children while they are at work. The practice reveals the unique ways in which life in the new host country affects childcare arrangements and social norms about care work among the Vietnamese immigrant community in the Czech Republic (Souralova 2015).

[1] This study originated at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague as part of the project Construction of Social Space, and Collective Memory: A Case Study of Vietnamese Ethnic Enclaves in Prague, supported by special-purpose funds intended for the specific tertiary education research provided by the Ministry of Education in 2020.

This study thus centres on the patterns of socialization among first-generation Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa outside of their work sphere. The questions relevant to this study are: How do they carve out space and time for social lives when their work-life is intensive and takes up most of their day? What meanings, social connections, or rituals arise from such interactions? What kinds of spaces do they use in this regard? To answer these questions, I examine the self-made rest areas scattered within the Sapa market centre, as well as the digital "rest" and leisure areas in Facebook groups as critical hotspots for community socialization. Previous ethnography scholarship has especially analyzed meanings in spatial arrangements and regarded constructed environments as fundamental to social life (Lawrence and Low 1990; Spier 1933; Koroeber 1939). Using the social constructionist approach and Setha M Low's (2000) framework of spatializing culture, I analyze how social relations, personal struggles, and certain cultural contestations are embedded and revealed in the social construction of these resting places. The ethnographic focus on studying space and place is critical, as they often function as sites of social identity construction and negotiation (Low 2016). Through social interactions with each other at these socially constructed spaces of leisure and rest, Sapa community members establish and strengthen each other's social networks while also constructing their own social identities outside of being merchants in migrant worlds.

Goffman's (1978) framework on role enactment and role distance is also helpful as groundwork for my analysis of socialization at rest areas in Sapa. These areas are where the members of the Vietnamese Czech community can establish and keep a comfortable distance from their public identity as merchants and service providers. During break times, these people temporarily leave their front stages of working life to interact with each other in Sapa's semi-private backstage areas as members of the Vietnamese immigrant community. It is therefore necessary to study and observe Vietnamese Czech community members in their everyday interactions during rest times in these places of leisure and socialization. One can in this way identify and analyze which behavioural patterns or rituals become part of their strategies to maintain their ethnic identities and strengthen communal relationships. In other words, the knowledge and information these immigrant workers exchange and relay to one another over time within these temporal and spatial contexts can contribute to the overall preservation and construction of the Vietnamese identity of Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa.

Research Design

As the research intent of this work is interpretive, I rely on ethnography fieldwork based on participant observation supported by visual techniques, such as photographic analysis, to study how members of the Vietnamese community in Sapa socialize with each other during break times. For data collection, I created extensive field notes, wrote diary entries, and took photographs from June to October 2020. During the first fieldwork stage, I utilized the discursive walking method combined with photographic mapping to explore and document interactions in Sapa between the people and space. This type of "discursive walking" as a "participatory mode of walking, during which we half-consciously explore the landscape while sensorially experiencing it passing by" (Wunderlich 2008, 132), allowed me to gather data in two different layers: first, as a newcomer visiting and analytically exploring the new space, and second, as a Vietnamese expatriate who connects to the Vietnamese community with a sense of belonging. By analyzing this exploratory data, I realized that crucial socialization as a means of community building and social identity-construction strategies occur at Sapa's rest areas, where community members interact in intimate and backstage forms.

As the study focuses on socialization around rest areas in Sapa, I chose one specific rest location: the wooden benches situated between a Czech-Vietnamese cafeteria and a small grocery store run by a middle-age Vietnamese couple. The area faces the entrance to Sapa through gate 4. This focus on one leisure spot allowed further, more focused participant observation fieldwork to establish stronger relationships with the place and the social networks based around this bench area. From June to September 2020, I visited the location three times a week; each visit usually lasted from three to five hours. During these visits, I observed, took notes, and participated in social interactions occurring at these benches, and also in front of the grocery store. In certain instances, the rest area became the backdrop to deep interactions that contributed to one's ethnic identity construction or mediation through exchanges of memories and cultural heritage. In other instances, the rest area helped facilitate and maintain the organic expansion of a social network.

For observations of the Facebook group for Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic, I employed a digital ethnography approach. I took extensive notes and screenshots of significant interactions or conversations within the Vietnamese online community in the Facebook group called Cho Sapa tai Sec (Sapa Market

in the Czech Republic) in September and October 2020. Many researchers regard this online ethnographic approach as *netnography* (Hine 2000; Kozinets 2010). By combining the collection of screen-captured posts and shares and running them through a discourse analysis and textual analysis approaches, I took a closer look at people's engagement and interpersonal relations on these Facebook groups during their leisure times outside their work sphere.

In addition, I also followed reflexive forms of research practice within both the regular and digital ethnography process as I collected and analyzed the data. In this way, I gave recognition to how findings and knowledge about community interactions are produced through a combination of field note taking and my own participation in the social interactions in Sapa (James et al. 1997; Pink et al. 2015). The insider ethnographic approach was helpful as my insider position, based on shared ethnicity with the researched group, accelerated my socialization with others in Sapa as an outsider to this new immigrant community (e.g., Khan 2011). This initial outsider position also made me more sensitive to identify newness and strangeness while observing the lifestyles and interactions of the people there (Hastrup 1987). Mining the data gathered from surface-level interactions provided valuable insights into how resting areas, both physical and digital, as related to Sapa function as important sites of identity construction and community bonding outside work realms. All the names of the community members observed during the physical and digital ethnography fieldwork have been changed to Vietnamese pseudonyms to respect their anonymity and remove any identifying attributes.

The Significance of Rest Areas in Sapa

At the initial stage of the research process, I conducted extensive visual mapping of the space using photography while taking ethnographic walking trips to collect the overall details of how space and people interacted (see Figures 1 and 2). The walking trips helped me navigate the networks of subjects, objects, and spaces through which life in Sapa unites into a coherent existence (Latham and McCormack 2007). The fragmented stories and narratives collected through the waking ethnography approach helped me see Sapa with its complexities, not just as an area of micro and macro merchant business but also as a social hub for Vietnamese community connections (Cheng 2013).

When entering the area with my camera in hand, I found myself drawn to capturing various instances of assortments of old furniture usually set up in

Figure 1. Community members catching up with each other, captured in front of a restaurant entrance. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

the intersections of paths or along the edges of commercial warehouses (see Figures 3 and 4). The collection and curation of furniture convey a sense of intentionality but also randomness. As I became interested in the functions of these "furnished" corners, I focused mainly on those places in my next field trip and found myself witnessing unique rhythms of social traffic around the area. The movement of bodies and the body itself becomes the template for spatial and social relations (Douglas 1971). Through tracking movements surrounding the space, I observed the transformation of space into a place for resting and socialization for the Czech Vietnamese community members in Sapa. This deliberate construction of social and physical areas is necessary to be looked at, especially when studying immigrant communities as these sites function as spaces of identity formation and heritage maintenance (Hall 2004; Li 2005; Meciar 2014).

On the first impression, the sightings of these rest areas make Sapa even more familiar to me because of the memories I have of the markets in Vietnam that I have often visited since I was young. These areas take up space immediately next to the people's workplace; they are usually under some roof for

Figure 2. A small corridor with plastic chairs set up outside a barbershop as a waiting area for customers. The appearance of resting furniture in front of the barbershop can have an inviting effect on foot traffic surrounding this area; people are more likely to stop by and have a seat to chat with the business's owner or people they know. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

Figure 3. A rest area set up right across from the working place of one merchant. During break time, the owner can offer tea from the kettle to facilitate more intimate conversations between friends and close acquaintances with the merchant. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

Figure 4. An example of a rest area. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

protection against the summer heat. The place is a literal collage of collected items and worn-out furniture combined into one cohesive structure: a small table with a scratched surface, mismatched chairs or stools, a large standing umbrella, and aged couches (see Figures 2, 3, and 4). However, these small, personalized rest areas are not usually for everyone to use. Only the people who set them up can invite people to socialize and chat there with them. As the rest areas are situated in open spaces, their owners and their acquaintances also socialize near them quite often, and thus also claim ownership to these public spaces.

On the other hand, there also exist those rest areas that are more for public use, thus more accessible, so even the random Sapa visitors can sit down and take a brief break from walking. These rest areas for public use are more standard and uniform, comprised of a few rows of long wooden benches and fitting tables. There are two such rest areas in front of the two Czech-Vietnamese cafeterias, which serve as places to eat for the cafeterias' customers and as temporary rest areas for others when the cafeterias are not so busy (see Figures 5 and 6).

Figure 5: The wooden benches chosen for the case observations. The photos were taken during one of the lockdown restrictions given by the Czech government. I chose not to take photos of this location during fieldwork due to resistance from the observed community and the potential disrupting effects on the on-going fieldwork itself. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

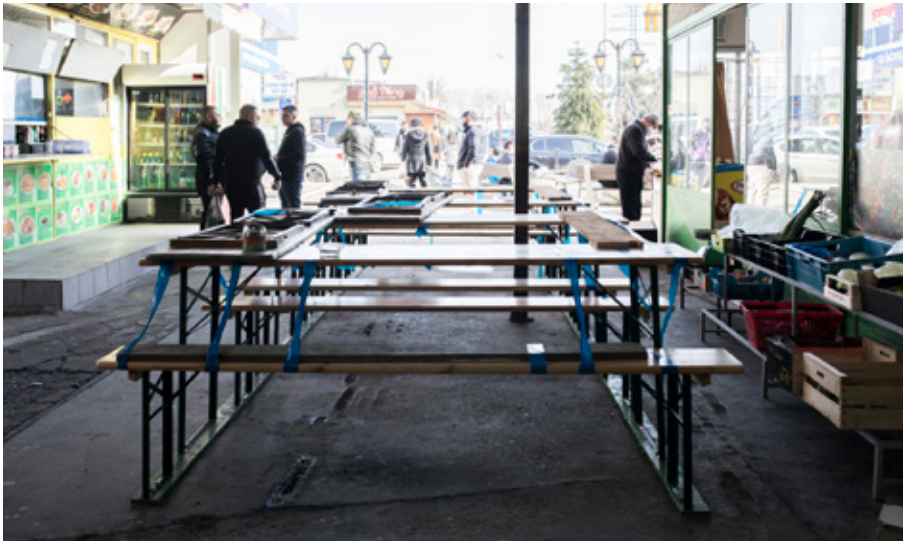

Figure 6. The wooden benches chosen for the case observations. Photo: Quynh Nguyen, 2020.

For my case study, I chose the public rest area in front of a small grocery store run by a Vietnamese couple in their early sixties, Mr. and Mrs. Tran (see Figures 5 and 6). The Trans previously lived in a different city in the Czech Republic and only moved to Prague and opened their grocery store a few years ago. People outside the Sapa area frequently stop at their store to ask for direction or guidance to their destinations, usually a restaurant serving the specific dish they want to try out. When I met Mr. Tran for the first time, I asked him to recommend where to get *bun bo hue* ("spicy Vietnamese noodle soup"), a signature dish from the central region of Vietnam. From this initial topic of conversation, I established a close connection with Mr. and Mrs. Tran as I became a regular visitor to their grocery store.

The Social Construction of the Resting Space through Socialization

Memories, heritage, and mediation

Compared to standard storefronts without self-made rest areas, people are more likely to stop by or pause their walking at resting spaces to check if someone they know is sitting on the benches to have a quick chat. The arrangement of benches, chairs, and table signifies a designated area for socialization between established connections. While the storefronts are a more fragile space for communication because of the flow of customers, the physicality of the self-made resting space allows for more concrete and prolonged off-work interactions. According to Setha M. Low's theoretical framework of "spatializing culture", "social construction of space and place includes the transformations and contestations that occur through people' social interactions, memories, feelings, imaginings, and daily uses [...] These are made into places, scenes and actions that convey particular meanings" (2016, 68). Thus, I proceeded to analyze how socializing interactions happening at this leisure site reveal memories, heritage, and mediation of cultures embedded in the social construction process of this space.

In one of the recorded dialogues happening there, I took note of the exchange between an acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Tran, who dropped by the bench area to ask for advice regarding preparations for a traditional Vietnamese ceremony for her new house before moving in. The ceremony is usually done with a table of offerings to the Tho Dia ("Land God"), usually including specific types of fruits, salt, water, rice, and joss papers. As a common practice of a Vietnamese folk religion, the ceremony acts as a gesture of good faith and

respect to the spirits inhabiting the new land to not disturb the house's new tenants. The observed exchange happened between a woman in her mid-thirties and the Trans, who were in their sixties. It is thus possible that older generations of Vietnamese living in Sapa are more likely to become essential resources for the younger ones to learn about necessary preparations for religious rituals often done in different stages of one's life. Consequently, the social construction of the resting space opens up a place where such exchanges of cultural heritage are possible. The Tho Dia ceremony is only one of the many examples in which community members seek each other's help when buying materials for traditional festivals which belong to Vietnamese's ethnic folk religion. The socialization happening at these leisure areas serves as purposeful preservation of Vietnamese intangible heritage such as traditional customs and ethnic festival celebrations when people remind each other of important dates and necessary preparations. By embedding topics of cultural and ethnic worshipping practices into daily communication, the community members ensure the continuation of these practices and traditions. In this instance, the resting space has become a place where cultural knowledge is maintained and passed down to younger immigrants.

Furthermore, through exchanging intimate details in this space about our personal histories and memories rooted in Vietnam, I gradually grew closer to Mr. and Mrs. Tran. The couple would accept my offer to help Mrs. Tran clean the mung beans that she grew to get them ready for selling. When we were sitting on stools behind the shop counter and cutting the ends off the mung beans, Mrs. Tran would tell me about her daughter and her relatives back at home. She would talk about one of her daughters who decided to settle in Vietnam instead of joining her here as one of the last immediate familial connections she had there. In exchange, I would tell her about my family and my hometown in Vietnam. As we discussed our remaining connections to our homeland while being in the Czech Republic, we created a stronger foundation for our relationship to become more than just casual acquaintances. The shared ethnicity helped at the beginning of our interactions to accelerate our getting to know each other. However, after the interaction above, we were able to more precisely locate each other geographically and culturally in Vietnam. As a result, The Trans became comfortable enough to invite me to join their lunch break meals. Thus, I would imagine that for new friendships and relationships to form between Vietnamese community members in Sapa, this relay of cultural memories and heritage outside of work time at these resting spaces is essential.

Through these two instances of interactions happening at the benches, I show how the socialization among first-generation immigrants in Sapa transformed the physical resting space into a social place where Vietnamese immigrants connect on a deeper level through communicating personal memories, personal histories, and cultural knowledge. Taking a phenomenological and affective approach to analyze the social construction of this space, we see that the daily conversations carry another layer of meanings, indicating a constant transferring back and forth of information and narratives rooted in Vietnam among these community members in Sapa. Sharing rituals and stories from back home during break time becomes a strategy to strengthen their bonds.

Once I see the resting space as embodied by meaningful personal and cultural interactions and conversations, I could also identify trans-national spatial flows linked with its social construction. Outside of interactions with the Trans, whenever I had a conversation with another Vietnamese working in Sapa for the first time, I would get asked where specifically I came from back in Vietnam. It is almost as if my hometown acted as a frame for others to imagine my journey from Vietnam to the Czech Republic and make sense of my presence here. This necessity of locating one's origin in Vietnam as part of forming new relationships is something more often noted in conversations among first-generation Vietnamese immigrants. For first-generation Vietnamese, the resting space has become a kind of "symbolic anchor" for their community to preserve connections and memories of homeland through informal, daily socialization situated in Czech lands (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Low (2016, 79) regards this strategy of constructing homeland as imagined places as being a "part of a politics of memory". Sustaining proximity to cultural traditions and shared histories helps make up for the physical distance to one's originating country.

At the same time, the resting space also communicates specific mediation between cultures during the place-making processes. As I spent time hanging out at the benches, I noticed the nuances in people's use of language there. Even though community members in Sapa converse with each other in fluent Vietnamese, they would use the Czech salutation *ahoj* ("hello" or "goodbye") whenever they pass by their friends or acquaintances. The adoption of the Czech greeting word is influenced by regularly using it to greet and converse with Czech customers daily during work. Occasionally, I also noticed friendly interactions and short conversations in Czech between the Trans and a Czech worker who often rested at the bench during lunchtime. So, this specific merging of languages can reflect the Vietnamese immigrants' readiness to interact

with Czech acquaintances. The simple and accessible form of this Czech word also makes it more easily adaptable for first-generation Vietnamese immigrants working in Sapa whose command of Czech can be more elementary.

In Low's discussion of the social construction of space, she states that "power relations always underlie the social construction of space" (2016, 69). Therefore, the spatial realities created from symbolic interactions between individuals at a specific site could communicate fundamental dynamics of culture (Richardson 1982; Low 2016). Here, the adaptation of the Czech word to greet other Vietnamese instead of using Vietnamese salutation to greet Czechs and Vietnamese reveals the power relation between the two cultures at play during the social construction of resting places. On the one hand, it shows the immigrants' efforts to integrate into Czech society through language. On the other, it illustrates the conscious decision to utilize Czech greetings also to further increase familiarity within the Vietnamese community through daily salutations. A habit formed primarily in the work sphere is then appropriated to be used during socialization among community members at the resting benches. By repeating encounters and saying *ahoj* to each other when passing by the benches near the Tran's store, mutual recognition is improved (Goffman 1963).[2] Therefore, the resting area becomes a place for Vietnamese immigrants to connect through an informal exchange of memories and heritage during break time and an intermediary place where the intersection of Vietnamese-Czech cultures can happen.

Expansion of social networks through an appropriation of the working space

The resting space is also a significant area where relationships between first-generation Vietnamese in Sapa can overlap and expand. As I observed how one's social network transformed at this site, I paid attention to the critical role the socially constructed space plays in the social lives of first-generation Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa. Within their socialized circle, Mr. and Mrs. Tran interact most frequently with Ms. Thu, who has been a resident at Sapa even longer than the couple. She is the owner of a clothing and accessory store in the alley right next to the Tran's store. Because of the proximity to each other and their close relationship, which has developed over time, during break hours, the three of

[2] Though not as prevalent, there are instances I observed where Vietnamese community members in SAPA also used Czech swear words such as *Ty vole* ("Damn it") during communication to express frustration or anger. However, this habit is more common for younger generations of Vietnamese working there. The second generation of Vietnamese usually don't work in SAPA. However, when they do visit SAPA, they would talk to each other in fluent Czech instead of Vietnamese.

them, occasionally joined by other people, often share their lunch. After getting to know each other for quite some time, I was also often invited to share a meal with Mr. and Mrs. Tran. One time, Mrs. Tran called out to me when I was sitting by the bench: "Stinky Duck [*vit hoi*], do you want to eat some blood sausage porridge I made?" (personal communication, 22 July 2020). Name-calling is an old custom in Vietnamese tradition, which is more prevalent in the older generation. When people gave birth to children, within the first 100 days of the babies' lives, the parents or grandparents would call them undesirable names so bad spirits would be deterred from taking them away.

When Mrs. Tran called me out by this name, I was caught off guard. A nickname as such is usually only given within familial, close social circles. Furthermore, when I first got in contact with the Trans, it was Mr. Tran who readily started a conversation with me. Mrs. Tran was more reserved and hesitant until we started sharing our personal histories. I took the endearing nickname "Stinky Duck" given to me as a sign of acceptance and acknowledgement into their social circle centring on the resting bench area. At the beginning of the fieldwork process, I only had Mr. and Mrs. Tran as casual acquaintances due to my frequent visits to the benches next to their store. However, by the end of these field trips, I had found myself within a loose network of socialization circulating this rest area. Not only did I recognize other frequent visitors to the place, but I was also informally introduced to them by Mr. and Mrs. Tran during the times we shared meals.

In this context, the name-calling stands for the reintroduction of my own social identity within their social circle. From a Vietnamese visiting Sapa, I then became a member of the Vietnamese immigrant community in Sapa. There seems to be this distinction between one's fleeting presence versus one's established position as part of the social life here. The forging of ties happening at the resting space becomes a crucial facilitator for this transition. The instance of name-calling further indicates that close relationships among community members working in Sapa can take on familial meanings. In some cases, the Vietnamese people here view each other as members of an imagined extended family of Vietnamese immigrants in the host country. The Vietnamese ancient practice of giving undesirable nicknames, which is originally only reserved for newborn babies, has been mediated and transformed to become also an expression of acceptance and openness toward new and younger members of the community in Sapa.

By assembling used furniture to carve out a space for socialization within the working areas, the residents of Sapa market centre have created their own opportunities to enrich their social lives during break time. I use Goffman's

analysis of the presentation of self in everyday life to interpret how Vietnamese immigrants utilize the rest areas as their "backstage" for off-work social interactions. According to Goffman's discussion of social construction of self (1963), the social self is present "in interaction with others, through 'gatherings' (incidents in which individuals are present, but not necessarily in interaction with each other) and 'encounters' (social events with temporary and spacious borders, where interaction is likely to occur)" (Henriksen and Tjora 2013). Such interactions are therefore closely connected to both social and physical structures. The purposeful arrangements of furniture in Sapa resting areas acts as signifiers for potential "gathering" opportunities, since it offers an established, physical space especially for socialization among acquaintances. Additionally, the leisure areas are where the members of the Vietnamese Czech community can keep a comfortable distance from their public identity as merchants and service providers. During their "encounters", the rest area creates a temporary separation from work, both in time and space. In other words, during break times, the people leave the front stage of working life to interact with each other as members of the Vietnamese immigrant community in Sapa.

However, we need to consider the work culture of Vietnamese immigrants working in Sapa and its influence on the formation of their social ties. The resting space is constructed not only to provide a kind of backstage from work but also to create and maintain close friendships among people working in Sapa during these backstage interactions. In Sapa, migrant merchants would start working at seven in the morning at the earliest and end work at seven or eight o'clock in the evening. Smaller-scale merchants would opt to stay open even during national holidays unless it is required to stay closed by Czech laws. This "hustle" culture is prominent in Sapa as the flow of customers can vary significantly from day to day for some shops. At the same time, one of the main reasons for migration for first-generation Vietnamese immigrants is to seek economic opportunities and stability. As a result, compared to native merchants, migrant merchants in Sapa could have more strained work-life balance experience. The demanding nature of work inadvertently introduces challenges to off-work socialization. At the end of the day, the merchants would often just go straight home to rest for the next day. Once in a while, they would hang out with each other a bit longer after closing their stores to catch up and finish their conversations. Since there is less time for community building activities or having rich social events outside of work, the unofficial and official break times during work become valuable opportunities for strengthening relationships.

With a large part of their day spent at Sapa, the merchants often have their co-workers or neighbouring shop owners as their close friends, such as in the case of the friendship we see between Ms. Thu and the Trans. Their friendship doesn't only exist exclusively in the working space but also bleeds into each other's personal and social lives. While conversing with each other during break time at the benches, Ms. Thu would often ask about Mrs. Tran's nieces, and she even attended her nieces' birthday parties in the past.

This example further shows that the appropriation of working space to make space for socialization is also born out of the need to have a social life despite the consuming work-life at Sapa. For community members of Sapa, their work culture often results in the unavoidable overlapping of the public/work sphere and the personal/leisure sphere. By embedding these resting spaces with intimate and familial exchanges, the migrant merchants in Sapa have opened up the space for social possibilities that allow them to bring personal life outside of work coexisting within their working place. These spatial practices also enable a transition from mere co-worker relationships to deeper friendships that extend beyond the work realms.

Different personal perspectives on social life at Sapa

Mrs. Hoa is one of the connections I gained as part of my own organic social network expansion during the fieldwork in Sapa. The first time I met Mrs. Hoa, I was hanging out at my usual spot on the bench when she joined me. Introducing herself as a newcomer to the Czech Republic, she said she did not know many people yet. "My husband came here first for a job, and he was here for two years before I joined him through the family reunification visa this year", she would tell me. Back at home, she was farming like other people in her regions' countryside. She said: "I've just sold my plots of lands and closed down the rice wholesale business. Then, I could come here to join my family" (personal communication with Mrs. Hoa, included in this section, all took place on 9 August 2020).

When asked about her experience with Prague and the Vietnamese community in Sapa, Mrs. Hoa could not avoid making comparisons to her previous life in Vietnam. "It was quite sad here when I first arrived", Mrs. Hoa complained. "Everyone here just works all day long until late evening and then goes home to sleep". It was not like this in the countryside village of Northern Vietnam, where she was from. In her hometown, the communal social activities are much more varied and exciting. "We would break our backs working so hard out on the

fields under such intense heat, but when evening comes, everyone gathers and has fun, you know?" According to Mrs. Hoa, her fellow villagers would usually hang out in the early evening at the park. Some would be playing badminton. Someone would always bring a portable radio, and the middle-aged countrymen would dance to the music under the night sky. "Nothing seems to happen here after the workday ends", she commented. From her perspective as a newcomer, Mrs. Hoa regarded the social life of the community in Sapa ethnoburb as lacking compared to that of the previous community she lived among.

In fact, to Mrs. Hoa, the lack of explicit post-work daily social activities that she noticed further reflected the life of Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa. When asked about the reasons behind many Vietnamese countryside residents' decision to find a new life in Czech lands, Mrs. Hoa contemplated: "If you worked hard here, you would be able to save a good amount of money for yourself and your family. With the same kinds of jobs like those available in Sapa, most people back in Vietnam would spend their salary on entertainment and enjoying themselves and end up with not much savings left". In both her remarks about life in Vietnam and Prague, specifically Sapa, I found a correlation between the social life differences and economic opportunities among the first-generation Vietnamese in Czech Republic. Considering the purpose of finding personal economic development as the reason for immigration, the decrease in habitual social life in host societies becomes one of the sacrifices immigrants would make to achieve their goals when immigrating into the Czech Republic.

Mrs. Hoa admitted that she often went to Sapa and sat at the benches to hang out and talk with people. Since she was still waiting for her husband to help find her a job in Sapa, she got bored just spending time at home. Everyone else was at the market centre working. As someone who had yet to start work, she was unable to form new relationships with other community members in the area easily unless she went to Sapa and interacted with them during their rest times. The bench area was also where Mrs. Hoa befriended Mr. and Mrs. Tran after sustained interactions over time. Furthermore, through this prolonged presence at the space, Mrs. Hoa was able to have an overview of how social life functions and operates in Sapa. Her observation again highlighted the off-work socialization as an essential symbolic resource but often taken away from community members by the demanding work schedules at Sapa. By recognizing the different forms of socialization within the Vietnamese community here, Mrs. Hoa gradually made sense of the new place and adjusted to the new lifestyle and social rhythms there. The narrative analyzed through in-depth interviews

with Mrs. Hoa revealed the ways in which established social traditions or socialization strategies acquired in their home countries gradually change and transform in new transnational spaces for the newly arrived Vietnamese immigrants like her.

Online Leisure Areas: Online Socialization and Interactions among Vietnamese Immigrants

As a new immigrant, one way of getting quick connections with an established Vietnamese community in Prague is through visiting Sapa. The other way can be done online. When entering straightforward Vietnamese search terms in the Facebook search bar, one can easily identify several major active Facebook groups serving different purposes that are run by Vietnamese Czech immigrants, each with thousands of members to connect with: Hom nay an gi – Ngay mai an gi – tai Sec (What to eat today – What to eat tomorrow – in the Czech Republic) as a group for promoting and reviewing food and restaurants in the Czech Republic, Hiep Hoi Potraviny Cz (Association of Potraviny Cz) as a news source and connecting point for the majority of Vietnamese merchants across the country, Cho Sapa Praha (Sapa Market Praha) as a specific group for the Vietnamese community in the Sapa ethnoburb. Daily, these Facebook groups get updated very frequently. In the case of the Facebook group Hiep Hoi Potraviny Cz (Association of Potraviny Cz), which currently has 54,000 members, the average number of posts per day can total nearly 100 posts. The active participation in such Facebook groups, which use Vietnamese as the primary language of communication, is especially prevalent among the first generation of Vietnamese in the Czech Republic. The majority of them utilize the space to promote and do online business targeting other Vietnamese-speaking members. Although any Vietnamese can join any of the groups listed above, as the membership is not exclusive, the content of the more specifically named groups would need to comply to those groups' rules. For example, the posts in Cho Sapa Praha should only be related to Sapa market centre or to sales and advertisements of stores operating in Sapa area. These Facebook groups not only allow for larger-scale communication between different Vietnamese communities in the Czech Republic, but they also have more specific categorizations suitable for one's needs.

Digital technologies and media (and the services and activities that people can do with them) are interdependent with the infrastructures of everyday life. Using digital ethnography on social media platforms allows me to analyze the

digital space in relation to physical environments. Given the concentrated use of social media among the general Vietnamese community in the Czech Republic as one of the main means of communication and social interaction among them, the online activities and interactions of the first-generation Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa count as important forms of socialization during and after work. Thus, I apply Low's framework of spatializing culture to study these Facebook groups as alternative, digital "resting" spaces. Even though these spaces also host certain business activities, I am only interested in analyzing their purpose as leisure/resting spaces for the Vietnamese immigrants. Therefore, I only focus on those members' interactions that are related to leisure and socialization, and not business or work. The field notes taken while participating in the Facebook groups and studying how daily routines or interactions among the members can reveal insights that direct, individual interviews and observations cannot uncover. This insight emphasizes how online spaces function as another essential part of the social lives of first-generation Vietnamese people outside and during their traditional working hours. As a result, interaction in this digital resting space also needs documentation and analysis.

Socioscape and mediascape of Vietnamese-Czech Facebook groups

When studying the purposes and functions of the major Facebook groups for the Vietnamese transnational community in the Czech Republic, and in Sapa specifically, to some extent, the online space operates similarly to that of the physical space: a combination of business operations and more informal, casual non-business-related interactions that occur side by side. Businesses in Facebook groups are often taken up by female members who dominate the sales of homemade products and traditional medicines sourced from natural herbs. The scale of such businesses is usually not large since they are often either home run businesses or convenient extensions of the physical stores in Sapa (see Figure 8). Most Facebook groups allow advertising posts; therefore, a large part of the group is inundated with such posts. The advertising posts serve to remind the Facebook members of the services and products of the business while also sharing updates of new offers or informing about operational changes. Usually, for advertising posts that appear daily in the group, there is little to no interaction with them; this observation accounts for only public and direct engagement with the posts, since I was not able to track whether personal messages were also sent to the seller's inbox nor I was able to observe the number of people who viewed the posts.

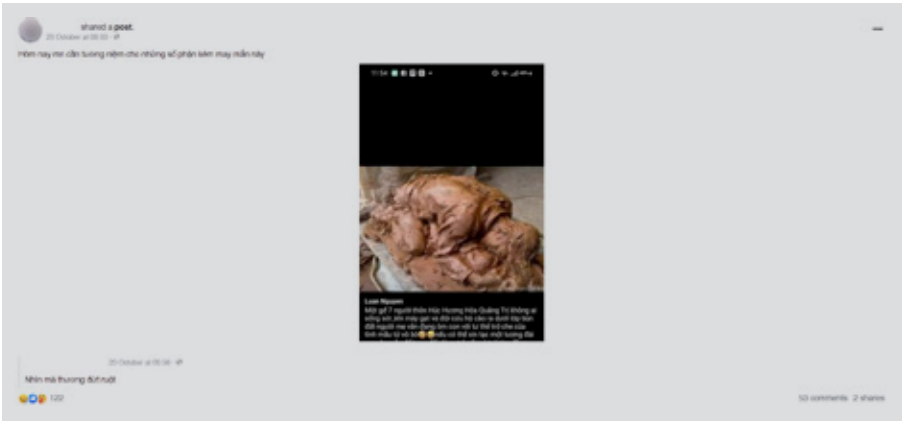

Figure 7. A shared post in the group Cho Sapa tai Sec (Sapa Market in the Czech Republic) commemorating the lives lost during the flood season in Central Vietnam (Le 2020). These informative posts across multiple Facebook groups run by Vietnamese immigrants in the Czech Republic help them keep in touch with contemporary situations or updates back in Vietnam.

Figure 8. An advertisement post in the Facebook group Cho Sapa tai Sec (Sapa Market in the Czech Republic) from a food business owner for traditional sweet desserts from Hai Phong province, Vietnam (Hoa Sua Praha 2020). The dessert is available at a physical Sapa café called Hoa Sua (Milkwood Pine Flower) but can also be ordered for take-away by Vietnamese merchants working at Sapa market.

Besides business-related posts, the rest of the posts on these Facebook groups provide content that supports the socialization and connections within the Czech Vietnamese community. On the one hand, these groups often act as information centres where people get updated with daily news in Vietnamese (see Figure 7) or where they go to ask for help and advice from the larger community. On the other hand, the groups also provide alternative forms of entertainment for the community. For entertainment, throughout the day, multiple groups and individuals would share on these social media Livestream videos of themselves singing and performing music. These music performances can vary between solo singing shows and group acts. The majority of them are made by amateur performers in the karaoke style.

The settings for these kinds of mini shows are not very complicated. One would often see one or two singers or performers on the computer screen, with the backdrop of a plain wall in domestic space dotted with lights from a moving disco ball or a small band who would provide live music with their keyboards and guitars in a small, decorated music venue. The music choice is predominantly Vietnamese, catering to the first generation of older Vietnamese immigrants, who are usually uninterested in contemporary international music styles. Vietnamese *bolero* is a particularly popular music genre that singers often Livestream on Facebook groups. This genre is a peculiar Vietnamese version of bolero, often colloquially known as *Nhac Vang* ("yellow music" or "golden music"), which took its influence from the Hispanic originator during the 1950s and blended it with traditional Southern Vietnam music during the Vietnam War era (Taylor 2000). Bolero songs are romantic, slow, and sad, often used to poetically express themes of love and daily life. The genre reflects the war times and political unrest from the 1950s to 1970s (ibid.). Thus, it is connected more with the upbringing and childhood of the older generations of Vietnamese immigrants out of nostalgia. The music choice is significant as it carries cultural memories of the wartime past. In this popular music genre, there are pieces of oral stories and memories embedded into it which enable for the Vietnamese immigrants to develop a perspective where they can feel they are more than just people who come from "rice paddies" (Nguyen 2018, 177).

The livestreaming of karaoke sessions on Facebook groups illustrates the intersections of the digital and physical resting spaces. As the videos are posted through the day, they act as alternative forms of entertainment for mid-work as well as post-work break time for the merchants. After work, the lack of interactive social activities is this way made up for by engagement in online

entertainment provided by other community members. Perhaps, given the nature of Vietnamese immigrants' working schedules, the activity of performing and watching karaoke videos during the day acts as an alternative to dancing and playing badminton in the park that Mrs. Hoa missed from Vietnam. At the same time, the content of these posts also represents the reliving of the times in Vietnam by way of traditional music genres.

Karaoke singing holds an important role for the Asian community, both at home and overseas, such as the Asian-American community in Deborah Wong and Mai Elliot's study of Asian American popular music (1988). For Asian American immigrants, karaoke is a great social ritual that "allows anyone to be a star for a few moments, and it can negotiate the potential wasteland between being Asian and being Asian American" (Wong and Elliot 1988, 156). However, for different communities, karaoke can hold profoundly different meanings and functions (ibid., 164). In the context of Vietnamese immigrants in the Czech Republic, online amateur karaoke performances of Vietnamese popular music of the past can also act as a substitute for their offline counterparts (i.e., live performances), which are a common socialization strategy during social gatherings in Vietnam, something that is not so feasible given the work culture of immigrants in Czech Republic. Here, the construction of a digital resting space on Facebook reflects again the need for a social life outside of work and for maintaining ethnic identity through various content originating from Vietnam. Furthermore, by way of performing and listening to the narratives embedded in the songs, Vietnamese migrants "can be transported back to an imagined Vietnam that no longer exists, or they can project themselves into uniquely immigrant versions" of the successful migration stories from the host country (ibid., 164). Vietnamese karaoke performance becomes a travel story told from a first-person perspective in which both the listeners and the performers temporarily escape from reality of hardworking migrants and engage in nostalgia for an imagined homeland or temporarily experience an imagined, ideal present.

Norms and stigmas

While employing critical discourse analysis, the close study of texts on the Facebook group, just like verbal social interaction in the case of the physical rest areas, includes examining written materials from both micro levels of word choices and macro levels of the overall structure and content (Kress and Hodge 1979; Fowler 1991; Fairclough 2000). Among the interactions occurring online in the chosen Facebook groups, sexual unfaithfulness is deemed a very sensitive

matter whenever it occurs and is reported in the groups, which happens rather often. It is also among the posts with the highest engagement rates, averaging in 100–200 comments per post. As a witness and reader of these posts during my fieldwork, I was able to observe specific patterns. The accusation posts included both textual explanations and digital media evidence ranging from screenshots of messages, video recordings, and voice recordings. The posting person would use the cheating couple's personal Facebook profile photos without blurring out their faces.

To the online community members, the reaction to these posts was that infidelity is unacceptable, especially if a person already has children with the partner they cheated on. One post I collected during digital fieldwork in the group Cho Sapa tai Sec (Sapa Market in the Czech Republic) brought up the case of a husband taking out collateral mortgages to finance his wife's immigration process to the Czech Republic. He later found out that she had left him and their two children for another man she had met in her new country. Reading through the comments, I noticed the consensus was against the cheating woman. "This woman is a hussy [*ranh ma*]", one commented, "acting as if she did not have a husband or any children" ("Cai Con Nay Gian ..." 2020). "Can any sisters share with me this girl's Facebook?" another inquired, and her request was met with an immediate screenshot image of the cheating woman's personal Facebook profile ("Co Chi Nao Chia ..." 2020). Another commenter advised, "I recommend that you do not regret leaving night moths [*buom dem*] like this one; they do not belong to the human category. If you are honest and kind, there are nice women out there in the world for you. Find a better mother for your two kids. I wish the three of you great health and peace. Live calmly. Consequences will come to those who do not appreciate what they had" ("Thoi Bo Di Tiec ..." 2020). The comment gathered six thumbs-ups in agreement. In this instance, the commenter had used an analogy of a creature active at night, comparing it to the sneaky cheating woman. In the Vietnamese language, this analogy is commonly used with a negative connotation to refer to call girls who are active at night on the streets, and waving at male passers-by to offer sexual services.

As it is necessary for ethnographic data to be interpreted against the background of a societal context, I have located the patterns of discourse found in these recorded texts within a wider social context to see the relationship with the existing Vietnamese Czech immigrant social structures (Burawoy et al. 2000). Infidelity is a sensitive issue and guarantees large engagement from the online community in the Vietnamese immigrant Facebook group because it closely

relates to immigration patterns and work cultures among the whole Vietnamese immigrant community. In instances of infidelity occurring within the Sapa ethnoburb community, a person was often cheated on during the separation period of the couple. Within the Vietnamese immigrant community, it is not rare, initially, during the immigration process, for a family to be separated for a certain time.

In many families, the husband is the first to immigrate to the Czech Republic to work, earn money, and obtain a stable work visa before his wife and children can join him later from Vietnam on a family reunion visa. Thus, the separation time can contribute to the possibility of infidelity among men and women in the Vietnamese immigrant community in the Czech Republic. The issue is especially sensitive for women, as they are more often on the receiving end of unfaithfulness. With this specific Vietnamese immigration pattern, an imbalanced gender power dynamic exists between the two partners of a marriage. The person who immigrates first to the Czech Republic has the time and resources to establish themselves socially and economically in the Vietnamese immigrant community. Relationships and connections become a soft power that one has over the other partner still residing in Vietnam. When the other partner arrives in the Czech Republic, they would have to rely on the one with connections in the Czech Republic to help them find jobs and settle into their new life. Such a process would require a significant amount of trust between the two. Not only that, just as with Mrs. Hoa's comment about the motivations for immigration (see above), many Vietnamese from smaller provinces work hard toward successful immigration in search of economic opportunities and personal stability. In this context, the initial migratory separation not only presents a sacrifice, but it also works as an investment in the future of the family. Consequently, when cheating happens, the damage can be more remarkable as it affects the family structure that one strives to maintain.

Hung Cam Thai's extensive study of international marriages among the Vietnamese diaspora community in the United States is relevant to this discussion about gender relations, marriage, and migration (2008). As he analyzed unions between Vietnamese men living in the United States and the Vietnamese women living in Vietnam who marry them, he anticipated that once the women unite with their husbands through migration, "all of them will proceed with their marital life according to the politics of kinship, familial piety, and obligations, regardless of their geographical identity or class status" (ibid., 144). He realized in this regard that "transnational mobilities can simultaneously challenge as well

as reinforce patriarchy" (ibid., 145). The women could find themselves faced with different cultural patterns in the new host country, but they would still be burdened by the Vietnamese culture and tradition where "divorce is stigmatized and where saving face is a sacred activity" (ibid., 145). However, it is important to distinguish the differences in migration patterns between Thai's case studies and the ones observed within the Vietnamese diaspora in the Czech Republic. The men who migrated to the Czech Republic already came from established marriages and would wait for the rest of their families to join them after a few years. Nevertheless, several factors that Thai identifies in his study, such as "familial surveillance across transnational social fields", or judgements from the Vietnamese community overseas, and their pressures against divorce, could be helpful for future studies regarding the connection between marriage, infidelity, and gender relations in the context of the Vietnamese immigrant family models in the Czech Republic.

The scene and engagement with the types of social media posts about infidelity among Vietnamese people in the Czech Republic resemble an online public trial in which the accused is shamed and has their identity publicized to others. Through observing the consistent presentation of posts exposing infidelity and the disapproving online public engagement, I was able to identify sexual faithfulness or fidelity as an upheld value and a powerful norm established within the Czech Vietnamese community. A person needs to adhere to this acceptable group conduct, and those who go against the expected norm would suffer from informal social sanction. The social sanction for violating such norms includes involuntary public exposure of personal information and online public shaming. In some instances, online exposure can result in follow-up video recordings of confrontation in the physical world posted to the group. Here, the digital space resting area becomes a place where new norms and stigmas are established and sustained through online interaction among first-generation Vietnamese immigrants. Moreover, the consequences and sanctions of such stigmas do not play out exclusively online but also inform and influence actions happening in physical spaces.

The digital resting space as an extension of the physical resting space

While the case study of social relations centring on the benches in Sapa shows how these interactions play out within personal social networks, the Facebook group's observations reveal how similar kinds of social exchanges function within a more extensive online network of Vietnamese immigrants

in Sapa and the Czech Republic in general. When reviewing the ethnography of internet users, researchers often discuss questions regarding the strength of binding commitments made in online settings compared to offline settings. Some researchers view the internet as a decentered and unlocalized "network of networks" (Hannerz 1996). However, when combining the data from the online ethnographic work with the data I collected in the context of offline fieldwork, I identified the connection between online social activities and physical social activities as being parts of a larger social whole (Miller and Slate 2000). Online, the sense of community is not only preserved but also further extended. I view the internet community existing in the Czech Vietnamese Facebook groups as an extension of the rest areas I observed physically in Sapa. It appears that the interactions between community members online help fill the gap left by the lack of larger-scale physical socialization after work in Sapa (Kozinets 2010, 22, 23). There is a flow of information going from the physical world to the digital world and back. After the community gets informed of current events in the physical space through the Facebook group posts, they would discuss and form opinions about it online and offline, including in Sapa's rest areas. Similarly, exposing posts online can have direct consequences in the relationships between certain members in the community and on other people's perception of them. In the digital world, community building and ethnic identity construction also go hand in hand: "unique characteristics of communities of immigrants – such as shared histories, cultural values, experiences, common country of origin, and offline interaction – help shape the nature and dynamics of their interactions online" (Navarrete 2006).

Active online communities, such as the Facebook groups I observed and participated in, have emerged increasingly concentrated across many platforms and for every conceivable type of community of people to find their "own" (Goffman 1963). Such communities act as safe spaces and closed environments to facilitate important collective identity work (Creek and Dunn 2015). It can be argued that membership of both the physical place of Sapa and the online space of the Vietnamese immigrant community contributes to the on-going process of "creating new identities through the creative appropriation of parts of each contradictory identity" (Broad, Crawley, and Foley 2004; Creek 2013). While playing the role of merchants in Sapa, these same people are also able to construct their social identity as members of the Vietnamese community in Czech Republic by interacting and socializing with each other during and after work hours.

Because the time span for digital ethnography work is limited, the observations mainly serve to offer a slice of daily life interaction on Facebook among Sapa ethnoburb community members specifically, and among larger Vietnamese Czech community in general. As such, the findings are also not to be overgeneralized but rather regarded as an initial critical insight into the implications of online resting spaces' social constructions through off-work socializing activities happening there. Nevertheless, applying the approach helped me further expand on established theory since it allowed me to investigate and analyze another resting space essential to Vietnamese immigrant merchants' social lives. Furthermore, the photographic documentation of their daily life interactions with physical space combined with observations of their online activities allow me to give a diaristic view of what a full day of a Vietnamese community member in Sapa looks like. Through this view, I was able to see how cultural memories and routines took place and which roles they played in the social construction of physical and digital spaces.

Conclusion

Through observing and analyzing online and offline socializations happening outside of work, I identify the resting space as a crucial site for identity construction and community building for first-generation Vietnamese immigrants in Sapa. On the one hand, the physical construction of the resting spaces in Sapa creates temporary backstage areas away from one's work life. On the other, the data shows that community members also connect and uphold a sense of ethnic identity in these resting spaces through exchanging personal memories and cultural practices. Such interactions further help one's geographic transition from Vietnam to become a part of the immigrant community in the Czech Republic. Especially for the new immigrants in the Czech Republic and to the Sapa community, the rest areas provide opportunities to form new friendships via routinized interactions.

For the immigrant community in Sapa, work takes up large parts of social life. Thus, the physical and social construction of resting areas there is born out of the need to carve out space for one's social life when work life become all-consuming. Traditional off-work socialization or clear separation between work and personal space become privileged resources that are not as accessible among the immigrant community due to the nature of their work and their social situation in general. As a result, relationships formed at Sapa's resting spaces

appropriated from working areas take on meanings that are more intimate and familial than casual.

The shift in focus to the online mediascape and socioscape of Sapa opens up a potential direction of ethnographic work that views online Facebook groups as alternative digital leisure areas for immigrant communities. The Facebook groups of Vietnamese Czech immigrants in Sapa, among others, act as an extension to their physical spaces. These social media host a mix of both business and a more casual and intimate level of interactions among the community members. The field notes gathered from online interactions on social media demonstrate how Vietnamese immigrants in the Czech Republic share cultural values and nostalgia for homeland through music performances in traditional Vietnamese genres or by posting news updates from Vietnam. The online space is also where larger-scale social interactions happen, contributing to the formation and preservation of certain cultural, gender norms, and social stigmas within the immigrant community that are restricting to some of its members.

The research offers an exploratory look at Vietnamese Czech immigrant socializations within Sapa ethnoburbs outside of the working sphere by focusing on the resting space as a socially constructed site and embedded with meanings. However, the data and analysis should not represent how the other ethnoburbs in other parts of the Czech Republic, or internationally, behave. The case study thus focuses more on the social organization aspect of this specific community, especially in terms of the dynamics of its social life rather than seeing it as something static and fixed (Firth 1951). Moreover, the research offers another perspective to the discussions and representations of Sapa in the context of cultural spatialization while highlighting the importance of online socialization for the immigrant community (Li 2012).

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WHO KILLED NEW YORK CITY?: IMAGINATION, AUTHENTICITY, AND VIOLENCE IN CITY SOUVENIRS

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Abstract: *Despite decreasing crime numbers over the last 30 years, for some, New York City still has a reputation as an inherently violent city. In various souvenir shops across the city, select souvenirs indulge in this reputation by depicting New York City as a place where grittiness, violence, and crime are essential to the experience of "real" New York. This essay meditates on the implications of such souvenirs, as they play on the fears, desires, and imagination of travellers. To illustrate these points, I use a series of black-and-white photos made in December 2020 depicting scenes from a cluster of souvenir shops in Lower Manhattan.*

Keywords: *urban anthropology, visual anthropology, tourist imaginaries, place and space, authenticity, violence, New York City*

Introduction

At the intersection of New York City's Little Italy and Chinatown is a dense cluster of rival souvenir stores selling identical items: New York snow globes, Statue of Liberty figures, Donald Trump bobbleheads, NYPD hats, "personalized" keychains, and a host of items with the well-known "I love NY" logo. These shops are all brightly lit, tightly packed, and filled floor to ceiling with merchandise that boldly declares "I went to New York and have the objects to

Figure 1. Mulberry and Hester at the intersection of Chinatown and Little in Lower Manhattan. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

prove it". One shop plays songs by rappers Post Malone and Lil Nas X, and another shop deploys battery-powered stuffed animals at the store's entrance, where they bark, chirp, and yap ad nauseam. Somewhere in the distance the first four bars of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" play in constant repetition, and the melody blends with passing sidewalk conversations in a wide variety of languages.

These kinds of souvenir shops are mainstays near Times Square, Broadway, Little Italy, and the neighbourhood around One World Trade Center – iconic areas that have high tourist value but struggle to be seen as the elusive *real New York* by many locals. Over the last ten years, columnists have bemoaned the death of New York City, arguing it has lost its distinct *je ne sais quoi* to corporate interests (Baker 2018; Baker 2017; Moss 2017). It is a sentiment among both New Yorkers and urban scholars that hyper-gentrification and widespread commercialization has stripped New York of its gritty, old-school soul (Zukin 2010, 1). This *new* New York can be seen in the commercial behemoth of Hudson

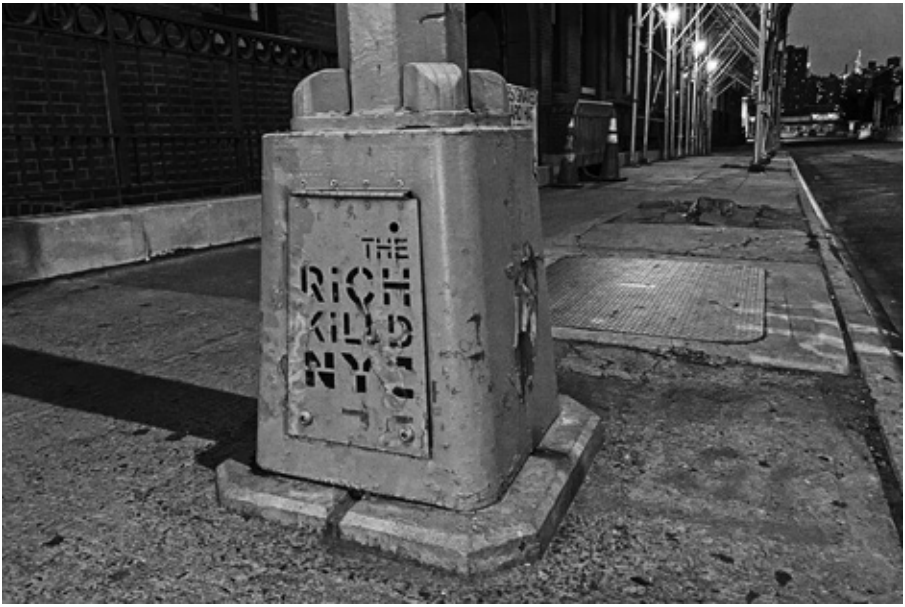

Figure 2. Stenciled graffiti with "the rich killd [sic] NYC" on a streetlamp in Dumbo, Brooklyn. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2021.

Yards (Sennett 2020, 12), a "Disneyfied" Times Square, or the capitalist sprawl of Billionaire's Row[1]. It can be seen in the torrent of new banks and designer stores, some of which occupy the formerly legendary spaces of punk music venue, CBGBs, and East Village dive bar, Mars Bar. Over the last few years, a recurring graffiti tag has appeared throughout the city's boroughs on building walls, sidewalks, and public fixtures, with stenciled lettering that "the rich killd [sic] NYC" (Figure 2). Although violent crime is down nearly 78% in the last 27 years (NYPD CompStat Unit 2020), some New York City souvenirs – along with popular film and TV – still often play into the idea that New York City is a hard, unforgiving, and inherently dangerous place. New York City's turn towards neoliberal interests has changed the city into a more commercial and homogenized urban space – and some would argue cleaner and safer – but I will

[1] Billionaire's Row is a growing group of luxury skyscrapers lining the southern edge of New York's Central Park.

present here the idea that the imaginaries of a violent New York City still live in both the minds of tourists and in some souvenirs that sell the city as a more dangerous version of its former self.

This project examines a particular subset of souvenirs that tend to exploit urban grittiness and proximity to danger as an authentic New York City experience. Sold at the nexus of Chinatown and Little Italy – two neighbourhoods with deep ethnic histories – these souvenirs contribute to the collective experience of "authenticity" in a dense, urban geography where the streets themselves contribute to the "delicate fabric of social uses and cultural meanings" (Zukin 2010, 219). This photo essay is a microethnography that heavily incorporates photography; while it uses participant observations and brief street interviews, it is not meant to function as an exhaustive ethnography of Lower Manhattan. The use of photography illustrates scenes I observed on three occasions in December 2020 as international travel was limited and no COVID-19 vaccines were available to the public.

Regarding the term *imaginary*, Claudia Strauss (2006) writes that it is primarily understood as an anthropological concept from three theoretical models: Cornelius Castoriadis's interpretation that an imaginary is the cultural ethos of a place and "the central world view associated with a particular group" (ibid., 329); the Jacques Lacan viewpoint that "imaginary" is an individual person's fantasy built on illusion emerging from psychological need (ibid., 328); or philosopher Charles Taylor's definition that the "modern social imaginary" is the way we imagine our society based off deeply held and widely shared cultural and symbolic models (Strauss 2006, 329, 331). Considering the few examples here and the many more omitted, the term *imaginary* has become obfuscated by ambiguity and inconsistent usage (Stankiewicz 2016) and in the realm of tourism, Michael Di Giovine writes that "there are as many tourist imaginaries as tourists" (2014, 436).

While these many interpretations are all relevant to the discussion of the imaginary in the anthropological sense, Noel Salazar merges "tourism imaginaries" into a definition of "socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and are used as world-making and world-shaping devices" (Salazar 2012, 864). This definition encompasses both Lacan's definition of an individual set of beliefs and expectations with Castoriadis and Taylor's definitions, which are more broadly societal and cultural. Salazar's definition is rooted in the imaginary of place, as imaginaries often manifest outside of the mind and in the material world, where they make

tangible abstract narratives of places and ideas (Di Giovine 2014). In a similar vein, B. D. Wortham-Galvin (2008, 32) writes that "places are both real and imagined: they depend on mental association as well as physical shape and character". Tourism is an act comprised of both myth and materiality, so place becomes the theatre in which tourists perform their imaginaries (Baerenholdt 2017) and turn their ideas into lived experiences.

Two imaginaries must be considered in relation to this article: those that are both produced by souvenir manufacturers and peddled by the souvenir shops, and also the imaginaries of the individual tourists and the expectations they import from their pre-constructed understanding (Leite 2014, 436) of New York City. Here I will consider the ways that tourists broadly imagine New York, Chinatown, and Little Italy, though some of these imaginaries will extend to how visitors imagine the United States. "New York" is both a city and a state, but "New York City" and "New York" will be used interchangeably here, as the context here is entirely about the city of New York.

For many, New York is an urban imaginary that indulges us to be the fantasy versions of ourselves: New York allows us to say what we want to say, wear what we want to wear, or be as loud, abrasive, and bold as we can be. In this tourist bubble (Salazar and Graburn 2014, 93) of chaos and imagination also exists a paradox of anonymity: it is easy to blend into a vast sea of humans and buildings in New York City, as it provides an anonymous social canopy that may not be possible in smaller towns across the country and world (Annes and Redlin 2012, 257). Freedom of identity thrives in places where a person is no longer tethered to their quotidian or normative obligations, and New York City – even for a brief vacation – can cultivate this newfound sense of self-expression as part of an "identity quest ... to a place whose physical and/or social qualities are consonant with his or her inner proclivities" (Zelinksy 2001, 139).

Black and White Photography

The photographs presented here are solely in black and white. Aesthetically, these souvenir shops are filled with thousands of mostly small objects fighting for limited physical and visual space. While colour photos would show the colour and hue of these many objects, for our purposes here the colour of a souvenir is ultimately not as important as the social and symbolic space it occupies. So instead, these black-and-white photos ease the viewer's gaze of chaotic scenes by

Figure 3. An American flag is used as a brand logo for a piece of luggage sold in a Lower Manhattan souvenir shop. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

removing colour from an already chaotic setting – this choice allows the viewer to meditate on the quantitative elements of *form* and *shape*.

Furthermore, this photo essay is about the way people imagine a store, a city, and a country. It reflects the ways that tourists balance fantasy and reality in a fantastical city. To remove colour and keep these photos in black and white is to conceptually invite a viewer to use their own imagination to colour the city. It is not a didactic declaration of an objective reality, but a request to experience New York City as a tourist and subjective observer. The visual language of black-and-white imagery has a long history in the documentation of war and conflict. As Susan Sontag writes, "There is something predatory in the act of taking a picture" (Sontag 1977, 10). I do not have the space here to pontificate on the philosophy of aesthetics, but I will note that despite the topic of violence in this essay, the photos contained therein have no depiction of violence or suffering. I challenge the viewer to observe and consider the more imaginative qualities of black and white over the "dark vision of humanity" (Duncombe 2016, 49)

Figure 4. A man walks in front of Jay's closed souvenir shop in December 2020. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

that black and white documentary photos often project. So while the photos presented here are not violent themselves, they function as representations of sometimes violent imaginaries of New York City.

T-Shirt as Symbolic Capital

On a cold Sunday afternoon in December 2020, a young woman walked into a souvenir shop in Lower Manhattan and casually asked, "Do you have a 'Fuck you, you fucking fuck' T-shirt?" Without missing a beat, the store's proprietor said plainly, "Yeah, they're right over here" and he walked the woman over to the small corner in the front of the store consisting mostly of garish and crude shirts. The woman was a New York local and not a tourist, though she said she always wanted this shirt. She asked her partner if she should get a larger size so that it drapes, or a smaller size that is more form-fitting. She opted for the larger version and paid $10 cash.

The shop is named Cool T-Shirts, Inc., and it is one of two adjacent stores co-owned by Jay and his father, Makesh, who immigrated to New York City over 40 years ago from Afghanistan (see Figure 5). The shops are at 185 and 187 Hester Street between Mott Street and Mulberry Street, near the diverse intersection of Manhattan's Chinatown and Little Italy. Jay says the "fuck you you fuckin' fuck" shirt is the best-selling item at the store. He points to the six different spots where the shirt hangs on the store's exterior alone. He says it catches people's attention and often makes them laugh, but laughable kitsch and good location is not enough to withstand the pandemic economy: the $10 "fuck you" shirt was one of the store's only six sales for the whole day – a total of $136.93 and a meagre dent in the business's $7,500 monthly rent (temporarily down from $15,000/month). Sales are so bad that he only opens the shop Friday to Sunday, as poor weekday sales don't recoup the money he spends on gas to drive in from Long Island or the hard costs to turn the shop's lights on.

At a shop across the street from Jay's, a vendor paces around inside, then outside, looking for people to walk along the uncrowded sidewalks. Someone stops, fingers through some shirts, and asks for a certain size of a particular shirt. Pictured clockwise from bottom left (see Figure 6) are T-shirts depicting Jimi Hendrix (Seattle guitarist), Nipsey Hussle (slain Los Angeles rapper), Pablo Escobar (Colombian drug lord), and Bruce Lee (Hong Kong–American martial artist and actor). The Bangladeshi merchant is touching a T-shirt that says "Brooklyn" yet the shop is located in Manhattan. It is important to note that none of the men pictured here (including the merchant) are originally from New York or even the East Coast, yet they still live in tourist spaces as an active part of the New York imagination.

All of the people depicted in these T-shirts are men and people of colour who suffered tragic deaths before they reached the age of 45. As entertainers, actors, and even a drug lord, they are seen in some capacity as folk heroes, or in Escobar's case, a folk villain. Hasan El-Shamy writes that folk figures are "depicted as the center of action in real or fictitious accounts of life and living" (El-Shamy 2011, 650–656) and the characteristics embodied by these heroes and villains function as "the marketing of identity traits as commodities for sale" within a tourist landscape (Swain 2014, 186). These T-shirts reinforce the idea that New York City is an experiential place where personal and existential transformation can occur, where people can evolve from ordinary to extra-ordinary and move from safe spaces to violent ones. Souvenirs such as these T-shirts are especially powerful mechanisms for reifying the intangible, as tourists are

constantly finding the proof or evidence that their imaginaries about New York City turn into experiences of urban authenticity (Salazar and Graburn 2014, 31). That all these shirts depict only men subtly implies that New York City is an exciting yet sometimes violent playground for the masculine.

These representations of popular culture sell the idea that life is an active performance to be consumed – one that is risky, dangerous, exhilarating, outward, and transformative. These factors contribute to the ethos of New York as a place where people can indulge in fantasy versions of their lives, and the images of the depicted T-shirt icons can subconsciously reinforce that imaginary to visiting tourists. It makes no difference that these people are not New Yorkers: their imagery and legacy transcends geography. These powerful imaginings of a fluid identity move even more freely than people do, as Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson write, "in a world of diaspora, transnational culture flows, and ... old-fashioned attempts to map the globe as set of culture regions or homelands are bewildered by a dazzling array of postcolonial simulacra, doublings and redoublings" (1992, 10).

In describing the fetishist fantasies by white Western woman of Black Masai men in Kenya, Jonathan Skinner and Dimitrios Theodossopoulos write of George Paul Meiu's research where "the bodies of exotic men can be transformed into value-laden objects of desire that incorporate Western stereotypes about beauty and cruelty, pleasure and danger" (Skinner and Theodossopoulos 2011, 16). Though the explicit connotations of colonial sexualization are not the same here, the visualizations of "exotic" men in the T-shirts represent some element of desire for the purchaser and wearer of the shirt. By wearing the value-laden image of an icon like Hendrix or Lee, the tourist is seen by others as sharing the same physical space with someone from a public mythology; someone who is a cultural icon. This proximity to fame and fantasy boosts the tourist's personality – a geographically centred experience that accumulates "symbolic capital" by ways of ego and personality enhancement (Salazar and Graburn 2014, 17). Kirsten Adkins cites Barbara Bolt, who asks us to consider that imagery has the power to transcend mere representation into performance: "We are asked not simply to experience the image, but to live the image, perhaps

Figure 5 (next two pages). Makesh (lower right), rearranges souvenirs at Cool T-Shirts Inc., the souvenir shop in Lower Manhattan he owns with his son. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.


NAME
SYRINGS
FOR $10.00
$3.99
10=10
SALE
$
YOU Break YOU Pay
Each $7
3 for $20


BROOKLYN
NEW YORK
2=10

Figure 6. A shop owner looks through T-shirts for a potential customer. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

to be the image" (Adkins 2014, 332). As part of the escapist allure of visiting New York City, the shirt becomes a proxy for the power these icons represent, and the person wearing the shirt becomes a vessel for transmitting that power to the people around them.

Some of the suggestive T-shirts found in many NYC souvenir shops (Figure 7) are not specific to New York and would likely be found in many souvenir shops across the country. In addition to incorporating cultural icons, many of these T-shirts depict aggressive language, sexuality, and drug and alcohol consumption, and taken as a whole, they sustain the New York tourist imaginary as a place to be experienced with rebellion and risk (Figure 7).[2] They

[2] These T-shirts (seen in Figure 7) also suggest other meanings that contribute to a more complex but still stereotypical understanding of New York and the US, for example, liberal values (marijuana), and political progressive movements and ideas (Black Lives Matter), mixed with right-wing slogans (Make America Great Again).

Figure 7. T-shirts at a souvenir shop in Lower Manhattan. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

communicate the idea that New York is where you can be the version of yourself you can't be anywhere else, and that you can express yourself freely in public without condemnation from local neighbours, friends, parishioners, schoolmates, or co-workers. The souvenirs become an extension or a multiplication of identity, and as Naomi Leite writes, these purchases indulge imaginaries and "continually crystallize in material form" (Leite 2014, 447).

Chinatown vs Little Italy: "Ethnic Theme Park"

The biggest point of neighbourhood tension was observed when groups of Chinese-American merchants showed up on the streets to sell knockoff handbags and watches (Figure 8) – a practice well known and documented in Chinatown (Guest 2011). Jay and his father say that these merchants are the biggest threat to the neighbourhood's tourist economy. Jays tells me these mobile merchants clutter the street and deter customers from walking into his store:

> By the time a tourist gets to our shop in the middle of the street, they already spent all their money on those bags. Those vendors sell illegally but they scatter before the cops can issue them tickets, and as soon as the cops leave, they're back on the corner in two minutes. They have no overhead like we do. I once got a fine for having the door open while the heater was on inside, and these guys [*points to the handbag sellers*] don't have to deal with any of that bullshit. It's crazy that we are getting punished for trying to do the right thing (personal communication, 6 December 2020)

Jan Lin echoes the same sentiment: "The City of New York has historically been antagonistic toward the ethnic street trader. Mobile vendors and peddlers were perceived to cause street congestion and to compete directly with retail stores occupying private property" (1998, 159). Lin writes that Chinatown experienced an economic downtown in the early 1990s that inspired some Chinatown residents to begin street trading, yet a public suspicion that many street vendors were undocumented immigrants increased negative public perception and discrimination against the group (ibid., 160).

The COVID-19 pandemic has put much of the world's economy into a recession that borders on a depression. In New York City, the confluence of exorbitant city rent prices and widespread unemployment could potentially contribute to an increase of street vendors operating under the informal economy in the near future. But recent reporting by the *New York Times* has shown that even street vendors – under the threat of precarious immigration statuses and a city strapped for cash – cannot escape the dire economy either (Arrendondo and Gonzalez 2020).

It is easy to understand the resentment that Jay and the other shop owners feel: the Chinese-American handbag dealers are much busier and they sell their merchandise at a far higher rate than Jay does. The selling of these bags was the only illegal activity I observed in the area, yet no one can deny their incredible popularity. Tripadvisor and internet forums describe the best ways to obtain counterfeit bags, and for many, getting a Chinatown knockoff is a tourist badge of honour: something that adds to a tourist's experience of the authentic, gritty, and somewhat dangerous New York City experience (Deener 2017, 364). It is an active participation in luxury, illegality, consumerism, and ethnic trade: a perfect encapsulation of a New York fantasy for visitors unaccustomed to any or all of those ideas in their everyday lives.

Tensions between the Chinese-American and Italian-American communities in Lower Manhattan have been long simmering, as various waves of immigration throughout the 20th century pushed and pulled neighbourhood boundaries at various times (Conforti 1996, 834; Krase 2017, 201). Though both Chinatown and Little Italy have become dominated by mainstream commercialization in the last two decades, Little Italy was toured as an authentic New York "ghetto" as recently as the mid-nineties (Conforti 1996). These tours played up derogatory stereotypes of Italians, where the exotic "Other" could be observed and "a lurking danger (as the home of the Mafia) can be sensed" (ibid., 831).

Even today, the souvenirs sold in Little Italy often invoke Italian tropes largely related to *The Godfather*, *The Sopranos*, or a general mafia presence. Kenneth A. Ciongoli and Jay Parini claim that *The Godfather* seems to have held up an image of Italian-American life that has obliterated the reality" (Ciongoli and Parini 1998, xiii), and the movie's lasting legacy has mythologized how people imagine Italian-Americans in New York, both in the past and present. These forces of mythic fantasy are so powerful that Italian-Americans must constantly defend themselves against the cultural assumption that the overarching culture of Italian-Americans "is in its essence criminal" (Gambino 1997, 274). Italian restaurants and pizza places all over New York City are filled with images of *The Godfather*, *Scarface*, *The Sopranos*. These images and souvenirs that glorify organized crime perpetuate the cultural bias against Italian-Americans, which implies "the Mafia myth found in so many films and TV shows about Italian-Americans is taken as history" (Gambino 1997, 272).

As the boundaries between Chinatown and Little Italy ebbed and flowed with much conflict throughout the 19th century, Jerome Krase writes that the ethnic exclusivity of a truly Italian Little Italy ultimately succumbed to the commercial dominance of big-city tourism (2004, 202). The visual collision of Chinese-Americans and Italian-Americans in these neighbourhoods created what Krase damningly defines as "Ethnic Theme Parks", which are performative spaces "preserved as spectacles for the appreciation of tourists" (2004, 36). These spaces maintain the optics of an ethnic enclave without any of its function as a real neighbourhood for and by local Italian-Americans. Within the context of the tourist gaze, these commodified "Ethnic Theme Parks" function as "human zoos" where "the subjects of curiosity are maintained in their live state" (ibid.), and tourists can fulfil the experiential obligation of witnessing so-called "authentic" people in their natural surroundings. Souvenirs that depict

Figure 8. Chinese-American merchants sell knock-off handbags at Mulberry and Hester. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

Italian-American culture as essentially criminal (Figures 9 and 11) actively contribute to the notion of Little Italy as an "Ethnic Theme Park" by commodifying ethnic culture. Through this experience of placemaking and mythologizing stereotyped Italian-American culture, tourists use souvenir-buying as a form of entertainment much like watching *The Godfather* or *Goodfellas*.

Violence as Urban Authenticity

In a 1995 episode of the TV sitcom *Seinfeld*, Kramer sees a bus of German tourists on a local street where he walks with George. He quickly fashions his hand into a gun, presses it into his jacket and forces the "gun" into George's chest, saying "for these German tourists, pretend that I'm robbing you". "Why?" George asks. Kramer replies, "So these people can go home and tell their friends they saw a real New York mugging" (Ackerman 1995). It's a somewhat silly, anecdotal pop-culture reference, but it speaks directly to the idea that the

Figure 9. A mafia-themed souvenir license plate at a souvenir shop on Hester Street. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

authentic experience of New York is one that includes brushes with violence. We can assume no visitor eagerly wants to be the victim of assault in New York City as evidence of some dark tourist experience, which I explain below. However, objects like violent T-shirts and scenarios like the *Seinfeld* episode indicate that the witnessing of some theoretical urban violence would indeed contribute to an "authentically" New York experience.

Ning Wang argues that tourism is a vehicle for people to escape their inauthentic daily lives (1999, 353) "not because they find the toured objects are authentic but simply because they are engaging in non-ordinary activities, free from the constraints of the daily" (ibid., 353). If New York City is a prime destination for fantasy as previously noted, then even extreme, possibly violent departures from the tourist's normalcy could be seen not as a qualitatively good experience, but an *authentic* one, which confirms the participatory realness of the urban experience that stands in direct opposition to the tourist's quotidian lives (Bunten 2014, 150). Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin argue through

Figure 10. A T-shirt perpetuates the idea that New York is still a violent city. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

a Marxist perspective that desire for authenticity in tourism is a "reaction to the alienation felt in everyday modern life" (Handler and Linnekin, in Salazar and Graburn 2014, 151). This desire for authentic experiences is an attempt for tourists to not just witness realness in a new place but to feel authentic themselves (Bunten 2014, 150). To break out of the tourist bubble and into the lived, local environment is what André Jansson describes as "authenticity feel" (2021, 47): interacting with the textures of urban life in a way that makes the tourist "lose oneself" in authentic experience (ibid., 40). Dean MacCannell writes that this "chance to glimpse the real" (2001, 36) is the primary driver for tourism's never-ending quest for authenticity, and it is a focus that both host destinations and traveling visitors actively pursue (Robb 2009, 55).

Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman write that "images of trauma are part of our political economy" (1997, 8), which inevitably influence the ways that tourists will imagine and create narratives about people and places, both local and foreign. Traumatic images subconsciously produce fantasies "about

Figure 11. The T-shirt in the centre depicts the scope of a rifle or gun, with the word *mafia* in its bullseye. The shirt also locates Little Italy. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

what places of violence might smell or feel like" (Robb 2009, 53) and these sentiments are at the heart of dark tourism, which is a growing industry in which tourists travel to destinations where violence and suffering are the main attractions. Dark tourism locations can represent past traumas like the gas chambers at Auschwitz or Alabama's lynching memorial, or present ones, like the witnessing of current suffering on favela tourism tours in Rio or the thousands of tourists who gazed upon New Orleans as it still suffered from Hurricane Katrina (Robb 2009, 57). Both MacCannell (2001) and Wang (1999) claim that society's increasing desire for authenticity stems from the alienation produced by late-capitalism (Olsen 2002, 160), which allows dark tourism to push the boundaries of social and ethical boundaries in search of something that is unmanufactured by the existing commercial culture.

In New York City, the 9/11 Memorial has turned Lower Manhattan into one of the world's most visited dark tourist sites. Twenty years later, millions of yearly visitors tour Ground Zero and its surrounding areas, which include

Figure 12. A group of people walk down Mulberry Street in December 2020. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

Chinatown and Little Italy, memorializing and grieving the nearly 3,000 New Yorkers who died on September 11, 2001. These visitors have "responded [to 9/11] in ways that evoked both mourning and tourism – they looked shocked, they cried, and they took photographs of what they saw" (Dalton 2015, 153). While admittedly on the distant fringes of dark tourism, the T-shirts sold in New York souvenir shops that play into violent imaginaries still exploit the urban expectations of visitors touring New York City. As powerful carriers of material culture (Graburn and Salazar 2014, 31), these souvenirs "capture and confirm the essence of the imaginary that [the tourists] brought with them" (ibid., 31). When considering the element of violence in the discussion of what is *real* New York versus what is not, tourists must be careful, as Kjell Olsen deftly observes that "when atrocity becomes a recreational attraction, visitors are themselves inflicting further violence as they search out unique and 'authentic' experiences" (Olsen 2002, 54).

Figure 13. Jay watches the security cameras in his shop, hoping for customers to walk in. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

COVID-19

Jay constantly watches the security cameras, his head bobbing between his phone and the TV. The dire conditions for the tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic makes Jay obsess about every potential customer. A group of four male tourists walk by the shop, and one briefly stops to rub the fabric of a white sweatshirt with "New York City" embroidered on the chest. Jay sees the group and he bolts outside. The tourists ask Jay how much for the sweatshirt. $24.99, Jay says, and the man scoffs and walks away while saying "it was twenty over there" and walks in the opposite direction of 'over there.'

"That's what it's like all day, every day", he says in December 2020. Jay gave me permission to photograph the souvenir shop over the course of two full days in December; I had permission to observe and interview customers so long as I did not interfere with a sale. When customers were present I observed from a distance and approached Jay after they left the store. I spoke with Jay

Figure 14. A for-sale souvenir shop on Mulberry Street in December 2020. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

throughout the day as he waited for approaching customers; through casual, recorded interviews Jay spoke candidly to me about his experience as a souvenir merchant.

In a different interaction with another group of prospective customers, two Spanish-speaking women sneer at a blue hoodie when Jay says he could sell it to them for $7. When they walk out of the shop Jay tells me that $7 is less than his cost for the hoodie, but he's at a point where he simply needs to get rid of merchandise. "Right now I'm not looking to profit, I'm looking for money to pay rent", he says.

The pandemic has brutalized Jay's business and every month he goes deeper into debt because he and his father must pay rent from their own pockets. At an average of $70 to $100 in sales per day they are open (Friday through Sunday), they now average $1,000 a month in sales. Jay and every other souvenir merchant I observed at Hester Street and Mulberry Street all hustle at every remote chance to make even a small sale. Jay said that at the end of December 2020 he and

Figure 15. A man carries balloons down Hester Street. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

his father would reassess the shop's viability – if they determine that the shop could not survive the winter, they will close down and put their merchandise into storage with the hope of opening a new store when the pandemic subsides and tourism recovers. On the second weekend I went to visit Jay, both of the shops were closed without any sign to indicate when they would re-open.

In a brief phone interview with Jay in April 2021, he says that they are still technically in business, but barely hanging on. His father opens the shop only on occasion and with no consistency: "Sometimes on a Friday, sometimes on a Saturday, but I don't even go there anymore. There's no tourists: who's gonna buy New York stuff now?" He says they are still paying upwards to $7,500 a month in rent and the few days the store is open, they make "not even $100" in sales" per day even after the weather is starting to get nicer and the city is slowly starting to open up. He now works for someone else, picking up shifts as a cashier at a local liquor store on Long Island. He and his father have still not decided whether or not they will close for good.

Figure 16. Jay waits for customers outside his souvenir shop on Hester Street. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

Conclusion

I observed two tourists scoop random handfuls of keychains into buckets, and between the two of them they bought 40 for $40. I observed a family look through a shelf of T-shirts, then briskly walk away, annoyed, when they discovered they couldn't be purchased for $2 each. I watched three young women haggle with Jay for two minutes over sweatpants, and after he offered them for 50% off they walked away and said "we'll be back", but never did return. From what I observed, customers and potential customers showed they simply did not value the objects in these shops beyond them being low-cost commodities. Shops like Cool T-Shirts prompt cheap and easy spending, and for the most part, the souvenir purchases made at these shops never seem to be considered with careful intention.

The objects here rely on easily reducible notions of New York that don't challenge the city's stereotypes. Based on the observed purchasing behaviour and my brief interviews at the point of sale, these souvenirs were not found to

Figure 17. A Statue of Liberty figure in the window of a closed souvenir shop in Little Italy. Photo: Ryan Christopher Jones, 2020.

be, as Kristen K. Swanson and Dallen J. Timothy argue, "memento[s]...with heightened meaning and symbolic transcendence" (2012, 491). Tiny Statues of Liberty, vulgar T-shirts, plastic keychains, Trump bubbleheads, and personalized license plates are unlikely to be the kinds of sentimental souvenirs that will live forever on a family's storied walls or cherished shelves, but instead will end up in drawers or boxes of accumulated clutter. In these souvenir shops, tourists appear to favour convenience and speed over ritual (Salazar and Graburn 2014, 11) and meaning-making (Swanson and Timothy 2012, 490), as these objects represent the part of American culture that is mass produced, cheaply sourced and quickly forgettable. They represent apathetic impulse buys over thoughtful memory building, and fast tourism – like fast food – is a quick fix when you need something now.

Souvenir shops like Cool T-Shirts are ubiquitous and repeatable spaces that cater to the transient visitor. They do not make tourists feel like their

experience of New York was special or custom, because if someone doesn't purchase a "I Love NY" shirt at Jay's shop, they can do that at another twenty shops in the vicinity that sell the exact same one. In Marc Augé's terms (1995, 86) these souvenir shops are the archetype of "non-places": supermodern spaces born of late-capitalist consumption; "banal utopia[s]" (ibid., 95) that "are there to be passed through" (ibid., 104). They sell commodities with "few emotional attachments" (Swanson and Timothy 2012, 490), and while there has historically been a great need for mass-produced souvenirs, one must wonder how shops that primarily sell them will survive in the wake of COVID-19.

The September 11 terrorist attacks forever changed the way that both New Yorkers and the rest of the world imagine New York City: the resilient and intractable city of dreams was dealt an incalculable nightmare that forced the city to consider its vulnerabilities. In this meditation on violence and imagination, I'm left to wonder how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the way New York City is imagined in the future. As of late July 2021, over 33,000 people died from COVID-19 in New York City – over ten times the number of deaths from 9/11. Will Elmhurst Hospital or city morgues become new, unsettling destinations for future dark tourists to New York City? Will there be COVID-19 memorials in the city for tourists to mourn and grieve, and will there be souvenirs sold? What will authentic experiences look like after much of our social world has collapsed under the weight of a global pandemic? Will there still be an appetite for mass-produced souvenirs, or will travel-hungry tourists be more focused on more meaningful or experiential remembrances? Conversely, will New York become more a place of pure play disconnected from the trauma much of the world shared throughout the pandemic? How has the pandemic changed our concepts of travel, exploration, and foreignness when much of the world continues to find itself in various states of social suffering? New York City was the first and hardest hit city in the world to experience widespread devastation from COVID-19 – for people who will soon be traveling to New York again, how will evolving notions of authenticity, fantasy, risk, and danger live in the imagination of a New York tourist in a post-pandemic world?

Crude T-shirts and kitsch souvenirs may seem like unconventional objects to investigate complex social themes, but they are material extensions of the ways that we make meaning in new places. Augé's earlier declaration that modernity produces objects of little emotional value is challenged by Jane Bennett, who argues that things – even cheap, tacky things like souvenirs – are vibrant and vivid entities. As was demonstrated through examples of T-shirts in

this essay, these inexpensive and man-made items can "exceed their status as objects" and even "manifest traces of independence or aliveness" (2010). Cheap T-shirts are seemingly simple objects, but once bought and worn, are given new life and transport ideas about one location back to a tourist's home, where their physical presence will continue to both challenge and reinforce how the tourist imagines New York as lived experience (Swanson and Timothy 2012, 490).

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Chris Hann and Jonathan Parry (eds.)
Industrial Labor on the Margins of Capitalism: Precarity, Class, and the Neoliberal Subject

Berghahn Books, 2018

Over the last 50 years, we have witnessed drastic, pervasive neoliberal political and economic changes affecting people's lives globally. The increasing competition has restructured economic activities, and the manufacturing industry has largely moved to the "Global South" and to postsocialist societies, where labor is cheaper. Nation-states are pushing structural changes, eradicating public services and social welfare, as well as increasing privatization and deregulation. Neoliberal legislations deepened previous inequalities, moved social responsibility from the state to the individual, increased the power of financial institutions, and decreased social and labor protection. Unions became weaker in power, and labor precarity increased. The concept of precarity encompasses the temporary and casual work arrangements and the feelings of vulnerability, displacement, and hopelessness which come from such insecure existential conditions. Uncertainties regarding employment and livelihoods create an atomized, individualized and an isolated workforce with limited rights (Kasmir 2018).

In *Industrial Labor on the Margins of Capitalism*, industrial anthropologists of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology ethnographically examine the casualization of work, laboring conditions, and the diminishing power of unions in the industrial settings of the Global South and postsocialist societies (referred to in the book as "the margins of capitalism"). These places in Bulgaria, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Philippines, Russia, Trinidad, and Zambia are marginal by their geographic location being set apart from the historical centres of industrial capitalism. Despite being named "marginal", as the book's authors demonstrate, the global neoliberal changes affect the livelihoods of workers in these countries at least as strongly and roughly as those in the West.

The 14 chapters of the book, positioned as autonomous articles, offer diverse ethnographic studies covering issues of class fragmentation, subcontracting, declining power of organized labor, and the role of the nation-state in conjunction with workforce casualization. Thematically, Ching Kwan Lee, Eeva Kesküla, Tommaso Trevisani, Christian Strümpell, Andrew Sanchez, and Michael Peter Hoffman in their chapters explore the formation of two distinct groups of workers, permanent employees, and contract workers, and how this division effects class consciousness and different domains of workers' everyday life. In all workplaces analyzed in this publication, production costs have been reduced by replacing permanent employment with contract workers with curtailed rights and lower pay. Considering this fact, Dimitra Kofti, Dragomir Rudnyckyj, Elisabeth Schober, and I-Chieh Fang in their contributions examine the role of the neoliberal nation-state regarding the weakening power of organized labor and workers' rights, as national legislations and policies promote the flexibility of the labor market and introduce cuts to welfare. Rebecca Prentice, Jeremy Morris and

Sarah Hinz, and Grace Carswell and Geert de Neve in their texts explore the neoliberal discourse accompanying precarious work and how skills alone no longer guarantee employment.

Further, Eeva Kesküla, Tommaso Trevisani, Dimitra Kofti, Jeremy Morris and Sarah Hinz, and I-Chieh Fang's chapters are placed in the postsocialist world, where the whole social, political, and economic order fundamentally changed relatively recently, and the historically guaranteed job security has been declining due to the spread of precarity. The authors investigate how these changes affect workers' class subjectivities, social networks of support, and family dynamics.

In contrast to postsocialist societies, in most industrial sites globally, permanent employment was never the predominant form and precarious work is not a new occurrence. Keskůla, Trevisani, Kofti, Strümpell, Sanchez, Fang, Prentice, Hoffmann, and Dina Makram-Ebeid in this regard challenge Guy Standing's (2011) model of precariat as a distinct class formation. Standing understands precariat as a "class-in-the-making", differentiating itself from permanently employed workers, the *salariat*. While the diverse group clustered together under the term *precariat* shares certain characteristics which greatly differentiate it from the salariat, such as weak labor security and the lack of work-based identity (2011, 8, 9), the sociopolitical formation of precariat as a distinct class seems questionable. In his chapter, Sanchez shows pertinently that permanent employees and casual workers do not foster different political attitudes and values, while Dimitra Kofti's chapter deals with two types of workers living in the same household, which makes the formation of different class subjectivities unlikely. A distinct social class needs to develop a certain sense of being as an identifiable group to be able to recognize their own interests in a wider political mobilization.

The above-mentioned authors call Standing's model of precariat as class into question by showing that precarity is not a new phenomenon but has been present in most parts of the world since the introduction of industrial work. The model, as the authors argue, also neglects the disempowerment that precarity brings to workers, workers' experience of struggle, and their understanding of the precarious position. Guy Standing has built his theory on the changes in the labor markets of the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan, and South Korea since the late 1980s, while the majority of laboring people in the Global South never had secure jobs or steady incomes and the capital there had essentially depended on an unprotected and exploited workforce since the beginning of capitalist relations in those countries (Kasmir 2018). The workplaces analyzed in this publication therefore show diverse experiences of precarity and its various consequences in settings different than those where precarity is usually being researched.

In the first chapter, Ching Kwan Lee observes the case of miners in the Zambian Copperbelt, where workers are forced to choose between the stable exploitation of secure permanent employment at low wages or short-term contracts at higher wages. The author also emphasizes that the large number of subcontracting companies makes it impossible for the workers to resist further casualization.

Eeva Kesküla then shows how the new organization of labor in Kazakhstan affects more than just the workplace conditions as the young generation experiences new circumstances radically different to those of their parents. Many other authors in the book (Kesküla, Trevisan, Kofti, and Strümpell) point out that even though they sometimes work side by side, younger generations' earnings as contract workers are considerably lower than those of their parents, who still enjoy permanent employment. As Kesküla's contribution demonstrates, the older generation still perceives themselves as a social class of labor aristocracy, sometimes even referring to themselves as the middle class. But the new conditions of contract workers disrupted the mechanisms of class reproduction and class consciousness of the permanent workforce while the contract workers lead utterly different lifestyles. Not only does this influence the class consciousness of the younger generation, but it also "infantilizes" them, as they often live with their parents well into their mid-twenties. The previously strong mining identity and shared class consciousness is inaccessible to the young generation, as the economic structures are shifting.

In the third chapter, Tommaso Travisani examines Kazakhstan's former steel town Temirtau and describes how the increasing contracting work, safety hazards, deteriorating shop floor conditions, and residential segregation changed the workers' political consciousness and generated two distinct groups of workers. As in the Kazakhstan-based fieldwork presented in Kesküla's chapter, the older permanent employees from Travisani's study still receive many benefits from the previously nationally owned factory, while the younger contract workers in the now privately owned factory struggle to financially emancipate themselves from their parents. Older permanent employees became passive and alienated from their work while reminiscing about the old days. Permanent and contract workers are also divided by their ability to unionize. While any kind of collective action is almost impossible for the contracting workers, permanent employees are fearful of resisting, as the abundance of available workforce makes them expendable. The shift to casual work also harshly affects female workers, as they are first to be fired and later on rehired as low-paid contract workers.

In the next chapter, Dimitra Kofti describes a comparable situation in Bulgaria, stressing that even though the conditions are similar in all the industrialized world, change arrived more abruptly in the postsocialist states. With the change of the socioeconomic system, socialist party-sponsored unions in Bulgaria were replaced by a number of smaller sectorial unions with decreased funding and declining membership. In the postsocialist times, the role of the unions changed significantly as union representatives encourage policies for "economic restructuring", which often bring job losses, erosion of workers' rights, and factory closings (cf. Stenning 2005, 987–988). As pointed out before, the nation-state is an important actor in the shaping of the landscape of labor, and under the neoliberal governance the labor market gradually heads towards bigger flexibility and casualization of labor. These postsocialist workplace changes also strengthen ethnic discrimination against the Roma people, who are the first to lose

their jobs, as well as gender inequalities in family relations, as women are more likely to be let go.

Both Tommaso Trevisani and Dimitra Kofti point out that in contrast to the postsocialist conditions, in the Soviet times, Bulgarian and Kazakhstani workers had access to benefits such as housing, healthcare, and education, which shows the political aspirations of the state, which aimed to create a modern industrial working class. While unable to diminish class inequalities completely, state-socialist countries confronted many inequalities, such as reducing the wage gap and increasing the status of manual workers and their autonomy (Cepić 2019, 6–7).

Further, Christian Strümpell analyzes in the following chapter the segregation of residential areas in India. The increasing precarity since the 1990s brought about the segregation of residential areas for permanent employees who were made up mostly of migrant workers and the local population working as contract workers. The two groups of workers are further divided by their ethnicity. Certain ethnicities with permanent employment have access to healthcare facilities, civic amenities, and better schools for their children. Others, especially Adivasis, do not have access to education and are left out of employment possibilities on a vast scale.

Next, Dragomir Rudnyckyj explores the role of labor policies and political strategies in foreclosing workers' abilities to unionize in Indonesia. Contract workers and permanent employees are hierarchized and visibly separated by their clothing, break rooms, and even more by their salaries and benefits. This segmentation reduces their ability to realize common interests. With the inability for political action and the increasing precarious position of contract workers, both groups of workers become docile and passive, which creates a welcoming environment for foreign investments seeking cheaper labor.

Dina Makram-Ebeid then focuses on cosmological beliefs which help workers in precarious positions in Egypt to articulate their lack of control over their lives. The language of religion is used to distinguish permanent employees of the steel factory from the precarious contract workers working elsewhere. Besides exploring the cosmological imaginary of luck and fate underpinning alternative economies, which, as Makram-Ebeid argues, anthropologists mostly overlook, Makram-Ebeid also points out the ongoing police violence that precarity workers experience throughout the Arab world.

In the eight chapter, Elisabeth Schober explores the work conditions of the Hanjin Subic Shipyard in the Philippines and how national laws there are making subcontracting easier. While shipyards represent one of the key nodes in the global economy, the workers there experience the most raw form of precarity, uncertainty, and danger at work with multiple deaths occurring every year.

Andrew Sanchez then describes the seemingly passive political attitudes of precarious workers in Jamshedpur, India. The contract workers of the local scrapyard consist of a rural population that for centuries has been pushed around the country by violence, unemployment, and natural disasters. Their lack of trust in political institutions is a result of the absence of any positive implications previous political changes had in their life. Their misfortune

and their precarity are perceived as a result of an individual and not collective experience.

The tenth chapter, by Jeremy Morris and Sarah Hinz, shows how the general dissatisfaction with the new neoliberal working conditions in the Russian automotive industry engenders a nostalgia for the socialist system as autoworkers covet the previous work pace, personalized production relations, and the autonomy and control they had over the work process in socialism. The workers' understanding of labor, autonomy, and the dignity of the previous system underscores their lack of satisfaction and self-realization in the workplace.

Next, I-Chieh Fang's chapter centres on the importance of the informal economy of rural industrial workers in China and how precarity inhibits workers' rational planning. With the absence of sufficient state welfare provisions, workers have to rely on family and other social networks of support. As the national laws and legislations still deny urban residency to rural migrants, they rely heavily on the social relationships they cultivate in the factory. The older generation, accustomed to stable employment, experiences precarity as a threat. But the young rural minority appreciates the flexibility and ambiguity contract working offers them as they perceive it as a brief time in their life when they could weave new networks before finding a better job or starting their own business in the informal economy.

In the next chapter, Rebecca Prentice's research focuses on Trinidad's garment sector, composed mainly of women, where the discourse of "micro-entrepreneurs" promotes precarious employment in terms of "being your own boss". The hegemony of global neoliberal thought boosts the orthodox understanding of the private sector as the main mechanism of economic growth. This discourse praises entrepreneurialism over stable employment and fetishizes precarity as freedom. All contract homeworkers who previously worked in factories for minimum wage now have even less benefits and stability, as well as lower pay.

Similar processes are discussed in the next chapter, in the case of Southern Indian garment workers, as presented by Grace Carswell and Geert De Neve, who describe how the discourse of acquired skills obscures the negative impacts of precarious work and is supported by the neoliberal ideology which nurtures the idea that society is made up of autonomous, entrepreneurial individuals. Such a discourse is separated from the reality of social processes which shape peoples' experience in the labor market. In practice, individual success depends on one's ability to utilize networks of support. Such neoliberal discourse also neglects the inequalities of power, gender, caste, and age, which greatly influence the importance of skills and the sociocultural values attached to them.

In the last chapter, Michael Peter Hoffmann investigates the role of Maoist unions in the industrial sector of Western Nepal, where ethnicity plays an important role in securing a permanent job. While the union is responsible for regularizing contract work, it also strengthens intra-ethnic tensions in the workplace. The benefits of the union's activism do not reach ethnicities outside the local community, which shows that ethnic identities in such an environment frequently cause class fragmentation.

In the afterword, Michael Burawoy places the book's ethnographic case studies in the global historical context of the third wave marketization which started in the 1970s. Industrial sites of the Global South and the postsocialist societies in his words therefore demonstrate how "those who have been dispossessed, often violently, of access to the means of existence and locked out of the market" shape the current conditions of production (Burawoy 2018, 361).

In summary, this book offers a wide range of diverse ethnographic studies covering several prominent topics concerning precarity, such as the role of the nation-state, the diminishing power of organized labor, workers' political passivity, and the questions of class formation and class fragmentation. It presents rich ethnographic descriptions of inhumane working conditions and the effects of precarious work on workers' lives. The book's authors also show how previous inequalities of ethnicity, age, and gender are deepening under the increased precarity of work. The book's greatest contribution is the focus on the industrial settings of the Global South, which remain relatively understudied by anthropologists. However, the collection of articles is intended for the knowledgeable reader, as many of the applied concepts are not theorized. Nevertheless, it offers an important insight into the casualization of work and its impact on industrial workers in the Global South and postsocialist societies, which differ greatly from those of the Global North, and therefore establishes a more nuanced anthropological perspective on the issue.

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Nili Belkind
Music in Conflict: Palestine, Israel, and the Politics of Aesthetic Production

Routledge, 2021

If we take into account the breaking news from spring and summer 2021, when Israeli-Palestinian conflicts slid from hibernation into bilateral open acts of violence, the book by Israeli-American ethnomusicologist Nili Belkind becomes very relevant. The Israel-Palestine region is an example of a very heterogeneous society suffering from a lengthy conflict with regularly recurring outbreaks of violence. Music-making in such a social field, including people with experience of war and occupying powers, represents a complex and multifaceted "web of signs". Multiple significance is embodied in musical sound itself, in repertories, venues, settings, and contexts of events and their organization processes, as well as in their actors' thinking, agency, and positioning within both the Israeli and the Palestinian communities.

The first general ethnographic accounts on Palestine appeared in the 1980s. The so-called Oslo process and the hope for reconciliation initiated a way of more intensive cultural production in the 1990s, including music-making. Many music-related studies then focused on the cultural politics of reconciliation or on Israel's relationship with its Arab and Palestinian minorities, in Israel and in the region (e.g., Al-Taee 2002; Beckles Willson 2009a; Belkind 2010; Brinner 2009; Dardashti 2009; Perelson 1998; Regev 1995). Four books published in 2013 deal with the role of music in Palestinian life (Beckles Willson 2013; Kanaaneh et al. 2013; Maira 2013; McDonald 2013b). Building upon their work, Belkind's monograph represents a very recent musical ethnography study of the fraught and complicated cultural politics of music-making in the Israel-Palestine area in the post-Oslo era of the early 2010s.

The author's main argument in the book is that music-making continues to provide platforms and occasions in which ethnonational divisions in the Israel-Palestine region are maintained and transgressed, as well as the most suitable lenses through which to study the interweaving of culture and politics. According to Belkind, "music is an especially rich site for tracking the mutually constitutive aspects of culture and politics because of its performative and participatory nature, its publicness, its circulatory unboundedness, and the ways in which its modes of signification and reception combine analytic and affective realms of perception. Music can be read as a social text, perceived as an embodied, sensory experience, and *felt* as projection of the Self. In short, music combines different ways of knowing. It is hence a potent instrument of governmentality as well as a powerful medium for projecting and mobilizing oppositional individual and/or collective agency" (12). Each chapter presents different modalities of music-making situated in different personal and communal geographies, and the ways that the musical activities cross different geographical and social boundaries in the midst of a violent conflict. The monograph, therefore, explores the field of state-supported, as well as independent, music-making of diverse music genres on both the Jewish and Arab-Palestinian sides of the "Green Line" of Israel-Palestine, and in this sense follows Josh Kun's (2001) call to theorize the "aural border".

The monograph is based on ethnographic data gathered by Belkind from January 2011 to September 2012. Therefore, her fieldwork overlapped temporally with the Arab Spring as well as with the largest contemporary social protest movement in Israel. At the same time, Palestine attempted to gain recognition as an independent state in the UN and was accepted by UNESCO. These circumstances enabled the author to conduct a unique "ethnography-in-motion". By "following the music", Belkind "followed the conflict" on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides. She chose Jaffa as her fieldwork "base". First, because of its mixed Palestinian-Jewish demography. Second, the location of Jaffa facilitated access to the Northern city of Haifa and the Galilee region, as well as to Jerusalem and West Bank sites. While working as a volunteer in Israeli institutions that promote Arab-Jewish coexistence projects and in Palestinian

conservatories in the West Bank, Belkind deeply immersed herself in the field on both sides of the wall. She experienced the philosophy and everyday practice of these varied institutions and she could establish close relationships with her informants within these places. The author interviewed numerous artists, producers, music educators, and actors from different music scenes, ranging from European and Arabic classical music, to local folk and popular music. She engaged in participant observation and filmed performances in a very diverse spectrum of venues, ranging from concert halls to demonstrations, community centres to checkpoints, restaurants and nightclubs to a refugee camp, children's clubs and home rooftops.

It should be appreciated that the monograph also includes a very personal confession and detailed explications concerning the author's multifaceted positioning in the field. Nili Belkind was born in Israel to a Zionist family. Her ancestors were considered "first pioneers", prominent members of the first Jewish immigration wave in 1882 (*'aliyah rishonah*). However, in connection with the first Lebanon war from 1982–1983 and the revelation of the Sabra and Shatila refugee camp massacres, Belkind decided to leave Israel and move to the USA. She lived there for a few decades and took a critical stance on the current Israeli politico-ideological narratives. When Belkind returned to Israel in 2008 and then started conducting her research as an Israeli-American, she was fully fluent in the Hebrew language and familiar with Israeli-Jewish musical and cultural terrain. However, she faced several problems. First, having learnt standard Arabic at an American university, she was unable to understand Palestinian Arabic dialect at the beginning of her fieldwork. Second, she lacked local contacts as well as personal acquaintance with the terrain in the Occupied Territories. Third, the main problem represented logistical and travel restrictions imposed on Jewish-Israelis travelling to Occupied Territories. Here, it was Belkind's American passport that enabled her to bypass these restrictions. The author's American citizenship counted in her favour also when doing research in Ramallah and some other places, where she was advised to downplay her Israeli background. However, a surprising recognition of Belkind's "Palestinian" heritage presented a remarkable coincidence: one of her father's relatives was adopted by a Palestinian family. In this sense, the author could shift among several personal identities according to circumstances in the field.

The book is not a music genre–based analysis. Instead, it is prominently anchored in the study of musical performances and their contexts as sites of multiple and multilateral meaning-making. The author also moves away from simple binary categories of hegemony and resistance and self-contained Palestinian/Israeli teleological narratives and reflexive constructions of nationhood, seeking to develop a contrapuntal reading of Israel and Palestine that complicates their ontological boundaries. Belkind refers to the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies and Stuart Hall's (1996) influential analytical framework, which regards identity as constantly negotiated by multiple actors and approaches expressive culture as a socially constructive process marked by shifts and internal contradictions. In this sense, the ethnomusicological

research conducted in Israel-Palestine brings an exemplary case of hyphenated identities articulated through music. Here Belkind refers to "third time-space" and "diverse geographies of identities" (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996) demonstrating that musical activities and their interpretations are situated in between coexistence and resistance through the multiplicity of subjectivities and also multiplicity of space(s). While deterritorializing the fixity of binary constructs, the monograph also follows up the edited volume by Rebecca L. Stein and Ted Swedenburg (2005) and the argumentation of other historians who emphasize that mutual interactions and interdependencies of Israel-Palestine have been muted in favour of advancing nationalist narratives, mutually denying the existence of either the Israeli or the Palestinian nation. Additionally, the book challenges the popular opinion that music has a recuperative power in conflict situations. Here Belkind's findings also resonate with other ethnomusicologists' critiques (e.g., O'Connell and Castelo-Branco 2010), which regard the "music as coexistence" trope with suspicion. It should be noted that music often serves different functions along the peace and war continuum: music can serve as an instrument both of reconciliation and of physical and mental torture, as well as many more functions in between.

The book has the following outline. Chapter One focuses on one of the prominent West Bank music schools, Al-Kamandjâti music conservatory, whose curriculum covers both Arabic and Western classical music (Western classical music is regarded here as an "art of resistance"). The author presents several case studies (e.g., various concerts, including students' participation in the contested space of East Jerusalem, or performances in the town of Abu Dis Palestinian, or at the al-Am'ari refugee camp), which convey the conservatory's position on Palestinian nationmaking, resistance, and conceptions of democracy. Ethnographic vignettes, along with insights into informants' lives and perspectives, show how these cultural and political aims are explicitly and implicitly lived and practiced through musical activities, individual reflections, institutional discourses, and aesthetic content. Therefore, they also reveal local negotiations of Palestinian sovereignty and the manifestation of this sovereignty both within the community and on the outside to foreign powers.

Chapter Two deals with multicultural choral projects of coexistence organized by the Jaffa Arab-Jewish Community Center: the Voices of Peace choir and the Shirana women's choir. Despite contemporary exclusionary neo-Zionist trends and Palestinian critiques of such projects, musical activities here are conceived as a means of resolving tensions between Arabs and Jews in Israel, by showcasing and fostering more egalitarian models of citizenship and offering a space for a constitution of "cross-ethnic" identities. Belkind explores in this regard both the integrative value of these projects for their actors as well as their dissonances in the sense of "whitewashing" violent political realities. On the one hand, members regard the choirs as an integrated space of belonging and togetherness, where common humanity, "female solidarity", and "safe spaces" sublimate differences. From the broader Palestinian point of view, on

the other hand, such collaborations in fact enable "normalization" (*taṭbīʿ*) – naturalizing unequal social relations and in that way supporting the oppressive occupation regime. From the 2000s, a growing legislative and discursive drive by the Israeli state turned away from a Jewish-Palestinian relations-building effort to "Judaicize" the country. In addition, she argues that muliticultural artistic and cultural projects nowadays are unable to reach the Occupied Territories as they did during the 1990s peace process, for both logistical and ideological reasons.

Chapter Three approaches the phenomenon of playing music in the context of "bureaucratic violence" by featuring several ethnographic accounts of performances at Israeli-Palestine border checkpoints (including a performance by the Al-Kamandjati orchestra at the main Qalandiya checkpoint). Since 2001, when a construction of the separation wall began, the West Bank / Occupied Palestine area became a specific habitat full of checkpoints. The spatial and temporal restrictions have in this way simultaneously become signifiers of identity, while they induce the transformation of embedded experiences of violence into sites of creativity. Belkind here presents borders as a master trope in Palestinian lives and discusses the relationship between music and space.

Some recent ethnomusicology monographs demonstrated the immeasurable role of musical activities within social protest movements taking place in urban spaces such as Kiev and Bangkok (Sonevytsky 2019; Tausig 2019). Chapter Four similarly examines the cultural and sociopolitical engagement of the mixed Jewish-Palestinian city of Jaffa with the nationwide summer 2011 Israeli social protest movement, and it describes how musical activities mediated the social protests' narrative. In this case, ethnonational tensions were subsumed by "periphery" class-based Mizrahi (Oriental) Jewish-Palestinian alliances against the Ashkenazi-Israeli "centre". However, Belkind noticed only the hesitant and partial participation of Palestinian-Israeli citizens in this movement.

Lastly, Chapter Five focuses on personages of two distinct Palestinian musicians and citizens of Israel, who are in fact "strangers in their homeland", performing in a liminal space and for both Jewish and Palestinian audiences: Amal Murkus and Jowan Safadi. The musicians are associated with different spheres of activities, music genres, audiences, and political ideologies. Amal Murkus is Israel's leading Palestinian female singer, who became famous as an artist as well as a representative of Israel's binational communist party. She experiments with several musical styles, including music associated with the international left, Palestinian folk, classical Arabic music, and a broader world music aesthetic. On the contrary, the singer-songwriter Jowan Safadi, who is aligned with the Palestinian alternative music scene of Haifa, draws on various popular music genres including electronica, punk, and Arabic hard rock. The author eloquently presents their own way of negotiating the exilic experience.

In conclusion, the monograph is very well balanced, combining ethnographic vignettes, interviews, and participants' portraits with a broader historical

background, solid factography, and theoretical linking. Belkind refers to a large spectrum of authors rooted in various disciplines including history, cultural geography, ethnomusicology, cultural anthropology, sociology, and conflict and reconciliation studies. The book fully accomplishes the author's aim to analyse the politics of sound and the ways by which music-making and related discourses reflect and constitute identities, affect public spheres, and contextualize political action.

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Fabian Holt
Everyone Loves Live Music: A Theory of Performance Institutions

University of Chicago Press, 2020

The social, economic, technological, and political changes of the last 30 years affected music culture and music industry in significant ways, but because these changes are very recent, they remain difficult to properly assess and analyze in all of their complexity. Since our lives are also equally affected by these changes, and we internalize many of the accompanying ideologies and discourses, it is sometimes difficult to adopt a critical stance to phenomena we take for granted. Such is the case with "live music", which virtually everyone loves (regardless the genre and taste differences). Hence, not everybody is ready to question this concept at face value. However, and fortunately, there has been a rising interest in academia in scrutinizing the phenomena of "live music" from a more critical perspective (e.g., Auslander 1999; Porcello 2005; Sanden 2013), including, most recently, a valuable contribution to this discussion by Fabian Holt's new book *Everyone Loves Live Music: A Theory of Performance Institutions*.

Some readers might be wondering at this point, why "live music" should be considered a *recent* phenomenon. In practice, it has existed in different shapes and forms from time immemorial, but this does not also apply to the "live music" term or discourse, as this could only come into existence after the appearance of its oppositional pair concept (and technological reality) of "recorded" music, therefore, only since the beginning of the 20th century. This conceptual opposition of live/recorded music has been employed extensively in marketing and authenticity discourses surrounding music recordings and music technologies throughout the 20th century (Frith 1986; Katz 2004; Wicke 2009), but has gained a new prominence and conceptual framing following the emergence of digital (mp3, p2p) technologies in the 1990s and 2000s, and the concomitant restructuring of the international music industry. This is also the moment from which Holt's new book takes its starting position, as he states that "digitalization weakened its [music industry's] hegemony, and this stimulated the exploitation of commodity forms other than the sound recording. [...] The recession in the recording sector stimulated a general shift of emphasis to the performance sector and accelerated its international corporatization and branding as a live music industry" (1). The "live" music performance (especially club and festival music performance), and the recent social and historical changes related to it, are therefore the main focus of Holt's new study, which aims to provide "a historically grounded analysis of the commercial institutionalization of the Anglophone popular music performance culture [that accelerated in the 1990s] in the United States and Western Europe" (1, 3).

Holt's focus in this regard brings a welcoming new perspective on the "live music" phenomenon which was not explored in the other publications mentioned above, particularly through his historical and structural (political economy) perspectives, enriched by (occasional) ethnographic observations and by

an (minimal) employment of discourse analysis. His goals are quite ambitious, as he endeavours to study the "live music industry" phenomenon from a variety of positions, thus incorporating both micro (ethnographic, performative) and macro (historical, structural) perspectives, as well as media, and discourse analysis (i.e., study of narratives of "liveness" and authenticity), constructing in this way an interdisciplinary study that combines historical sociology, ethnomusicology, cultural anthropology, performance studies, media studies, event studies, and tourism studies. Holt's contribution is significant mainly in regard to the more macro (historical, structural) and media analysis approaches, partially also in relation to his ethnographic inquiry (mainly in chapter four, to some degree in chapter seven), but less so with respect to the study of the "liveness" discourse, which is very minimally incorporated into the main analytical chapters (it appears mainly in the introduction, pp. 12–19, with exception of pages 131 and 145), and even there mostly in relation to the phenomena of recent discursive rebranding and renaming of organizations and institutions into "live" entities (e.g., BBC's Live Lounge, Billboard Live Music Summit, Live Music Forum, Live Nation, LiveStyle, Live Music Capital of the World, Dansk Live, Livemusik Sverige, Live Europe, etc.). Judging from the first part of the title of the book, and from the first pages of the introduction, the work should deliver more in the way of "liveness" discourse, but somehow neglects this issue with the progression of chapters.

In continuation, I examine particular chapters, and identify further strengths and weaknesses of this work. As a side note, it should be noted that Holt presented the findings included in this book already in many of his earlier studies (e.g., 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017), but he extends the discussion, and adds more context, data, nuance, and complexity in his current work.

After his initial elaboration of the main conceptual issues of the book in chapters one and two, Holt dedicates chapters three to five to the study of music clubs, and chapters six to nine to the study of music festivals, which he regards as the dominant live music performance institutions of the early 21st century in the Global North, and thus they are also central to his argument about the corporate institutionalization of Anglophone culture in this time and place. Holt establishes a cursory outline of the literature on the history of "music in cities" (as somehow vaguely related to the history of the music venues and rock clubs) in chapter three, but much more relevant history and literature could be added to this discussion, especially in relation to the history of urban music performance institutions that would provide a suitable contextual background to the latter transformations in this regard (e.g., Bennett 1980; Forsyth 1985; Gilmore 1987; Hazzard-Donald 1990; Carney 2003; Chatterton and Holland 2003; Strachan and Cohen 2005; Fonarow 2006; see also Verbuč 2021).

Chapter four then focuses more narrowly on the transformation of rock club institution and neo-bohemian neighbourhoods in New York City, from the early 1970s (CBGB, Lower East Side), to the current situation (gentrification, corporate institutionalization of the indie rock club), and adds a comparative ethnographic analysis of the current Brooklyn DIY

warehouse scene. The chapter offers a rich and nuanced analysis of different stages of gentrification from both macro and micro perspectives, and thus successfully demonstrates how larger socio-economic and political forces shape changes in architectural design, technological features, organizational characteristics, programming, promotion, demographics, and music aesthetics of current indie rock clubs.

In the subsequent chapter, Holt extends his analysis to the transformation of rock clubs in Europe, especially in Amsterdam, Brussels, and Copenhagen, and shows similar processes of corporate institutionalization, but with a European bent, which puts more emphasis on non-profit clubs subsidized by city governments. However, the growing gentrification, neoliberalization, and corporatization of cities in the past three decades has also affected clubs in Europe, which manifests itself in declining public subsidies and rising rents for clubs, clubs' dependency on corporate agencies, increase in headliners, and decline in programming diversity and socio-political engagement. However, Holt's strength in this chapter is also in demonstrating the complexity of this transformation, and how it differently affects particular clubs in various cities (there is less of such variety and complexity presented in chapter four, in relation to the contemporary professionalized indie rock clubs in New York).

In chapters six and seven, Holt first provides an illustrative survey of the history of festivals and their accompanying worldviews in Europe, showing in this way the transformation from more civic to more commercial and institutionalized forms of festivals, before moving to a case-study analysis of several larger (Roskilde, Sziget), and smaller niche festivals (Sonar, Iceland Airwaves), among others. Through these case studies, the author demonstrates the recent transformation in festival culture, in terms of the increased number of festivals, the doubling of audiences, the growing number of stages, the rise in the number of Anglophone headliners and stars, the popularization of EDM DJs and festivals, growing festival corporatization, and a decrease in programming diversity. Chapter eight takes into account larger issues in this transformation, such as the headliner economy, and the relation between festivals and mainstream culture in terms of gentrification, tourism, fashion, promotion, and social media.

The last chapter then shifts perspective to festival media culture, specifically scrutinizing the emergence of new festival cinematography, such as trailer videos, live-casts, and aftermovies. While this discussion offers some intriguing insights into the contemporary visual and promotional festival strategies, it also leaves out unexamined much of the social media territory related to the festival culture, especially with respect to other types and strategies of festival promotion (apart from marketing video), and other types of festival-related uses of social media (for example, by audiences). There are also only two brief ethnographic references to fans' online and offline festival activities in chapter nine (pp. 254, 257), but Holt otherwise concludes in this regard that

> Social media could have brought popular music festivals in other directions, as illustrated by the early participatory culture at Tomorrowland. [...] But in the hands of

> the festival industry, social media became a tool for the further transformation into mass culture, epitomized by the main-stage euphoria, glamour, and spectacle of EDM pop, with audience behaviours scripted by festival marketing video (259).

This also brings me to some general critiques of Holt's book. First, while Holt dedicates himself to not only dismissing audience consumerism but also showing fans' agency in his work (240), he does not deliver on this agenda in his analyses (except for a couple of sentences on fan behaviour on two pages mentioned above). This relates not only to his discussion of festivals (see above), but also to clubs, as he himself states in chapter four:

> The indie rock club theatre appeals to desires for leisure, aesthetic pleasure, sophistication, and intimacy, but it also indicates how the working life ideology of professional authority permeates leisure and imposes constraints on the concert ritual. [...] Corporate structures have thus constrained the space of individual and collective agency at the microlevel (121).

Holt therefore reintroduces the same weakness into his book that he otherwise blames on Timothy Taylor, when he states that Taylor "ignores [...] the dynamics between [...] structure and agency" (26). The actions of indie rock club and festival audiences in Holt's book are mainly interpreted as "constrained" and "scripted" by structure, as we also hear very little of their voices in this book (except for a few quotes from questionnaires given to festival goers on page 239, and one interview quote about indie rock clubs on page 118), and learn very little about their behaviour at festivals and even less in indie rock clubs. Second, this is not only an interpretive problem, but also a problem of methodology, which is also my next critique here. Several generalizing interpretations in Holt's work, not only those above about the perceived non-agency of fans, but also about other issues (e.g., the author claims there was no presence of young urban middle-class indie rock fans and musicians at Occupy protests, or in Brooklyn warehouse scenes, and no nostalgia among young middle-aged professionals for the gritty clubs; see pages 116, 118, 121), are not based on any transparent methods, as they often appear to depend on hearsay or on author's personal impressions of the scene. The readers are in these cases left alone with questions such as: Where did the author get this information? How can we confirm these claims, even if they might be true? Or, maybe they might be true in part, but not for all participants. Holt's ethnographic fieldwork in clubs and at festivals was not so intensive as to indicate any sufficient or intuitive response to these methodological questions (e.g., 75, 107, 221, 243).

Third, while Holt's book incorporates extensive and relevant literature on the corporatization of clubs and festivals in the Global North, it also misses some important contributions on the topic of history of music venues and rock clubs (see above), on festivals (e.g., Taylor and Bennett 2014; Gibson and Connell 2016), and on the gentrification, corporatization, and neoliberalization of music cultures and scenes (e.g., Chatterton and Holland 2003; Krims 2007; Moore 2010). In terms of the strengths of the book, in addition to the ones mentioned in the introduction (intriguing historical, political economy, and media analyses), Holt also provides

brief but particularly welcome and astute discussions of gender, race, class, and sexuality issues in relation to the contemporary club and festival culture, which are interspersed throughout the book.

In conclusion, *Everyone Loves Live Music: A Theory of Performance Institutions*, presents an important contribution to the study of contemporary clubs and festivals, by way of critical and informative historical, political economy, and media analysis, but also with a few shortcomings related to the agency-structure interpretations, methodology, and literature. It offers a significant albeit partial view on the recent re-emergence of the "live music" phenomena, advancing important scholarly insights regarding the questions pertaining to historical, structural, and media analyses of contemporary performance institutions, while leaving ample space for further studies on the topics of agency and discourse in relation to these same phenomena. We do not learn in the book why everyone loves live music, in a sense of a discursive formation, or individual practice, but we do reach an understanding of the structural and historical aspects of this contemporary phenomena.

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