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Living Together in and with Diversity in a New York Neighborhood¹

Johanne Lefeldt (Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz, Germany, lefeldt@uni-mainz.de)

Situated in the middle of the second largest New York City borough, there is a small, insignificant and almost unknown neighborhood called Kensington. At first sight there seems to be nothing particularly interesting in this working class, family-friendly residential area. It is far away from the skyline of Manhattan, from tourist attractions and the gentrified areas in the northern parts of Brooklyn, there are no architectural peculiarities, cultural or economic points of interest. But there is something else that makes this place unique: It is the composition of its population. “You really get a mixture that you don’t see in many other places” (Jane 2010, 00:03:33)² is the way the resident Jane who has been living in one of the traffic calm streets with detached, single-family houses for more than 26 years describes her neighborhood. What she refers to needs no further explanation, a glance across the street and to her next-door neighbors illustrates what she’s saying: In the front yard on the right-hand side a flag from the Caribbean island state St. Vincent and the Grenadines points to the country of origin of its inhabitants. On the door-steps to her left are a couple of kids in Jewish-orthodox clothing chatting and the porch next to them is crowded by women dressed in colorful saris. On the other side of the street, a young man in a caftan gets out of his car, behind him, Jane’s long known neighbor from Honduras passes by who lives next to a Chinese family at the end of the block. Even by looking at a single section of a street one can grasp the mixture of nationalities,

¹ This paper summarizes the thematic field, scientific interest, underlying research and main outcomes of a completed but not yet published dissertation.

² Statements from people interviewed are quoted listing their first name, the year of the research conducted as well as the timecode referring to the recorded file. Further details can be found in the bibliography.

ethnic and cultural origins, religions and languages of the people living here in a density that is astonishing even for a multicultural city like New York. To give an example, the block Jane lives on with 37 houses and a length of 230 meter counts residents from 29 different nationalities who speak 13 different languages. The diversity of the population living in the entire neighborhood becomes even more evident in view of the wide range of ethnic-businesses on the main shopping street, by the local schools and religious congregations. Over 60% of the population speaks another language than English and more than half was born outside the US (Kensington ACS Social 2014). The overall population counts 36.000 people living in an area that is less than two square kilometers in size. In a population survey conducted between 2008 and 2012 51,2% defined themselves as “White alone“, 24,4% as „Asian alone“, 13,9% as „Hispanic or Latino“ and 7,7% as „Black or African American alone“ (Kensington ACS Demographic 2014).

Research Area and Scientific Interest

The impression of this exceptional cultural diversity in a residential, almost suburban appearing area formed the starting point of a social-anthropological PhD project on everyday-relations between people differing by diverse backgrounds, cultural and social heritages, religious beliefs and lifestyles.

In a world that is increasingly marked by global linkages, intercultural relations are one of the main topics of social discourse in Western societies today. On the other hand, this is a topic being studied since the very beginning of research on migration going back to the well-known ethnographic field works of the Chicago School during the first half of the 20th century (for instance Park 1967 [1925]). How people of diverse backgrounds manage to live together, how societies are influenced by immigration and the relation between newcomers and established populations, minorities and majorities, strangers and intimates are questions not only debated within scientific contexts. Especially in societies that are highly influenced by migration processes, like the US, they are also of public and political interest. The most popular concept or rather ideal conception is that of the melting pot. In the course of the so called “multicultural

turn”, the metaphor of different cultures merging has been replaced by the idea of the salad bowl where the different ingredients stay visible and can be interpreted as a result of pluralist ideals that gained ground against the background of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s leading to a political motivated multiculturalism (cf. Hildebrandt 2005).

Today, reformed conceptions recognize processes of assimilation no longer as one-sided adjustments but as open, negotiable and situative processes conceivable in variable forms (cf. Brubaker 2001; Alba, Nee 2003). Social changes due to processes of globalization and individualism call for new concepts, approaches and research methods to capture contemporary realities and their implications. In this context, cities play a major role as locations of field research because they are and always have been the centers where people meet, where social changes can be studied in a condensed form and contemporary new qualities of diversity become especially visible (Vertovec 2015). As the social anthropologist, Ulf Hannerz (1980, 99) defined, cities are characterized by accessibility in two respects: Because spheres of life are typically split up in the city points of contact are possible in different areas. Furthermore, due to the variety of subcultures living the city it offers a wide range of linkages for people. On the other hand, cities themselves mostly consist of a range of self-contained local areas with often socially and ethnically homogeneous populations. Even in places like New York defined by immigration processes like almost no other there are still only a few neighborhoods that can be defined as diverse regarding their population (cf. Nyden et al. 1998; Sanjek 1998; Maly 2005; Logan, Zhang 2010). Rarely the diversity of the city in its whole can be captured in a single neighborhood. Kensington therefore seems to be almost predestined to study the multiple forms of diversity and to examine the practical negotiations of transnationally engaged people in daily life. According to Steven Vertovec (2015, 1) we still know far too little about “how people in diversifying urban settings create new patterns of coexistence or how and why they might tend towards conflict”. To close this gap ethnographic research is necessary that focuses on the perspective of the people allowing a deeper understanding of their daily life and interactions.

Empirical Basis and Methods of Research

Based on this interest, an ethnographic research project was conducted consisting of two several weeks lasting periods of observation and questioning in 2010 and 2012. Whereas the first fieldwork focused on the relationship between neighbors of a single street, the second expanded the perspective, both geographically and thematically. This time, the neighborhood was studied including local businesses, educational institutions and social organizations, religious communities and congregations, political parties, public events and festivals. Although the research focused on contemporary life and relations of the inhabitants mainly combining different methods of observation and interviewing the history of the neighborhood, processes of change and their influences on current circumstances were also taken into account by analyzing historical sources. Altogether, the empirical data conducted consists of 88 qualitative and mainly in-depth interviews with 105 people from over 45 countries of origin speaking 19 different languages. Besides the mostly audio- and partly video-recorded interviews observations were captured in written protocols and field notes, photographs and sketches. Moreover, a wide range of media sources such as newspaper articles, brochures and flyers were collected during the periods of fieldwork.

As the chosen methodical approach indicates the study aimed to examine the relations of people living in and with diversity from an everyday perspective and from the point of view of the respondents themselves. According to the broad spectrum of the research topic and the multitude of sites and occurrences explored the ways of collecting data also had to be variable. Instead of following a strict research agenda planned beforehand I mostly worked intuitive by taking opportunities, accepting the help of gate keepers and often just following the field and the people I already knew. Besides, I explicitly sought out places, institutions, events and respondents that I expected would provide a different perspective.

After transcribing and managing the collected qualitative data I used an inductive and content-related approach with analytical methods of open coding. This way, I managed to arrange the

data following thematic priorities and links between the topics that eventually led to the structure of a 500-pages long monograph³.

Outline of the Study

After an introductory chapter the second section discusses major theoretical concepts and empirical studies on migration and diversity and thereby providing an overview of the history of research in the US in its respective contexts including national as well as global social and political influences. The following chapter focusses on the city specific basis of the study. Here, it becomes apparent that New York City as the broader context, its history and image as a gateway and multicultural center plays an important role and influences the perceptions and expectations of its inhabitants. In the same way, the composition, historical background and transformation of neighborhoods have an impact on processes of migration, assimilation, settlement, internal and external perceptions and relationships between social and cultural groups. Thereafter, the periods of fieldwork are presented and reflected discussing the access to the field, contact situations and communication with the respondents, forms of observation and interview techniques, settings and interactions as well as role-related challenges and impacts during the data collection. Here, the reader already gets an idea of the location of the study and is introduced to some of the respondents and sites of research. To ensure a comprehensive insight into the neighborhood the next chapter provides a detailed overview of Kensington combining historical and contemporary perceptions with the help of geographic and demographic data as well as background information on migration waves and settlement processes. This external perspective on the neighborhood is supplemented by the individual perceptions and memories of the respondents as well as the observations conducted during the periods of fieldwork. With this multidimensional description of the research location and by using a fictional walk through the neighborhood as a red thread the reader gets a complex insight into the spacial and architectural environment, the history and atmosphere of the neighborhood and its surrounding districts.

³ The ethnographic monograph is written in German and will be published by the end of the year 2019.

The following three major chapters of the study focus on the central question of how people live together in and with diversity in their daily life. Concentrating on individual as well as group-specific relations of contact the opportunities as well as limitations of multicultural settings are discussed, levels of adjustment and conformity on the one hand, maintenance and preservation of cultural identity on the other. Based on the empirical data and with the attempt to get past common divisions of majority versus minority, integrated versus segregated and beyond concepts referring to a supposed and often idealized and judgmental outcome these chapters try to capture the differing and often parallel and intermingled forms of living together. By this means three differentiable levels of relations were identified. They have been subsumed as living among, next to and with each other. These three concepts will be presented in the following and with the aid of empirical examples.

Living Among Each Other

The first concept discusses forms and circumstances of living among each other reflecting relations within national, ethnic, cultural, religious and social groups. It focuses on questions of residential settlement, origin-related communities and ethnic economies looking at practices of preserving culture-specific customs and searching for affiliation. Concentrating on strategies of locating oneself, community building and identity formation the complexity of these processes becomes transparent and comprehensible allowing a more differentiated view on local communities.

The findings of this chapter point to several aspects influencing the emergence, maintenance and perception of everyday relations described as living among each other. By taking the arrival of newcomers as a starting point the chapter retraces their ways of settlement. Here, the role of proven, city specific established strategies becomes evident using family- and origin-related as well as institutional networks in search of a new home, a job and social integration. As a result, it can be stated that the affiliation to a community connected to the place of origin is especially important in the first years after immigration when one needs to orient oneself in a new environment. On the other side strategies of trying to find connecting

points in a new environment can just as well be of importance for people who have just moved to a different city or neighborhood. For instance, when Martine and her husband moved from Kentucky to New York the decision to live in Kensington was mainly affected by something familiar Martine could connect to. “Now, why did we pick up this neighborhood? We had no attach in New York, we did not know anybody, so we could have been here, in the Bronx, wherever. [...] So, we’re cruising with the car you know, trying to know a little bit and there we ended up being in this neighborhood. And I find some Jewish-Orthodox with the uniform, so, you know, I felt save. And I said to my husband: ‘it sounds to me like a decent neighborhood to live’. Now, the only thing decent is because it was other Jewish people, really it was a very emotional decision and no concrete, no rational“ (Martine 2010, 00:01:26).

The affiliation to a community connected to one’s origin and/or feelings of belonging in many cases depends on the necessity of this linkage to maintain one’s lifestyle and cultural routines. For some the maintenance or rediscovery and revival of traditions and habits are options to evoke memories, for others preserving cultural and religious customs and the language of the country of origin is an attempt to stay in touch transnationally with a community beyond the new environment. And yet for others, keeping traditions is an existential necessity to ensure one’s way of life and identity. For the Jewish orthodox living outside their own community seems almost impossible because their daily live completely hinges on their own infrastructure, their synagogues, schools, shops and so forth. Mohammed, a Bengali taxi driver has moved with his family to Kensington because of similar reasons. “Number one, you know our people [...] truly like the family life, the social life, it’s so close, we know each other. [...] Number two, you’ve seen this street, I mean the McDonald, we have a lot of our own stores. Number three, [...] if you want to go to a prayer, we have the three mosques over here“ (Mohammed 2010, 00:02:16). The existing and growing Bangladeshi community in Kensington enables him to go to the mosque, to buy products and prepare food the way he used to in his home country and to get in touch and communicate with people sharing the same national, linguistic and religious background.

Furthermore, the chapter deals with communities that are perceived as self-contained entities from an outstanding position like the Jewish and the Bengali communities but are often characterized by great discrepancies when looking at them from an internal perspective. This became especially apparent in an interview with the Rabbi of the “Flatbush & Shaare Torah Jewish Center”, a congregation struggling to overcome generational gaps and to please the many different religious orientations of their members. „I’m like leading this double life where I have to you know go and be the Rabbi for the traditionalists and the Rabbi for the young families. And it’s hard because you know there’s a feeling that with this thing I can only be one or the other and it’s very torn“ (Rabbi David 2012, 00:08:43). This and other examples regarding the relationship within religious groups indicate that these communities do not represent homogeneous groups but must be conceded as communities marked by internal divisions. Mostly, these differences can be traced back to a variety of geographical origins and waves of immigration, to family backgrounds and specific religious teachings. Similar separations can also be found within the Bengali community where Muslim congregations are divided according to their political affiliation.

Besides, the analysis of the empirical data revealed the impact of city and national specific self-conceptions and expectations related thereto. To identify with one’s place of origin and/or family roots seems to be especially relevant in a city like New York due to its image as a gateway city and immigrant friendly place that celebrates the diversity of its population and the wide range of ethnic communities hosted (cf. Foner 2010). When Jill first came to New York from California she was surprised by people asking about her family roots. “I remember when I first moved here, the first question people would ask me was my roots, my culture, you know, and people would try to guess, you know. [...] So, that I think is very important in New York: your identity – and more so than other parts of America“ (Jill 2012, 00:21:19). Since then and against the background of this expectation of being able to define one’s cultural roots Jill has intensively tried to retrace her family history. Like her, many respondents expressed a new interest in their cultural heritage in the context of the city-specific habitus to openly express ethnic identities and refer to one’s cultural roots. In a multicultural neighborhood like

Kensington this reference seemed especially important and could for instance be analyzed with regard to the public schools that encourage their pupils to deal and identify with their cultural history. At the same time the schools promote themselves by referring to the diversity of their pupils. The current ways of dealing with difference or better those at the time of the study must of course not only be interpreted considering local specifics but have to be seen as part of worldwide and national sociopolitical developments initiated by movements such as the “ethnic revival” that dramatically changed the public perception, meaning and dealing with cultural diversity (cf. Hildebrandt 2005, 66 f.).

Living Next to Each Other

Living next to each other refers to relations characterized by social distance, by reservation, anxiety of the unknown, by competition and reservation between and against specific parts of the population within the neighborhood. It examines observable and articulated tendencies of social and residential segregation, its causes and consequences, points out the impact of social, economic and immigration-based differences and socially dominant prejudice. On the other hand, the findings also reveal that social distance between inhabitants in an urban area can be traced back to a lack of opportunities due to different lifestyles, daily routines as well as spatial and city specific conditions.

A major topic in this chapter reflects on the difficulties respondents expressed concerning the relation between different cultural and religious groups. One story might illustrate the challenges of intercultural contact. It focusses on the tendency of the Jewish orthodox population to separate from the rest of the local community that a lot of non-Jewish orthodox respondents define as disturbing and cause of conflicts and misunderstandings. Referring to a situation of conflict between her and her next-door Jewish-orthodox neighbors, Kim, a young non-religious single mother who has moved to Kensington with her son from the northern Brooklyn neighborhood of Park Slope explains her difficulties with the Jewish-orthodox population. Shortly before the start of the Jewish holiday sukkot her neighbor had parked his car in a way that made it impossible for her to get to her garden hose and water her freshly

planted flowers in the front yard. When she asked him to remove the car he answered: „I’m three minutes into my holiday, I can’t. I’m sorry. You can’t get through, Kim? I’m sorry, but I can’t, I’m three minutes into my holiday“ (Kim 2012, 00:12:48). Kim’s reaction shows that she is not willing to accept this explanation. “He’s three minutes into his holiday and it’s the longest holiday. [...] And I just thought that was like so selfish, you know“ (ibid.). There are several other situations she describes that can all be defined as typical conflicts between neighbors though they seem to be connected to the cultural difference of the two parties. For Kim, the reference to religious rules as an explanation for their behavior sounds like an excuse and therefore makes it difficult for her to tolerate. “I’m not so accepting. Like, I just think being neighborly and caring about other people like that’s more important, that trumps this and I just can’t get it, you know. Moving a car so I can water my plants, you know. I don’t get it, I just can’t get that“ (ibid., 00:13:14). The example shows that the behavior of people is usually evaluated in reference to one’s own moral concepts. The understanding of unfamiliar cultures is always bound to one’s own contexts of meaning and framework of culture (Schneider 2004, 24). Therefore, understanding means classifying circumstances against the background of the respective cultural defined horizon of knowledge (Brenner 1999, 10). Kim is not able to understand her neighbors because their behavior cannot be explained with regard to her own cultural range of values.

Tendencies of segregation between the inhabitants of the neighborhood could be made out looking at the concentration of residents living in specific parts of the neighborhood. As contact impeding factors the lack of a common language, culture and religion based feelings of strangeness and socioeconomic differences could be made out. Furthermore, the length and continuity of the residence very much seemed to influence the chances of intercultural relationships as well as the type of housing, physical proximity and daily routines. In this context, social and immigration related distances often seemed to be of greater importance than cultural differences even though respondents generally defined them as the main reason for a lack of contact. For instance, neighbors were often perceived as belonging to one and the same group on the basis of socioeconomic, class and immigration related similarities. This

way, people with for instance a Latin or Hispanic background and people coming from South Asian countries were defined as members of the same group while the differences and accompanying challenges in contact situations with these inhabitants were defined as cultural.

Concerning the separating effect of language that was stressed by most of the respondents it is important to note that in a multicultural setting where many people use the language of their home country to communicate the exclusive effect does not only have an impact on people who do not speak or understand the national language but also on those who (only) speak English. For instance, Martine recalls an incident when she was doing her shopping in one of the Polish stores in the neighborhood where she could not find out what meat they were using for their cold cuts due to linguistic communication problems. Even though she generally appreciates the many different ethnic businesses around she finds it regrettable that they are not open to all residents of the neighborhood. „It makes sense, you know, people come from a different country and they are going to sell to their own population, their own ... but it's also closing the door to more opportunity – very frustrating. They don't speak English. Tell me, maybe I could learn Polish, you know, maybe it's another way to see it“ (Martine 2010, 00:27:14).

The chapter moreover reveals that the existing resentments between people living in Kensington are mainly expressed towards specific population groups, namely the Jewish-orthodox and the Muslims because they are perceived as standing out due to their lifestyle and tendency to separate from the rest of the community. For the reservations against the Muslim population the connection between their religion and Islamic terrorism plays an important role, especially since one of the terrorists of 9/11 had been living in Kensington. Most important for the discomfort expressed by many respondents against both the Jewish-orthodox and the Muslim, or rather the Bengali population seems to be connected to the size of these groups, their spheres of influence and independence and hence an arising anxiety that their dominance could endanger the balance of the different cultural groups living in Kensington. Tendencies of segregation and conflict between inhabitants of the neighborhood could in

general more often be traced back to power relations than to cultural or religious differences. Lastly, a main result of the analysis showed that an everyday life without much contact points has often to do with a lack of opportunity to meet due to the daily routines of people, their different lifestyles, current circumstances and individual preferences that depend on social differences such as gender, age, education and profession. Recalling the years they have been living in Kensington and their personal relationships in the neighborhood Tania and Gheorghe have to admit great changes but they mainly trace them back to different circumstances in their own life. “We’re not so much in the neighborhood now, but when the kids were little, then we were socializing a lot more with people from the neighborhood, a lot more. [...] We were visiting, had dinner, lunches, the kids were playing, were talking, it was like a circle of friends. But we all separated [...]. It’s the lifestyle. Now, I don’t meet them because I’m not on the street that much“ (Tania 2010, 00:33:25a).

Again, city specific conditions and spatial factors also influence whether, where and how often people get into contact with each other. Against this background living next to each other can also be interpreted as a common expression of urban life characterized by fugacity, individuality and anonymity.

Living with Each Other

Lastly, the third concept of living with each other considers relations that can be defined as inter- or cross-cultural. It focuses on everyday encounters, on exchange, alliances, shared interests and belongings and analyses the potential of local places, institutions and events to bring people together. Factors that enhance and prevent intercultural contacts such as infrastructural premises and opportunities to gather are identified and the effects of encounters for individual and intergroup relations are questioned.

In contrast to the given example of the conflict between Kim and her Jewish-orthodox neighbors that can be read as a confirmation of the commonly documented lack of the group’s willingness to integrate I would like to present another intercultural contact situation. It is based on the same religious custom and took place during the same Jewish holiday but ended in a

different outcome. One day, at the beginning of sukkot I met a Jewish orthodox man in front of his house on the street obviously looking for help. He addressed me and asked for a hand in his house. His kitchen radio was making a loud annoying sound for hours and due to the religious holiday that forbids him to touch electronic devices he was not able to turn it off himself (Field note 2012 (2), 30.09.). In this case, the different cultural, respectively religious belongings had a beneficial effect on intercultural contact. In comparison, the two episodes described show that it would be rather unilateral to make specific religious beliefs responsible for an inability to live together and processes of segregation between people from different cultures. Instead the two episodes suggest that depending on the context one and the same cultural characteristic can have very different consequences.

The analysis of the data referring to forms of living with each and thereby concentrating on relations of contact and exchange between people and groups of different cultural origin and belonging can be summarized in the following findings. The residential area, civic institutions, leisure offers, educational organizations, a broad range of products tailored to the needs of all inhabitants of the neighborhood, festivals, public events and civic activities provide opportunities of encounters and can promote intercultural contact. A good example are programs like the “Participatory Budgeting” that enhance citizen's participation or initiatives by activist groups such as the “Kensington Trash Mob”. “Contact zones” (Pratt 1991) are significantly influenced by situational occasions and places like public and green spaces, thus infrastructural and development conditions play a major role. The relations between people are furthermore shaped by their individual life style and condition and related possibilities and motivations, their professional activity and economic coalitions. Therefore, common interests have a positive impact on relations of living together. Cultural, religious or social differences did for instance not matter when it came to common goals like the beautification of the neighborhood or the improvement of security. Exceptional situations caused by extreme weather conditions, blackouts or human tragedies were also identified as occasions bringing people together. In all these non-daily cases the inhabitants largely supported each other on the basis of a common fate or interest and due to an interdependence.

Moreover, the physical proximity, recurring contact situations and social behavioral norms have a positive effect on the relationship between inhabitants. For instance, regular agreements and support between neighbors can promote intercultural contact. Moreover, the experience of the unfamiliar and the confrontation with different ways of life and cultural habits can enhance the awareness for one's own normality and that of others and lead to a more reflective dealing with difference. In the first weeks after Florence moved to Kensington with her daughter and son in law she had an encounter with one of her Bengali neighbors that angered her but at the same time made her think about the causes that led to the uncomfortable situation when the two ladies almost bumped into one another because one was walking on the right-hand side and one on the left. Afterwards, Florence brought herself into mind that walking on the left-hand side is the norm in Bangladesh and the woman was most likely unintentionally almost walking into her. Still, she realized the risk to adopt a general attitude on the basis of this one negative experience. "The reason I'm telling you this is because I'm barely getting over the struggle of doing what people do. And I thought I was above it: ,I don't like all Bangladeshi people because they all bump into me or run right into me.' I mean I ... this little attitude that doesn't have words would get into my head and I fight that and I'm getting over it now. It's happened maybe three weeks ago or two and I will not be that kind of a person" (Florence 2010, 00:08:08).

Encounters with people from different cultural backgrounds can cause irritations and misunderstandings but they do not always have to lead to negative attitudes and open conflicts. Instead they often help to reduce reservations, prejudices and fears, contribute to a greater sensitivity and a better understanding of others and therewith enable a mutual adjustment and closer relationship. Finally, the last part of the chapter underlined that the existence and increase of intercultural couples and families as well as a multicultural social environment contribute to a perception of diversity as something familiar and normal.

Concluding Remarks

Whether melting pot or salad bowl, acculturation, integration, assimilation or segregation, what all these terms and underlying concepts have in common is that they refer to social processes with an expected result of immigration in relation to a dominant society. In contrast, the perspectives of living among, next to and with each other are capturing different relational levels at a specific time and do therefore not describe processes but conditions. Moreover, they are dissociated from a conceptualization simply focusing on the assimilation of immigrants including forms of communitization, delimitation, adaptation and exchange that are not only directed to the practices of people with the experience of migration. Even though the relationships between newcomers and long-established inhabitants and the challenges of acculturation and integration are playing an important role in the presented study it also pays attention to social constellations and relational structures beyond these dualistic perspectives looking at the relationships of people within supposedly self-contained communities. In general I was less interested in recalling processes of integration that besides would have afforded very different research methods but I aimed to point out existing forms of living together. To summarize, the study captures social relationships between people living in a multicultural residential urban entity – at a specific time, in their situational relatedness and against the background of city-specific as well as national and worldwide circumstances.

In sum, the findings of the research project and the example of the relationships between the inhabitants of Kensington showed that people in a small geographical area live together in different networks and constellations of relationships that can change, that are situationally negotiated and affected by individual and collective experiences and contexts of socialization. They are influenced by city-specific characteristics, sociopolitical and global processes and can therefore only be understood against the background of local and transregional linkages. In this light, to ensure a conflict-free and harmonic cohabitation a certain balance between the inhabitants and groups of people living in a neighborhood and their sphere of influence seems to be important. That such a balance can be rather fragile is notable looking at the future forecasts articulated by the respondents. Most of them expressed their concern that one of the

current population groups or ethnic communities could become predominant and consequently others would be pushed out of the neighborhood. The here presented data and results are based on a specific period of fieldwork and thus can only capture a moment of everyday life in Kensington that – at the time and generally speaking – appeared to be characterized as a harmonious and peaceful coexistence in and with diversity.

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