

Religion and Economics: the Case of Social Inequality in Latin America

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Scholars in economics and sociology have debated the relationship between economics and religions for many years. This debate has been approached in three ways.

First, the “economics of religion” point of view analyzes economic policies from a religious perspective: economic policies are determined by religious beliefs. Second, the “religion of economics” perspective analyzes patterns of religious behavior from an economic framework by utilizing microeconomic tools to explain an individual’s religious activities. Finally the religion-economics relation is approached by the “economic effect” of religion or the consequences that religious beliefs may have on the generation of wealth. In this paper, we will focus on the latter approach. Max Weber’s thesis on the relationship between protestant religious ethic and

economic outcomes argues that Protestantism generates certain attitudes in an individual that allows him to progress economically. Protestantism results in a way of thinking that leads an individual to strive for economic success, through the personal will to work hard, and the habit of not spending on frivolous self-indulgence. These attitudes foster initiative and innovation, which in turn are conducive to economic growth through “rational investment.” For many scholars this interpretation is a “travesty” of Weber’s ideas. However, for the purpose of this paper, to measure the relationship between Protestantism and social inequality, we assume the adequacy of this interpretation. On the other hand, in the context of Latin America, Martin- Baro has suggested

that the degree of economic development in the region is the result of the “Latin American Fatalism.” In other words, he implies that the Latin American economic backwardness is due to the belief in the inevitability of a predetermined destiny and the resignation to accept it, and thus, to be contented with what one possesses. Fatalism is a way of understanding human existence as a condition in which everyone’s fate is already

predetermined. This mind-set is the product of a religious colonial past (mostly catholic), which promoted such attitudes based on resignation and conformism. In the Latin American predominantly religious framework, a distant all-powerful God, against whom it is pointless to resist, and whose infinity wisdom in the creation of the world and society could not be questioned by a human being, determines an individual’s destiny. As a

result, Latin Americans have only one option: to be submissive to the system; ambitioning a better life or planning for the future is worthless. This fatalistic attitude is found mostly among the poorer groups of Latin America. Latin America is a region in which social inequality, assessed through income distribution, levels of education, access to housing and health coverage, is well marked. For instance, in 1980 income distribution in Central America was allocated in the following proportions: 57.4% of GDP to the wealthiest 20% of the population, 8.9% to the middle 60%, and 3.7% to the poorest one-fifth. If in a region like Latin America,

there is a movement from Catholicism to Protestantism, or from a fatalistic-conformist-submissive mind-set toward a pragmatic income-conducive attitude, there should be a reduction on social inequality. Indeed, in the past 25 years there has been a Protestant explosion in Latin America. For instance, in Guatemala the Catholic percentage of total population has decreased from 85% in 1995 to 70.5% in 1998. Meanwhile, Protestant population has increased from 60,000 in 1962 to almost 3.5 million in 1998. This movement has taken

place mostly among Indigenous and poorer groups of the Latin American society. By generating attitudes that leads to income accumulation, Protestantism should favor economically, in the case of Latin America, the indigenous and poorer groups of society. Therefore we should observe that social inequality has decreased in the region during the last decades. In this paper we measured social inequality through three dimensions. First, the “Economic dimension” or inequality based on the differences in income distribution per capita, access to housing and level of savings. Second, the “Social dimension;” that is inequality measured by access to health, education and the percentage of illiteracy. Finally, we approach inequality from the “Political dimension” or the percentage of voting, increases in the membership of political parties that promote social equality or

that defend the interest of the “have-nots” of society. We demonstrate that the relation between religion (increase in Protestantism) and the reduction of social inequality is robust, once we control for factors proven to reduce income inequality, such as economic growth and political orientation of the groups in power, in the countries we analyze.

Racism in France

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Multiculturalism has been a major issue in the European social sciences for twenty years. Nevertheless, in being especially a normative theory of culture, it seems to lack its sociological facets and tends to hinder comparability. Yet, though social actors' reflexivity is probably essentially limited, the empirical elements of a cultural analysis (practices, discourses, beliefs...) are subject to performance or enactment. It can therefore be interesting to define and observe, theoretically, epistemological and methodological constraints that should be respected by all good uses of culture, and among them some supposed social mechanisms. Thus, «cultural groups» are analytically defined by identity, and normatively by respect or recognition. As a consequence, the existence and actions of such groups depend highly on the main orientations of national politics and public policies. In France, any mention of "ethnic" categories encounters deep suspicion, as conceptualization and administrative codification deepen highly on French universalistic conception of equality, give rights to individuals only and not to groups, and fear that ethnicization of politics tends to favour xenophobia. Thus, since the beginning of the 1980's, French policies have formulated "ethnic issues" in socio-economic rather than cultural terms, notably in the form of a search for a coherent urban policy (*politique de la ville*). Indeed, urban violence is a recurrent issue of both the media and political agenda, which often hits underprivileged suburbs and is generally said to be due to children of immigrant parents.

In order to illustrate our hypotheses and give European comparability food for thought, we suggest to study action and policies against racism in France, and more precisely two French specific issues which deal with the "city": urban violence and education. Yet, European comparison is difficult because racism reflects diverse circumstances and institutions, but also differentiated ideological frameworks. Thus, contemporary France's specific conceptual and legal frameworks are inscribed within its distinctive history, which is linked to the decolonization of North Africa in particular. Moreover, policy and politics are very closely intertwined. Sometimes, the initial policy framework addresses itself solely to immigration in the narrow sense (i.e. rules on entry and residence and mechanisms for their application) or to issues, such as urban decay, linked to immigration in political discourse. Besides, in the sociology of racism, there are two great paradigms: the prejudice, based on psychological and pulsional criteria; and everyday discrimination, which is often violent, as racism is above all a concrete social practice. For instance, some groups are stigmatized by pejorative modes of designation or by spatial or socio-economic discrepancies. Contemporary racism is multifaceted and constantly changing. The evolution of the stereotypical "foreigner" shows the inter-penetration of racism and broader social phenomena. Over the past decade or so, suburban unrest (in most French cities, inner-city areas have a generally favourable socio-economic profile) has framed everyday racism in terms of a rejection of "otherness", which is amplified by the media sensationalism.

France now has a comprehensive legislative and legal framework against racism, but civil society is also a main actor. In recent years, some associations have developed actions to raise public awareness and to increase mobilization for the integration of "visible minorities". The issue of "racial violence" (murders, insults and discourses) raises major conceptual and methodological problems. Sport, especially football, is sometimes linked to racism and to urban violence. But there is no presumption that the status of the victim (in terms of skin colour, religion, "origin", nationality, etc.) *in itself* creates a presumption of "racial" or "ethnic" violence. This is partly common sense, partly a reflection of the French ideological climate, which, as we said, is hostile to "racial" or "ethnic" categorization.

Furthermore, urban violence seems to be a French specificity. It corresponds in some respects to what is called elsewhere "youth violence", and there is a widespread perception that current problems in France have something to do with a broader crisis of "the city" (*la ville*). Some researchers think that spatial and social exclusion is more striking than in other countries, because of the architecture of the houses and of town planning. Relations with the police also crystallize many aspects of violence in racialized contexts in French society, because of a range of social and economic factors. Conversely, the police are routinely accused of racism both in language and in practices such as profiling.

In the educational field, violence is considered only as a symptom of hardened patterns of social inequality, as the classroom is said to be simply an extension of the street. Among other things, the territorial basis of the French school system is in principle strictly defined by compulsory catchment areas. This obviously means that the school system tends to reproduce social segregation in so far as it exists.

Municipal Reform on the Island of Montreal Tensions between two Majority Groups in a Multicultural City

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In contemporary democratic societies, ethnic diversity is an unavoidable element in the analysis of change, social cohesion and the transformation of majority-minority relations. Although immigration is historically rooted in these societies, the international conjuncture plays a preponderate role in this diversification of migratory flows. Accompanied by a predominant urbanization, ethnic diversification is such that the social sciences, sociology in particular, have begun to examine this phenomenon via a multiplicity of theoretical approaches and field studies in order to grasp the implications of this social recombining. In that context, there has been a tendency to turn away from studies of the groups issuing from older migratory waves and of majority groups. Without wishing to question the relevance of work on recent immigrant groups and the attendant issues for democratic societies, the abandonment of studies of majority groups prevents us from understanding how, in given contexts, ethnic relations, understood in the widest sense of the term, are structured and transformed.

This presentation discusses the link between diversity and conflict in multicultural cities from the perspective of the transformation of ethnic relations grounded in a socio-spatio-historical context characterized by the co-presence of two ethnic groups—French Canadians and English Canadians—with significant access to resources and occupying a no less significant space in the field of social relations in Quebec society. Focusing on ethnic relations between these two majority groups, our study's point of departure is the recent merger of all the cities on the Island of Montreal into one large city, one of the most multiethnic in North America. In place since January 2002, this merger, which is itself a part of a process that affects other Canadian and Western settings, is a rich ground for the analysis of ethnic social relations. Characterized by the historical presence of these two colonizing groups, the Montreal Island and Quebec Province in general have witnessed, since the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, the inversion of traditional relations between the two groups. Linked to the emergence of the Quebec State, which adopted various laws intended to make the French the dominant language of public space, this transformation strengthened the power of French Canadians, who were the majority group demographically but the minority group historically in social and economic terms. It has also given rise to the emergence of new boundaries defined by language which have replaced, without completely encompassing, the former ethnic boundaries between the two groups. In the context of the demographic decline of the two groups, in which the insertion of immigrants into the Francophone collectivity is at the heart of the efforts by French Canadians to modify this relation of force to their advantage, we can note that, in institutional terms, there has been a decrease in the capacity of English Canadians to maintain their institutions in various sectors such as education, health and social services. In this conjuncture, the merger of Montreal Island cities into a French-language mega-city appears at first glance to extend this process, and the vigorous opposition of the English Canadian community reflects its strong feeling that this municipal merger will result in a number of perverse effects. Highly mediatized, the resistance to this merger by the Anglophone community, especially Anglophones of British descent who refuse to accept the disappearance of their municipalities, which they view as essential to the survival of their community, has given rise to a resurgence of a conflict that had seemed to have been attenuated over the last few years.

This paper will analyze the various facets of this conflict by drawing out the socio-political factors that help to explain its development. In addition to a brief historical review of the specific nature of the Montreal context, the transformation of ethnic relations in Quebec, and the various language laws adopted over the past few decades, we will discuss the effects of these policies on the ethno-linguistic vitality of the Anglophone community of British descent. The sources, the object and the stakes of the current conflict will also be examined in order to draw out the role of language in the transformation of ethnic social relations. More generally, the case study of Montreal, where many kinds of ethnic and linguistic relations can be found, should enable a reconsideration of how ethnic social relations are understood by drawing the role of institutions and the importance of language as a marker for ethnic belonging.

Cultural Difference and Civic Culture

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This paper will address the potential tension between two broadly stated policy objectives: one, the preservation of distinctive cultural traditions and two, the fostering of civic virtue, a sense of local community and the advancement of common civic enterprises.

Many scholars have argued that liberal societies have an obligation to accommodate the cultural traditions of various sub groups through legal rights and a redistribution of social resources. The "right to cultural difference" is now widely (if not universally) understood to be a basic human right, on par with rights to religious liberty and racial equality.

Other theorists writing in the liberal, civic republican, and urban sociology traditions have expounded on the necessity of civic virtue, urban community and common enterprises initiated and executed at the local or municipal level of government and/or private association. These theorists have argued that common projects, shared norms and social trust are indispensable elements of effective democratic government and are necessary to the altruism and public spiritedness that in turn support social justice.

These two policy goals therefore may at times be in conflict. This conflict is especially severe in larger culturally diverse cities, where social trust and civic virtue are most needed and often in shortest supply. Policies designed to counter cosmopolitan alienation and anomie by fostering civic virtue, social trust and common social norms will inevitably conflict with the cultural traditions and sub group identification of some minority groups. Accommodation of any and all sub group cultural practices will make it difficult if not impossible to foster a common civic culture and social trust.

The bulk of the paper will examine such conflicts. For instance, many have argued that the best hope for revitalizing urban politics is to promote municipal enterprises and services that allow for citizen participation, such as community based policing and municipal utilities. Community policing is a good example of a city service that can foster social trust in and amongst culturally distinctive communities: by encouraging police officers to participate in local social events and become acquainted with local residents, community policing can improve relations between police and communities that typically distrust them by helping police become more sensitive to minority communities and by helping those communities better understand the demands of effective police work. Yet at the same time a key benefit of community policing involves the improvement of neighborhood morale and quality of life through intensive policing of relatively minor crimes and the use of police to enforce informally social norms of behavior. Anti loitering and anti vagrancy laws can improve quality of life by removing vaguely threatening people from the streets and can improve routine police work by allowing officers to preemptively intervene in potential sites of criminal activity before crime actually takes place. Many commentators have found that such effort are quite popular among minority communities who often feel under served by police (even as they also distrust police when they do intervene). But intensive community policing of this type almost inevitably runs afoul of the cultural practices of some groups, leaving community policing open to charge of "cultural hegemony."

Programmatically speaking, the paper will argue that such conflicts between cultural rights and civic norms must be confronted on the field of political debate and policy analysis, not in the language of civil rights. Rights discourse, with its inherent absolutism, is ill suited to the type of subtle trade offs that these conflicts entail. While local government and public institutions must be sensitive to the needs of all cultural groups that they affect, the need for civic enterprise and social trust should not be subject to absolute and non negotiable demands for the accommodation of cultural traditions. The accommodation of some cultural traditions will impose severe costs in terms of strife, conflict and the inability effectively to pursue other important social goals-in at least some cases, the minority cultural traditions, and not the other social goals, should yield.

The Case of Baroda, India

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India has been known as the land of many cultures. Since before the Common Era invaders / marauders have come from the North and left traces of their life. Over the years intermarriage and interaction among various groups built a kind of composite ethos that was the pride of this country.

Gujarat, an Indian state, has reflected this special aspect for over a millennium. In addition to the people of different religious faith like Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Christian and Zoroastrian, various caste groups within the Hindus and migrant workers ensured a diversity of culture and lifestyle. This is especially true in the city of Baroda. This paper studies the dynamics of their coexistence.

Baroda is a large city of this state with a population of about 2,000,000. Till the mid-20th century it was a beautiful city with wooden-gabled houses, tree-lined avenues and large open space. Today it is transformed. Large oil refineries, fertilizer and petroleum complexes mark its boundaries. Industries, small and big, demands of residential housing, shopping centres, corporate offices have encroached on the surrounding farmland, orchards and gardens. Quaint old buildings have given way to soulless highrisers and the roads can hardly carry the yearly increase in traffic load. Noise and air pollution are a part of every Barodian's life.

Gujarat, till about two years ago, was an economically vibrant state with Baroda as its pride. Employment opportunities attracted fresh migration to the city, specially from the nearby tribal areas where constant logging and acid rain had destroyed much of their environment. Migration and conflict do not necessarily go together; the relationship between tribals, Hindus of lower castes and the Hindu dominant castes has been mainly stress-free, largely because of their attempt to become a part of the mainstream Hindu society, possibly out of a fear of conflict. The pull of the majority then erases some of the cultural forms.

Despite sporadic troubles among different religious groups there was at least a veneer of calm in Baroda. But earlier this year in 2002, violence of an unbelievable dimension broke out between Hindus and Muslims; urban squalor, stress and struggle attacked the basic diversity of the society. Over 2000 people all over the state were killed and over 100,000 people were rendered homeless. It was extremely severe in Baroda where in one instance alone 14 people were burnt alive.

Why? This was not a conflict arising out of migration of outsiders but among people of the same soil and similar background, between Hindus and Muslims. The religious, social and cultural blend into one another in Indian society and in the last two decades religion has taken a very public posture. Religious differences like idolatry of many Gods versus the prayer to one Allah merge with cultural or lifestyle differences like food habits (eating of beef), attire and language. In cultural forms like music and art, the devotional music of the Hindu is different not only in content but in style as well. In art and architecture the Hindu depiction of animate forms poses a strong contrast to the Islamic stress on intricate designs.

Spatial segregation intensifies suspicion. With little social intercourse, rumours easily enhance the already existing mistrust and enmity; the Hindu asserts his identity through a greater public demonstration of his religious and cultural symbols and the Muslim reiterates his Islamic identity through his own religio-cultural traits. Diversity turns into divide.

With this background the critical factor in spreading the violence was economic. Monsoon had failed repeatedly, recession had hit the job market, 'sale' signs had no takers, people were going through extreme economic hardship. The memory of better times, exposure to the lifestyle of the world through international communication meant greater needs and aspirations; a fight for essentials became the central dynamic. For both communities diversity had created certain areas of specialisation in craft, art, trade, manufacture and other spheres. With economic distress, encroachments on each other's economic turf were unavoidable which in turn became a new source of conflict. The Hindu masses were ready to demolish the outsider, the Muslim, the competitor.

There never is a set formula about the relationship between cultural diversity and conflict. Diverse cultures merge into the mainstream partly to avoid conflicts as in the case of tribals whereas in the case of the two major protagonists, Hindus and Muslims, conflict leads to greater attention to difference. In periods of extreme tension in this relationship,

economic hardships, spatial pressures, competition for limited resources can lead to conflicts of catastrophic proportions.

Diversity and inter-ethnic conflicts among adolescents

Addresses topic 2: Cultural diversity and conflict in multicultural cities

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This paper concentrates on an important aspect during processes of migration: The interaction between immigrants and members of the host society. Early studies by Park (1924) and Bogardus (1925) employing social distance scales were able to identify conflicts and peaceful interactions between autochthonous and allochthonous groups. But in the longer term the assimilation models assumed a decrease in inter-ethnic tensions. More recent studies challenge this assumption by pointing at the development of ethnic colonies, dissimilation or even marginalisation of migrant groups (see Gordon 1964, Yinger 1981, Barrera 1988, Pedraza 1996 or Bourhis/Moïse/Perrault/Senécal 1997). Following these research results we expect that tensions between ethnic groups still exist and that conflicts and violent activities can particularly be observed in urban areas with comparatively high proportions of young immigrants (see also Dubet/Lapeyronnie 1994, Häußermann 1998, MacDonald 1997). Taking these developments into consideration the paper focusses more specifically on aspects of diversity, conflict resolution strategies and inter-ethnic violent activities among adolescents. The analysis is based on a quantitative longitudinal survey, that began in 2001 and is projected to conclude in 2006. In the first wave of the survey, 11,200 respondents participated, of which 6,100 were German youths, 3,500 Resettler and 1,600 Turkish youths. Violent activities are measured as hard forms, labelled as deviant behaviour, and soft forms, labelled as anti-social behaviour. Conflict resolution strategies are measured as bargaining or revenge oriented attitudes. A descriptive analysis will reveal the major pattern of violent activities between the three groups and their preferred conflict resolution strategies. It will be investigated whether members of the host society are more prone to violent behaviour against the immigrant groups or whether the opposite is the case. The explanatory models will finally investigate the effects of ethnic diversity in the area of living, school education, gender and conflict resolution strategies on violent behaviour. It will be tested whether bargaining as a preference for conflict resolution is able to prevent inter-ethnic violent activities. The analysis will further reveal whether we can talk of a more general explanatory pattern across the three ethnic groups.

The Struggle of Becoming Established in a Deprived Inner-City Neighbourhood

Abstract for a paper submitted to the Third ENGIME Workshop

Social Dynamics and Conflicts in Multicultural Cities

Topic #2: Cultural diversity and Conflict in multicultural cities

(alternatively Topic #3: Inequality and Conflict in multicultural cities)

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The theory of established-outsider relations is a useful tool for examining conflicts across ethnic boundaries especially when analysing deprived inner-city neighbourhoods. The aim of this paper is twofold: it both extends the theory of established-outsider relations and presents the case of Dortmund Nordstadt in Germany. Nordstadt is an old inner-city neighbourhood that has been heavily influenced by the coal and steel industry throughout the last 1½ centuries. Furthermore, Nordstadt has from its early days housed the newly arrived and in 1997, 41.1% of its inhabitants did not have a German passport. The theory of established-outsider relations has been developed by Norbert Elias 1960s and 1970s. According to this theory, the social cohesion of the established together with the stigmatisation of the outsiders lead to status and power differentials that exclude the outsiders and in turn produce more cohesion and stigmatisation.

However, deprived neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrants cannot be analysed on their own. Here three levels of established-outsider relations overlap and effect each other.

On the first, the societal level, the two groups of the Germans and the immigrants stand opposite to each other. The legal system creates ab initio power differential that confines the immigrants to the positions of the outsiders. This structure is taken up on the levels below, re-produced, and at the same time superimposed by other developments.

On the second, the city level, the status of the outsiders is decided upon spatial criteria. Nordstadt is a big neighbourhood that is cut off from the rest of the city by the rails and industry and thus easy to stigmatise. Furthermore, these criteria are time and again linked with the first level of established-outsider relations as Nordstadt is a traditional immigrant neighbourhood. Thus the low status of the immigrants is taken as proof for the low status of Nordstadt.

On the third, the neighbourhood level, the other established-outsider relations are in part re-produced and in part changed by recent developments. This gives rise to specific conflicts and special ways of handling conflicts. Conflicts arise over the status and recognition of the different ethnic and religious groups, over the distribution of resources and defending the interests of the various actors, and over values and lifestyles of both actors and groups. These conflicts facilitate ethnicisation and stigmatisation when occurring across ethnic boundaries.

Here on the neighbourhood level, the immigrants can to increasingly greater degrees establish themselves due to their greater cohesion and due to their growing control over material resources in the neighbourhood. To some extent, immigrants begin ethnicising and stigmatising the Germans. However, the Germans of Nordstadt assume themselves being the established in their relation to the immigrants and attempt to implement the established-outsider relation from the societal level and hold the immigrants responsible for being regarded as outsiders in the city-wide established-outsider relation. Yet, the Germans of Nordstadt do not have enough local cohesion to effectively exclude and disadvantage the immigrants on the local level. However, the advantage immigrants can gain through their greater cohesion on the local level is more than outweighed by the disadvantage on the societal level of established-outsider relations.

Abstract

Under the broad heading of “Changing City Spaces” – an EU-financed project currently conducted simultaneously in seven European cities (London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, Belgrade and Ljubljana) – we involve ourselves in the field of the new (and old) challenges to cultural policy in Europe. We envisage several objectives, not the least trying to track the development of new kinds of networking between cities, whereby the city is considered to be an innovative focus for capturing social and cultural flows and nexuses across, and beyond, the European space. With respect to the term nexus, we think that our design enables us to go beyond the more orthodox comparative and cross-national research, and that it has the potential to capture new social and cultural dynamics that are not apparent to more conventional approaches.

As the title of the project might imply, we research the interaction between migrants and non-migrants in the city (cities) with respect to culture. The former element – the migrants – does address, in our opinion, challenges to European culture, especially in the context of the contemporary change overwhelming Europe (e.g. enlargement; East/West Europe relations; imperial legacies; new transnational migrations). We focus attention on the new kinds of social and cultural interaction and encounter taking place within the above-mentioned arenas/ cities.

Among the results we hope this research might yield is understanding how people construct a sense of belonging through involvement with particular cultural industries, forms and practices; in other words, processes and policies of social inclusion and/ or exclusion, xenophobia and racism.

A starting point will be analysing official local/ European cultural policies, the cultural policy practices and their degree of implementation. This top-bottom approach is counter-balanced with a bottom-top study of how migrants construct and mobilise their own cultural identities. The next step will consist in collecting data through in-depth qualitative research in the respective cities in isolation, but without losing track of the inter-urban nexuses across the system of European cities. This is going to be carried out through consumption and reception studies with migrant groups – individual interviews, focus groups as well as participant observation at cultural events. This requires a maximum of local knowledge and high researcher mobility to be capable of tracing nexus linkages and the particular networks.

Our expectations include developing an innovative agenda on European cultural dynamics regarding migrants, shedding light on the relation between cultural policies and social integration, establishing new approaches to good practice in cultural policy, and bringing together practitioners, policymakers and researchers from diverse contexts. These goals are to be furthered by teams working within larger interdisciplinary frameworks: ethnographic observation; discourse, text and semiotic analysis; focus group research; open and semi-structured interview techniques.

The city of Vienna features in two nexuses: the Turkish and the Balkan. The former also includes Kurds, while the latter revolves around the Serbs, Bosnians, Croats, Slovenes and Roma. This selection reflects the fact that both nexuses are well established, and that the cultural connections and interactions associated with them are particularly significant in the contemporary European context. The two nexuses might be complemented, at a later stage, with that of the African and Middle Eastern.

Since this conference coincides with the first phase of our project, what we have to offer is presenting the existing documents and literature on Austrian/ Viennese cultural policies and an overview of them, as well as first impressions on the cultural situation of the nexuses under study.