Where you live versus who you know:
A study investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration

by

Zita Ingen-Housz

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Utrecht University for the degree of Master of Science

Where you live versus who you know:

A study investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration

by

Zita Ingen-Housz

Supervisor
Prof. Dr. Ronald van Kempen
Professor of Urban Geography
Faculty of Geosciences
Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Acknowledgements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the past, international migration flows were highly dominated by male members of the family who went abroad for economic reasons. Recently however, women, children, and other family members seem to occupy a significant share of these international flows of migration (Boyd, 1989). Developments in Information and Communication Technologies -ICTs- as well as advances in transportation modes have, figuratively spoken, led to the 'shrinking' of out planet, and, have highly contributed to the complexity of these international flows of migration, making it possible for immigrants to keep in touch with friends and relatives abroad easily, regularly, as well as to often inexpensively travel back and forth between home and host country (e.g. Kelly, 2003; Vertovec, 2001; Mills, 2005). As a consequence, these developments have led to a situation in which contemporary migrants have increasingly developed complex social networks that stretch the globe while often keeping strong links to the home-country, thereby creating so called transnational social networks (Diminescu, 2008):

> *"Now a new kind of migrating population is emerging, composed of those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. Their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field"* (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1).

When immigrants first arrive in a new country it is often argued that they rely on friends and family in the host country, and thus on their social networks, to help them with, amongst others, finding a place to stay and a job. Immigrant enclaves also seem to be a save haven for newly arriving immigrants in which they can find help and support from their own ethnic group (e.g. Grönqvist, 2006). However, besides theories that stress the positive aspects of ethnic residential concentration, a great number of studies have mainly emphasized the negative impacts of living in an area with a concentration of co-ethnics or other immigrant groups. Advocates of this stream generally argue that living in an ethnic enclave will worsen one's socio-economic position or hamper one's social mobility (Urban, 2009), and, that the residential concentration of disadvantaged people, often but not always corresponding with ethnic minorities, has a negative impact on integration into society and the ability to get ahead in life (Musterd and Andersson, 2006). These so called neighbourhood effects studies are numerous, and most theories stress that living amongst disadvantaged others impacts people's live negatively (Musterd and Andersson, 2006). When focusing on the mechanisms through which these so called neighbourhood effects are assumed to operate, it becomes clear that it is simply assumed that people socialize in their neighbourhoods and that the neighbourhood, and the social contacts in them, contribute significantly to people's social lives. However, to what extent is the neighbourhood really an important locale in immigrants their lives? And, if where you live is less important than who you know, isn't there a need for a new perspective on residential concentration?

In order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration, and thus a move away from seeing the neighbourhood as the pivot in determining individual outcomes, it seems important to study social networks. Much more so than is often assumed in these studies on residential concentration and neighbourhood effects, research on social networks (e.g. Winchie and Carment, 1989 in Walton-Roberts, 2003; Boyd, 1989) has shown the importance of broader contexts and has emphasized that both local contexts, in the form of local social networks, as well as broader contexts, in the form of more (trans)national social networks outside of one's neighbourhood, are important determinants of individual outcomes. In other words, not so much one's locale but the networks one is part of are important

determinants of how one's live is shaped (e.g. Boyd, 1989; Ryan, 2007; Ryan et al., 2008). Consequently, this study on social networks will be conducted without dismissing the importance of one's locale, but stressing the need for the incorporation of the wider (social) context including both local, as well as regional, national and transnational social networks of which immigrants can be part off.

Also, my study will pay special attention to some gaps in the literature on social networks. Despite the fact that a lot of research has been done studying -migrant- social networks, so far, research on these matters has mostly been quite 'static' and not much research has taken into account the dynamic nature, in time as well as in space, of social networks (Boyd, 1989; Ryan, 2007). Also, little attention has been paid to the different social networks that exist, and the diverse 'forms of support' that each of these networks might supply, as well as on how migrants gain access to social networks and how they develop new social relations (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 673). In this realm, studies have demonstrated that different social contacts, provide different kinds of support. For example, it is found that instrumental support such as childcare is mostly provided by contacts that live close by (Willmott, 1987 in Ryan, 2007), emotional support is often provided by friends and family who live on the other side of the world (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007), and informational support is often provided by acquaintances, such as colleagues (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007).

Research aim and research questions

In sum, it seems important to study immigrants' social networks in the way that both local and (trans)national social networks are taken as the point of departure instead of the neighbourhood. Thus, the aim of this study is to provide insight into the way immigrants' social networks operate, in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration. In this realm, the following main research question has been formulated:

How do social networks of immigrants in cities operate and what is the role of the residential neighbourhood in these social networks?

The 'operation' of social networks, as stated in the previous research question, is operationalized in the following sub-questions:

1) To what extent are immigrants part of transnational networks?

2) How do immigrants gain access to new social networks and develop new social ties after immigration, and to what extent does ethnic homophily play a role?

3) How are pre-existing kinship networks important in influencing one's choice for a specific neighbourhood to reside in?

4) To what extent do immigrants socialize in their neighbourhood and engage in neighbouring?

5) What kind of support do immigrants get upon initial settlement and from which social contacts in their network do they receive this support?

6) What kind of support, either emotional, instrumental and informational, is received through which social contacts in immigrant's their social networks, and how important are neighbourhood based contacts in this realm?

In order to answer these research questions, a qualitative study is conducted, interviewing Iranian immigrants in Toronto, Canada. Toronto in Canada is chosen as the context for my study since it seems an interesting place to conduct a study in the realm of social networks and immigration. Not only for Toronto's extremely multi-cultural character: more than 200 ethnic groups live in Toronto, but also because Toronto is an immigrant city per se: half of Toronto's inhabitants are immigrants. Iranians are chosen as the group under study since they, in comparison to other groups in Toronto such Italian and Somali, have not been studied extensively yet and seem an interesting group to study. Also, Iranians in Toronto have an on average good English language ability, which enables successful communication, and they are residentially clustered to a certain degree, which is highly relevant in my study which is aimed at investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

Structure

In the first chapter, Chapter 2, theories and findings from three different but connected bodies of literature are reviewed, in order to provide a theoretical basis for my own study on social networks. The first part of the theory chapter focuses on social networks, however, since there is an abundant literature on social networks, clear choices have been made with regards to which literature to include in the review, and which literature not to include. The second part of the chapter investigates transnationalism, and more specifically, the implications of transnationalism on immigrants their lives. In the third and final section of this chapter attention is paid at neighbourhood effect studies and -amongst others- a brief overview of studies undertaken in this realm is given. Chapter 3 is meant to illustrate the context in which my research has taken place and pays -amongst others- attention to the special position of Toronto as Canada's immigrant capital, major immigration waves to Canada, Canadian immigration policy and Toronto's ethnic neighbourhoods. Chapter 4 deals with issues in the realm of research strategy, research design and research method, choice of specific setting and ethnic group, and sampling. Chapter 5 focuses on the Iranian population in Canada and starts off with a brief section on the history of Iranian immigration to Canada, followed by some statistics and a section on the Iranian residential concentration area of North York. Chapter 6, Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 all present the results of my fieldwork in Toronto, and, the thesis will be ended by Chapter 9, in which the research questions are answered and the limitations of my study and direction for further research discussed.

CHAPTER 2: THEORY

INTRODUCTION

As introduced in the introduction, my study is aimed at understanding how immigrants' social networks operate, in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration. Therefore, in this chapter theories and findings that have emerged from three different but connected bodies of literature will be reviewed, since theories, concepts and findings from all three are important to construct a firm theoretical basis for my study. The first section of this theory chapter reviews literature on social networks in the fields of – amongst others- sociology, geography and labour economics. This body of literature is abundant, and clear selections have been made with regards to which parts of the literature will be dealt with, and which parts won't. The second theoretical section specifically deals with the transnational dimension of social networks. A dimension which is highly relevant in the field of immigration since it is nowadays much easier and cheaper for immigrants to keep in touch with relatives and friends abroad, creating complex social networks that stretch the world. In this section the emphasis will be specifically on the implications of transnational relations and networks on the lives of immigrants. The last theoretical section deals with local social networks and the importance of one's locale. This specific section therefore focuses on neighbourhood effect studies in order to provide a theoretical basis for studying the operation of local social networks. In sum, all three bodies of literature are, in different ways, linked to social networks and immigration, and thus relevant in providing a firm theoretical basis for my own study.

2.1 SOCIAL NETWORKS

Introduction

"Networks can have a variety of structures, functions and consequences that may be either beneficial or detrimental to the individual or to the network as a whole"
(Antcliff, 2007, p. 376).

Social networks and the support individuals can get from them are often taken for granted. Not only are varieties within and between social networks often overlooked, it is also often assumed that immigrants can easily slot into already existing networks upon arrival in the host country. However, this uncritical and simplified stance does not suffice if one really wants to understand how social networks work, and, thus, there is a need for a better understanding of social networks, especially with regards to immigration. The following chapter deals with these issues and starts off with a brief section on social capital, since an understanding of this classical concept is important for any study in the realm of social network. Next, studies that have focused on social networks and support will be reviewed, and specific attention is paid at studies that have dealt with the importance of social networks for getting a job. Thereafter, in order to understand how social networks influence and shape the process of immigration itself, the chapter is more specifically focused on the macro-dimensions of immigration. Thereafter, literature will be reviewed that has taken into account issues of access, bonding and bridging, and ethnic homophily, in order to provide a theoretical basis for my own study, which aims at providing more insight into these issues.

Often seen as closely linked to social networks, is the sociological concept of social capital. In this realm, Ryan et al. (2008) clearly state that "Social networks are increasingly regarded as important sources of social capital for migrants, allowing them to access social

support" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 673). However, although the concepts of social networks and social capital are often used interchangeably, the statement above already pinpoints an important difference: social networks are a means through which individuals can gain support, and social capital is 'embedded' in these social network and therefore does not exist on its own (Ryan et al., 2008). For this reason, both terms will not be used interchangeably in my research but seen as two different things: social networks as a means through which individuals can access social support, and, thus, social capital as something that can only be 'accessed' through the membership in these social networks. It is beyond the scope of my study to discuss the relationship between social networks and social capital any further here, but, in the following section I will briefly look at the concept of social capital in more detail since an understanding of this classical concept is important for any study on social networks.

Social capital: an ambiguous concept

The concept of social capital has been developed based on work of e.g. Bourdieu (1985) Loury (1977), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) (e.g. Lin, 1999; Portes, 1998). An early use of the term can be traced back to Loury (1977), who argued that it was important to think of the consequences of the social context in which humans being were positioned, in impacting individual characteristics (deFilippis, 2001, p. 783). Bourdieu (1985) on the other hand, used the term social capital as an "attempt to understand the production of classes and class divisions" (p. 783) and focused on power relations and linked social capital to economic capital (deFilippis, 2001). In 1988, James Coleman introduced a, as deFilippis puts it, "rather fuzzy definition" of social capital which included both "actions, outcomes and relationships" (p. 784). As a consequence, this definition of the concept gave room to Putnam and its followers to propose an even broader definition of social capital, which became very influential in community development. Putnam's definition, instead of seeing social capital as something that is embedded in social relationships and can be realized by individuals such as the earlier definitions proposed, saw social capital as "a resource that individuals or groups of people possess or fail to possess" (deFilippis, 2001, p. 785). And, consequently, defined social capital as "social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 673).

From all the definitions that exist on social capital, I prefer a definition as proposed by Portes in his critical response to the work of Putnam and its followers, in which he defines social capital as the "ability to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures" (Portes, 1998, p. 8). This definition clearly returns to seeing social capital as something individuals can realize because of their membership in social networks, but not automatically possess. Also, Portes' definition is a step away from conflations with civil society -such as Putnam proposed- and acknowledges that social capital has both a positive as well as a negative side: on the one hand social capital can lead to social control, family support and so called 'network-mediated benefits' and, on the other hand, it can lead to 'restrictions on personal freedom', 'excessive claims on group members', 'downward leveling norms' and 'restricted access to opportunities' (Portes, 1998, p. 8). Moreover, when we specifically turn our attention to immigration, Portes definition is also a step away from seeing social capital as something positive that immigrants can access through their membership in ethnic specific communities or networks, but acknowledges that being immersed in ethnic specific communities can also lead to 'ghettoization' and disadvantage (Kelly and Lusis, 2006 in: Ryan et al., 2008).

Although I do not disregard that the membership in social networks can have both positive as well as negative consequences such as Portes has suggested, in my study I will mainly focus on the positive 'consequences' of network membership in the possibility of its

members to gain support. Furthermore, as Ryan et al. (2008) have clearly stressed, seeing social capital as something that lies within specific neighbourhoods and communities "fails to capture the dynamics, diversity and spatial dispersion of migrants' social networks" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 685). Consequently, they completely step away from using the concept of social capital, and rather investigate different types of support that individuals can access through the contacts in their social networks. In my thesis I will take this same stance and, without disregarding the importance of social capital, rather focus on immigrants' social networks and the different types of support that can be accessed through their social networks. Consequently, the next section will focus on social networks and the different types of support that individuals can get from them. Theories and findings that will be 'tested' in my own study in order to provide better insight into how social networks work. Thereafter, special attention will be paid at one specific type of support that individuals can get from others in their social networks: help with finding a job. I pay special attention to this, since there is a large literature on this topic which grew significantly since Granovetter's publications in the 70s, and it seems interesting to investigate whether –amongst others- Granovetter's claims hold for my own study.

Social networks and support

"Community ties with friends and relatives are a principal means by which people and households get supportive resources" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 360).

It is a well-known fact that social networks – and more accurately contacts within these social networks - can provide support to individuals. Following a characterisation by Schaefer et al. (used in Ryan et al., 2008), informational, instrumental and emotional support can be distinguished. Ryan et al. (2008) add to this characterisation the elements of companionship and socializing. Wellman and Wortley (1990) on the other hand, distinguish between 5 different types of social support: emotional aid, small services, large services, financial aid and companionship (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 560). Of course these are but three ways to categorize the various types of support people can get from others, and many other categorizations are conceivable. However, in my study I will use the characterisation of support as developed by Schaefer et al., since it is very clear and inclusive. Besides the different types of support that exist, it is also found that these different types of support are provided by different contacts (e.g. Wellman and Wortley, 1990; Ryan et al., 2008). In this realm, Wellman and Wortley -in their study *Different Strokes from Different Folks: Community Ties and Social Support* (1990)- stress that "most relationships provide specialized support" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 558) and it is found that most support comes from strong ties (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). Also, it is found that strong ties provide more emotional support, small services – such as lending tools – and companionship than weaker –but significant- ties (Wellman and Wortley, 1990), and that most people rarely socialize with co-workers (Ray and Preston, 2009).

In addition to levels of intimacy that have been found to influence support giving as illustrated above, geographical proximity has also been found to influence the giving and receiving of certain types of support. Especially with regards to providing small and large services geographic proximity seems to be important, much less so with emotional and financial support (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). A study by Ryan (2007) *Migrant Woman, Social Networks and Motherhood: The Experience of Irish Nurses in Britain* clearly illustrates this as well, since it is found that for the help with childcare -a large service- geographically close contacts are very important (Ryan 2007; Willmott, 1987 in Ryan, 2007). However, when it comes to emotional support, it is found that geographical proximity is of less

importance since this type of support is often provided by friends and family who do not live close-by and are contacted –for example- via the telephone (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007). In this realm, confirming Wellman and Wortley's argument, Plickert et al. (2007) conclude that "although networks have gone beyond the confines of our frond yards, neighbouring still pays off. Neighbours reciprocally exchange more services" (p. 424) and "the importance of proximity will persist for services until it is possible to transport a cup of sugar electronically" (Plickert et al., 2007, p. 424).

However, despite these recognitions that proximity is still important, Plickert et al. also argue –conversely- that "the distance between network members [..] plays an insignificant role in the exchange of social support" (Plickert et al., 2007, p. 424), because 'internet [maintains] many friendship and kinship ties over long distances' (Plickert et al., 2007, p. 424) and "the phone takes much of the place of neighbourly interaction, supplemented by intermittent trips by car or plane to visit with far-flung network members" (Wellman and Tindall, 1993 in: Plickert et al., 2007, p. 424). In this realm Plickert et al. argue that "it is not that neighbourhood ties have died; it is just that they no longer dominate most personal networks" (Plickert et al., 2007). In sum, it is thus argued that although people's social networks "have gone beyond the confines of our front yards" (Plickert et al., 2007, p. 424), there are certain –tangible- types of support that are more likely provided by geographically close contacts - varying from strong to weaker ties- but, because of developments in transportation and communication technologies, geographical proximity seems to be getting more insignificant when it comes to receiving certain other less tangible types of support.

Besides the fact that geographic proximity influences receiving certain types of support, it also seems to influence the frequency of contact that people have with each other. In other words, it is argued that people have more frequent contact with social contacts that live close, even when they are only acquaintances: "physical access makes it easier for people to deliver services even when their relationships are not strong [..] and they help each other much like (paid) co-workers do, out of convenience" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 569). However, in contrast to studies in which it is argued that the frequency of contact also positively correlates with the strength of the tie (e.g. Homans, 1961 in; Wellman and Wortley, 1990) Wellman and Wortley find that more face-to-face contact does not lead to stronger relationships per se. To illustrate this argument they argue that "most [..] frequent contact is with weaker ties whom they encounter – less voluntarily – in workplaces, neighbourhoods, and kinship groups" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 568) and thus 'infrequent interactions with neighbours are the norm' (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241).

After having taken into account the impact of intimacy and the influence of geographic proximity when it comes to receiving support, let us now look at the differences between friends and family in providing support. Wellman and Wortley find first of all that family acts in very different ways than friends, and that within the family structure, there are large differences to be found. More specifically, the relationship between parents and children is found to be most supportive and parents are "most likely of all network members to provide financial aid [..] and parents (and grandparents) are a key source of aid in buying homes in high priced Toronto" (Wellman and Wortley, p. 574; also Adams 1968; Fischer 1982 in Plickert et al., 2007). Furthermore, neighbours are generally perceived to be helpful, however, when looked at the share of people that actually receive support from their neighbours, this proportion is quite small. And, although neighbours might be helpful for 'small support' such as borrowing tools, only a very small percentage of people indicate that their neighbours have helped them with more 'important' types of support such as help with finding a job (Wellman and Wortley, 1990).

Having now discussed who receives what support from whom, it should be noted that individuals themselves can of course also give support to others. And, receiving support from others might result in giving support back in return. This relationship of reciprocity, defined by Plickert et al. (2007) as "doing for others if they have done for you" (p. 405), is argued to be important in understanding who gives and receives support from whom. However, although the concept of reciprocity is an interesting one, it is beyond the scope of my study to address this phenomenon. Consequently, I will only focus on whom individuals receive support from, not to whom they give support in return, without disregarding that the concept of reciprocity might be a interesting avenue for future research. Furthermore, in my own study on the social networks of Iranian immigrants in Toronto -building on the ideas of e.g. Wellman and Wortley, 1990 and Ryan (2007; 2008), there will be special attention for the operation of social networks by focusing on –amongst others- what types of networks people are part off, the characteristics of the people in those networks, and what sort of social support is received from whom. All in all, I will move away from seeing social networks as "descriptive metaphor[s] to portray social interactions" (Vertovec, 2001 in Ryan, 2007, p. 298) and, instead, investigate them in detail, "analysing aspects of network formation and structure" (Ryan, 2007, p. 298).

Social networks as a means to get a job

The old cliché about finding work - It is not what you know, it who you know that matters - suggests that having good connections is important in the labour market" (Mouw, 2003, p. 868). This cliché seems to fit in well with ideas of researchers such as Granovetter, who argue that one's social networks - the characteristics of the people in these social network as well as the structure of the relationships itself - indeed determines how well we do in life. Others have critically argued that not much is known yet about the causal relationship between one's social networks and individual outcomes and we should be careful making such assumptions (Mouw, 2003). Academic interest in the relationship between social networks and labour market outcomes has for a large part been initiated by Mark Granovetter since he wrote his influential work *Getting a job: A study of contacts and careers* (1974) and *The Strength of Weak Ties* (1973).

In a nutshell, Granovetter proposed that jobs found through one's social network are better paid and higher in prestige – and thus qualitatively better – because of a better match between the job and the employee. Furthermore, he argued that the use of weak ties for finding a job, leads to gaining new information and knowledge about job openings and other job related information, not available through one's strong network ties (e.g. Franzen and Hangartner, 2006, Aguilera, 2008). Since Granovetter's work in the early 1970's, many studies have focused on this relationship between social networks and labour market outcomes, and have found mixed evidence for Granovetter's statements. Especially his 'Strength of Weak ties hypothesis' has been highly debated. On the other hand, many studies conducted in both Europe and North America (e.g. Mouw, 2003; Franzen and Hangartner, 2006; Loury, 2006) have found evidence for Granovetter's hypothesis that almost half of all job-seekers find their job through their social network (Franzen and Hangartner, 2006): 'it is now a stylized fact that individuals rely on friends, family and acquaintances to find jobs" (Burns et al., 2010, p. 336)

With regards to Granovetter's ideas that jobs found through one's social networks are qualitatively better, some studies have indeed indicated that using social contacts for finding a job has a positive effect on wages (e.g. Corcoran et al., 1980; Staiger 1990; Jann, 2003 in: Franzen and Hangartner, 2006; Yakubovich, 2005). However, most studies have argued that no such positive effects can be found (e.g. Bridges en Villemez 1986; Korenman and Turner

1996 in: Mouw, 2003; Marsden and Hurlbert, 1988; Lin, 1999 in: Franzen and Hangartner, 2006), and some studies have even opted that using social contacts for finding a job leads to lower paid jobs (e.g. De Graaf and Flap, 1988 in Franzen and Hangartner, 2006). However, it has been critically argued that positive correlations found have much more to do with the non-randomness of friendships or homophily, which means so much as the "tendency for similar people to become friends" (Mouw, 2003, p. 872), "with the result that social networks tend to sort along dimensions such as race, ethnicity, age and religion" (Lin, 2001; Waldinger 1996 in: Burns et al., 2010, p. 338) and, thus, are a product of self-selection (Burns et al., 2010; Mouw, 2003).

Now returning to Granovetter's strength of weak ties hypothesis, the classical assumption Granovetter made was that the use of weak ties for finding jobs would increase the probability of getting a job, since weak ties would be able to generate new, non-redundant information about jobs, not available through one's stronger ties (e.g. Yakubovich, 2005; Aguilera, 2008). Thus, Granovetter's strength of weak ties statement did not make any assumptions about whether jobs found through these weak ties would lead to better quality jobs. However, many studies that have tried to test Granovetters strength of weak ties hypothesis have instead dealt with specific characteristics of jobs found through one's network, such as wages and job prestige, and not so much focused on whether using weak ties increases the probability of getting a job (Yakubovich, 2005). An example of a study that has tried to test Granovetter's classical assumption is a study by Ryan (2007), in which it was found that weak ties were very important for getting a job after a period of not working because of childbirth. Many of the women interviewed got back to work after this period because of information on job availabilities received from people they new outside of their close social circle (Ryan, 2007). In an attempt to further investigate the importance of social networks for finding a job, my study will also specifically focus on how immigrants found their jobs after immigration, as well as testing Granovetter's classical strength of weak ties hypothesis. Now moving away from theories and findings in the realm of social networks and labour market outcomes, it is time to shed light on literature which has more specifically focused on social networks and support in relation to immigration.

Social networks and immigration

First of all it is important to take into account how social networks influence and shape the process of immigration itself. For this reason, the following section will briefly address the importance of social networks in understanding immigration, without getting into too much detail. The importance of social networks for understanding migration is emphasised by a study by Winchie and Carment (1989) on Indian immigration to Canada, in which it is argued that already existing social networks are most important for the decision to move to a certain destination (Winchie and Carment, 1989 in Walton-Roberts, 2003). Walton-Roberts research on Indian immigrants to Canada confirms this, and highlights the importance of existing social contacts abroad as a motivation for immigration. Ryan (2007) in her study on Irish nurses in Britain also found that 'pre-existing kinship networks' in the host country were an important driver for immigrants besides economic motives (p. 300). What becomes most clear from the above stated observations is 'that the mobility of economically defined subjects is actually shaped by pre-existing social factors" (Walton-Roberts, 2003, p. 244). In this same realm, Boyd (1989), in her article on family and personal networks, makes clear that social networks "across time and space", are very important in understanding international migration flows (Boyd, 1989, p. 639), because social networks "shape migration outcomes" and provide information and support (Boyd, 1989, p. 639). She goes on by arguing that "studying networks, particularly those linked to family and households, permits understanding migration

as a social product – not as the sole result of individual decisions made by individual actors, not as the sole result of economic or political parameter, but rather as an outcome of all these factors in interaction" (Boyd, 1989, p. 642).

Studies on international migration have further shown that structural factors - such as immigration policies - greatly influence migration decisions. Walton-Roberts' (2003) study on Indian migration to Canada for example, clearly indicates that the sharpening and loosing of migration laws has highly influenced migration from India to Canada. After the introduction of a point system in Canada, which allowed migrants to enter if they lived up to certain pre-stated qualifications, the social composition of migration flows from India to Canada changed significantly (Walton-Roberts, 2003). A study by Mills (2005), on the transnational network between Canada and Carriacou -a small Caribbean island- also clearly stresses the importance of structural factors. It was found that the character and extent of support from the ethnic community in Vancouver and Toronto to Carriacou has changed significantly over time due to developments in ICT as well as changing immigration policies: when England, an important destination for migrants from Carriacou, tightened its rules on immigration in the 1960s, the flow of Carriacouan migrants to the US increased significantly (Mills, 2005).

Despite these recognitions that immigration is –amongst others- a social as well as a structural product, it is beyond the scope of this paper to further address these and other –such as economic- drivers of migration. They have been briefly outlined above to keep in mind the multi-dimensional character of immigration and the importance of social networks in understanding immigration flows. Moving away now from this macro-dimension of immigration and social networks, the following sections will take into account the micro-dimension and deal specifically with immigrants' social networks, and address questions such as how immigrants gain access to new social networks after immigration, if ethnic/racial homophily plays a role in their networks, and how their social networks operate.

Getting settled: issues of access and ethnic networks

'It is apparent that migrants access support through a combination of established and newly formed networks involving a mixture of contacts in both the country of origin and within the new environment" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 686).

One of the first questions that comes to mind when thinking of social networks and immigration, will probably be related to how immigrants gain access to 'new' social networks after arrival, and with whom they form these new ties. However, although this might seem to be a logical first question, only limited attention has been devoted to studying "how migrants access existing networks or establish new ties in the host society" (Wierzbicki, 2004 in: Ryan, 2007, p. 298). Instead, "migration theorists often take for granted that migrants arrive and simply slot into networks that provide them with jobs, housing and emotional support" (Wierzbicki, 2004 in: Ryan, 2007, p. 298). Ryan -in her study on Irish nurses in Britain- did not take the existence of local social networks for granted, and found out that migrant women thought of getting children as very helpful in the formation of new social ties: "Baby groups, mother and toddler clubs and schools were a vital source of adult companionship and indeed lasting friendship for many woman" (Ryan, 2007, p. 309). A finding in line with what Gans had argued in 1962, when he stated that "having children may provide access to new, local networks" (Gans, 1962 in: Ryan, 2007, p. 301). Other than the possibility of forming new social ties through one's children, Ryan found that schools, work-places and neighbourhoods were important places for these women to come in contact with others and establish new ties. In my own study on the social networks of Iranian immigrants in Toronto I will take into account the issue of access as outlined above, and it won't be taken for granted that

individuals simply slot into social networks upon arrival, instead, it is tried to find out how people get to know people in the host country and thus how and through whom they get access to social networks.

In the beginning migrants - and especially the disadvantaged ones- often rely on co-ethnics for help and support (Ryan et al., 2008). A study that has emphasized the importance of co-ethnics or ethnic networks is a study by Ryan et al. (2008) on Polish migrants in London, in which it is found that most new relationships were formed with other immigrants and not with the native inhabitants (Ryan et al., 2008). In this same realm Wierzbicki (2004) critically notes that "there is evidence to suggest that many migrants are likely to establish friendships with other migrants" (Wierzbicki, 2004, p. 301). These ethnic networks -which do not need to be clustered in space but can be spatially dispersed- have proven to be very useful in getting information and support on e.g. jobs and housing. However, the immersion within these ethnic networks may also work constraining after a while because it discourages the formation of weak ties since it "locks migrants into specific ethnic niches [..] exacerbating competition, rivalry and exploitation" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 686). And, exactly those weak ties -as Granovetter has stressed- function as important bridges to others outside of one's close social circle and can provide new and non-redundant information on for example job openings.
.

Bonding versus bridging

Despite the fact -using Putnam's characterisation- that some immigrants engage in high levels of bonding -i.e. ties to people that are similar- but not bridging -i.e. ties to people that are dissimilar- there are large differences between the social networks of immigrants. In other words, although some immigrants succeed in developing ties with people outside of their close social circle, others "adopt a cautious and limited approach to making links across the wider society" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 681):

> *"While many participants spoke no English upon arrival and were dependent on the practical support of co-ethnics, it is important to differentiate between those who manage over time to improve their skills and develop wider social networks and those who remain within a limited circle of co-ethnics"*(Ryan et al., 2008, p. 678).

Thus, some immigrants seem to develop wider social networks and links to people outside their ethnic community over time, while others do not. Why these differences? With regards to those that stay immersed in networks with mainly co-ethnics -and thus failed to develop bridging social capital or weak ties- Ryan et al. stress that language was a problem for many, which severely restricted contacts to others than co-ethnics. Furthermore, some immigrants were part of a disadvantaged community of co-ethnics from which it was hard to escape since there were very few opportunities for developing weak ties. Even more so, for some immigrants, co-ethnics other than their close family and friends proved to be sources of competition and distrust: "Despite the high levels of practical, information and emotional support that many respondents received from their Polish friends and relatives, there was also a sense of distrust towards the wider Polish community" (p. 679).

What about those immigrants who did form weak ties over time? How are they different from the one's that don't? According to Ryan et al. those immigrants who did succeed in developing weak ties did so for a variety of reasons. For example, one Polish male immigrant had made the deliberate choice himself to move out of the dense Polish community and move in with Australians in order to learn the language and adapt better to British society. For others, bridging came about because of their own choices -such as attending English classes- and again others had gotten the opportunity to meet new people outside of their own

ethnic community, e.g. on the workplace or school of their children (Ryan et al., 2008). However, despite the fact that some immigrants indeed were successful in forming weak ties, many of these ties seemed to be with other immigrants -horizontal bridging- and not with natives, signalling that "It may be particularly difficult for newly arrived migrants to establish weak ties vertically" (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 682).

Ethnic homophily in newcomers' networks

A study by Ray and Preston (2009) has indicated that, in contrast to Ryan et al. (2008), people generally have contact with people that extend beyond their own ethnicity: "a considerable number of friendship ties extend beyond the bounds of ethnic identity [..] the ethnicity of friends is remarkably diverse" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 227). But, recent immigrants appear to have a larger share of co-ethnics in their social circle compared to older immigrant groups and Canadian born. Still, "the majority of immigrants have culturally diverse rather than mono-ethnic social network" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241), and a significant proportion of the immigrants has no or very few friends from the same ethnicity (Ray and Preston, 2009).

In contrast to Ray and Preston (2009), many other studies have indicated that people like to associate with the same sort of people and, thus, that "people generally only have significant contact with others like themselves" (McPherson et al., 2001, p. 415), whereby this sameness can be based on -amongst others- common background, education level, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, norms and values. This tendency of people to have more contact with others that are similar to them is referred to as homophily, and has been studied extensively since the early 1900s (McPherson, 2001). Lazarsfeld and Merton's (1954) classical study on friendship processes, is often cited when homophily is addressed. Racial and ethnic homophily have proved to be one of the strongest sorting principles in our society and brings with it important implications (McPherson et al., 2001). On the one hand homophilous relationships based on race or ethnicity have proved to be beneficial, in that they are important sources of help and support and are valued in that it "increases ease of communication, improves predictability of behavior and fosters relationships of trust and reciprocity" (Ibarra, 1993, p. 61 in: Mollica et al., 2003, p. 124). On the other hand, engaging in relationships with dissimilar others, in this case of different race or ethnicity, can lead to valuable information e.g. on job openings that is not available through homophilous relationships, an idea that is in line with Granovertter's strength of weak ties hypothesis (Mollica et al., 2003).

While studying the social networks of first-year MBA students, Mollica et al. (2003) find that, in line with McPherson et al. (2001), and confirming many previous studies, ethnic minorities have more homophilous social networks than majorities. Another interesting finding was that although the students were exposed to many other racial/ethnic groups, and thus students had the possibility of forming heterogeneous networks, homophily in their networks persisted over time. This finding therefore contradicts the so called 'contact hypothesis' in which it is stressed that contact amongst different groups, e.g. based on culture/ethnicity, would foster acceptance and lead to more 'heterophilous contacts' (Mollica et al., 2003, p. 125). When it comes to ethnic homophily, in my own study on the social networks of Iranian immigrants in Toronto, I will pay special attention to this and investigate why some immigrants develop wider social networks across society, while others don't and stay immersed in dense networks of co-ethnics.

Conclusion

As evident from this theoretical overview on social networks, literature on the subject is abundant, but, some clear gaps can be identified that need further investigation, gaps that all come down to a lack of knowledge on how social networks work. In other words, despite that it is a well known fact that individuals receive support from others in their social networks and that the immersion within these social networks can have both positive as well as negative consequences, not much attention is paid at how social networks operate, and, therefore, my research hopes to add to the current knowledge on social networks by better specifying the different types of networks immigrants can be part off, how they get access to these networks and the different types of support they can gain from different people in these networks. Also, it will be investigated to what extent ethnic homophily plays a role. In other words, a more detailed look upon social networks, without a taken-for-granted attitude which is evident in many studies on the subject. Having outlined theories on social networks and social support in general, it is now time to zoom into the transnational dimension of social networks. The transnational dimension has been briefly touched upon in this section but will now we discussed in more detail since it is highly relevant in the field of immigration, for many immigrant nowadays have complex social networks that stretch the globe.

2.2 THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSION

Introduction

Only looking at immigrants their social network in the host country would not suffice in fully understanding the operation of immigrant's social networks, since developments in ICT have made it possible for many immigrants to keep in touch, and receive and give support to friends and family in the home country on a regular basis, creating complex social networks that are not confined to one's place of residence. Also, travelling back and forth between home and host country has become cheaper and above all, much easier. Consequently, the following chapter will focus on immigrants' transnational social contacts and networks and start of with outlining developments in international migration studies that have led to this transnational approach, followed by a overview on different definitions that exist of the concept and a discussion on how new transnationalism really is. Next, the implications of transnationalism on home and host societies will be discussed.

As early as in 1916, the term transnationalism was used in a critical essay by Randolph Bourne on the character of America's society and immigrant assimilation (Portes, 2009). This early occurrence of the term might indicate that the concept of transnationalism is not as new as it is sometimes portrayed. However, despite this early occurrence, transnationalism as a new conceptual approach to international migration studies has only recently been given attention by immigration scholars (Portes et al., 1999), and only since the early 1990s, especially after Shiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) coined the concept stressing the need for a "new analytic framework for understanding migration", the concept gained significant popularity (Kelly, 2003; Shiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1). Before further elaborating upon this transnational approach, it seems wise to first briefly sketch an historical outline of developments in international migration studies, in order to better understand and contextualize this latest development.

Developments in international migration studies leading to a new approach

Since the 1920's research on migration has largely concentrated on migrant assimilation and exclusion in receiving countries (Vertovec, 2001). It was also until the 1970's that social sciences dogmatically hold on to their static models of analysis, seeing both societies and populations as bounded entities, and, therefore, not permitting themselves to take into account processes that crossed the fixed borders of these entities and thus dismissing the importance of broader contexts (Boyd, 1989). However, in the 1970's and 1980's, the character of international flows of migration -which had long been dominated by male migrants it the search for work- changed, and came to be characterised more and more by the migration of other family members. The changing nature of these international migration flows led to the understanding that classic push and pull models of migration, which explained migration as a result of social and economic factors in home and host country, did not suffice any longer (Boyd, 1989).

This changing nature of migration flows and the understanding that social networks had a role to play in international migration, led to a focus of international migration research in the 1980's in which broader contexts were no longer dismissed and 'structural factors' such as immigration policies were seen as important guiding mechanisms for international migration. However, despite earlier recognitions that migrants themselves steered migration decisions, and a realization that the majority of migrants kept links to friends and family in the home country, this structural approach systematically ignored migrants as active agents in the process, and a re-conceptualization of studies on international migration did not yet occur

(Boyd, 1989; Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992). However, since the early 1990's scholars started to realize more and more that most contemporary migration was not simply a linear movement followed by settling in the receiving country, but instead a recursive migration pattern whereby migrants kept strong links to friends and family in home countries, and, thus, that social networks influenced migration to a large extent (Kelly, 2003). In this line of reasoning a different approach in international migration studies developed in the last decade of the 19th century: the transnational approach (Vertovec, 2001). Since then, many attempts have been made to define and conceptualize transnationalism, whereby some very clearly delimiting the concept and others holding on to broader descriptions (Kelly, 2003).

Defining transnationalism

"Transnational migration studies form a highly fragmented, emergent field which still lacks both a well defined theoretical framework and analytical rigour" (Portes et al., 1999, p. 218) *"A wide variety of descriptions surrounding meanings, processes, scales and methods concerning the notion of transnationalism [and] much conceptual muddling takes place"* (Vertovec, 1999, p. 447-448).

Portes et al. (1999) claim that transnationalism should be delimited to "regular and sustained social contacts" that cross borders, and thus leave out those cross border activities that occur on an irregular and infrequent basis (Portes et al. 1999, p. 219; Kelly, 2003). Also, the authors claim that the individual and the social network of this individual, are the appropriate unit of analysis, without disregarding the importance of wider structures. They also distinguish between three types of transnationalism; economic, seen as the activities of transnational entrepreneurs, socio-cultural, referred to as the activities of all kinds of institutions, and political, e.g. community and government activities. Moreover, transnationalism 'from above' and transnationalism 'from below' (Guarnizo, 1997 in Portes et al. 1999) are seen as different processes, where the latter is referred to as grass-root transnationalism, especially linked to transnational entrepreneurs and seen as a form of immigrant adaptation (Portes et al., 1999, p. 229).

In contrast to Portes et al. (1999), Vertovec (1999) conceptualizes transnationalism less narrowly (Kelly, 2003) and sees transnationalism as encompassing multiple dimensions, amongst which transnationalism as a way to reproduce culture, as a form of consciousness, as a flow of capital and lastly as a lane for transnational political activities (Vertovec, 1999; Kelly, 2003). Furthermore, Vertovec (1999) stresses that transnationalism encompasses "multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec, 1999, p. 447), and Walton-Roberts adds to this that "the recursive movement between sites is an important component of transnationality" (Walton-Roberts, 2003, p. 247) while Kelly (2003) argues that very significant proportions of migrants their political, social, economic and emotional lives are rooted in both home and host country simultaneously (Kelly, 2003).

These many attempts to define transnationalism have greatly contributed to the vagueness of the concept, theoretically as well as empirically, and sheds light on the somewhat ambiguous nature of transnationalism: defined, understood and used in a variety of different ways (Portes et al., 1999). This leads, amongst others, to contrasting claims on how widespread the phenomenon is (Kelly, 2003). Besides this 'problem' of definition, studies on transnationalism have been selective in largely focussing on those migrants that are part of transnational networks, ignoring the ones that are not, leading to a distorted image of the characteristics of contemporary migration (Portes et al., 1999). Furthermore, many studies have not taken into account the diversity of the phenomenon, while transnationalism is a very

diverse phenomenon that varies in its impact upon different home and host societies as well as within and between immigrant groups (Walton-Roberts, 2003). Others have brought to the fore that transnationalism is a dynamic phenomenon: some argue that transnational links will become more important over time, even for second generation migrants, while others have claimed that transnational connections will become less important over time (Kelly, 2003).

The main focus of my own study is on the operation of migrant social networks, and, thus, the transnational dimension of immigrant's their networks will also be taken into account. More specifically, while investigating immigrant's transnational networks, the focus will be on grassroots transnationalism, or, in other words, the transnational practises of individuals and, thus, a definition of transnationalism -as developed by Portes et al. (1999)- is taken as the point of departure, although I don't limit transnationalism to regular and sustained social contacts that cross borders, but also take irregular contacts into account.

How new are transnational migrants and their practises?

<div style="border:1px solid">

The new migrant

"Now a new kind of migrating population is emerging, composed of those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. Their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field" (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1). This new kind of migrant is referred to as "the connected migrant" and, is in contrast to the 'uprooted migrant', characterised by 'multi-belonging', 'hypermobility' and 'flexibility', and clearly holds on to his roots and social relations in the home country while developing networks across space (Diminescu, 2008, p. 565). Also," It is more and more common for migrants to maintain remote relations typical of relations of proximity and to activate them on a daily basis" (Diminescu, 2008, p. 567). In order to understand this new kind of migrant, it is called for a new conceptual framework, which is referred to as 'transnationalism' and understood as "a process by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement" (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1).

</div>

Some authors have argued that contemporary migration differs significantly from migration in earlier decades. Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992), for example clearly stress that contemporary migration flows are a 'new and different phenomenon' (p. 9), and Portes et al. (1999) add to this that despite the fact that migrants recursive movements to and from home and host country have existed in the past, and even early but rare examples of transnationalism can be found, developments in information and communication technologies have led to a "complexity and critical mass" of migration flows that validates the claim that contemporary migration is a new phenomenon and a new transnational social field has emerged (Portes et al. 1999, p. 1). Others have also mingled themselves in questions on the novelty of the phenomenon. For example, Kelly (2003) who -in his article on Canadian-Asian transnationalism- argues that developments in transportation and communication technologies and the increased affordability of these technologies have led to increased and more intensive contacts across borders (e.g. Kelly, 2003; Vertovec, 2001; Mills, 2005). Developments which have led to practises, such as close involvement in distant family life, that were not practically doable in earlier decennia, and, leading to a situation in which 'transnationalism as a way of life is [..] more common in more countries than it was ever before" (Ley, 1999 and Li, 2003 in Kelly, 2003) and thus the `scale and scope of the phenomenon are […] novel` (Kelly, 2003, p. 211).

Others have stressed that the phenomenon of transnationalism per se isn't new, but that it encompasses a new conceptual framework and thus a different approach. That is to say, in order to understand contemporary migration flows, migration is looked at through a 'transnational lens', seeing migration as part of its broader context, as well historically as geographically, and taking into account recursive migration movements from, and to home and host societies (e.g. Portes, 2009; Walton-Roberts, 2003, p. 236). This approach not only sees migration as superficial flows of people, goods and activities -as is the case with some older approaches- but puts emphasis on the social structures that lie beneath these more superficial flows (Walton-Roberts, 2003). Thus, emphasis is placed on the embeddedness of flows of goods and activities within social relationships and networks, in other words, flows are given meaning by social relations (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992). Regardless of these debates whether transnationalism is a new phenomenon or not, transnationalism has -without a doubt- implications for societies and individuals. Therefore, the next section will deal with these implications, and discusses implications of transnationalism for home and host societies.

The implications of transnational practises for home and host societies

Transnationalism impacts home and host societies in multiple ways, amongst others, economic, political and socio-cultural impacts can be distinguished. With regards to economic impacts, especially development countries depend for a large part on remittances and other foreign investments made by their migrants in Western countries. Cross border marriages and religious practises can be seen as socio-cultural impacts, and the dual citizenship arrangements that most sending countries develop can be named as political impacts (Vertovec, 2001, p. 575). Moreover, the increase of transnational activities amongst immigrant groups gives rise to all kinds of ethnic institutions in the host society -such as ethnic TV stations and home associations- which help in fostering close contact between home and host country and create an awareness of multi-belonging. On the other side of the coin, sending countries actively stimulate transnationalism for its positive economic impact on their own economy (e.g. Kelly, 2003; Diminescu, 2008).

A good example of this so called state regulated transnationalism is the case of the Philippines in the 1990's where immigrants where stimulated to visit their home country, by allowing them to take with them a box twice a year –referred to as 'balikbayan boxes' in which balikbayan refers to a Philipino immigrant- without paying taxes for all that it contained (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p. 1). An other example is the case of the Indian government who permits migrants to have dual citizenship and even voting rights (Sharma, 2003 in Kelly, 2003). As stated by Patterson (2006): 'Strategic transnationalism is an other example of state regulated transnationalism in which there is a high degree of coordination amongst community leaders in the host country and the country of origin, so that 'brain circulation' in stead of 'brain drain' can be fostered in the home country which can eventually encourage further development" (Patterson, 2006). What becomes clear is that all these incentives are meant to attract migrants' remittances, investments and 'brains', in order to benefit the economy of the home country (Sharma, 2003 in Kelly, 2003).

As already pointed out, the dual-citizenship arrangements of some home countries can be named as a political impact of transnationalism. And, the 'dual lives' that many migrants develop because of these arrangement has brought about questions on concepts such as citizenship, nation-state and identity. More specifically, dual citizenship has contested the classical notion of citizenship in which migrants participate and identify with one nation only, and, it is often argued that migrants only obtain dual citizenship for instrumental and strategic reasons (Kelly, 2003). In this realm, a study by Johanna Waters (2003) amongst Chinese

'satellite kids' and 'astronaut families' in Vancouver, has pointed out that despite these common assumptions, over time, some members of these migrant families also start integrating and participating in local activities and adapting to Canadian culture. However, according to Waters, these findings do not take away that, in first instance, many of these migrants do deliberately move to Canada in order to become a Canadian citizen for more instrumental reasons, such as good schooling for their kids and the safety and benefits of dual citizenship (Waters, 2003).

With regards to the nation-state, Kelly notes that the expansion and increasing intensity of cross-border flows of information, goods an people leads to questions on the value of the concept of the nation-state because "national territories define the spatiality of social life less and less" (Kelly, 2003, p. 215). However this is not to say that the nation-state and its borders are not important anymore: "it is the role of the territorial state as a scale or container for social processes, rather than its power to create and police legal boundaries, that is diminished" (Kelly, 2003, p. 215). According to Kelly (2003), territorial states are still very important in regulating migration by means of migration laws and other policies towards transnational migrants, such as permitting dual citizenship (Kelly, 2003) and, although borders have lost their physical constraints, they have turned into "electronic borders" and actively monitor border crossing of people (Diminescu, 2008, p. 568).

Conclusion

What becomes clear from this literature review on transnationalism is first of all that the concept of transnationalism is highly debated within international immigration studies itself. Not only do there exist a variety of definitions of the concept, the novelty as well as the implications of the phenomenon for societies as well as individuals are questioned. However, this doesn't mean that transnationalism is a useless concept, I rather see it as a useful description of trends in information, communication and transportation technologies that have made it possible for immigrants to be part of social networks, that are not only confined to one's 'locale' but instead stretch the globe in ways not possible before. Disregarding these transnational practises would highly limit any attempt to study the social networks of immigrants. Consequently, in my own study I will pay attention to immigrant's transnational contacts and networks and the implications of these contacts, in order to give a more complete picture of the working of immigrant's their social networks. This bring us to the last section in this theory chapter which will focus solely on the local dimension of social network, and, therefore, paying attention to theories and findings in the field of neighbourhood effects studies.

2.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD EFFECTS

Introduction

As is with transnational networks, disregarding the importance of local social networks would also highly limit any attempt to understand the operation of immigrants' social networks. With regards to local social networks, it is often argued that they are very important sources of tangible support, support that is hard to get from friends and family in the home-country. In this realm, neighbourhood effects research is a specific stream of research that has focused on local social networks as one of the mechanisms through which neighbourhood effects manifest itself. Consequently, this chapter will deal with these neighbourhood effect studies, and it will be investigated what neighbourhood effects are and through which mechanisms neighbourhood effects are assumed to operate. Next, in order to be better aware of the shortcomings of current studies, empirical studies on the subject will be outlined and issues of bias introduced. Last, the focus will be on a specific stream of neighbourhood effect research which has focused on ethnic enclaves in particular. However, it should be noted that my study doesn't aim to investigate the existence or scope of neighbourhood effects in any way, but, since it is the aim of my study to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration, it is important to know what neighbourhood effects are and which mechanisms play a role.

> *"It is widely believed that the neighbourhood in which a person lives and grows up makes a difference to the opportunities for social mobility that are available to that person"* (Musterd and Andersson, 2006, p. 120).

Studies on neighbourhood effects started off in the United States and some decades later Europe followed. Especially since Wilsons' influential book "The Truly Disadvantaged' in the late 1980's, the number of American studies on neighbourhood effects starkly grew and the interest in neighbourhoods was reclaimed by scholars in a variety of research disciplines (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Bolster et al., 2007; Urban, 2009). Consequently, most studies on neighbourhood effects are and have been conducted in the US, but the amount of research originating from Europe is gaining strength, and Swedish research is responsible for an important share (Urban, 2009). When American and European research on neighbourhood effects are compared, it is evident that in the US generally larger neighbourhood effects are found than in Europe, which might for a part be explained by institutionalized racism and a much stronger ethnic segregation in US, as well as the presence of a stronger welfare system in Europe (Urban, 2009). This divide between American and European research is also stressed by Friedrichs et al. (2003) who, in their editorial piece for a special issue on neighbourhood effects and social opportunities in Housing Studies, underline the interdisciplinary character of neighbourhood effect studies and stress the importance of bringing research on 'both sides the Atlantic' closer together (Friedrichs et al., 2003). Before going any further, it seems wise to first briefly discuss what neighbourhood effects are and what these effects are assumed to do.

What are neighbourhood effects?

Broadly spoken neighbourhood effects are seen as the impact that the neighbourhood which someone lives in or grows up in has on a wide range of outcomes and opportunities for its residents, such as income and health, while controlling for individual and household characteristics (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Urban, 2009). For

example, Musterd and Andersson (2006) refer to neighbourhood effects as "inputs" from the neighbourhood which can either be positive or negative, and Brannstrom (2004) refers to neighbourhood effects in that "the composition of urban neighbourhoods has an impact on the behaviour of their residents" (Brannstrom, 2004, p. 2515). The common assumption often made is that living in a poor area amongst socio-economic disadvantaged residents, often but not always corresponding with ethnic minority groups, has a negative impact on chances of -amongst others- improving your own social-economic situation, and thus has negative consequences for the people living in these neighbourhoods. In other words, it is thought that people with the same individual characteristics but who live in different types of neighbourhoods, i.e. with different social compositions, will have different chances and opportunities in life (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Brannstrom, 2004; Bolster et al., 2007). In general, most researchers on neighbourhood effects have concluded that neighbourhood effects exist while some others have been very critical upon this argument and argue that no or only a very limited amount of evidence is found to support the neighbourhood effect thesis (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001). Despite this, in a lot of cases, researchers on neighbourhood effects seem to agree with the neighbourhood effect thesis, and, make clear that a variety of social processes or mechanisms play a role in bringing neighbourhood effects to the surface (Buck, 2000 in Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001).

The above stated theoretical ideas have led to "operational policy responses" (Musterd and Andersson, 2006, p. 122) in the form of -amongst others- mixed housing policies in Europe, and, more specifically, 'Area based initiatives' in the UK, 'urban renewal policies' in the Netherlands and the "moving to opportunity' programme in the US (Musterd and Andersson, 2006). These policies have in common that mixed housing is seen as having a positive influence on the lives of residents, and, in Europe and the Netherland in particular, tenure diversification is seen as a means of changing and diversifying the social composition of a neighbourhood, inherently assuming that the residential clustering of a specific group of people is unwanted (Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Musterd et al. 2003), and that people socialize in their neighbourhood.

The underlying mechanisms of neighbourhood effects

Different mechanisms have been detected at the micro-level through which neighbourhood effects can manifest itself, and, in this study a categorisation made by Friedrichs et al. (2003) is taken as a starting point since it is very inclusive and complete. The four mechanisms outlined by Friedrichs et al. -with an exception of neighbourhood reputation- are all part of a larger body of literature comprising the largest share of the neighbourhood research literature, and is referred to as the 'micro-to-micro link' (Coleman 1990, in Brannstrom 2004). What's more, the main idea of this stream of literature is that an individual's preferences, beliefs and behaviour is influenced and shaped by peer groups, family and social networks (Brannstrom, 2004). In other words, it is assumed that the neighbourhood is a very important locale in people's social lives.

One of these micro-mechanisms is referred to as 'neighbourhood resources', such as the quality of schools, health facilities, availability of jobs etc. In other words, characteristics of a neighbourhood independent from characteristics of its inhabitants (Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Friedrichs et al., 2003). Clearly linked to this mechanism is the so called "spatial mismatch hypothesis", in which it is argued that the spatial separation of jobs and places of residence leads to unemployment, and, thus, that residents who live in a neighbourhood that is not well connected to a public transport network are more prone to being unemployed. Also, the reputation of a neighbourhood is put in this category since it is argued that a bad reputation of a neighbourhood can lead to stigmatisation by outsiders which

can, consequently, lead to so called red lining practices and not hiring people living in these areas (Musterd and Andersson, 2006). However, according to Brannstrom, this so called 'address effect' (Urban, 2009, p. 589) does not belong to the micro-to-micro link but to an other body of literature in neighbourhood research, namely the micro-to-macro link (Coleman, 1990 in Brannstrom, 2004). Despite this disagreement, in general it is assumed that a bad reputation of a neighbourhood blocks -amongst others- social mobility (Musterd et al., 2003).

An other micro-mechanism that is assumed to underlie neighbourhood effects is labelled as 'social relations and networks' and referred to as "the classic neighbourhood effect' (Johnston et al., 2005, p. 1444). More specifically, the sort of relations and the quality of these relationships are found to highly determine ones chances and opportunities in life. Clearly linked to this mechanism is a third category of micro-mechanisms which is referred to as 'socialisation and collective efficacy' (p.802), in which it is argued that people who live together and socialize, over time start to adjust to each other and take over each others behaviour (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Musterd et al., 2003). Thus, living in a neighbourhood with a lot of unemployed people might lead to wrong role models and a wrong learning environment, leading to a higher propensity for others living in that same neighbourhood to be unemployed themselves as well (Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Bolster et al., 2007). The last category of micro-mechanisms through which neighbourhood effects are assumed to manifest themselves is labelled as 'perceptions of deviance' (Friedrichs et al., 2003, p. 802). More specifically, people's perceptions of their living environment impacts upon their lives, for example because residents are afraid of leaving their house (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Musterd and Andersson, 2006).

These four mechanisms through which neighbourhood effects are assumed to operate have been clearly summarized by Musterd and Andersson (2006) who argue that "Neighbourhood reputation, social composition and socialization processes in the neighbourhood, as well as social networks and neighbourhood services may impact upon people's lives, independently of individual and household attributes that may also affect their opportunities; the results will be visible as neighbourhood effects" (Musterd and Andersson, 2006, p. 121). It should be noted that, besides the micro-mechanism outlined above, there is also a wider context that needs to be taken into account when addressing neighbourhood effects. Brannstrom refers to this dimension as the 'macro-to-micro transition" (Coleman, 1990 in: Brannstrom, 2004, p. 2517). Or, in other words, the impact that macro events and situations -such as immigration policies, shifts in demand for certain kinds of labour, and social programs- have on individual lives (Wilson 1987, 1996 and Muray 1984 in Brannstrom, 2004). However, it is beyond the scope of my study to investigate the impact of these macro-mechanisms on individuals' lives.

In my own study I will only focus on the underlying assumption of the so called 'classic neighbourhood effect', i.e. that people socialize in the neighbourhood and form 'friendships' with their neighbours. Therefore, I will solely devote my attention to local social ties and networks, and not to neighbourhood reputation or the quality of neighbourhood institution such as schools, and investigate the most important assumption that neighbourhood effect studies make: that people socialize in the neighbourhood: how else could they be influenced by neighbours and the (quality) of the social networks in the neighbourhood? Therefore, in order to investigate if we need a new perspective on residential concentration, and thus investigating if the underlying assumption of the classical neighbourhood effect holds, my study will -amongst others- investigate to what extent people really do socialize in their neighbourhood and form friendships with neighbours.

Empirical studies compared: mixed evidence

"The study of neighbourhood effects is plagued by the problem of selection, individuals with low incomes are selected into poor neighbourhoods" (Bolster et al., 2007).

Classical studies by Lewis (1986) and Wilson (1987) have already early on pinpointed the negative effects of living together with disadvantaged others. Lewis talks about "cultures of poverty" that are sustained in certain environments and from which it is hard to escape, and Wilson argues that the lack of positive role-models in certain environments with a large proportion of working class poor residents, leads to a negative spiral for other residents living in that same area (Musterd et al., 2003). In contrast to American research -such as the before mentioned example of Lewis and Wilson- in its initial stages, European research on neighbourhood effects focused mainly on voting behaviour, and only a decade or so ago European studies started to incorporate social issues in neighbourhood effect research (Friedrichs et al., 2003).

Despite this difference, a similarity of the American and the European stream of work is that they both mainly focus on what Friedrichs et al. call the "how much question" and not so much on the "how question" (p. 799). In other words, researchers on neighbourhood effects seem more eager to explore how much of an effect neighbourhoods have on their residents, instead of going further and exploring the deeper processes and mechanisms -as outlined in the former section- that explain how neighbourhood effects come into existence (Friedrichs et al., 2003). This focus on the 'how much' question is also clearly reflected by the abundance of quantitative studies on neighbourhood effects, and Brannstrom (2004) refers to this issue by arguing that "the black box of neighbourhood effects still needs to be further investigated" (Brannstrom, 2004, p. 2534). Thus, there is a clear need for more qualitative studies that address the underlying, mostly non-observed mechanisms of neighbourhood effects (Brannstrom, 2004). Therefore, my study is aimed at investigating an important underlying mechanism of neighbourhood effects, namely the assumption that people socialize in their neighbourhoods.

When comparing American and European research on neighbourhood effects, American research has mainly concluded that the macro-economic context, individual and family characteristics, and one's locale or neighbourhood all have an impact on a variety of outcomes for its residents, although the neighbourhood seems to have the smallest 'independent effect' (Friedrichs et al., 2003). Furthermore, even in North America with its much more extreme segregation and social inequality, results of studies on neighbourhood effects are mixed (Ellen en Turner, 1997 in Musterd and Andersson, 2006). On the other side of the Atlantic, European studies have mostly pointed to the occurrence of neighbourhood effects, however it is argued that these neighbourhood effects are "minor or not fully understood" (Musterd and Andersson, 2006, p. 124), and that "irrespective of these plausible theories of neighbourhood effects, there appears to be only thin, if any, evidence for their existence" (Musterd and Andersson, 2006, p. 123). Friedrichs et al. add that "there is a growing number of studies on neighbourhood effects but there is still a long way to go before a sufficiently high level of knowledge is attained to fundamentally evaluate the actual impact of neighbourhoods" (Friendrichs et al., 2003, p. 804).

Thus, neighbourhood effect research is a much debated field of study and the mixed results found in both the American and the European context illustrate this clearly. On the one hand empirical studies have indicated that neighbourhood effects exist (e.g. Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001; Johnston et al., 2005) while others have questioned the existence of the phenomenon and found no or very limited evidence for the

existence of neighbourhood effects (e.g. Musterd et al., 2003; Brannstrom, 2004; Bolster et al., 2007) (Musterd and Andersson, 2006). Also, besides these two camps of researchers, there is yet another camp of researchers who heavily place critique on the 'existing empirical evidence' of current quantitative studies on neighbourhood effects, because of –amongst others- selection biases and the sparse attention for underlying mechanisms (Brannstrom, 2004, p. 2515).

Those that place critique on neighbourhood effect studies argue that studies on neighbourhood effects suffer from selection biases, and, without taking these into account while conducting a study on neighbourhood effects, results found and even causal relationships detected should be questioned (Friedrichs et al., 2003). Luckily, these issues are taken seriously by many researchers, and all kinds of attempts are and have been made (e.g. Bolster et al., 2007; Brannstrom, 2004; Galster, 2007) that try to level out selection biases (Friedrichs et al., 2003). In this realm, Brannstrom (2004) argues that "as a result of sorting mechanism on the housing market, the establishment of a causal link between neighbourhood conditions and individuals outcomes is tricky" (Brannstrom 2004, p. 1518), and, thus, "selection into poor neighbourhoods is non-random" (Brannstrom, 2004, p. 2516). Others have pointed to selection biases that are caused by parental selection, since parents often choose certain neighbourhoods to live in which are thought to improve their families' situation (Friedrichs et al., 2003), and even others argue that selection biases are produced by the researchers themselves simply by choosing one sample over an other (Brannstrom, 2004). Furthermore, others claim that selection biases caused by research methods and techniques, and data collection should not be forgotten (Friedrichs et al., 2003; Musterd and Andersson, 2006).

What's more, most studies on neighbourhood effects have focused solely on the impact of the socio-economic composition of neighbourhoods, and not the ethnic composition. Urban (2009) however, has distinguished between the impact of the socio-economic composition, and the ethnic composition of a neighbourhood. In this realm, she argues that the socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood is more important than the ethnic composition in explaining the small neighbourhood effects found (Urban, 2009). Also, Urban finds that the ethnic and socio-economic composition of the neighbourhood are correlated to a considerable degree (Urban, 2009) and, thus, that 'ethnic housing segregation and segregation in the labour market affect and reinforce one another through a concentration of foreign-born individuals in poor areas' and therefore 'immigrants are more often victims of concentrated poverty" (Urban, 2009, p. 596). Studies that specifically deal with this ethnic composition of the neighbourhood focus on the impact of living in an ethnic enclave on individual -mainly-economic outcomes, and belong to the ethnic enclave debate.

The ethnic enclave debate

> *"Although ethnic enclaves are rich in social capital, mutual support networks and community organisations, paradoxically, they can also be a barrier to residents meeting and networking in the mainstream society and economy"* (Quadeer, 2004, p. 4).

As introduced in the former section, a specific stream of neighbourhood effect research -which is relevant for my own study- has focused on the impact of living in an ethnic enclave. First and foremost there has been great interest in ethnic enclaves and the impact of living in such enclaves on a range of outcomes for its residents, an interest fed by the often worse socio-economic position of immigrants and their tendency to cluster with other ethnic minorities (Gronqvist, 2006). What's more, studies in this specific stream of neighbourhood

effect research are abundant, and most studies have specifically focussed on economic outcomes for enclave residents and have commonly assumed that residing in an ethnic enclave worsens one's employment career and socio-economic position (Urban, 2009). In this realm, in their pioneering study in 1980 -also referred to as the enclave hypothesis (Portes and Zhou, 1996)- Wilson and Portes were one of the first to stress that the economic situation of immigrants living within and outside of ethnic enclaves differed, and, more specifically that "enclave workers are not better off initially, but that they are subsequently rewarded for skills and past investments in human capital"(Wilson and Portes, 1980, p. 315). Since then, many more studies have followed paying attention to the economic outcomes of individuals living in ethnic enclaves (Gronqvist, 2006). Some studies have specifically focused on Wilson and Portes' enclave hypothesis (e.g. Gilbertson and Gurak, 1993; Musterd et al., 2008), others have investigated the relationship between ethnic entrepreneurship and economic outcomes (e.g. Borjas, 1990; Bates and Dunham, 1991 in: Portes and Zhou, 1996). And again others have specifically focused on the impact of living in an ethnic enclave for children (e.g. Gronqvist, 2006). Over time numerous theories have been developed trying to explain the outcomes of studies found.

A first group of hypotheses is related to 'local economic conditions' (Urban, 2009, p. 585), and a first hypothesis in this groups is 'the culture hypothesis', which stresses that residents of disadvantaged areas develop deviant values and norms, e.g. with regards to work and criminal activities, which will consequently limit their possibilities. A second hypothesis related to local economic conditions is 'the social network hypothesis' which stresses that social networks in disadvantaged neighbourhoods lack the kind of role-models and information related to e.g. available work, to have a successful employment career. In this realm, Gronqvist (2006) underlines the importance of so called "peer groups' for children's development. The last hypothesis related to local economic conditions is 'the institutional hypothesis', which argues that poor neighbourhoods lead to a worsened quality of the institutions present, such as schools and shops (Urban, 2009).

A second group of hypotheses is related to 'immigrant density' (Urban, 2009, p. 585), and a first hypothesis in this group is 'the language hypothesis' which stresses that living in an area with other people from the same ethnic minority will decrease the need, as well as the possibility, of language comprehension and the ability to learn other customs of the country, which will consequently, limit one's possibilities on the labour market. A second hypothesis related to immigrant density is the 'ethnic deprivation hypothesis' in which it is argued that if a large group of people lives together whom are being discriminated against with regards to work, this will lead to a decreased motivation and ambition in the realm of work. The last hypothesis related to immigrant density is 'the white flight hypothesis' and signals that white -middle class- residents that live in areas dominated by immigrant groups, will leave the area because of the worsened reputation of such an area (Urban, 2009, p. 585).

Besides these 'negative' theories of ethnic concentration, others have stressed the positive consequences of living in an ethnic enclave. Musterd et al. (2008) for example, stress that living together with co-ethnics leads to less discrimination on the labour market because ethnic employers are more willing to employ workers of their own ethnic group (e.g. Portes, 1995 in: Musterd et al., 2008). Also the ethnic enclave may serve as a good market for ethnic products attracting customers from outside (Light and Rosenstein, 1995 in Musterd et al., 2008), and can be an important source of trading niches (Kloosterman en van der Leun, 1999 in Musterd et al., 2008). Moreover, ethnic enclaves have also been labelled as important sources of 'ethnic capital' (Borjas 1995) and 'social capital' (e.g. Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1992) which may benefit its residents (Musterd et al., 2008).

Neighbouring

As stated before in this chapter, the underlying assumption of all these studies on neighbourhood effects– no matter whether they find positive, negative or no effects- is that people socialize in their neighbourhood and take part in neighbouring. But to what extent do people really socialize in their neighbourhood? Ray and Preston (2009) find first of all that the extent to which people engage in neighbouring depends on their time of residence and, that -in contrast to the general belief that the social networks of immigrants are very local (Gregg, 2006 in Ray and Preston, 2009)- only a small share of recent (1995-2003) and new origin immigrants (1980-1994) know many of their neighbours, in contrast to the approximately 40 percent of post-war immigrants (1946-1979) and Canadian-born. This finding is in line with the idea that "recent arrivals have less free time to devote to developing and maintaining local social contacts" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 229) and signals the fact that newly arrived immigrant experience more social isolation in their neighbourhood (Ray and Preston, 2009). Also it is found that the extent to which people engage in neighbouring activities differs amongst different groups of people, confirming other studies that have found that people who have more time to "socialize in the neighbourhood", know more neighbours (e.g. Campbell and Lee 1992 in Ray and Preston, 2009) and that a "constrained activity space" e.g. due to unemployment, leads to developing more local social contacts (Ray an Preston, 2009). In this realm, Ray and Preston found that homeowners, older people, married couples and people with children were more engaged in neighbouring and, in contrast, people engaged in full-time employment or schooling were less so (Ray and Preston, 2009).

Besides differences in people's 'social' engagement in the neighbourhood, Ray and Preston have also argued that that 'it is important not to overstate the importance of the neighbourhood as a location of intense mutual assistance" and go on by arguing that for most people "infrequent interactions with neighbours are the norm" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241), but, that these interaction do appear to foster a sense of belonging (confirming Wellman, 1996). Thus, although neighbours might be a source of support such as for borrowing tools etc. only a very small percentage of people have indicated that their neighbours have helped them with more 'important' types of support such as help with finding a job (Ray and Preston, 2009). Developing these thoughts even further, and bringing these issues of neighbouring back to the ethnic enclave debate, Ray and Preston argue that, although the popular press often immediately links high rates of ethnic residential clustering to limited possibilities for its residents in the realm of social inclusion and integration, "Social inclusion, cannot necessarily be imputed from the degree of residential segregation of recent immigrants" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241). Instead it should be focused on who immigrants know and with whom they interact in their neighbourhood in order to better understand how to promote social inclusion of new immigrants and, thus, there is need for future research on immigrant's social networks –who do they know, with whom do they socialize- and the variety of locales where people socialize and interact since 'the neighbourhood is but one place where people meet, interact [..]" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241).

Conclusion

What becomes clear from this literature review on neighbourhood effects, is that it is a highly debated field of study. Some authors claim that neighbourhood effects exist, others question the existence of the phenomenon, while even others highly question the current empirical evidence because of biases. And, even if studies do find neighbourhood effects, the nature -positive or negative- and scope -small or large- of this effect varies greatly between studies. The same holds true for studies that have specifically focused on the impact of living in an

ethnic enclave. However, this vagueness surrounding neighbourhood effects should not lead to disregarding the possible existence of neighbourhood effects completely, and more research is needed to get a better idea of the impact of underlying mechanisms on individual outcomes, such as social networks. Also, as Ray and Preston have argued, we should not reluctantly accept the popular idea that residential segregation has a negative effect on -amongst others- social inclusion, but instead focus on who immigrant's know and with whom they socialize, since the neighbourhood is only one of the many localities where people socialize and interact. Consequently, in my own study I will focus on immigrant's their social networks in a variety of locales and investigate into detail who immigrants know and how theirs social networks work, without disregarding the importance of neighbouring and neighbourhood based contacts for help and support.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Using theories and findings from all three sections of this theory chapter, a conceptual model is created which serves as the basis for my own qualitative study investigating the social networks of Iranian immigrants in Toronto, with the aim of investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration. To begin with, the social network of the respondents are studied, and it is investigated who immigrants know and where those social contacts live. As the conceptual model makes clear, immigrants can have ties to people at four different levels: the neighbourhood, the city [Toronto], the country [Canada] and other countries abroad [including Iran]. On the basis of the literature, it can be expected that most immigrants have complex social networks that stretch the globe and therefore know people in all of these geographical levels. Besides distinguishing between social contacts at different geographical scales, the relationship that the respondents have with these social contacts also differs: social ties can either be family members, friends, acquaintances or neighbours. What's more, immigrant's social networks can either be ethnically homophilous, heterophilous or mixed. When it comes to help and support that immigrants receive from these different contacts at the different geographical scales, the literature has indicated that most social contacts provide specialized support, and, in order to investigate these claims, my study will specifically focus on the different types of support -either instrumental, informational or emotional- that immigrants receive from the different social contacts in their social networks. In sum, as the conceptual model indicates, my study is aimed at providing insight into the way immigrants their social networks work –while specifically focussing on the importance of the neighbourhood for social contacts in comparison to other locales- in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.
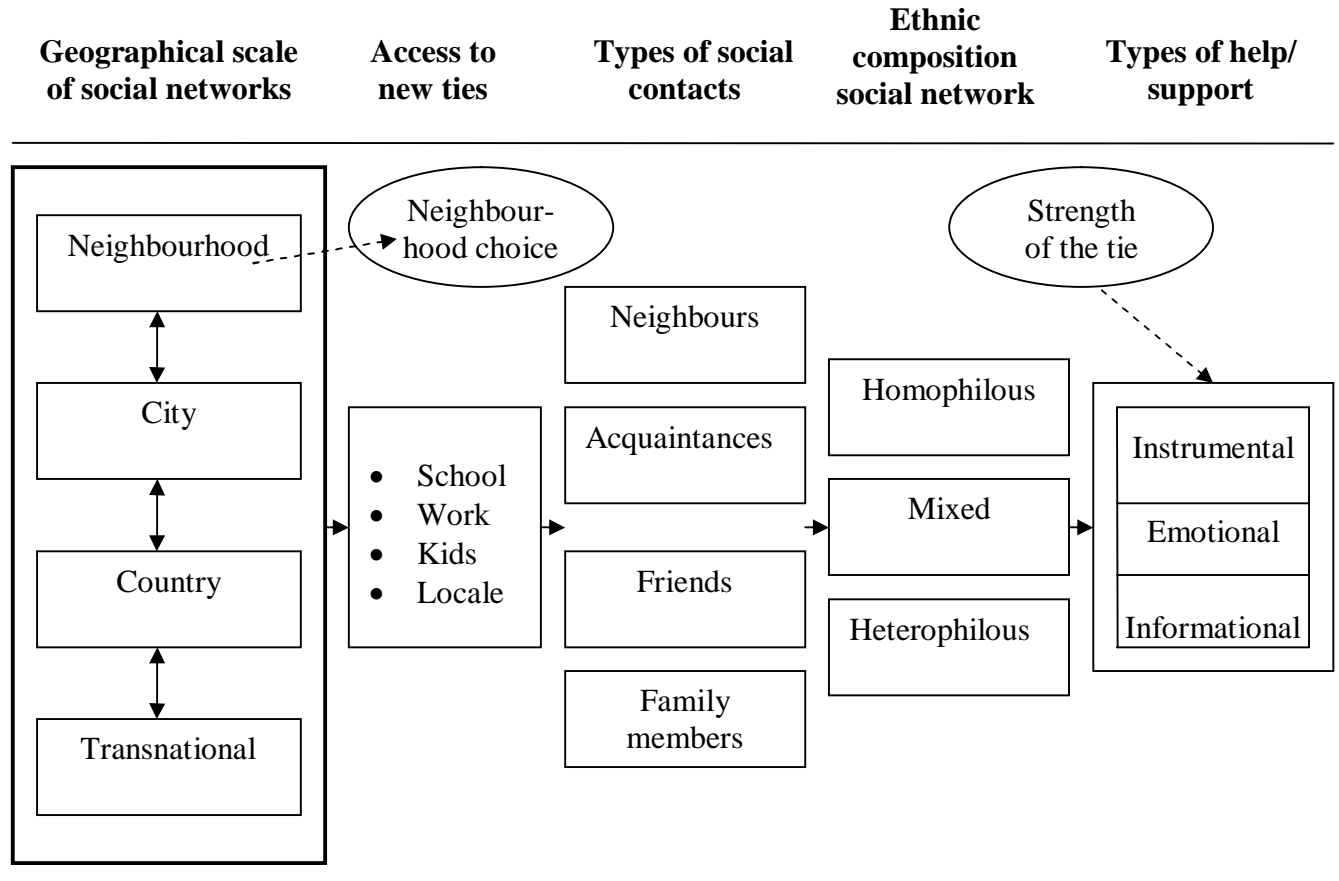
CHAPTER 3: TORONTO, A CITY OF IMMIGRANTS

Introduction

Since my study has taken place in Toronto, Canada, the following chapter will deal with data and trends on Canada and Toronto respectively, in order to better place my research in its context. In the methodology chapter I will further clarify why I chose Toronto as the place to conduct my research, but for now it suffices to say that Toronto, as one of the most multicultural cities in the world, seems a perfect context in which to conduct a study in the realm of social networks and immigration. The first part of this chapter deals with Canada, and specifically focuses on its role as immigrant country, discussing -amongst others- major waves of immigration in the 20th century, the impact of immigration policies, and the emergence of three trends that distinguish current immigration from immigration before. The second part of this chapter specifically focuses on Toronto, and starts with a brief overview of Toronto's history, followed by a discussion of Toronto's position as Canada's largest city and as immigrant capital. Next, implications for newly arriving immigrants in Toronto's housing market are discussed, followed by an overview of who lives where in Toronto based on socio-economic characteristics. The chapter is ended by a discussion on Toronto's ethnic landscape and the phenomenon of residential clustering.

Canada: an immigration country per se

Canada, with Ottawa as its capital, is a bilingual country, with French and English as its official languages. Canada is the second largest country in the world after Russia, with a GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita belonging to the top 30 of the world (Government of Canada, 2010[1]; CIA, 2010[2]). It is situated on the most northern part of North America, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the East, the Pacific Ocean on the West, the Arctic Ocean on the North and the USA on the South (figure 3.1). In 2006, the country was home to 31,241,030 people, of whom 6,186,950 immigrants, making Canada one of the countries in the world with the greatest share of immigrants to the total population (Statistics Canada, 2006[3]; Omidvar and Richmond, 2005). Also, Canada's population is mainly urban, since four out of five people live in urban areas. Furthermore, Canada has witnessed the largest population increase of any of the G8 countries between 2001 to 2006, totalling up to a 5.4 percent population increase in this period, in comparison to a 5.0 percent increase in this period in the USA. Of all the provinces in Canada, Alberta and Ontario, which is Canada's most populated province (Statistics Canada, 2006[4]), attributed most to this growth, together accounting for the lion share -2/3rd- of Canada's population growth between 2001 and 2006, with Ontario alone attributing to half of Canada's population growth in this period (Statistics Canada, 2006[5]). With regards to Canada's economy, natural resources industries –amongst which fishing, mining and the extraction of oil and gas- are important sectors of Canada's

---

[1] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/guide/section-07.asp
[2] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html?countryName=Canada&countryCode=ca&regionCode=na&rank=27#ca
[3] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-557/T403-eng.cfm?Lang=E&T=403&GH=4&SC=1&S=99&O=A
[4] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-550/p7-eng.cfm
[5] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-550/Index.cfm?TPL=P2C&Page=HIGH&LANG=Eng&T=99

economy, as well as telecommunications, biotechnology, aerospace technologies and pharmaceuticals (Statistics Canada, 2010[6]).

Figure 3.1: Canada (Source: Statistics Canada 2006[7])

Before Canada became inhabited by French and later British colonizers, for thousands of years Canada had been home to a variety of different aboriginal peoples. In 1763, after years of battle over Canada between the French and the British, Canada became under British rule (Statistics Canada, 2010[8]). As of the 1st of July 1867, the day of Canada's confederation, Canada became a so called self-governing dominion, while remaining ties to Great Britain (CIA, 2010[9]). Initially only New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario were part of the new federation, but, since then, new provinces and territories were officially 'added' to Canada, with Saskatchewan and Alberta the last to join (Martin and Olds, 2003). Only in 1982, Queen Elizabeth the second signed the constitution act, granting Canada full political independence (Martin and Olds, 2003). Nowadays, Canada is a constitutional monarchy, with the Queen of Britain -Queen Elizabeth the second- as Canada's monarch (Government of

---

[6] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/guide/section-07.asp
[7] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/guide/section-07.asp
[8] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/guide/section-07.asp
[9] https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ca.html

Canada, 2010[10]). Furthermore, Canada is a federation -since the powers and responsibilities are divided between the federal, provincial and municipal governments- and a parliamentary democracy, in that the people of Canada can elect their own governments (Government of Canada, 2010[11]).

Let's now turn our attention to Canada's major immigration waves and immigration policies. Note that is beyond the scope of this study to give a detailed description of Canadian immigration and its policies over time, instead, a brief overview will be given in order to better understand how immigration policies have impacted immigration to Canada. First of all it becomes clear that immigration to Canada in the 20th century is characterized by two major waves. The first wave occurred in the early 20th century, when European immigrants –mainly farmers- came to Canada triggered by the government's promise of free land. This immigration wave peaked in 1913 when immigration accounted for a little more than 5 percent of the total population. The second large wave occurred after the Second World War, but never reached the early 1900s scope and scale. Instead, after the Second World War, immigration accounted annually for a -on average- 1 percent of the total population (Murdie, 2008). Although immigration numbers stayed rather stable since the 1990's, three broad trends have become visible in the last approximately 30 years, trends that differentiate contemporary migration from migration in the past (Murdie, 2008).

First of all, there is a trend visible that immigrants mainly settle down in Canada's larger metropolitan centers. This is well illustrated by the fact that between 1965 and 1971 a little more than 50 percent of recent immigrants settled down in Canada's major Census Metropolitan Area's -CMA's- while in contrast, between 2001 and 2006, 90 percent of recent immigrants settled down in Canada's major CMA's. A study by Statistics Canada furthermore revealed that almost 90 percent of recent immigrant settle down in places where family or friends already live, and, that "the most important reason for choosing a particular city is the presence of family, friends, and other people of the same ethnicity who can provide economic, social, and cultural support, especially in the initial stages of settlement" (Statistics Canada, 2005 in Murdie, 2008, p. 4). A second trend that has become visible in recent decades is the so called 'decentralisation of immigration'. In general, there is a shift visible from a concentration of immigrants in the city centre, to a concentration in the suburbs. This pattern is clearly visible in Toronto and Vancouver, although not to the same extent in Montreal (Murdie, 2008). I will get back to this trend of decentralisation in the specific section on Toronto later on in this chapter. The last trend that has become visible in the last decennia is that the origin of immigrants has clearly shifted: from a large majority of European immigrants, to a majority of Asian immigrants, especially in the CMA's of Toronto and Vancouver. As figure 3.2 for Toronto clearly shows, before 1961 more than 90 percent of the immigrants came from Europe, while between 1991 and 2006 only a little more than 10 percent of the immigrants came from Europe, the lion share of the immigrants -almost 70 percent- coming from Asia. This same pattern is visible in Vancouver, but slightly different in Montreal, since Montreal is characterized by a large share of Francophone immigration from former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean and the Middle East (Murdie, 2008).

Reasons for the shift in origin countries to Canada are -amongst others- "an increased demand for both high- and low-skilled employees in the emerging service sector, more emphasis on family reunification and humanitarian migrants, and reduced immigration from Europe as a result of that region's post–Second World War economic recovery" (Murdie, 2008, p. 6-7). However, maybe the most important reason behind this shift is Canada's changing immigration policy in the late 1960's, when "from a preference for "white"

---

[10] http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1266245566496
[11] http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/guide/section-07.asp

immigrants" Canada changed "to a points system based on criteria such as educational qualifications, occupational skills, and language ability" (Murdie, 2008, p. 6). This new policy meant that everybody could apply for immigration to Canada "regardless of ethnic or racial background" (Murdie, 2008, p. 6). What's more, the 1976 Immigration act -which included the point system for skilled workers- created three classes of immigrants: 'family class', 'independent immigrants' and 'refugees'. Only the independent immigrant class –skilled workers- who apply for immigration, are assessed on the basis of a point system, in which points are allocated on the basis of -amongst others- education, working experience and language ability. If the immigrant 'earns' enough points, he or she can apply for a skilled worker visa which can lead to the status of permanent resident (Garousi, 2005). However, since there are considerable amounts of immigrants who are 'not assessed through the point system' (p. 7) but are part of the family class 'sponsored' by relatives already living in Canada, many immigrants do not 'satisfy al the high demands that are placed on immigrants in the independent class' (Garousi, 2005, p. 7). Thus, through other channels such as family migration, many immigrants can immigrate to Canada who would never be able to get enough points to immigrate as a skilled worker (Garousi, 2005).
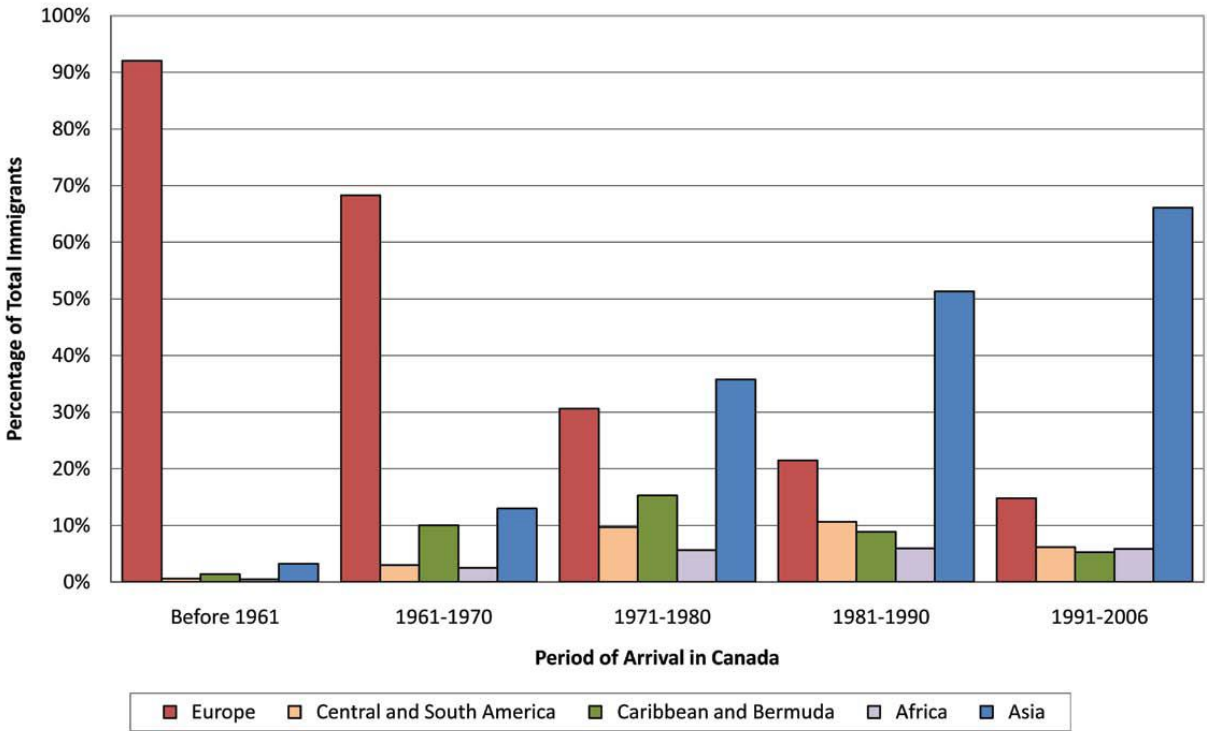
Figure 3.2: Regions of origin of immigrants in Toronto, 2006 (Source: Murdie, 2008)

When looking at how 'well' Canadian immigrants do in general, it becomes clear that recent immigrants do worse on the labour market than Canadian-born: as compared to Canadians, the unemployment rates amongst recent immigrants are greater and the employment rates smaller. Also, recent immigrants, as compared to Canadian born, have a lower propensity to work full time, and the ones having a university degree have a higher propensity to be occupied in low-skilled jobs. With regards to earnings, immigrants earn less than Canadian-born but "the gap is reduced as immigrants gain work experience in Canada" (Statistics Canada: Trends and Conditions in CMA's, 2004, p. 8). What is surprising as well is that recent immigrants have on average higher qualifications and skills than Canadian-born, but, these qualifications and skills seem often not to be recognized by employers (Omidvar

and Richmond, 2005). In this realm, Omidvar and Richmond (2005) have argued that, despite the fact that Canada has an immigrant settlement policy in place, this policy does not seem better the weak position of many recent immigrants, leading to the formation of a new underclass of immigrants in cities: "During the last two decades, immigrants and refugees who have arrived to Canada are experiencing severe difficulties in the Canadian labour market. For many, it has been a life of underemployment or unemployment, low income or poverty and lost hope" (Omidvar and Richmond, 2005, p. 1).

According to the same authors, the 'failing' of immigration settlement policy has to do with the fact that too much is focused on the needs of recent immigrants in the beginning, such as language trainings, but are not enough focused on the longer term, therefore not recognizing "that settlement involves a lifetime of adjustment, with effects that extend into the next generation" (Omidvar and Richmond, 2005, p. 2). Also, because of governmental cutbacks, many immigrant settlement services, as provided by nongovernmental organizations and community based organizations, are having a hard time to survive and to provide the services immigrants need, since they depend for a large part on governmental funding (Omidvar and Richmond, 2005). In sum, it is argued that there is a growing "contradiction between official inclusion policies and the growing social exclusion for Canada's newcomers in the economic sphere and in public life generally" (Omidvar and Richmond, 2005, p. 1). Having outlined some important general trends in Canada with regards to immigration, it is now time to zoom into Canada's number one immigrant city which provided the context for my own study: Toronto.

Toronto: a brief history of the city

Colonization in the Toronto area began when the French colonizers arrived in the 1600s for fur trading purposes in the area. Halfway the 18th century the French built Fort Rouillé -Fort Toronto- but burned it downs shortly thereafter in order to prevent the British from seizing it. However, not much later the area was owned by the British:

> *"In 1787, the British 'purchased' much of today's greater Toronto area from the Mississaugas and founded the Town of York -1793- under John Graves Simcoe, the first lieutenant-governor of the province of Upper Canada"* (Wieditz, 2007, p. 1).

Since the town of York expanded, former military land with in its midst fort York, was opened up and other developments allowed. In 1834 "the Town of York became the City of Toronto" (Wieditz, 2007, p. 2) and, the former military land, that was disconnected from the wider city because of railway lines, became in use first as a location for institutions such as prisons and asylums, and later -in the 20th century- became a thriving industrial district. Nowadays, the district, known as liberty village, is being gentrified, and aims at attracting middle- and high income residents. Some of the old industrial buildings still remain and have been converted in spacious apartments or office buildings (Wieditz, 2007). When looking back upon Toronto's pre-industrial period, two phases can be distinguished. First, a 'mercantile period' in which Toronto developed as a mercantile outpost of the -amongst others- fur trade of the colonizers. Later, in the so called 'commercial period' Toronto became an administrative town:

> *"The town's role was now as a service centre where government was based, wholesale and retail goods were bought and sold, and key institutions like the bank, post office, and hospital were located"* (Caulfield, 2005, p. 314).

In this period, one of Toronto's first industries was build, the 'Gooderham and Worts' windmill, processing grain, and, later a distillery was added to the windmill. Also, in 1834 a municipal government came in place, governing the "rapidly growing middle class of immigrant entrepreneurs and professionals" (Caulfield, 2005 p. 315). It was only in the late 19th century that industrialization in Toronto really started off, and not until the early 20th century that "a basic shift in the scale and organization of the factory economy" had taken place (Caulfield, 2005, p. 316): the number of industrial firms was cut in half, although the number of employees working in these firms tripled. Toronto's industrial period was also characterized by an exponential growing population. In 1891, Toronto counted 180,000 inhabitants, compared to 40,000 inhabitants thirty years earlier (Caulfield, 2005).

Toronto's elite, who, in the pre-industrial period, settled down mainly in neighbourhoods near the city centre, now moved away to the edges of the city to get away from the noise and pollution of the inner-cities' industries and working-class neighbourhoods. When land in inner city Toronto became scarce, industries and the inner-city working-class neighbourhoods also started to move out of the city centre, to places that were well connected to the railway line, creating so called industrial suburbs. Furthermore, Toronto's late industrial period also gave rise to 'one-industry' towns outside of Toronto, that specialized in for example mining or the manufacturing of one specific good. Lastly, in 1914 the industrial period gave rise to the first 'office skyscrapers' as headquarters for large companies (Caulfield, 2005). What is interesting as well is that although "industry became a key sector of its economy, Toronto was never a primarily industrial city" and "the number of factory workers never outnumbered those employed in areas like management, finance and commerce, wholesale and retail trade, and government and personal services"(Caulfield, 2005, p. 317). It was only in the 1950's that the number of industrial jobs in Toronto started dropping considerably, marking the end of the late industrial period. A great share of the industrial jobs that Toronto lost moved to the outskirts of Toronto and to more remote parts of Ontario, fed by developments in transportation technologies. An other considerable part moved to third world countries, Asia and the US. Besides Toronto's post-industrial period being characterized by a loss of industries and consequently a loss of industrial jobs, the city's economy became more and more polarized with on one hand the 'knowledge economy' and on the other hand the "McDonald's economy" -referring to low-wage service sector jobs- and the cities major 'job clusters' […] being 'business and professional services, financial services, tourism and information technology' (Caulfield, 2005, p. 318).

Toronto: Canada's largest city

After this brief history of Toronto it is now time to look at Toronto in its current form and shape. First and foremost, Toronto is Canada's largest city and the provincial capital of Ontario, a province which is home to approximately 12,2 million people (Statistics Canada, 2006[12]). Toronto hasn't always been Canada's largest city, it was only after the second world war that Toronto took over Montreal's position as Canada's largest city and financial and business capital, attracting the majority of Canada's immigrants. Toronto is situated in South Ontario on the North shore of Lake Ontario, and forms the centre of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)[13] (see figure 3.3) inhabited by more than 5,5 million people (City of Toronto, 2010[14]).

---

[12] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-550/Index.cfm?TPL=P1C&Page=RETR&LANG=Eng&T=101
[13] 'The term 'Greater Toronto Area' refers to the City of Toronto and the surrounding Regional Municipalities of Halton, Peel, York and Durham' (City of Toronto, 2010).
[14] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pd

Toronto's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)[15], which is smaller than the GTA (see figure 3.3), is inhabited by almost 5,1 million people of whom almost half are immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2006[16]). Also, Toronto is part of the so called Greater Golden Horseshoe Region, Canada's most urbanized region which extends along Lake Ontario's western shore (Statistics Canada, 2006[17]). What's more, the city of Toronto[18] itself (referred to as 'Metropolitan Toronto' in figure 3.3) belongs to one of the five largest cities in North America (City of Toronto, 2010[19]), has the largest public transport system in North America after New York (City of Toronto[20]), takes up 632 square kilometres (Hulchanski, 2007), and is home to about 2.5 million people (Statistics Canada, 2006[21]).
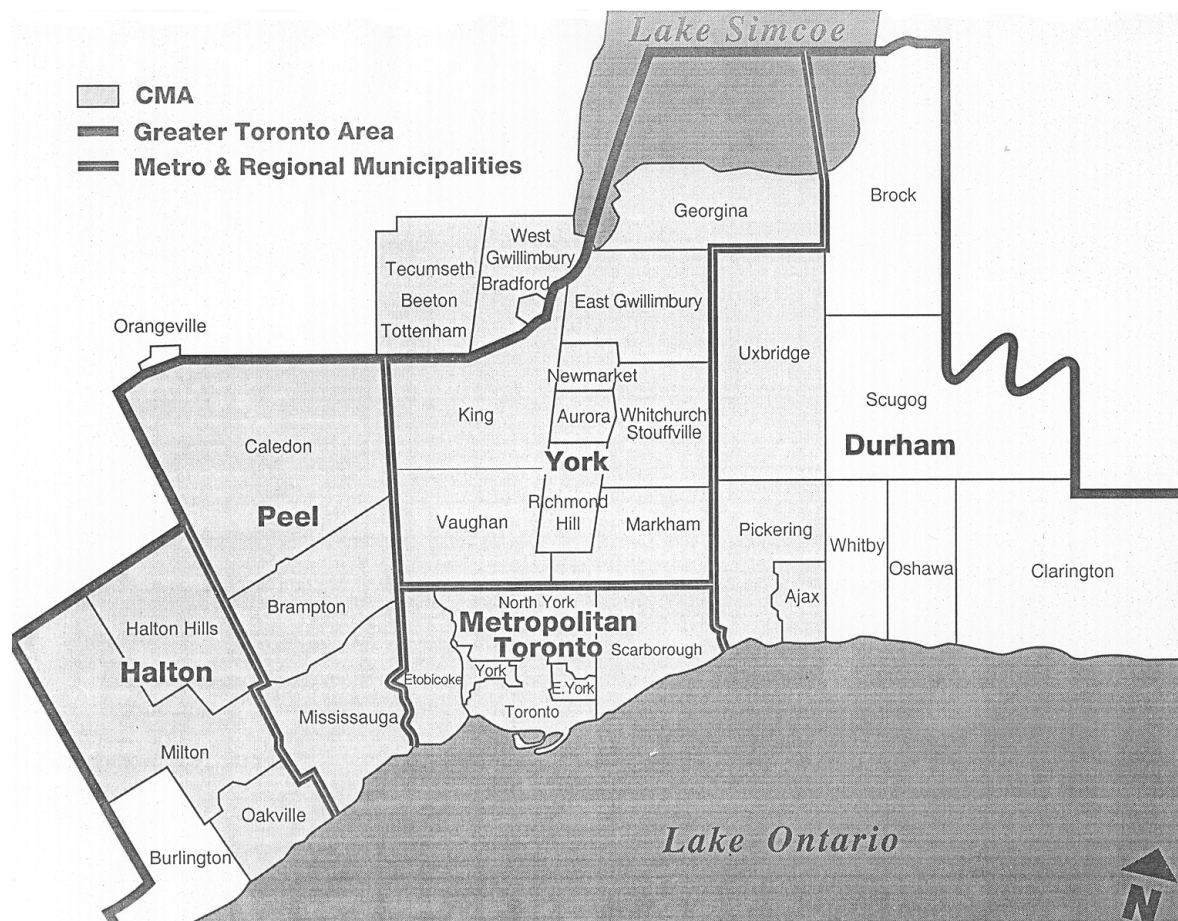
Figure 3.3 City of Toronto, GTA, CMA (Source: Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, 1995)

---

[15] The Toronto Census Metropolitan Area 'consists of 23 municipalities with the City of Toronto as its core' (Qadeer, 2004, p.1).
[16] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/sip/Rp-eng.cfm?TABID=1&LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=97614&PRID=0&PTYPE=97154&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=
[17] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-550/p14-eng.cfm
[18] The City of Toronto consists of the historic city of Toronto and the inner suburbs of Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York and East York (Qadeer, 2004)
[19] http://www.toronto.ca/invest-in-toronto/tor_overview.htm
[20] http://www.toronto.ca/toronto_facts/infrastructure.htm
[21] http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-562/pages/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo=CSD&Code=3520005&Data=Count&Table=2&StartRec=1&Sort=3&Display=All&CSDFilter=5000

Besides the fact that Toronto is Canada's largest city, Toronto is also Canada's financial capital and ranks third as compared to other large cities in North America:

> *"Toronto is the third largest North American financial services centre after New York and Chicago and is Canada's financial and business capital. With an employed workforce of roughly 232,000, Toronto's financial services sector is an engine of growth"* (City of Toronto, 2010[22]).

Other than financial services as a key area of growth for Toronto's economy, aerospace, business services, design, fashion, film and television, life-sciences, information and communication technologies and tourism have been identified as key industry clusters (City of Toronto, 2010[23]). With regards to the City of Toronto's labour force, approximately 1,3 million residents are employed –accounting for 7.8 percent of the Canadian labour force- with an unemployment rate of 7.6 percent in 2006 compared to 7.0 percent in 2001, slightly higher than the Canadian average of 6.6 percent in 2006. The largest share of Toronto's labour force works in respectively 'information and cultural industries' and 'finance and insurance'. Other large employers are -amongst others- 'real estate and rental and leasing', 'professional, scientific and technical services' and the 'management of companies and enterprises' (City of Toronto, 2010[24]) The next section will now deal more specifically with Toronto's position as a very important immigrant reception area in Canada, and the problems that arise from this position.

The city of Toronto – Some more statistics

- Toronto has a well-educated population with more people having earned a bachelor degree -37.4 percent- compared to Ontario -26.0 percent- or Canada as a whole -22.9 percent- (City of Toronto, 2010[1]).

- The median annual household income of Toronto's residents in 2005 was around 53,000 CAD, a drop of approximately 5 percent compared to 2000 and a 9th place as compared to other big cities in Canada (City of Toronto, 2010[1]).

- The amount of low-income families in Toronto increased drastically between 2000 and 2005, and is double that of the Canadian average (City of Toronto, 2010[1]).

- Besides the concentration of low-income families and individuals in Toronto, housing affordability is also a problem since almost 50 percent of all renters in Toronto spend 30 percent or more on their housing (City of Toronto, 2010[1]).

- Alongside Toronto's position as Canada's financial capital, Toronto is also a tourist magnet- attracting around 16 million tourist each year- and is home to numerous museums, ballet and opera companies and theatres, and is considered to be the third largest theatre centre only leaving London and New York behind as well as having a strong position in the film-industry (City of Toronto, 2010[1]).

---

[22] http://www.toronto.ca/invest-in-toronto/finance.htm
[23] http://www.toronto.ca/invest-in-toronto/clusteroverview.htm
[24] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_labour_force_backgrounder.pdf

Toronto: Canada's immigrant capital

Before the Second World War Toronto's inhabitants were mainly British. However, after the Second World War, and more specifically after 1951, Toronto's population diversified due to a change in immigration policies, starting off with a large influx of Italian immigrants. It was only after the Second World War that Toronto became "the hub of Canadian immigration" taking over Montreal's position (Buzzelli, 2001, p. 573), with the number of Torontonians doubling between 1951 and 1981, combined with a significant decrease of the proportion of British, leading to a "mostly non-British-origin city by the 1990s" (Buzzelli, 2001, p. 578). Nowadays, in Toronto -which is often praised for its multicultural and diverse character- over 200 different ethnic groups are represented (City of Toronto, 2010[25]) with immigrants taking up half of Toronto's population, and half of this immigrant population being rather 'recent' in that they have lived in Canada less than 15 years. What's more, half of Toronto's population has another mother tongue than English or French, with Chinese, Italian and Punjabi as largest language groups, and Chinese and Tamil as most spoken languages at home (see table 3.1).

A large share of recent immigrants to Canada, 70 percent of a total of 1,109,980 between 2001 and 2006, settled down in the Census Metropolitan Area's of either Montreal, Vancouver or Toronto, with Toronto being the most important destination for newly arriving immigrants of all three. And, comparing the City of Toronto's position as immigrant reception area with Canada's total, between 2001 and 2006, almost twenty-five percent of all newly arriving immigrants to Canada -in comparison to 30 percent in 1996- settled down in the City of Toronto, accounting for 267,855 persons. What is interesting as well is that although Toronto accounts for 8 percent of Canada's total population, it accounts for 20 percent of its total number of immigrants, again showing Toronto's position as a real immigrant city and Canada's most important reception area for newly arriving immigrants (City of Toronto, 2010[26]). Also, one can see a steady increase of the share of immigrants that settle down in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area: from 35 percent in the 1990's to about 50 percent in 2001 (Murdie, 2003).

Rank	Language	Persons	Percentage (%)
1	Chinese languages	197,370	8.3
2	Tamil	50,660	2.1
3	Italian	44,445	1.9
4	Spanish	43,910	1.9
5	Portuguese	37,820	1.6
6	Tegalog	33,920	1.4
7	Urdu	30,820	1.3
8	Russian	28,145	1.2
9	Persian (Farsi)	27,570	1.2
10	Korean	23,785	1.0

Table 3.1: Top ten home languages in Toronto (Source: City of Toronto, 2010[27])

---

[25] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf
[26] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_lang_imm_citizenship_mobility_backgrounder.pdf
[27] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf

Between 2001 and 2006, most of these newly arriving immigrants to the City of Toronto were from South Asia (mostly Indians) East Asia (mostly Chinese) and Europe (mostly Eastern Europeans), of whom the majority aged 25 years or older upon arrival (City of Toronto, 2010[28]). When Toronto's figures with regards to the regions of origin of immigrants are compared to figures of some decennia ago there is a very clear shift visible, as shown in figure 3.5 and illustrated by the following quote:

> *"The countries of origin have [..] changed dramatically over recent decades. Until the late 1960's, most of Toronto's immigrants were from Britain or other European countries. Since then there has been a substantial internationalisation of Toronto's population with the arrival of relatively large number of immigrant from various countries in Asia, Africa, Central and South America and the Caribbean"* (Murdie, 2003, p. 184).

What is more, when looked at the background of these newly arriving immigrants it becomes clear that "Toronto's newcomers represent a wide spectrum of economic classes ranging from refugees to business people" (Murdie, 2003, p. 184), and that the majority of newly arriving immigrants in 2001 were either 'skilled workers' or 'business people' (Murdie, 2003).
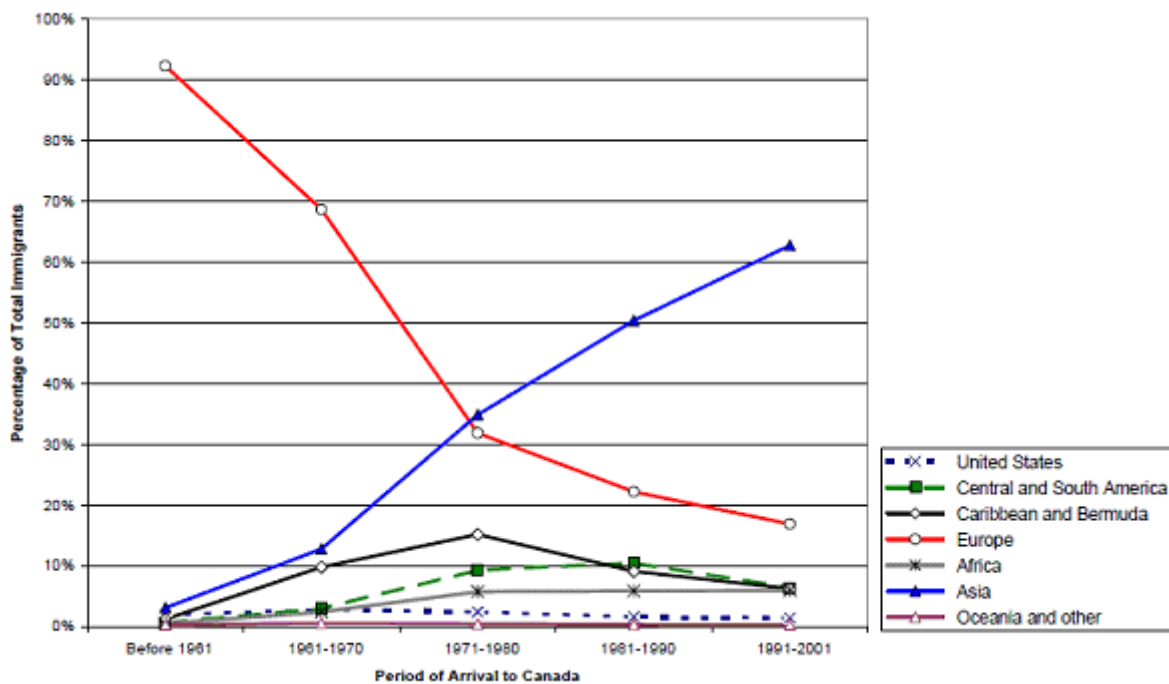
Figure 3.5 Origins of the immigrant population by period of arrival, Toronto CMA, 2001 (Source: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, 2010[29])

As figure 3.6 shows, the most numerous named single ethnic origins of Torontonians in the 2006 census were English, Chinese, Canadian, Scottish, Irish, East Indian and Italian signalling a "growing prominence of non-European ethnic identity" which "continues a trend that began in the 1980's as Toronto's population changed as a result of increasing immigration from Asia and other part of the world" (City of Toronto, 2010[30], p.3).

---

[28] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_lang_imm_citizenship_mobility_backgrounder.pdf
[29] http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/gtuo/map_immig_settle/Toronto_Immigrant-Settlement_1960-2000_Maps-Graphsall.pdf
[30] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf

Interestingly, only 11 percent of the people in Toronto identified themselves as Canadian, compared to 32,2 percent of the total Canadian population. With regards to visible minority groups in Toronto, a little more than 40 percent of Toronto's Census Metropolitan population has identified themselves as visible minorities, which makes Toronto the CMA with the greatest share of visible minority groups in Canada. And, the city of Toronto itself is home to a little less than 50 percent visible minorities, an increase of almost 5 percent since 2001. What is more interesting, since 1996, Toronto's visible minority population increased by a little more than 30 (!) percent, compared to a decrease of Toronto's non-visible minority population of approximately 11 percent since 1996. South-Asians, Chinese and Blacks are Toronto's largest visible minority groups, with Latin American's the fastest growing group between 2001 and 2006. When we compare these statistics to Canada as a whole, we see the same trend there: Since 1981 there are almost 4 times as many visible minority groups in Canada, and a 27 percent growth between 2001 and 2006. Not too surprising when about 75 percent of all newly arriving immigrants to Canada since 2001 were visible minorities (City of Toronto, 2010[31]).
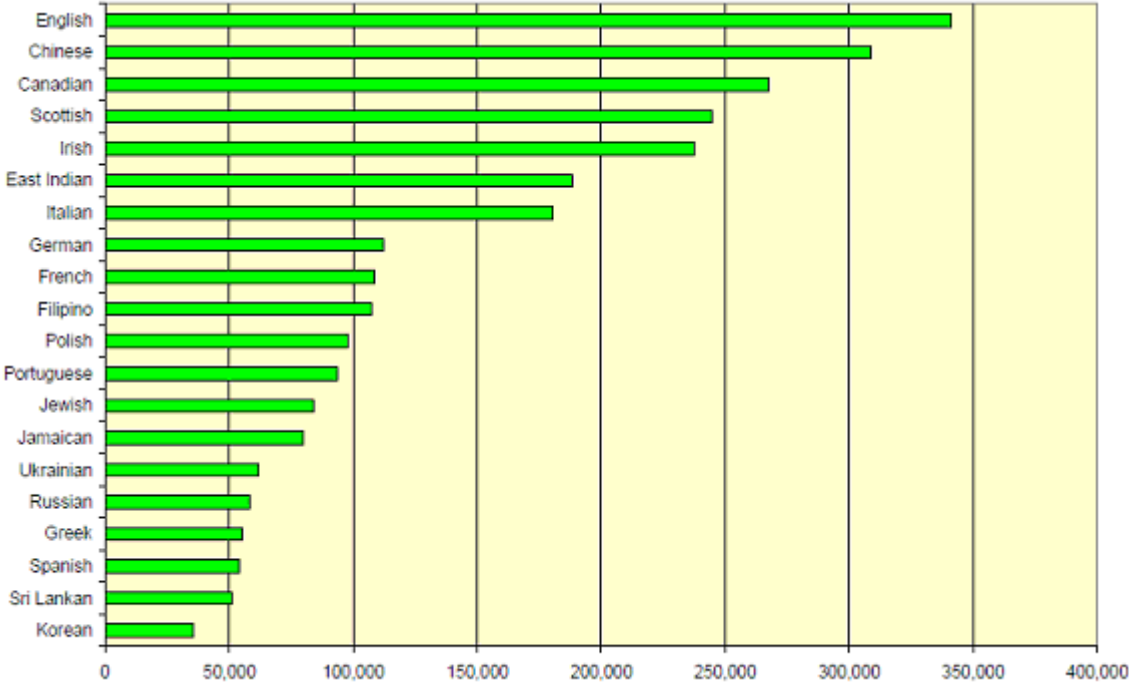
Figure 3.6: Top 20 Ethnic origins, City of Toronto, 2006 (Source: City of Toronto, 2010[32])

Toronto's housing market and the difficulties for newly arriving immigrants

When it comes to newly arriving immigrants and their search for affordable housing, many have difficulties finding such housing in Toronto because of the high rents and low vacancy rates, combined with some of the immigrants' weak financial situation and sometimes subtle discrimination on the housing market (Murdie, 2003). Looking at Toronto's housing market in more detail, there are three types of housing in Toronto: home ownership, public rental and

---

[31] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf
[32] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_ethnic_origin_visible_minorities_backgrounder.pdf

private rental (Murdie, 2003), with a little more than half -54 percent- of all households in Toronto being home owners compared to 46 percent of households being renters. When the City of Toronto's housing market is compared to the rest of the Greater Toronto Area, it becomes clear that the housing market in the rest of the GTA looks very different, with the large majority -83 percent- of the households being owners. What's more, over the years, the number of renter household in Toronto have been steadily declining, and the number of owner household have been steadily increasing. Also, Toronto's housing stock is relatively 'old' in that a little more than 80 percent of all housing is build before 1986 and only 6 percent after 2001 (City of Toronto, 2010[33]).

Low housing prices in the 1960s and 1970s -when many European immigrants settled down in Toronto- combined with a mentality that home-ownership was important and a sign of doing well, led to a situation in which the proportion of immigrant home-ownership was higher than the proportion of home-ownership of the whole population of Toronto. Current housing prices have increased to an average of 275,000 CAD in 2002, leading to a decreasing proportion of home-ownership amongst immigrants today. Especially immigrants with a weak financial position will have to rely upon the rental market, and more specifically the cheaper segment of the private rental market. However, vacancy rates in this segment of the housing market are very low, and less than the 3 percent that the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) sees as necessary for a 'normal turnover in rental housing' (Murdie, 2003, p. 185).

Besides the low vacancy rates in the rental segment of the Toronto housing market, since 1998 the Canadian government has also decided to abolish rent control, which means that landlords can increase the price of the rental unit as much as they want when the old renter leaves the property. Consequently, this lack of rent control has led to an increase in the price for rental units. When looking at the social rented sector, this sector only adds up to 11 percent of the total housing stock in Toronto and is 'plagued' by very long waiting lists: of the 60,000 applications in 2001, 5,000 were remunerated (Murdie, 2003). In sum, high housing prices and rents, a tight private rental sector, long waiting lists for socially rented housing, the often weak financial position of many recent immigrants and subtle discrimination on the housing market, have led to a situation in which "newcomers, especially visibly minorities, are likely to use informal social networks rather than formal institutions in their search for housing" (Murdie, 2003, p. 185).

With regards to the housing conditions of Toronto's immigrants, the CMHC -with data of the 1996 census- indicated that about 24 percent of immigrants living in Toronto -as compared to 17 percent of non-immigrants- were in core need, what meant so much as that of the three indicators, adequacy -'physical quality of the dwelling' (p.186)- suitability -'appropriateness of the dwelling for accommodating a particular size and type of household' (p.186)- and affordability -relation between shelter cost and the income of the household' (p.186)- one or more wasn't met, and that 30 percent or more of the households income was spend on housing. Also it was found that "tenants were much more likely to be in core need than homeowners were" and "immigrants also tended to have higher shelter to income ratios than non-migrants" (Murdie, 2003, p. 186). An analysis of the same data by Murdie and Teixeira (2003) furthermore signals that a large share of newly arriving immigrants "live in overcrowded conditions" and that about 1/3rd of newly arriving immigrants spend 30 percent or more on their housing, related to 23 percent of non-migrants and 22 percent of 'older' immigrant groups that arrived before 1976. Especially recent immigrants from East-Asia, such as Iran and Iraq, spend a considerable proportion of their income on housing (Murdie,

---

[33] http://www.toronto.ca/demographics/pdf/2006_families-households_backgrounder.pdf

2003, p. 187). However, despite the fact that a significant share of immigrants in Toronto are in core need, the condition of Toronto's housing is on average good, providing "tolerable living conditions in most ethnic enclaves" and detaches spatial segregation from "poor living conditions" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 4). It is also interesting to see that Toronto's immigrant population experiences slightly better housing conditions than non-immigrants in Toronto, partly due to the fact that recent waves of immigrants mainly settle down in the suburbs of Toronto, where a high share a newly build housing can be found (Quadeer, 2004). The next section will deal with this trend and investigate who lives where in Toronto based on socio-economic position.

Toronto: Who lives where?

"There is a great deal of change in a dynamic city like Toronto. People move in and out of neighbourhoods in the context of ever-changing economic, social and government policy conditions" (Hulchanski, 2007, p. 8).

Neighbourhood changes, especially in "societies were the real-estate market governs access to housing, with only limited public intervention" (Hulchanski, 2007, p. 2), are for a large part led by housing prices. In other words, individuals and households with the highest socio-economic positions and the most financial capital can always outbid lower-income individuals and households for housing. For example, a neighbourhood inhabited by low-income residents might over time become in demand by higher-income people because of its desirable location, and, over time, low-income residents become replaced. On the other hand, a middle and high income neighbourhood may fall out of grace by their residents and over time become a low-income neighbourhood for its housing now being affordable for the lower-incomes (Hulchanski, 2007). These neighbourhood changes occur all the time and everywhere, however, in Toronto there have been "relatively sudden and dramatic" neighbourhood changes, showing a worrying trend of severe income polarisation (Hulchanski, 2007, p. 2).

According to a recent publication of the Centre for Urban and Community Studies of the University of Toronto in December of 2007, three distinct 'cities' have emerged in Toronto, with each 'city' having its own characteristics. More specifically, over the period of 1970 up to 2000, a trend of income polarization has been visible amongst the many neighbourhoods in Toronto and "the pattern of who lives where in Toronto on the basis of socio-economic characteristics has changed dramatically" (Hulchanski, 2007, p. 4). With regards to who lives where, the city of Toronto looked very different in the 1970's as compared to the year 2000. First and foremost, in 1970, most low and very low income individuals resided in the inner 'downtown' core of Toronto, with the middle- high- and very high income individuals residing further away from Toronto's downtown, with especially the high and very high income individuals clustering around the Young Street Subway lines outside the downtown area. In 2000, this picture is almost completely reversed. Instead of Toronto's core being inhabited by mostly low-income individuals, Toronto's downtown has now been 'taken over' by the higher income individuals who have, besides their concentration in Toronto's core, especially clustered in the vicinity of the city's Young and Bloor subway lines (Hulchanski, 2007). As reasons for this reversed pattern of who lives where in the City of Toronto, Murdie (2003) names the decentralisation of low-wage employment to the suburbs, and more importantly, the gentrification of Toronto's inner city neighbourhoods. That is to say, inner-city housing once affordable for immigrants becomes unaffordable and immigrants are forced to settle down in neighbourhoods where they can find affordable housing. In the case of Toronto, this affordable housing is present in the inner-suburbs with a large share of affordable high-rise rent apartments (Murdie, 2003).

When looking specifically at the developments over the 30 year period from 1970 to 2000, three distinct cities have thus emerged within Toronto (see figure 3.7). So called 'city 1' takes up 20 percent of Toronto and represents neighbourhoods within which the average income of the population has increased by 20 percent or more in the 30-year period. City 1 is located in and close to downtown Toronto and near the subway lines of Bloor and Young. So called 'city 2' takes up a little more than 40 percent of the city and represents those neighbourhoods in which the average income of the population increased or decreased with no more than 20 percent and is located around city 1. So called 'city 3' takes up about 36 percent of Toronto and represents those neighbourhoods in which the average income of the population decreased by 20 percent or more and is located around city 2, farthest away from Toronto's downtown with a considerable part located above highway 401. City 3 is also home to Toronto's 13 priority neighbourhoods as assigned by the City of Toronto and the United Way of Greater Toronto (Hulchanski, 2007). When also taking Toronto's outer suburbs into account, an other trend is visible. Namely, very distinct groups of immigrants -based on socio-economic characteristics- settle down in very different parts of the city: low-income immigrants from Asia, Africa and South-America especially cluster in Toronto's inner suburbs -city3- while high-educated immigrants from India and China settle down in Mississauga and Brampton, and Scarborough, Markham and Richmond Hill respectively (Murdie, 2003).
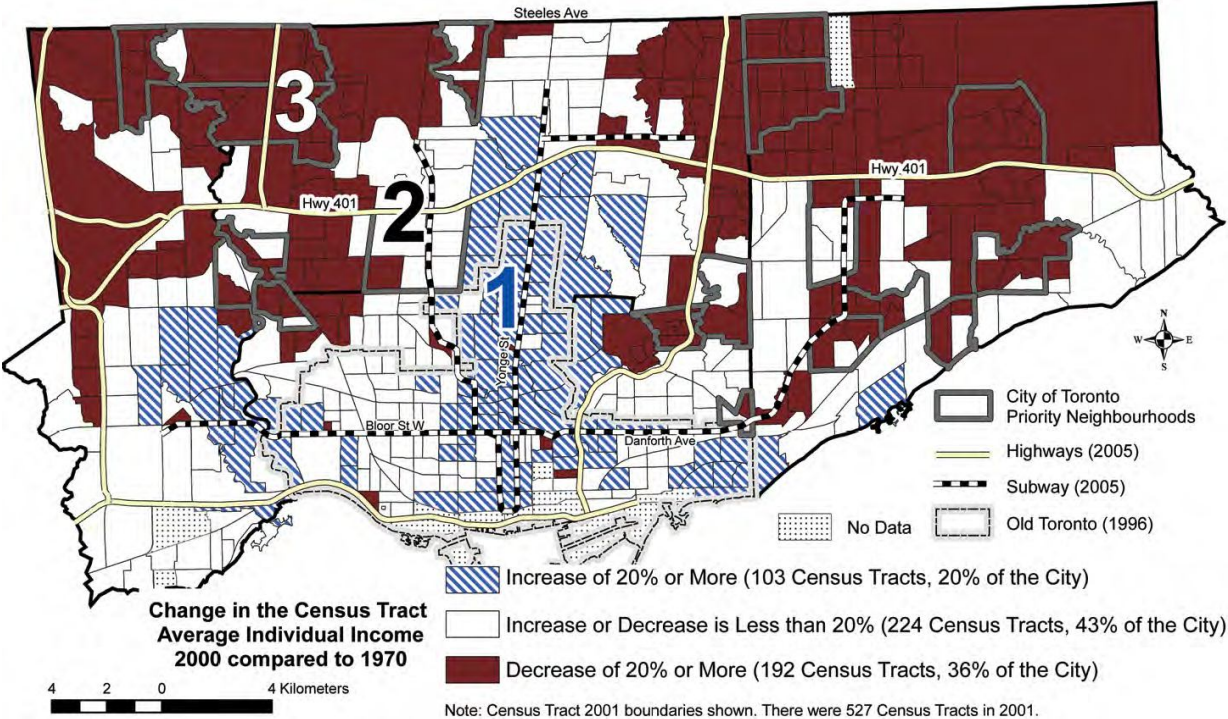
Figure 3.7: The three cities within Toronto (Source: Hulchanski, 2007)

What's more, besides a clear difference in income profiles of the inhabitants of these three cities within Toronto, each city also has a very distinct set of other characteristics such as ethnicity (Hulchanski, 2007). In general, the characteristics of the inhabitants of city 2 are close to the city average. City 1 on the other hand is inhabited by mainly white, white-collar individuals, with a smaller proportion of immigrants –about 30 percent- than the 50 percent average of Toronto as a whole. Furthermore, the greatest gap between the incomes of owners and renters can be found in city 1, and on average smaller households than in Toronto as a

whole. City 3 has the worst access to public transportation, is inhabited by 60 percent of immigrants of whom almost 50 percent are Blacks, Chinese and South Asian's and has a dominance of blue-collar workers (Hulchanski, 2007). Also, besides the fact that inhabitants of city 3 have the worst access to public transport, there is also a mismatch between these low-income residents of city 3 and services catering their needs, since the majority of social and community services remain in the inner-city since this used to be the place were the poor 'gathered' (Hulchanski, 2007).

Besides these changing patterns within the City of Toronto of who lives where on the basis of socio-economic position, there have also been clear changes in the number of low-income and middle-income neighbourhoods (see figure 3.8 and figure 3.9). First, the number of middle-income neighbourhoods has fallen from 66 percent of Toronto's total in 1970, to 32 percent in 2000. The share of low and very low income neighbourhoods has increased to 50 percent of Toronto's neighbourhoods -compared to 19 percent in 1970- and the proportion of Toronto's high and very high income neighbourhoods has increased to 18 percent as compared to 15 percent in 1970 (Hulchanski, 2007, p. 4) Thus, the number of middle income neighbourhoods has sharply decreased over the thirty year period, and a shocking 50 (!) percent of Toronto's neighbourhoods are now low-income, in line with the finding that the number of low-income households in Toronto has drastically increased over the years. What's more, since the same trends are visible in the suburbs -although to a lesser extent- Toronto's middle-income people can not be said to have simply moved there (Hulchanski, 2007). Moving away now from a discussion on who lives where in Toronto based on socio-economic characteristics, the following section deals with who lives where based on ethnicity and discusses the urban phenomenon of ethnic neighbourhoods in Toronto.
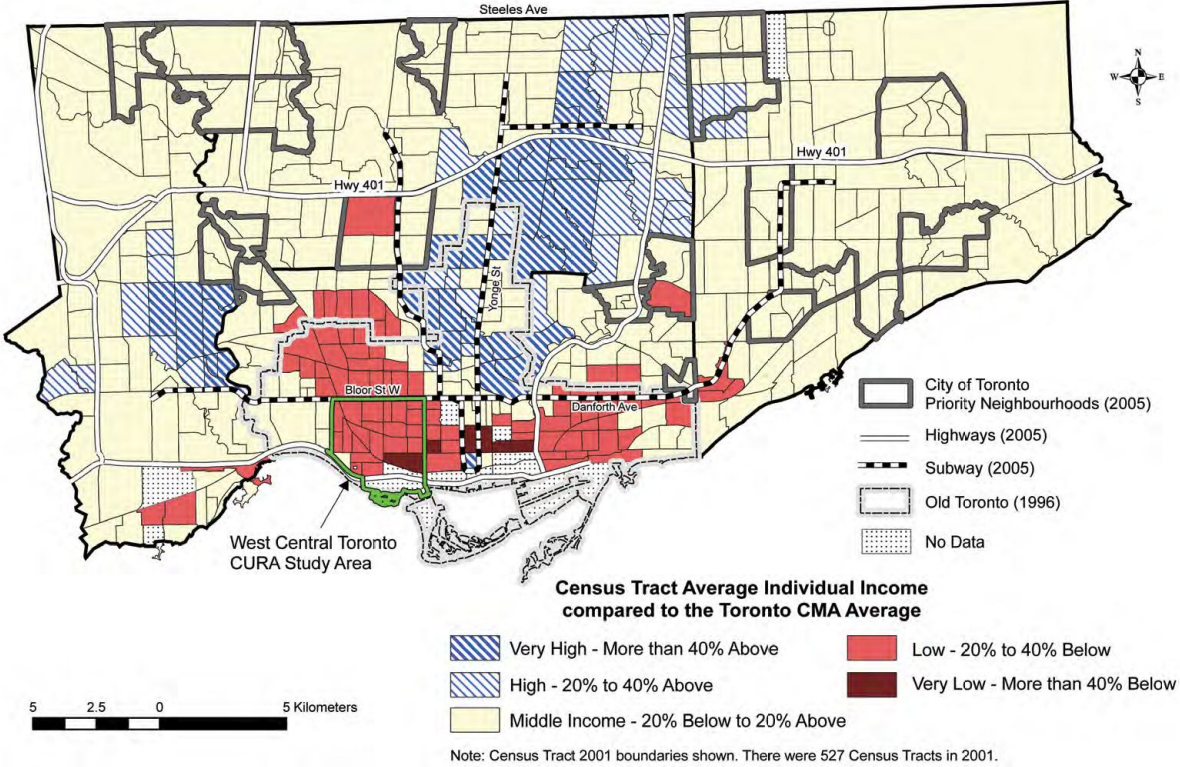
Figure 3.8: Toronto's neighbourhoods, based on individual income, 1970 (Source: Hulchanski, 2007)

**Census Tract Average Individual Income
compared to the Toronto CMA Average**

Very High - More than 40% Above   Low - 20% to 40% Below

High - 20% to 40% Above   Very Low - More than 40% Below

Middle Income - 20% Below to 20% Above

Note: Census Tract 2001 boundaries shown. There were 527 Census Tracts in 2001.
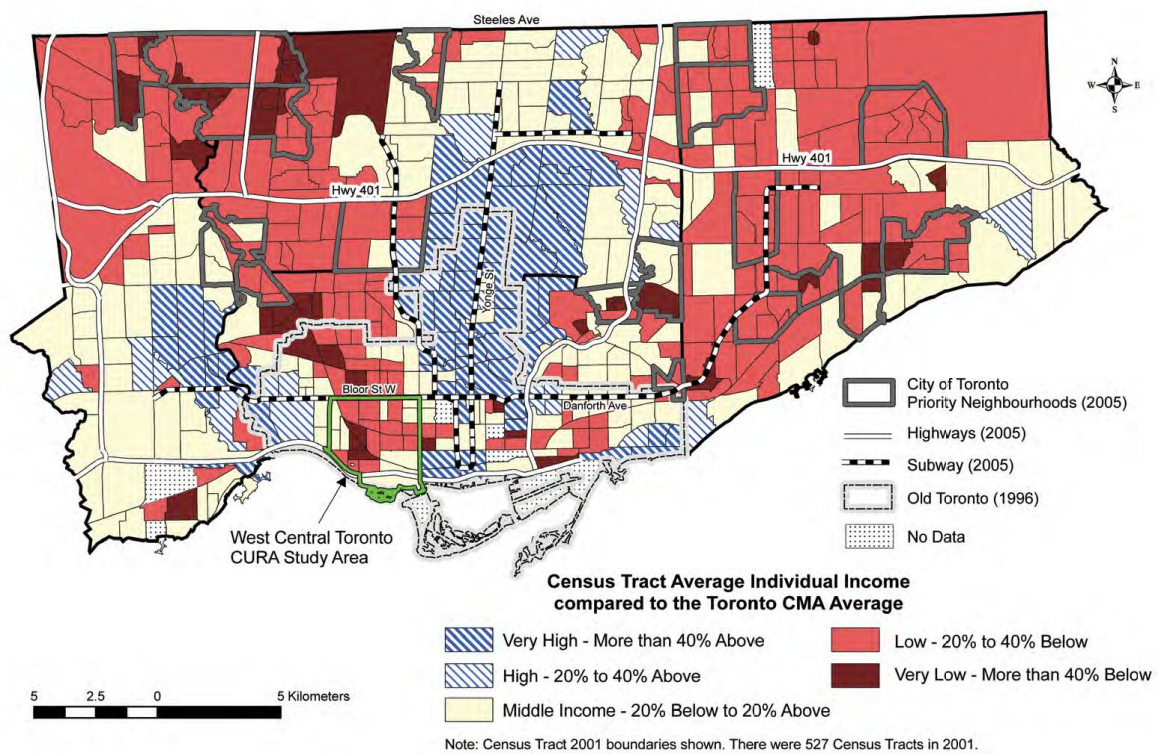
Figure 3.9: Toronto's neighbourhoods, based on individual income, 2000 (Source: Hulchanski, 2007)

Toronto: ethnic neighbourhoods

"In Toronto, ethnic enclaves appear to be largely expressions of preferences, common interests, social networks, and the cultural and/or religious needs of their residents. They provide familiarity and security to new immigrants, and serve as the basis for their integration into the Canadian economy and society" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 4).

Toronto, like many other North American cities, is "dotted with ethnic residential enclaves" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 3). And, maybe the most well know and most researched example is North America's Chinatown. Both Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto, and even smaller cities like Victoria all have their own Chinatown, full of Chinese organisations and shops. However, besides this well known example, a wide variety of other ethnic enclaves can be found in Toronto -amongst others- Little Italy (St Clair Avenue West) and Little Portugal (Dundas West). Other than a ghetto, which existence is part of complex mix of -amongst others-discrimination, poverty, and the working of the housing market, creating involuntary residential concentration of the poorest of society (Quadeer, 2004), ethnic enclaves are seen as "expressions of spatial and social segregation by choice" [..] framed by [..] income and class" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 3-4) and are attributed to immigrant's their 'housing search behaviour' and the local housing market.

Chinatown

Source: Own pictures

With regards to the formation of ethnic enclaves in Toronto, Quadeer has indentified three stages of which the first is for a large part characterised by the help and support immigrants get from social networks of co-ethnics. In this realm, many immigrants rely on the support of friends, family or acquaintances when they first arrive in Toronto and are looking for a place to stay:

> *"Once landed in Canada and Toronto, an immigrant typically contacts friends, relatives, or acquaintances for help in finding a place to live"* (Quadeer, 2004, p. 2).

More specifically, during their search for permanent housing, some immigrants might even stay at a co-ethnic's home for a while, instead of staying in hotels or other temporary housing, and ask their co-ethnics for information on how and where to find permanent housing. Also, sometimes co-ethnics rent out sections of their residence to newly arrived immigrants, as well as giving advise about buying a property in Toronto. Consequently, "Through these ethnic networks, newly-arrived immigrants are channelled to areas where their predecessors are living" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 2). In the second phase of the formation of ethnic enclaves, the proportion of a certain group of co-ethnics in a neighbourhood becomes big enough to become a clear visible presence on the streets, with more co-ethnics coming in, and other ethnic groups moving out. In this phase it is also often evident that landlords start relying

more and more upon ethnic networks to populate empty housing. Also, the large share of co-ethnics clustering together creates enough of a basis to gives rise to "religious, cultural, and community institutions"(Quadeer, 2004, p. 3). In the third phase, an ethnic community comes into being and becomes a "segmented (sub) housing market sustained by real estate agents, lawyers, dentists, doctors, and community and religious leaders" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 3). As Quadeer notes, in Toronto religion seems an important basis for the existence of ethnic residential clustering, however, this is not always the case (Quadeer, 2004).

When looking specifically at Toronto's ethnic landscape, there is a wide variety of different ethnic neighbourhoods, ranging from so called 'high-rise ghetto's' inhabited by poor immigrants from, for example, India and Africa and Eastern Europe (Carey, 2001 in Quadeer, 2004, p. 3), to more affluent ethnic enclaves. In Quadeer's words: "the CMA's social landscape is a mosaic of both affluent and poor ethnic communities, interspersed with large swaths of mixed neighbourhoods" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 4). Furthermore, not many exclusively white neighbourhood can be found in Toronto, however there are some -such as Rosedale and Forest Hill- which are inhabited mainly by white's (Quadeer, 2004, p. 4). What is interesting as well is that ethnic neighbourhoods -although often assumed to be some kind of phase of transition in immigrants their lives and especially important in the beginning of their new existence abroad- instead "appear to have become a mode of spatial organization for some groups in the Toronto region" (Quadeer, 2004, p. 3) and thus, although some affluent members of ethnic communities could easily live somewhere else, they prefer to live amongst their co-ethnics (e.g. Quadeer, 2004).

Also, some of Toronto's ethnic residential concentrations -such as Little Italy (St Clair)- have had, or still have a clear imprint on the build environment and urban space. In the case of little Italy, the so called Georgian style housing as built by their British predecessors, was gradually changed and given a more Italian flavour: "St Clair [..] acquired new architectural expressions, such as façade materials, styles, and uses of space and these were based in the ethnic identity of the new group" (Buzzelli, 2001, p. 574). Other ethnic enclaves such as Toronto's Chinatown -with Asian style facades and multiple Chinese street vendors- and Toronto's little Portugal -being "one of the most visible ethnic neighbourhoods in Toronto" (Teixeira, 2007, p. 1)- are hard to miss. However, not all members of these ethnic groups have altered urban space to the same extent and, out-group differences can be found:

> *"The ethnic imprint on urban space and its identification by urban residents vary between and within groups. All Chinatowns do not look alike and all Portuguese-Canadian homes in Toronto do not display iconographies of identity and religion. The ethno-cultural landscape in each case reflects the occupants' experience with the production and association of urban space"* (Buzzelli, 2001, p. 585).

Conclusion

Canada is an immigration country per se and is home to one of the largest proportions of immigrants to the total population of any country in the world. In the 20th century, two clear waves of immigration occurred, the first one clearly related to the opening up of Canada to the West by a promise of the government of free land. These immigrants were mainly European farmers, looking for a better life in America. The second wave occurred after the depression in the 1930's and the Second World War, but never reached the scale and scope of the early 1900s wave. In the last 30 years, rates of immigration to Canada have been stable -on average an annual 1 percent of the total population- however, the nature of immigration to Canada has clearly changed. One of these changes is clearly linked to Canadian immigration policy in the late 60' when instead of a discriminatory policy, a point system was introduced allowing

immigrants from all over the world to apply for citizenship. Since then, the origin of immigrants coming to Canada changed dramatically, from mainly European in the 1960's to mostly Asian in 2006. Also, immigrants have increasingly started to settle down in Canada's major CMAs, and have started to concentrate in the suburbs of Canada's major cities. All three trends are also visible in Toronto, Canada's largest city and its financial and business capital. Toronto is Canada's immigrant capital with 50 percent of its population being immigrant, and with 50 percent of Canada's total of newly arriving immigrants in 2001 settling down in Toronto's CMA. Moreover, Toronto is praised to be one of the worlds most multicultural cities, home to more than 200 different ethnic groups and a variety of ethnic specific neighbourhoods. Despite this claim, strong income polarization has taken place in Toronto, with a great share of Toronto's population being low-income -amongst which many recent immigrants- and half of Toronto's neighbourhoods places of residence for the poor.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter will describe in detail how this study was performed and why certain choices, e.g. with regards to methods and sampling, were made. More specifically, the chapter will start off by explaining the choice for a qualitative research strategy and choices made with regards to research design and research methods. In the next section the choice for the specific setting and ethnic group are discussed, followed by a section on sampling methods. Last, more practical issues such as interview settings and the process of transcription and analysis are described.

Research strategy, research design and research method

A qualitative study has been conducted, interviewing Iranian immigrants in Toronto, Canada. A qualitative research strategy has been employed since my study is not exclusively aimed at testing theory, nor on quantification and generalization, but instead on providing insight into the underlying mechanisms and processes of social networks -how they 'work'- with an emphasis on how individuals experience and interpret the world around them (Bryman, 2008), in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

I employ a qualitative research strategy and I use a case-study research design. First and foremost, my research design has elements that are common in case-study research, such as the focus on one single group or community, making the results context and group specific and limiting the generalizability. However, my study is far from a classic case-study in which the case itself is the unit of analysis. What's more, my research design also has some elements of a cross-sectional research design, such as the focus on more than one case -persons- at a single point in time and the interest in causes and effects. However, by no means I intent to produce quantifiable data and 'discover' or test patterns of association, elements that are common to a cross-sectional approach (Bryman, 2008). Note that although my qualitative research design has elements that 'belong' to a cross-sectional approach, my study is by no means quantitative and is an explicit qualitative project.

With regards to the research method employed, I used a semi-structured interview schedule to collect my data. Although an ethnographic or participant observation approach seemed a good way to investigate how social networks operate and evolve over time, the method would have been too time-consuming for the limited time available for this study. Also, an unstructured interview approach -which bares a lot of resemblances to a normal conversation and is characterised by the absence of any interview schedule- would not satisfy since the risk would be to high to end up with an overload of 'useless' information and a lack of vital information. Therefore, I chose to conduct qualitative semi-structured interviews, which seemed an appropriate research method. First of all because of the 'flexible' nature of semi-structured interviews, leaving room for adding new issues and questions during the interview by either the interviewer or the interviewee, something that would not be possible with a structured interview approach, in which a rigid list of questions is followed for the purpose of generalizing the results (Bryman, 2008). Secondly, because a semi-structured approach encourages respondents to give "rich and detailed answers" (Bryman, 2008, p. 437), something that is highly valued in any qualitative study.

Choice of specific setting and ethnic group

In the former chapter, detailed information was given on Toronto and its special position as Canada's largest city and immigrant capital: not only does Toronto represent more than 200 different ethnic groups, also half of the city of Toronto's inhabitants are immigrants. It is exactly this complex multicultural mosaic, the many ethnic groups and the large amount of

immigrants from all over the world, that makes Toronto a very interesting place to conduct a study in the realm of immigration and social networks. Conversely it can be argued that this special position of Toronto also biases the results of any study undertaken in this realm. However, I do realize that the results of my study are context-specific, and, therefore, can not be automatically extrapolated to other contexts.

Although a comparison between different ethnic groups in Toronto would have been interesting and should be seen as an interesting direction for future research on the subject, only one specific ethnic group in Toronto was chosen to be interviewed due to time constraints. However, choosing one specific ethnic group out of Toronto's many proved to be a difficulty in itself. Therefore, I narrowed down my choices by only considering ethnic groups who lived up to certain criteria. First of all, the general level of English proficiency of the majority of the members of the specific ethnic group needed to be good enough in order for the interviewer and the interviewee to understand each other. Secondly, the specific ethnic group needed to be well accessible with public transit since I was dependent upon public transport for my travelling. Third, the specific group needed to be residentially clustered to a certain degree in order to investigate -amongst others- community affiliation. A couple of groups lived up to these criteria, amongst which the Somali, Polish and Iranian, but, since the Somali and Polish had been studied quite extensively in Toronto (e.g. Murdie, 2003; Opoku-Dapaah, 1995; Baker, 1989), I decided to focus on the Iranians since they had been underexposed and seemed an interesting group to study.

Sampling

In order to get respondents for my study I combined two sampling methods: snowball and purposive sampling. I started off with snowball sampling, and via friends and colleagues I got in contact with Iranians that lived in the City of Toronto and were willing to let me interview them. At the end of each interview I would ask the respondent if he or she knew other Iranians living in Toronto with whom I could get in touch with, and, got in contact with other Iranians that where willing to let me interview them through these initial contacts. After conducting a couple of interviews with respondents that were found through this snowball method, I started to engage more in purposive sampling since I wanted to make sure that I interviewed -amongst others- an equal number of men and woman, people from all ages and people that differed in time of residence in Canada. In contrast to the first stage of my research in which I mainly engaged in snowball sampling, this purposive sampling was much more strategic in the sense that it was tried to interview Iranians who differed "in terms or key characteristics" so that there was variety in the sample and some careful statements could possibly be made about the group (Bryman, 2008, p. 415). Both snowball and purposive sampling are non-random, which means so much as that the results can not be generalized to the total population, but must be seen as time and place specific. With regards to the number of interviews I conducted, I did not pinpoint any number beforehand but had decided to go on until the point where I felt that I didn't hear anything new, or, so called 'theoretical saturation' was achieved (Bryman, 2008).

Respondents and interview settings

Over a two and a half month period, from the midst of January to the end of March 2010, I interviewed 18 Iranian immigrants living in the City of Toronto and two key persons. As stated before, I used both a snowball an purposive sampling method to get respondents for my study. More specifically, three of my respondents were direct friends/acquaintances of friends and colleagues of mine, and, through these initial contacts I got in contact with other Iranians

that where willing to let me interview them. Also, I got help from University Settlement in North York, a community centre especially focused on newcomers in the North York area, and specifically -but not exclusively- on Iranian newcomers. Most of the employees at the community centre were Iranian and some of them let me interview them or introduced members of their family who I could interview. Also, I participated in a couple of Iranian meetings in the community centre and was handed the possibility to briefly introduce my research project at the end of these meetings and invite people to participate. Via this route I also got a couple of respondents for my study. Furthermore I conducted two semi-structured interviews with key persons. One of them was the Manager of Settlement Services of University Settlement, the community centre in North York, and the other one an employee of the Shelter, Housing and Support Division of the City of Toronto, who I got in contact with through a Immigrant and Refugee Housing Committee (IRHC) meeting that I had participated in.

Most of the interviews took place in public spaces such as café's and coffee corners either downtown Toronto or in the North York area, and were all voice recorded. Other interviews took place in people's homes or in the Community Centre, where I was given the possibility of using one of their spaces for the purpose of interviewing. The interviews with the key persons took place in their offices, University Settlement in North York and the City of Toronto's office downtown respectively. Before each interview with the immigrants, I explained the aim of my study and asked them permission to voice-record our conversation. Also, when I asked them questions about 'their neighbourhood' in the interview, I would leave it up to the respondents themselves to define their neighbourhood, since studies have found that people mostly see their neighbourhood as a relatively small area -a couple of blocks- from their house. I also let the respondents sign a Informed Consent Form, which in a nutshell stated that they were not obliged to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable answering and that they could decide to stop the interview anytime [see appendix A]. Also, the community centre let me use one of their employees for the purpose of translating. I made use of this translator once, but afterwards decided that I would not make use of her any more since I felt that due to translation, valuable details of the interview got lost.

Some basic characteristics of the respondents

Exactly half of the interviews I conducted -18 in total- were with men, and the other half with women. When looked at the ages of the respondents, most of them were in the 25 to 54 age group, the youngest respondent being in his mid twenties, and the oldest respondent in her late 60s. When comparing these figures to the Toronto average, it becomes clear that these are quite similar, with the largest age group amongst Iranians in Toronto indeed being 25 to 54, and approximately as much -although slightly more- men as women. Furthermore, in line with the Toronto average, the greatest share of the respondents was married and a considerable part single (Statistics Canada, 2006).

When looked at ethnicity, the large majority of the respondents proclaimed to be Iranian or Persian, although some identified with other ethnic groups such as Mazandarani. It was interesting that some of respondents who ticked the box Persian explained to me that the term Iranian was too broad since it referred to all the people in Iran, including all other ethnic groups which are present in Iran. Some others explained that they liked to think of themselves as being Persian, since it referred back to Persia, and not Iran which has for most people a negative connotation. The level of English of most respondents was quite good, although the

English of the younger respondents was overall better. This finding is in line with the on average good language ability of Iranians in Toronto (Statistics Canada 2006[34]).

With regards to the education levels of the respondents, a large majority had attained at least a bachelor degree, signalling that the education level of my respondents was a bit higher than the Toronto average where about 40 percent of Iranians have earned a degree at bachelor level or higher (Statistics Canada, 2006). What's more, when the educational attainments of Iranian-Canadians are compared to the educational attainments of Canadians, it becomes clear that "the Iranian community is relatively more educated than typical Canadians" (Garousi, 2005, p. 17). Despite the fact that many respondents were highly educated, still quite a large share was unemployed, but, of those who were unemployed, the majority indicated that they were actively looking for work. However, the lion share of the respondents (2/3rd) were either full- or part-time employed or full-time students. With regards to wages of the full-time employed Iranians, my respondents indicated to earn more than 40,000 (before taxes or deduction) a year, signalling an over-representation of higher-earning full-time working Iranian immigrants in my study as compared to the Toronto average (Statistics Canada, 2006). In sum, the characteristics of my respondents are for a large part in line with the Toronto average, however, my sample sees an over-representation of higher educated and higher-paid Iranian immigrants compared to the average Iranian immigrant in Toronto.

Transcription and analysis

After conducting each interview I listened back to it and transcribed large parts of the interview. At first I started to transcribe complete interviews, but soon realized that it would be too time-consuming and a lot of the written text was not going to be used in the end. Therefore, I started to transcribe the interviews partially, only focusing on the major themes related to my research questions and jotting down interesting quotes that I thought were important for my analysis. I created schemes on different topics/themes related to my research question, in order to analyze the data per topic. Also, for anonymity purposes, I have given the respondents fictive names in my thesis.

---

[34] http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/sip/Rp-eng.cfm?TABID=1&LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=97614&PRID=0&PTYPE=97154&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=

CHAPTER 5: IRANIANS IN CANADA

Iranian immigration to Canada: a brief history

With regards to Iranian immigration to Canada, two waves of immigration can be clearly distinguished until the 1990s. The first wave -between 1964 and 1978- was mainly composed of professionals –mostly single men and families- who voluntary immigrated to Canada and were "part of a broader movement of professionals from the Third World to more advanced, capitalist countries" (Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples, 1999, p. 2). Amongst those were many Iranian students who had been encouraged by their families to study abroad, since Iran was in need for professionals, and also many "doctors and other professionals who had been selectively recruited within the available labour force" (Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples, 1999, p. 2). When looked at the scope of this first wave one can see that it was still very limited with approximately 600 Iranian immigrants arriving in Canada in 1978 (Garousi, 2005).

In contrast to the first wave, the second wave of immigration to Canada was characterised by a sharp increase of immigration rates -several thousands per year- and started off after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 when the Shah's dictatorship steering towards westernization an modernization was overthrown, and Ayatollah Komeini took control, turning Iran into an Islamic Republic "governed by the laws of the Holy Koran and the traditions of the Shiite Muslim religion" (Garousi, 2005; Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples, 1999, p. 2). While in the period before 1979 many opponents of the Shah -amongst which many religious groups- were brutally captured and killed, in the new era after the revolution the same brutalities took place, now turned towards those that opposed the Shah's strict religious regime, amongst which many of the former Shah's supporters. Iran's new Islamic state was characterised by inequality -e.g. based on gender, ethnicity and religion- and discrimination. Especially strict rules and hard measures were enforced on women who -amongst others- were taken away the right to vote and pressured to walk around veiled (Encyclopedia of Canada's People's, 1999).

The second wave of immigration to Canada was less voluntary in nature and clearly linked to the establishment of the Islamic regime in Iran and the Iran-Iraq war between 1980 and 1988. Consequently, many of the immigrants entering Canada after 1979 claimed refugee status (Encyclopedia of Canada's People's, 1999) and came for political reasons (Garousi, 2005). This second wave is also clearly composed of two different groups of immigrants. On the one hand it is composed of those who had enough capital and "had enjoyed a certain socio-political or economic importance within the old regime" (Encyclopedia of Canada's People's, 1999). And on the other hand, it is composed of members of the middle-classes from urban areas in Iran, in the search for a better life in the context of political repression and the war with Iraq.

In contrast to the first wave of Iranians to Canada, this second wave saw also much more woman migrating which can be seen as a reaction to their political, economic and social repression in the Islamic republic. What's more, the second wave of immigration saw an increase of family migration, meaning so much that individuals were often accompanied by their families when immigrating to Canada (Encyclopedia of Canada's People's, 1999). Since the 1990s however, the character of Iranian immigration to Canada has shifted again, and the rate of immigration has even increased more. While in the period after the Islamic revolution most immigration was driven by the political situation in Iran, in the post 1990 period most Iranians have come to Canada on the basis of their professional and educational attainments (Garousi, 2005).

Iranians in Canada

In 2001 approximately 89,000 Iranians were living in Canada. What's more, the rate of Iranian immigration to Canada has increased significantly since the late 1970s, and is still increasing (Garousi, 2005): "The Iranian community is a relatively new component of Canada's immigrant population, making up less that 2 percent of Canada's immigrant population, however immigration from Iran has increased in recent years" (Khanlou et al., 2008, p. 545). Furthermore, the main destination for Iranian immigrants to Canada is Ontario: more than half of all Iranian immigrants in 2001 settled down in the province of Ontario, and again almost half of that in Toronto. In 2001 Toronto was home to about 40,000 Iranians, however, other non-formal estimations point to a much larger population of approximately 100,000. With regards to the gender distribution of Iranians in Canada, a little more men than women have settled down in Canada and, when looked at age, the Iranian population in Canada is rather young: the largest part is between the age of 24 and 44. Furthermore, about half of the Iranians are married and a considerable part is single. Also, more than 95 percent is first generation immigrant, and Farsi and other Iranian languages are the most spoken languages at home (Garousi, 2005, based on Statscan, 2001). Since the ethnic background of Iranian-Canadians is not available as data from Statistics Canada, Garousi conducted a internet survey amongst Iranians and found that almost half of the respondents were Persian, an other large part Azeri and a small part Kurd, Arab etc. (Garousi, 2005). With regards to Education, Iranians seem to be better educated than the average Canadian: almost 40 percent of Iranians in Canada have a university degree, compared to only 12 percent of the Canadians. Conversely, when looked at employment and income, the Iranian-Canadians seem to do worse as compared to Canadians: more Iranians are unemployed and have, on average, lower wages than Canadians (Garousi 2005, based on Statscan, 2001).

The Iranian concentration area: North York

When looked at the percentage of Census Tracts[35] occupied by 50 percent of the groups population (see table 5.1), Iranians are the 11th most residentially concentrated group in Toronto's CMA. More specifically, 50 percent of the Iranian population is concentrated in 6.3 percent of the City of Toronto's census tracts, as compared to 2.6 percent of the Somali, Toronto's most concentrated ethnic group. Looking more specifically at where Iranians in Toronto cluster, it becomes clear that the Iranian population mainly concentrates in the Northern inner suburbs of the city of Toronto -North York- and the municipality of Richmond Hill in the outer suburbs (see figure 5.1). Looking more closely at figure 5.1, one can see a large concentration of purple dots -which represent persons of Iranian origin- in the Northern-central parts of Toronto, spilling over in the municipalities of Vaughan and Markham as well as Richmond Hill. Performing an analysis on census tract level (see figure 5.2), in which the spectrum from light to dark red represents the absolute concentration of Iranians, it becomes clear that the three census tracts within the City of Toronto with the largest absolute number of Iranians -the darkest red area's in the figure- are adjacent areas located in the North York area (see red circle in figure 5.2) and, might for this reason be labelled as the core of an Iranian residential concentration area in Toronto.

---

[35] Definition by Statistics Canada: "Census tracts are small, relatively stable geographic areas that usually have a population of 2,500 to 8,000" (http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-597/index.cfm?lang=E)

	Total Population	Amount of Census Tracts in the CMA	Amount of Census Tracts occupied by 50% of the groups population	% of Census Tracts occupied by 50% of the Groups population
Total Population	5.072.075	995	355	35,7%
Somali	18.440	995	26	2,6%
Bangladeshi	13.025	995	30	3,0%
Punjabi	22.615	995	32	3,2%
Jewish	141.685	995	39	3,9%
Iraqi	11.925	995	44	4,4%
Ghanaian	14.720	995	46	4,6%
Albanian	11.385	995	54	5,4%
Ethiopian	10.635	995	54	5,4%
Tamil	29.240	995	57	5,7%
Ecuadorian	12.975	995	60	6,0%
Iranian	56.925	995	63	6,3%
Sri Lankan	80.610	995	65	6,5%
Afghan	23.230	995	67	6,7%

Table 5.1: Iranian residential concentration in Toronto (Source: Murdie, 2009)

A bit more than 3000 Iranians live in these three census tracts, accounting for approximately 10 percent of the total population in these tracts. Although the area is labelled by the City of Toronto as Willowdale East, its inhabitants refer to the area as North York. Taking note of Hulchanski's finding that over the 30 year period from 1979 to 2000, three distinct cities have developed in Toronto, North York is for most part situated in 'city 2' –with little change in the average income of its inhabitants, and with characteristics of its inhabitants close to the Toronto average. What's more, North York is classified as a middle-income neighbourhood, with some of its surrounding areas classified as high or even very high income neighbourhoods (Hulchanski, 2007).

Adjacent to these three tracts with the largest absolute number of Iranians are census tracts with also quite distinctive concentrations of Iranian as compared to the rest of the census tracts in Toronto, however less so. Since census tracts are still quite large areas, a closer look was taken at the dissemination areas within these three census tracts. From this analysis it becomes clear that most Iranians live close to either Yonge street or Highway 401 (see figure 5.3 for reference to these streets). For the purpose of my study, the three census tracts with the highest absolute number of Iranians in Toronto and its surrounding tracts will be loosely referred to as an Iranian concentration area and be referred to as North York.

Figure 5.1: Iranian Concentration Toronto (absolute) (Source: Murdie, 2010)
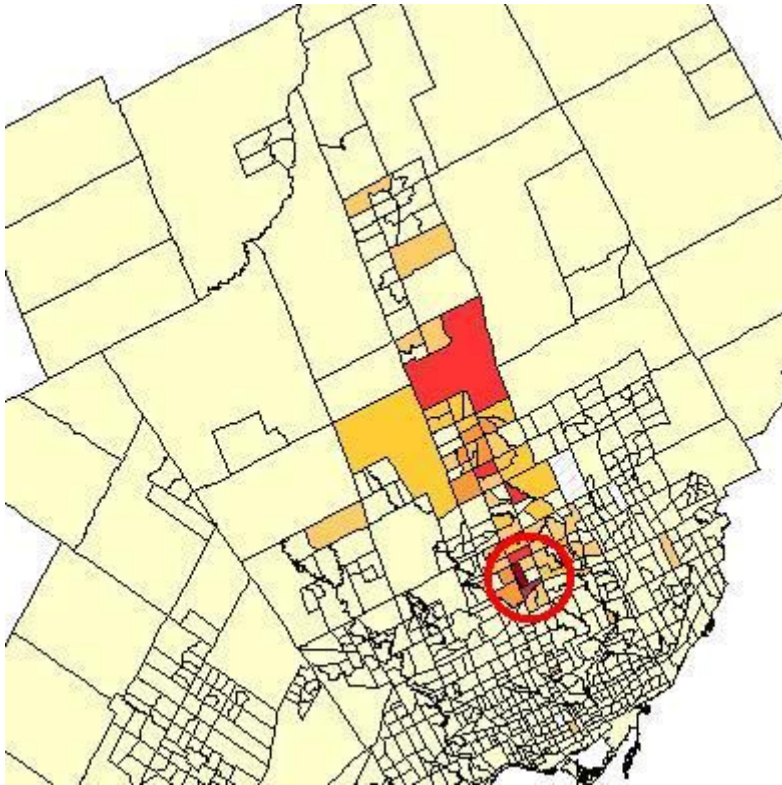
Figure 5.2: Concentration of Iranians in Toronto per census tract (absolute) (Source: Statistics Canada 2006, E-stat)

Iranian businesses

Besides the fact that there is a considerable concentration of Iranians in the North York area, this concentration is accompanied by Iranian institutions and businesses, making North York a real Iranian enclave were one finds the voluntary residential concentration of an ethnic group accompanied by ethnic institutions -such as the Iranian community centre- and shops (Quadeer, 2004). These Iranian shops are not only Iranian owned, but also seem to cater Iranian needs, i.e. special Iranian food stores, halal butchers, Iranian bookstore etc. With the help of two Iranian business directories online I analyzed the location of Iranian businesses in Toronto, and, as figure 5.3 indicates, the largest clustering of Iranian businesses -each black dot represents a business- is between Cummer Avenue and Steeles Avenue, just a little outside the core Iranian concentration area, but still inside the Iranian residential concentration area of North York.

Iranian businesses North York

Source: own pictures, 2010
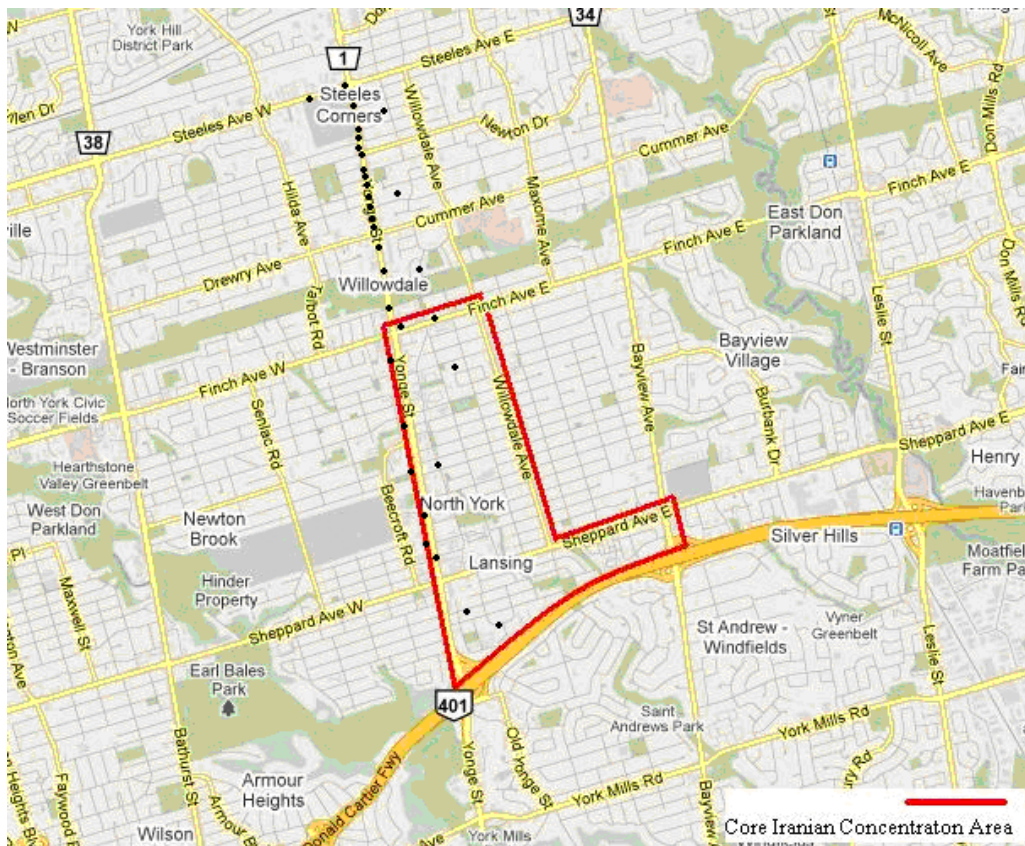
Figure 5.3: North York (Source: Google maps, 2010)

CHAPTER 6: (TRANS)NATIONAL SOCIAL NETWORKS

Introduction

This chapter is the first of thee analysis chapters based on my fieldwork in Toronto, and all three chapters will, in different ways, pay attention to immigrants' social networks. Developments in -amongst others- communication and transportation technologies and the increased affordability of these technologies, have led to the development of complex social networks that are not confined to one's place of residence any longer, and to increased and more intensive contacts across borders (e.g. Kelly, 2003; Vertovec, 2001; Mills, 2005). Specifically focused upon immigration, this means that many immigrants nowadays have complex social networks that stretch the globe (e.g. Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Diminescu, 2008) and that "it is more and more common for migrants to maintain remote relations typical of relations of proximity and to activate them on a daily basis" (Diminescu, 2008, p. 567). Indeed, most of the respondents in my study had social networks that included both their neighbourhood, Toronto, Canada, other countries abroad and Iran, confirming the complex and transnational nature of many contemporary immigrants' social networks. The first two sections of this chapter will specifically focus on this complexity, and investigate if and how immigrants keep in touch with friends and family in their home country and abroad, with a specific interest in differences between younger and older generation immigrants. Also, it is investigated to what extent the role of geographical distance affects the frequency of contact and the strength of ties. Thus, the first two sections of this chapter are aimed at answering the following research question: To what extent are immigrants part of transnational networks? The last two sections will be more focused on immigrants' social networks in Toronto, and investigate how immigrants gain access to social networks and create new social ties upon immigration. Also the extent to which ethnic homophily -the tendency to associate with others of the same ethnicity- plays a role in their social networks is investigated. Those sections therefore are aimed at answering the following research question: How do immigrants gain access to new social networks and develop new social ties after immigration, and to what extent does ethnic homophily play a role?

Border crossing social networks

Most immigrants will have to leave behind family members and friends when they decide to leave their home country and permanently reside somewhere else. This was also the case with many of the Iranian immigrants I interviewed in Toronto: the large majority indicated that they had to leave behind close family members and friends in Iran, who were contacted on a regular basis once in Canada, thereby creating transnational social networks, confirming previous studies (e.g. Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Diminescu, 2008). Also, almost all of the respondents indicated to have friends and/or family members living abroad, especially in Europe and the USA. Some of the respondents kept in close contact with these friends or relatives abroad -particularly when these contacts happened to be close family members or close friends- others kept in touch occasionally or very rarely. Of the respondents who indicated not to have close relatives in Iran anymore, these immigrants were mainly young immigrants in their 20s who had immigrated together with their families. When looking more specifically at the respondents who did have close family back home, it becomes clear that almost all kept in touch very regularly over the phone: most immigrants about once every week, some a little more, some a little less. The narrative of Fatemeh, a 43 year old woman who moved to Canada three years ago, is a good example of the contact that many of the immigrants have with their close family back home:

> *"Every Saturday and Sunday I should meet my brother and my brother in law, with camera, with webcam [..] Every Saturday I call them [her parents] and during the week before I got the job, every Tuesday my mom called".*

The telephone was clearly the most important medium for immigrants to communicate and keep in touch with their family back home, however, besides this phone contact, quite some immigrants used email as well. However, from the narratives of the immigrants it is evident that most preferred the phone over email, such as Jabil, a 36 year old man who moved to Canada three years ago, describes: "it is better to hear the voice", and that email is clearly seen as an addition to the phone contact they already have with their close family back home, such as Tahmineh, a 33 year old woman who moved to Canada 2 years ago, describes: "No because we can see each other on the skype, so no, just send some pictures to them [over email], that's it". What is interesting as well is that only some immigrants used skype, and the ones who did, only used it to contact family members in Iran and other countries abroad. Many of the immigrants blamed the bad internet connection in Iran for not using skype, and Zohreh, a 42 year old woman who moved to Canada 7 years ago, makes clear that although she used skype when she first moved to Canada, she now prefers to use the phone due to the bad internet connection:

> *"Skype actually I used it when I came to Canada for the first years, after that I became tired because the connections there are not very good, it's a very low speed connection, so it's very difficult. And now it's easier for me to pick up the phone and just call you know, it doesn't cost that much so it's easier to do that".*

Besides family, many respondents also indicated to still have (close) friends living in Iran who they kept in touch with, albeit the frequency of this contact was often less than with close family members: although many immigrants kept in weekly touch over the phone with close family members in Iran, they contacted close friends back home over phone around once every month. However, there are quite some differences between the respondents: some indicated to have much more frequent contact with close friends back home than others, ranging from every day to twice a year. What's more, the email contact many respondents had with close friends back home was more regular than the phone contact, and it seems that, in contrast to contact with family back home, most of the respondents thus preferred using email over phone when contacting friends in Iran.

When focusing more specifically on the contact respondents have with friends in the home country, there is a striking difference between younger and older generation Iranians. All of the older generation immigrants (40+) indicated to still have a lot of friends in Iran, in contrast to younger generation Iranians, aging between 23 and 36, of whom almost all indicated to have no or just one or a couple of friends left in Iran. Length of residence in Canada did not seem to explain the differences found between the generations, since younger and older generation immigrants with the same length of residence in Canada still had a very different number of friends in Iran. Therefore, these findings might suggest that age has an effect on the number of friends left in the home county. For example, because older generation immigrants, due to their older age, have much more established friendship networks in Iran than the younger generation, leading to stronger friendship networks that are better able to survive the obstacle of distance than the less-established friendship networks of younger generation immigrants. However, I don't find any evidence for this statement in my study other than some younger generation immigrants signalling that they have lost touch with their friends back home such as Ramin, a 24 year old man who moved to Canada with his family 9 years ago: "Highschool friends, I haven't been in contact with". And others, such

as Tahmineh, a 33 year old woman who moved to Canada 2 years ago, signal that it is hard to keep in touch with friends in the home country e.g. due to time differences:

> *"We [Tamineh and her friends back home] contact each other by email and sometimes, two times a year maybe, we talk on the phone because they are very busy and you know we have a 8 and1/2 hour difference so it is very hard to you know keep in touch with each other".*

On the other hand it could be argued that the finding that many younger generation immigrants have little friends left in Iran, is caused by the fact that many of the younger generation immigrant's their friends have immigrated, and thus left Iran as well. Indeed, my study finds some evidence for this statement, and many of the younger generation immigrants, such as Hamed, a 33 year old man who moved to Canada 9 years ago, indicate that most of their friends in Iran have moved abroad themselves:

> *"Most of the friends that I used to know from back home moved to California [..] We went to school, the year that I went to school, we were 140 people in the same major. I would say maybe half of them are out of the country now, no like when I go back home mostly I don't have any friends left right".*

As discussed above, many immigrants have social networks that stretch the globe, which makes one wonder what impact geographical distance has on individual's their social networks. However, when posing the question if distance matters for social contacts one should actually pose oneself two different questions: does distance matter for the frequency of contact and does distance matter for the strength of the ties? With regards to the first question, studies have indicated that people "are more likely to have contact with those who are closer [..] in geographic location than those who are distant" (McPherson, 2001). In other words, it is argued that people have more frequent contact with social contacts that live close, since "physical access makes it easier for people to deliver services even when their relationships are not strong" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 569).

In line with these former studies (e.g. McPherson, 2001; Wellmand and Wortley, 1990) geography indeed seemed to influence the frequency of face-to-face contact that the immigrants had with social contact in their networks. However, although the frequency of face-to-face contact to those that live closer logically exceeds that of those who live farther away, the telephone contact or contact over the internet -e.g. email and skype- respondents had with their close friends and family abroad, often levelled that of friends and family in Toronto, confirming Kaufer and Carley's finding (1993) that developments in ICT's have "oosened the bounds of geography by lowering the effort involved in contact" (Kaufer and Carley, 1993 in: McPherson, 2003). The narrative of Hamed, a 33 year old man, who moved to Canada 9 years ago, clearly indicates that indeed physical proximity makes face-to-face contact easier:

> *"Definitely it is easier to hang out with people [that are close] so like if I want to set up something I try to be close because I don't want to just drive like another 40 km to just get there or to see my friends".*

With regards to the question if distance matters for the strength of ties, studies have found that more frequent contact with people that live close does not automatically mean that these contacts are close ties, since "purely local networks are a source more of contacts than close ties" (Wellman, 1996 in McPerson, 2001, p. 429) and thus that more face-to-face contact does

not lead to stronger relationships per se (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). In line with these studies, my study confirms that more face-to-face contact indeed does not lead to closer ties: many of the respondents indicated to have close friends or family members living far away, and, although these contacts were rarely contacted face-to-face because of this geographical distance, they were strong ties. Afareen, a young 28 year old Iranian woman who moved to Canada with her family 23 years ago and now lives in the downtown neighbourhood Queen west, clearly illustrates this:

> *"The people that most matter to me are in Dubai, are my parents [..] I guess with the neighbourhood, with the neighbourhood friends there is a lot of going out to dinners and going to bars [..] But in terms of like my confidence and my closest, closest friends, lot of them aren't actually the Queen West kids".*

In sum, my study finds that most immigrants kept links to friends and relatives in the home-country, and less so to other countries abroad, confirming previous studies that many immigrants are part of transnational networks (e.g. Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Diminescu, 2008). What's more, many immigrants contacted family and friends in the home-country or abroad on a regular basis, and, although phone was the preferred way of contact with family, respondents preferred to use email when contacting friends. Also, it was interesting to find that many younger generation immigrants had no or very few friends left in Iran, in contrast to many older generation immigrants who mostly had still quite some friends in Iran. In trying to explain these differences, I find some evidence for the fact that many of the younger generation immigrants their friends have immigrated away from Iran themselves as well. When it comes to the impact of geographical distance on the frequency and strength of the ties, my study finds that most immigrants had more face-to-face contact with those that lived geographically closer –as in Toronto- compared to contacts that lived further away, confirming previous studies that have found that geographical proximity makes face-to-face contact easier (e.g. McPherson, 2001; Wellmand and Wortley, 1990). However, the contact immigrants had over the phone or the internet to friends and family outside of Toronto often levelled that of friends and family in Toronto. What's more, my study is in line with previous studies (Wellman, 1996 in McPerson, 2001; Wellman and Wortley, 1990) that have argued that more face-to-face contact does not automatically lead to stronger ties.

Getting access

It is often taken for granted that immigrants arrive in a country and simply are able to access and slot into existing social networks and create new social ties without any problems. However, as some researchers have pointed out, this is much too simplistic of a thought and more attention should be paid at how immigrants actually get access to social networks and create new ties upon arrival (Wierzbicki, 2004 in: Ryan, 2007). From my own experience of living in Toronto and arriving without knowing anybody beforehand, I know that it is essential to become part of an environment in which you have the chance to meet others and engage in social relations. This seems very simple and logical, but proved to be a difficulty for some of the immigrants I interviewed. Although many of them indicated to have quite some friends in Toronto at the moment of the interview, some also made clear that they initially found it difficult to find new friends.

In line with Gans (1962) and Ryan (2007), my study indicates first of all that many women found their kids very helpful for getting to know new friends, and thus signals the fact that "having children may provide access to new, local networks" (Gans, 1962 in: Ryan, 2007, p. 301). More specifically, most of my respondents with children indicated that they had

-amongst others- found friends through their kids, such as Fatemeh, a full-time employed office assistant and a mother or two, clearly illustrates: "I try to make relationship with my kids their friends family [..] and my kids found some friend and I try to be friends with their parents". Also, many immigrants who went -or are still going- to high school or university in Canada, indicated that they had found friends through those locales, such as Ramin, a 24 year old full-time student, clearly illustrates: "A lot of them I have met at school [..] especially university", as well as Reza, a 24 year old full-time student at York University: "I know so many people here at York, York is a like, very friendly environment, has a friendly environment".

In line with a study by Ray and Preston (2009) in which it is found that most people rarely socialize with co-workers, many respondents indeed indicated not to socialize with their colleagues outside work, such as Zohreh, a full-time working woman without kids: "I try to actually keep the contact with them [her co-workers] very official, not very close". In this same realm, Jamileh, a 29 year old full-time student who works part-time, argues: "Outside work we don't meet". Others, such as Sholeh, a retired woman in her 60s, indicates that she got to know people through work, although these contacts did not develop to be close friends: "Not really close friends though, you know the one's I met on the job are just acquaintances". Despite of this, other respondents indicated to have found friends through their jobs in Toronto, finding some evidence for the statement that workplaces are important locales to meet others and thus important places to form new friendships (Ryan, 2007). In this realm, Mina, a mother of two who works full-time, makes clear that her workplace proved to be an important source of getting to know new friends, as does Afshin, a 45 year old man who has been recently laid off:

> "Most of them I meet at the Winners, the work, because everyday we meet each other and you have a, sometimes you have a plan, we get together and we have a party". [Mina]

> "Yeah I found an other friend in my job [..] I found a friend in my previous job, and we are in contact, of course he is Iranian also".[Afshin]

For Afareen, a 28 year old unemployed university graduate, the contacts she found through her job in her -at that time- new neighbourhood seemed even more essential:

> "When I got a job there I became a part of 50 young people who worked there, so you immediately make a network of friends or co-workers anyways, which leads to going out, which leads to what's hip in the city [..] and that's how it really started for me".

Another important locale for meeting new friends seemed to be the language classes that many of the immigrants attended shortly after arrival in Canada, such as the narrative of Firouz, a 51 year old unemployed man, clearly indicates:

> "When I was in the Link class I found two classmates as a friend, one of them is Taiwanese and the other is Turkish, and we are together after quitting the link class, we are sometimes together and in contact".

Fatemeh, a 43 years old full-time employed woman, and Jabil, a 36 years old unemployed man, are also good examples of respondents who have found friends through language classes. Fatemeh indicates that she met someone in language class who she is now closely befriended with: "In the English classes I found my friend, very close, and still we are friends", as does

Jabil who makes clear that he found some of his friends through participating in language classes: "Two or three of them I met them in the English classes".

Besides these 'direct' ways of meeting new friends and getting access to social networks through e.g. work and school, many respondents signalled more 'indirect' ways of meeting friends, e.g. through their spouse or friends. Hassan, a 46 year old full-time employed man, makes clear that he does not really have time to socialize and therefore his social network is through that of his wife's: "Actually because of my job that I am very far from here and, it's very far from my community [..] my social network is actually through my wife". Afshin, a 45 years old man who had been recently laid off, has a similar experience as Hassan in finding friends through his wife, although he himself has also managed to find his own friends: "Fatemeh [his wife] found two or three friends here and we have some relation with them also, which, if we add those with my friends it's about ten families which we have a relation with".

It is also quite interesting to see that the social contacts immigrants have in their home country play an important role in getting access to new friends after immigration to Toronto. In many instances the respondents made clear that social contacts back in Iran introduced them to friends or relatives of theirs living in Toronto, such as the narratives of Fatemeh, a 43 years old full-time employed woman, and Afshin, a 45 year old man, describe:

> "When we came in Canada, one of my friends in Iran he introduced somebody here to us [..] and they are the best people in the world to support us for every single step [..] we didn't know them, we find them here by our friend". [Fatemeh]

> "I found a friend via another friend just one month before coming here, and he introduced me to one of his friends which was living here for more than 20 years, and he was really good for me, and he's really a good friend for me now". [Afshin]

Others indicated that over time, they had found friends via other friends they had found in Toronto, such as Hamed, a 33 year old full-time employed engineer, who makes clear that he not only found friends through his work or studies, but that his social network expanded by meeting friends of friends: "No not necessarily from my studies/work like, no you meet people right [..] You just hang out with friend of friend of friend of mine friend of mine, so like, it expands right?" Fatemeh has the same experience and indicates that most of her friends she got to know through one initial (new) friend: "For example some of them is friends of my friends and then I get friends with them, most of them is like that, we just have one friend that we have a direct link [..] and the other one is, we can find them by network". In this realm, Amir, a 25 year old full-time student, explains how he got access to the Jewish community even though he himself is a Christian:

> "I got to know them [his Jewish friends] first here, we've been studying a lot you know, I helped them, they helped me, and we became really close. One of my friends his name is Shaun, he brought me into their community, because they don't usually, they are usually by themselves, yeah but he brought me in you know, he introduced so many other Jewish friends, his friends [..] I know so many you know, through my friend".

Although Ryan (2007) found that the neighbourhood was also an important locale to meet new friends, only very few of my respondents have actually found new friends through neighbouring. The next chapter will focus more on this, and investigate -amongst others- how important the neighbourhood is for social contacts.

Birds of a feather flock together[36]?

Many studies have indicated that people like to associate with the same sort of people; a tendency referred to as homophily (McPherson, 2001). Of course no one person is the same and, therefore, differences exist between individuals and the composition of their networks. So-called ethnic and racial homophily are found to be especially strong sorting principles and, specifically focused upon immigration, Ryan et al. (2008) found that there are large differences between the ethnic composition of immigrants' their social networks, i.e. the extent to which social contacts in one's network have a similar ethnicity or not. On the one hand, there are immigrants who mainly form social ties with the same sort of people -immigrants- and even limit their social circle to other co-ethnics, while on the other hand, others engage more in so called bridging and form social ties with people that are dissimilar to them, people who are, for example, not part of their own ethnic community (Ryan et al., 2008). Indeed, my study finds evidence for these findings, and, while some of my respondents had formed friendships with people from different ethnic groups and even Canadians -anybody who isn't a first generation immigrant-, and thus had engaged in horizontal and vertical bridging, others seemed to have immersed themselves mainly in the Iranian community and limit their social contacts to those people with the same ethnicity and the 'same tongue'. This section will investigate to what extent the social networks of my respondents were ethnically homophilous, and specifically focus on the question why some immigrants stay immersed within a dense circle of co-ethnics, while others seem to develop much 'wider' social networks across society.

When looked at the ethnicity that the respondents say their friends have, there are some interesting differences between the immigrants interviewed. Most of the older immigrants (40 +) have mainly Iranian friends, some even have only Iranian friends, and others indicate that the vast majority of their friends are Iranian and that they have few friends from other ethnic groups. However, there are also younger immigrants in their 20's and 30's who indicate to have mainly Iranian friends. Focusing on the immigrants who indicate to have both quite some Iranian as well as non-Iranian friends or indicate to have mostly non-Iranian friends, these immigrants are mainly younger immigrants in their 20's, however, there are also older immigrants in their 40's and 50's who indicate that a lot of their friends are non-Iranian. What becomes clear from these findings is that we cannot simply point at age in determining which immigrants mainly socialize with co-ethnics and which don't. Although age does seem to influence the presence of co-ethnics in one's network to a certain extent, other factors are at play as well. What's more, these findings refute the statement that "the majority of immigrants have culturally diverse rather than mono-ethnic social network" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241), since many respondents had social networks that to a considerable degree consisted of co-ethnics. In the next bit of this section, it will be tried to get a better idea of why some immigrant stay immersed in dense networks of co-ethnics, while other don't.

In accordance to Ryan et al. (2008) my study finds evidence for the fact that immigrants who do succeed in developing ties beyond their own ethnicity -weak ties- do this out of preference and deliberate choice as well as 'have been handed' the opportunity to do so, e.g. by working or studying in a environment in which they had the possibility to get in contact with other ethnic groups. More specifically, when focusing on the immigrants who indicate that the majority of their friends are non-Iranian, most of these immigrants seem all to have gone to university in Canada, where they are likely to be exposed to a lot of different ethnic groups, thereby increasing the likelihood of their friends to be from different ethnic

---

[36] Expression by e.g. Lazersfeld and Merton, 1954 based on Burton, 1927

groups as well. This so called 'contact hypothesis' (Mollica et al., 2003) is emphasized by Sholeh, a 67 years old retired woman, who indicates the following: "With young people it is different because they have, they pick their friends in school and in school there is all kinds of people, the same with us, when we were in school we had friends from all over the place, but it is different when you're not". Ramin, a 24 year old full-time student, confirms what Sholeh has signalled, and explains that he has met friends from different ethnic origins while in university: "Again, a lot of them I have met at school, especially university, and I could say, possibly 80 percent are not Persians, 20 percent Persians, I have friends from a lot of different countries". Amir, also a full-time student, has a similar experience: "Most of my close friends are Non-Persian or Jewish, well I know so many people here at York, York is a like very friendly environment, has a friendly environment".

However, other young Iranian immigrants who have gone to University in Canada do not seem to have a lot of non-Iranian friends despite being exposed to a lot of different ethnic groups, confirming Mollica et al. (2003) findings that although being exposed to many other racial/ethnic groups, thereby increasing the possibility of forming heterogeneous social ties, homophily in students networks persists over time. Jamileh, a 29 year old full-time student, is an example of this and indicates that although she has met Canadians in university she did not form close friendships with them because of culture differences:

> "I just met one guy [Canadian] [..] the culture is so different [..] we couldn't get along because we had nothing to talk about, like in common, the activities he liked, the way of thinking was so different".

When looking at the reasons that the immigrants give of whom their friends are mainly non-Iranian, and who have thus formed ties across the wider society, we see quite some differences. Some indicate that their will to learn English has 'pushed' them to contact with Canadians instead of Iranians. Firouz, a 51 years old unemployed man, is a good example of this, and argues that he has tried to contact with Canadians in his building in order to learn English and learn about the culture of Canadians:

> "I try to contact with some Canadian people in my building, for example a couple of guys in my building they are Canadian and they are older and they are really friendly and sometimes we, my daughter my wife and I, are going to this, to their apartment and is good for us to learn English and learn culture of Canadian people".

Firouz goes on by arguing that he does not really like to speak in Farsi with his fellow Iranian students of the English classes he attends, since it is his main goal to learn English in order to become part of Canadian society:

> "I don't like to talk Iranian for a long time, just in English class there are a lot of Iranian students [..] and in the break time we talk for a little [..] in Farsi [..] it's my main idea to learn English first here because [..] it is a necessary thing for us to learn English [..] to find a job, to contact with people, and to involve here, we will stay for a long time".

Amir, a 25 years old full-time student, has the same sort experience and emphasizes that his drive to learn English has pushed him to socialize with others than Iranians:

> *"The thing is, I have more like, non Persian friends than Persian friends, I don't know, when I came to Canada I started, because for my English I tried to be with people that I, they don't know Farsi, so I tried to hang out with other people, like non-Persians".*

Another immigrant makes clear that, besides the fact that he wanted to have non Iranian friends to improve his English, he likes to have non Iranian friends since he is a Christian and many Iranians aren't:

> *"The other thing is, you don't see many Persians that are Christians, not many, so that's why, there are some stuff that you know, they are different, the things they do, I am not saying I am perfect but I don't know like, if you are Christian you don't do certain things, so that's why I like, I got, many of friends are not Persian".*

Unlike all other respondents, Ramin, a 24 years old full-time student, stresses that he feels that ethnicity is not an important factor in choosing his friends since it is, in his opinion, a social constructs and therefore not 'real'. What is interesting as well is that he feels that many people hold on to friendships with fellow Iranians since it allows them to stay in their comfort zone:

> *"Because personally my believe is that I think of ethnicity as something arbitrary that, you happen to be born in that country [..] it is a social construct, it's nothing, I doesn't have really any physical basis right, it's not real [..] so I don't see that as an important factor in choosing for example who your friends are [..] maybe they [others who do have a lot of Iranian friends] feel more comfortable being just with people who have the same culture as their own, people are usually in their comfort zone when they are".*

In contrast to Ryan et al. (2008), who stress that language barriers clearly restrict the contact that many immigrants have to that of co-ethnics, I do not find evidence for this in my study since few respondents name language barriers as a reason for not having more contact with others than co-ethnics. However, I do find evidence for Ryan et al.'s (2008) findings that most new relationships are formed with other immigrants -horizontal bridging- and not with non-immigrants -vertical bridging- : Only a couple of respondents, especially younger generation, indicate to have some Canadian friends. The large majority of my respondents however, have, besides Iranian friends, friends that are immigrants themselves, signalling that "It may be particularly difficult for newly arrived migrants to establish weak ties vertically" (Ryan et al. 2008, p. 682). When looking at reasons that respondents give for not having more non-Iranian friends, some indicate it has to do with the differences in culture, such as Jamileh, a young full-time student:

> *"I know finally we cant be so close because the culture is so different, and maybe language can be a barrier too [..] Like my first year at university I met some Canadians, but finally I found out I cannot get along with them [..] I have Canadian friends just in terms of hi and bye like that, but not more than that, not like intimate relationships".*

Jabil, a unemployed male in his 30's and Sholeh, a retired woman in her 60's, have a similar experience, and emphasize that their lack of Canadian friends has to do with the fact that Canadians are not very open to new contacts, especially not with other ethnic groups:

"In North America I think people they are, they have a cold relationship until they be a friend, they be very warm but, everyday I see my neighbours [..] only maybe sometimes we look at each other and don't smile and don't say anything". [Jabil]

"Canadians are very close people, they don't allow a lot of ethnic people among themselves [..] They don't allow too many non Canadians inside their network" [Sholeh]

Some immigrants clearly express the desire to have more Canadian friends or non-Iranian friends, but make clear that thus far they have not really been successful, such as Afshin, a 45 year old man who has been recently laid-off, illustrates:

"In my previous job my immediate colleague was a Polish, many times I tried to have closer contact with him, he usually goes to fishing, to ice-fishing and I like fishing, and several times I tried to ask him if you want to go fishing I want to come with you if there is no problem, and every time he answered me different things, I don't know, finally I changed my mind".

Like Afshin, other immigrants who do not have a lot of non-Iranian friends express the desire to have more contact with Canadians. In this realm, Jabil, an unemployed young Iranian man, clearly stresses that he dislikes the fact that most of his friends are Iranian and speak Farsi because it doesn't help his English language learning: "Because most of my people here they are from Iran, they speak, we speak Farsi unfortunately, when we talk to each other [..] I want to make more Canadian friends to have communication with them". Tahmineh, a full-time employed woman, has the same experience and emphasizes that she dislikes the fact that she is so entrenched in the Iranian community since it inhibits her from improving her English: "I am not really happy because I think my English language is not improving enough, because I am connected with the Iranian community so there is no opportunity that I talk in English you know".

Besides asking my respondents which ethnicity their friends had, I was also interested in knowing whether most of their friends were old or new friends. In other words, did they already know friends in Toronto from back home who happened to immigrate to Toronto as well, or did they get to know 'new' people in Toronto, who they did not know before immigration? In this realm it is interesting to see that immigrants who found many 'new' friends in Toronto, often formed these friendships with non-Iranians. However, there are also many immigrants who found 'new' friends in Toronto and formed these friendships with Iranians. Thus, although most of the respondents formed new friendships over time, and might be exposed to other ethnic groups after arrival in Canada -e.g. due to participation in schools and workplaces- there are quite large differences between the ethnic composition of immigrants' social networks, signalling that preference plays an important role in influencing who people pick as their friends.

Conclusion

First of all my study confirms the complex nature of contemporary immigrants' social networks. Not only do most respondents keep (close) links to the home-country, and keep in regular touch with close family and friends that were 'left behind' in Iran, after immigration most immigrants also succeeded in developing new social networks in the host country. However, when it comes to transnational social networks, age does seem to influence the number of friends immigrants still have back home. Many of the younger generation

immigrants have little friends left in Iran, partly due to the fact that many of their friends themselves have immigrated. When looking at the importance of geographical proximity for the immigrants' social ties, it becomes clear that, in line with former studies, respondents indeed seem to have more frequent face-to-face contact with those contacts that live geographically close. However, when it comes to contact over the phone or the internet -e.g. skype, email- the frequency of contact with people back home seems to level that of those living in Toronto, showing that ICT has indeed 'loosened the bounds of geography' (Kaufer and Carley, 1993) by making contacting a friend in Toronto almost as easy as contacting a friend in Iran. In line with former studies, and with regards to tie strength, more face-to-face contact is found not to lead to stronger relationships per se.

When it comes to developing new ties from the moment of immigration, many immigrants seemed to be able to do so, and successfully develop new ties. In line with former studies, many immigrants with children signalled that they found their kids very helpful for getting to know new friends. Also, schools seemed to be an important place for the immigrants to meet new friends. With regards to the working place, evidence is mixed: while some immigrants successfully found new friends through their work, others indicated not to socialize with their co-workers after work. Besides these more direct ways of developing new ties, some respondents found friends through their spouse or through other friends in Toronto. It was also interesting to see that family members or friends back home had brought some of the respondents in contact with relatives or friends of theirs living in Toronto. The neighbourhood did not seem to be an important locale to meet new friends. The next chapter will focus on this in more depth and explore how important the neighbourhood is for social contacts.

In line with Ryan et al. (2008), it becomes clear from my study that there are indeed large differences between the ethnic composition of immigrants' social networks: while some had mainly developed new ties with co-ethnics, others had formed mainly new ties with other ethnic groups. Age did not seem to explain these differences, and, in contrast to former studies that indicated that "the majority of immigrants have culturally diverse rather than mono-ethnic social network" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241), I found that many immigrants have social networks that to a considerable degree consist of co-ethnics. With regards to immigrants that did develop ties to other ethnic groups and/or Canadians over time, their own preference and deliberate choice as well as 'been handed' the opportunity to meet those people played an important role. My study also finds some evidence for the fact that being part of an environment with lots of ethnic diversity increases the probability of forming heterophilous ties, however I also find evidence against this statement. Furthermore, many of the immigrants who did develop ties to non-Iranian people or Canadians, often indicated they did so because they wanted to improve their English language.

When looked at the experiences of respondent who had mainly Iranian friends, these people seem to signal that 'culture barriers' play an important role: some respondents indicated that differences in culture made it hard to socialize with Canadians, others emphasized that they felt that Canadians were not very open to contact with other ethnic groups. Only very few respondents felt that language barriers played a role. What is more, some of the respondents with no or little Canadian friends seemed to be eager to get in touch with Canadians in order to improve their language and learn about Canadian culture. Last but not least, even though most of the respondents where 'exposed' to other ethnic groups and thus in the position to form heterophilous networks, preference seemed to play an important role in influencing who the immigrants picked as their friends.

CHAPTER 7: NEIGHBOURHOOD AND NEIGHBOURING

Introduction

The neighbourhood is considered to be an important locale for the people that reside in it. Many studies have indicated that the place where one lives impacts upon a wide range of outcomes, such as employment career and health (e.g. Musterd and Andersson, 2006; Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001). On the other hand, many other studies have found no or very little evidence for the existence of neighbourhood effects (e.g. Musterd et al 2003; Brannstrom, 2004; Bolster et al., 2007). Despite the fact that neighbourhood effects are an interesting field of study, it is beyond the scope of this research to find out if neighbourhood effects exist. Instead, I will focus on the underlying assumption of these studies on neighbourhood effects -no matter whether they find positive, negative or no effects-, namely, that people socialize in their neighbourhood. Despite the wide acceptance of this assumption, it should be questioned to what extent people really socialize in their neighbourhood and take part in neighbouring. Therefore, this chapter will specifically focus on the neighbourhood dimension and aims at answering the following research question: to what extent do immigrants socialize in their neighbourhood and engage in neighbouring? Also, this chapter will investigate to what extent 'pre-existing kinship networks' (Ryan et al., 2007, p. 300) are important in influencing one's choice for a specific neighbourhood to reside in, and answer the following research question: How are pre-existing kinship networks important in influencing one's choice for a specific neighbourhood to reside in?

Neighbourhood choice

Before analyzing why respondents chose their current neighbourhood to reside in, it is important to first briefly focus on the immigrants' choice for Canada as country to migrate to, since this decision logically precedes that of neighbourhood choice. Former studies (e.g. Winchie and Carment, 1989 in Walton-Roberts, 2003; Ryan, 2007) have indicated that immigration is for an important part steered by 'pre-existing kinship networks' (Ryan et al., 2007, p. 300) and "that the mobility of economically defined subjects is actually shaped by pre-existing social factors" (Walton-Roberts, 2003, p.244). At first sight, my study confirms these ideas, since the large majority of the immigrants in my study had relatives living in Canada upon immigration. However, when looking more closely at the most important reasons that the immigrants give for their immigration decision, most respondents indicate that the bad political situation in Iran and a lack of opportunities, were most important driving mechanisms for them to immigrate. Furthermore, their specific choice for Canada was fuelled by the fact that Canada was more easy to 'get into' than the USA, and was more willing to accept Iranian citizens for immigration. Some respondents even mentioned that they first tried to get into the USA, and when that failed, they applied for immigration to Canada. The presence of family or friends in Canada is rarely mentioned as a first reason to immigrate, however, from the narratives of some immigrants it becomes clear that the presence of family and/or friends did to a certain extent influence their migration decision, such as Zohreh, a 42 year old full-time employed woman indicates:

> "Because my sister lives in Canada [Toronto], my parents said that it is difficult to be in three different continents, because we are only two sisters and my parents, so, I decided to come to Canada".

People pick their neighbourhood for various reasons. Choosing a particular neighbourhood might for example be due to its accessible location near public transport or a highway, or its desirable location in or near the city centre. Also, the choice might be related to the location of one's work or school, the price or size of housing available, or the presence of friends and family. From the literature it has already become clear that immigration is for an important part steered by 'pre-existing kinship networks' (Ryan et al, 2007, p. 300) and, in this section it will be analyzed how important the presence of friends and family in the neighbourhood are in influencing the decision to move to a particular neighbourhood.

Of the few immigrants who, at the moment of the interview, indicated to have -or had- either friends who they knew from back home or family in their neighbourhood, for most, the presence of that relative or friend was -amongst others- an important reason to move to that particular neighbourhood. The narrative Hassan, a 42 years old full-time employed man who lives in North York, is a good example of this and describes that, above all, the presence of his relative was a very important reason to move to the neighbourhood: "The first reason was my relative, that's why I directly came here". Firouz, a 51 years old unemployed man who lives in North York, also expresses the desire to live close to his relative: "I like to be close to my cousin, because my wife is very close related with her cousin and his family". Amir, a full-time student in his 20's who lives in North York, also signals the presence of their relative as most important reason to choose the neighbourhood: "Well it was because of my mom's cousin, they were there, and the neighbourhood is quite good, you know it's clean and stuff like that, so we stayed". However, it should be noted that there were also quite some immigrants who indicated not to have picked a neighbourhood where friends and relatives where already living.

Immigrants who indicated not to have friends or relatives living in their neighbourhood give an array of different reasons for picking their particular neighbourhood. Focussing on respondents who live in North York, most named reasons for the neighbourhood choice are its convenient location near the subway station, the fact that it is a good neighbourhood with good schools, and the presence of the Iranian community. With regards to schooling, the following respondents clearly stress that they needed to live close to the desired school for their kids, because in Toronto elementary and secondary students cannot attend every school they want but are bound to the schools in their residential district:

> "Neighbourhood is nice, and is has good high schools because I have a younger sister, and there are not so many gangs and stuff and because they care so much about my younger sister, me and my brother are old enough to know what's wrong and right, but she's like pretty young, so we wanted her to be, and she is very talented so my mom wanted her to be in a good school". [Jamileh, woman, 29 years old, full-time student, lives at home with parents and siblings]

> "The main reason, school, other than that, because it's convenient". [Mina, woman, 46 years old, full-time employed mother of two]

Quite some other respondents emphasize that the presence of the Iranian community was an -amongst others- important reason to pick their neighbourhood, such as Jamileh: "Here it was a Persian area, which was good, and it's still not a very like poor area, no here is a good area [..] and like not so many crimes and everything you know, the price is expensive but its worth it". The narrative of Afshin, a 45 year old man who has been recently laid-off, also clearly illustrates the preference of living amongst Iranians in North York:

> *"Because mainly Iranian are living here and usually people like to live in the area which they found more, the same tongue, they hear Persian, they hear Iranian speaking and there are some, there are many Iranian stores here which you can buy many thing in, within your tradition [..] I like it here, but of course I hear that some Iranians prefer to go to other place to be separate from the Iranian community, I don't, I didn't see anything bad from Iranian people [he laughs] to escape from them, I like them".*

Besides some respondents naming the presence of the Iranian community as one of the most important reasons for picking the neighbourhood, quite some others stress that other reasons were more important, such as the good investment climate in the neighbourhood, but that the presence of the Iranian community still played a role, such as Tahmineh, a 33 year old woman who moved to Canada two years ago indicates:

> *"40 percent for this is an Iranian area, but most of them because, I tried to pick some apartment that has a low rental [..] I thought maybe downtown is lowest, has the lowest price and cheaper but I figured out, no, is more expensive, so then I came in North York area and figured out ok this area is much more better and it was good that was Iranian area you know".*

Other respondents specifically emphasize that the presence of the Iranian community in their neighbourhood was not an important reason at all for their neighbourhood choice, for example Ramin, a 24 year old full-time student, who clearly explains this by saying that the choice for the specific neighbourhood had nothing to do with the Persian community but with the -amongst others- good investment climate:

> *"Investment-wise, that would be, I wouldn't say it's because it's a Persian community that we moved here, it's not that, it is probably the, like for example downtown the buildings would be too expensive for us [..] whereas here it's, it's not too expensive and it's a lot like, really accessible too, I would say this neighbourhood is like, you can go to a lot of stores easily".*

Zohreh, a 42 years old full-time employed woman, had a similar experience and stresses that the presence of the Iranian community was not a reason to choose the neighbourhood at all, but that her choice for the neighbourhood was related to convenience and closeness to the public transit:

> *"I believe, you know that Finch and Yonge is an Iranian, is the Iranian area, but that was not the reason that we picked it, I wanted to live in the first subway station, in the first not in the middle because I cannot stand up for very long time, and in the mornings it's near sometimes forty minutes ride, and I cannot stand up so I wanted somewhere that it is in the first subway station, I go in and can sit, and the first subway station is exactly Finch and Yonge, so we bought the condo in one block from Finch and Yonge".*

In sum, in contrast to former studies that have indicated that 'pre-existing social networks' are important in steering migration decisions (e.g. Winchie and Carment, 1989 in Walton-Roberts, 2003; Ryan, 2007, p. 300), my study find that when it comes to the decision to move to Canada, other factors, such as the restrictive immigration regime in the USA, and the search for better opportunities elsewhere, were more important in steering the immigration decision. When it comes to neighbourhood choice, mixed evidence is found for the pre-existing social

networks argument (e.g. Winchie and Carment, 1989 in Walton-Roberts, 2003; Ryan, 2007, p. 300): although for some, friends and family in the neighbourhood seemed an important reason to move to that particular neighbourhood, others indicated not to have chosen a neighbourhood where they already new friends or relatives. With regards to immigrants who lived in North York and who indicated not to have friends or relatives living in their neighbourhood, different reasons were given for neighbourhood choice, such as its convenient location near the subway station, the fact that it is a good neighbourhood with good schools, and the presence of the Iranian community.

Neighbouring

Toronto is often referred to as a city of neighbourhoods and this is not without reason. Any visitor to Toronto who takes time to explore the city beyond its downtown core will soon realize that Toronto consists of many different neighbourhoods (see chapter 3: Toronto, a city of immigrants, e.g. Quadeer, 2004). This might not seem to be anything special, however, in Toronto these neighbourhoods are very confined and often specifically focused upon one or multiple ethnic groups (Quadeer, 2004). What's more, in these neighbourhoods one does not only find considerable concentrations of members of one or more specific ethnic groups, these residential concentrations are often accompanied by ethnic shops and institutions. Looking at these neighbourhoods one might wonder how important these locales are for the people living in them. This section will therefore specifically focus upon the importance of the neighbourhood and the social contacts in them, and analyse -amongst others- who people know in their neighbourhood, and to what extent they engage in neighbouring. Of the immigrants who live in North York, also their use of specific Iranian shops and the extent to which they feel affiliated with the Iranian community are analyzed in order to further investigate how neighbourly immigrants are who live in the residential concentration area of North York.

There are quite some immigrants who don't have any friends living in their neighbourhood. Furthermore, few respondents indicated to have relatives living in their neighbourhood, and the large majority of the respondents seemed not to associate with their neighbours. Of those respondents who indicated not to have friends in the neighbourhood, it is interesting to see that these are mainly immigrants who have arrived in Canada/Toronto quite recently, from 2 to 5 years, a finding which, at first sight, seems to support the idea that "recent arrivals have less free time to devote to developing and maintaining local social contacts" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 229) and signals that newly arrived immigrants experience more social isolation in their neighbourhood (Ray and Preston, 2009). However, none of the recent immigrants who indicated not to have friends in the neighbourhood indicated that a lack of free time for developing and maintaining local social contacts was a reason for not knowing their neighbours, and, thus, other reasons must be at play.

Furthermore, my study finds mixed evidence for the idea that a 'constrained activity space' e.g. due to unemployment, leads to developing more local social contacts (Ray and Preston, 2009). On the one hand, of the few respondents who engage in neighbouring most of them are unemployed, such as Afshin, a 45 year old unemployed man: "In my neighbourhood no there is no friends, but I know my both side neighbours [..] and every time I see them I just say hi and how are you today, and the left one has a dog and the dog come to me and I play with". However, on the other hand, there are also unemployed respondents who indicated not to know their neighbours at all and thus not to engage in any kind of neighbouring, such as Jabil, a unemployed man in his thirties: "Sometimes they say hi, I say hi, but I don't continue". Also, my study finds some evidence for the idea that people who have more time to 'socialize in the neighbourhood', know more of their neighbours (e.g. Campbell and Lee 1992 in Ray

and Preston, 2009) since full-time employed or full-time students engage much less in neighbouring than for example unemployed and retired respondents (Ray and Preston, 2009).

As former studies have indicated, the ethnic enclave may serve as a good market for ethnic products attracting customers from outside (Light and Rosenstein, 1995), and, indeed the North York Iranian residential concentration area proved to 'house' an important share of Iranian shops and services, attracting Iranian immigrants either living in or close by the Iranian concentration area, as well as in other neighbourhoods in Toronto. Many respondents indicated to go to the Iranian stores quite regularly to get some special Iranian foods, and emphasized they only went there to get some special Iranian products or ingredients they could not get at normal Canadian stores, such as Iranian bread. What is interesting as well is that most respondents made very clear that they only went to the Iranian businesses for shopping and that there was no social aspect to it. The narrative of Hamed, a 33 year old full-time employed man, is a good example of an respondent who goes to the Iranian stores regularly:

> *"Almost like every week yeah, every weekend I go there, I just drop by like, I don't know I get take-out I go home, like mainly I do my shopping, not all my shoppings maybe, not like for fruits and this kind of stuff, but like bread, most of stuff I like need, like Persian kind of things".*

With regards to community affiliation, most respondents living within or near North York make clear that they don't really affiliate strongly with the Iranian community, such as the experience of Ramin, a 24 year old full time student who lives with his family: "There are some celebrations you now at North York, empress walk, for example they celebrate Persian new year there, they bring singers, we don't go, we don't go there". Zohreh, a 42 year old full-time employed woman has the same sort experience: "I have to see some people sometimes because I have to, but not for enjoying my time and anything because I don't have time for that, and if I want to do those type of things, as I said I prefer not to do it with Iranian community".

Although many respondents say they don't really affiliate with the Iranian community, it is interesting to see that some of their statements signal a discrepancy, pointing towards an abstract sense of belonging that they feel by living close to other Iranians. A good example of this is Amir, a 25 years old full-time student, who stresses that other than socializing with his Iranian neighbours, he does not strongly affiliate with the Iranian community, however, his following experience indicates that he does like to be close to fellow Iranians:

> *"I went to Vancouver to visit my ex-girlfriend's family, and they live outside of Vancouver, they're all like they're white [..] so after two weeks I missed it, you know like, not that I didn't like white people, I felt that I needed to see someone Persian you know? [he laughs] I need to eat something Middle-Eastern you know? [he laughs] so I did not tell them, then maybe that's the thing like since I am in the area that I see Persians, I don't feel it if I am away from them [..] like when I went there I sensed that, I have to keep in touch with some Persians".*

In line with findings that for some immigrants, co-ethnics other than their close family and friends prove to be sources of competition and distrust (Ryan et al., 2008), some of my respondents indeed signal a sense of distrust towards the wider Iranian community. Surprisingly, these same respondents stress that they chose to live in the neighbourhood because of –amongst others- the presence of the Iranian community, again pointing towards some abstract sense of belonging the presence of the Iranian community brings about. The

narrative of Davood, a full-time employed man in his 30s, clearly brings to the fore this discrepancy when he argues that he is careful in socializing with fellow Iranians:

> *"Unfortunately, maybe I am wrong, but the Persian community in Canada is not very well distributed, like you don't know who you are talking to because anybody could come here, yeah I am very careful, I usually don't communicate, like don't associate too much [..] For the same reason I don't like Iranian concerts here [..] when they come here the Persian singers I don't go there".*

But then he goes on by arguing that he does want to be in the vicinity of the Iranian community:

> *"I didn't want to be with them and I didn't want to be without them, so I picked a place to be with them and without them [..] I mean it's bad to say but sometimes you find your like, people from your country very nice and sometimes very bad, so you don't know what you are dealing with, you try to be in the middle not too close, not too far".*

In sum, my study indicates that most immigrants do not have family and friends living in their neighbourhood, and, the majority of the respondents also indicated not to socialize with neighbours. Furthermore, since most of the respondents without friends in the neighbourhood were recent arrivals, at first sight it seems that my study confirms previous studies that have found that "recent arrivals have less free time to devote to developing and maintaining local social contacts" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 229). However, none of the recent immigrants argued that a lack of time was a reason for not knowing neighbours. Moreover, my study finds mixed evidence for the proposition that a 'constrained activity space' e.g. due to unemployment, leads to developing more local social contacts (Ray and Preston, 2009). With regards to the North York Iranian residential concentration area, it indeed seemed to be 'home' to many Iranian shops and institutions (e.g. Light and Rosenstein, 1995), and most Iranians, both living within and outside of North York, indicated to go to these stores regularly. However, almost all made clear that there was no social aspect to it. When it comes to Iranian community affiliation, most respondents did not seem to affiliate strongly with the Iranian community, and some even felt that fellow Iranians could not be trusted, confirming previous studies (e.g. Ryan et al., 2008). However, my study also finds examples of immigrants who, although they stress not to affiliate strongly with the Iranian residential concentration area, feel an abstract sense of belonging from being around other co-ethnics.

Hi and Bye?

Although at first sight not having friends in the neighbourhood seems to be going hand in hand with a lack of neighbouring, this conclusion cannot be so easily drawn: when looking at the experiences of the respondents who do indicate to have friends in the neighbourhood, very few have found these contacts through neighbouring activities. Also, many participants either don't know their neighbours at all or just say hi and bye when they meet them on the street or in the building, confirming Ray and Preston's (2009) finding that only a very small share of recent immigrants know many of their neighbours and that for most people 'infrequent interactions with neighbours are the norm" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p.241). Ramin, a student in his early 20s, is a good reflection of the contact that many respondents have with their neighbours: "We say hi to people in the elevators but [..] I don't even know the, I don't even completely know the people who live on our floor". As is Zohreh, a full-time employed

Iranian woman in her 40s, who clearly describes the limited knowledge she has of her neighbours: "I know that one of them is Italian, one of them is, they're Canadian, that much we know each other but not a lot".

Jabil, a young unemployed man in his late 30's, attributes the difficulties he has with getting to know his neighbours to his own personality, and a similar experience was described by Hamed, a young full-time employed man in his early 30's:

> *"Sometimes they say hi, I say hi, but I don't continue or, I am a little shy, I don't look at them [..] but I am very interested to improve my self-confident and start to communicate more especially with the Canadian peoples because it helps me to improve my English language".* [Jabil]

> *"Like for me I don't know why like I am not a very neighbourhood friendly kind of person, I mean like you know what I am saying, I am not like, I don't walk on the street and talk to people and say you know lets go out and just have a beer sometime".* [Hamed]

Other respondents don't attribute the absence of neighbouring to their own personality but instead indicate that they find it hard to meet people in their neighbourhood due to the absence of a place to meet them, like Naser, a full-time employed 29 year old man who came to Canada 3 years ago: "I don't know I, there is no place to meet them and I can't just knock on the door, I don't usually do that". Sholeh, a 67 years old retired woman, describes the same kind of dilemma:

> *"Well for one thing, how would you meet them? If there is no source or, or no place where you meet, you know obviously you just say hello to people in the elevator, no more than that, where would you meet them? [..] you know you can't grab people on the street you know, you have to meet them some place, here of course you know we have a book club, there used to be a tai-chi club that people got together and did tai-chi, I did tai-chi so I liked that, but it's no longer in session".*

Naser, adds that he is careful in making contact with his neighbours due to the fact that he knows he is going to move soon:

> *"Right now still I, I don't have much contact with my neighbours, and I know that I am going to change my place, so, until that I am not gonna have more, getting in touch with them but, until I found like a place that I know that I am going to stay for a long time, I haven't decided yet".*

Zohreh like Naser, also emphasizes the aspect of time in constraining her from neighbouring, albeit in a different way. As a full-time working woman in her 40's, Zohreh emphasis her lack of free time as a reason for not being more neighbourly:

> *"Actually the new neighbours, that we have in the house we were planning from eight months ago that we came to the new house we were planning to go in front of their door and take some Iranian you know, nuts and something like that to, to see them and they get to know us and everything, but I never, we never had the chance, we never had the time to do that".*

The above experiences illustrate that most respondents with friends in the neighbourhood, were 'lucky enough' to know these friends from back home or meet friends in Toronto that

happened to be living in the same neighbourhood. Hassan, a 42 year old full-time employed Iranian man, is a good example of an immigrant who found friends in his neighbourhood who he knew from back home: "they [two friends from back home] are living in this area [..] and occasionally we meet each other here". Davood, a full-time employed Iranian man in his 30's, describes the same experience: "There is just one close, kind of close friends, which living, a couple of intersections to the north, they are, we know them through our family so, that's the only person". Ramin, a 24 year old full-time student, is an example of a respondent who did not happen to have old friends from back home living in the same neighbourhood, but instead indicates that he has met friends in Toronto, e.g. in high school, who happened to live in the same neighbourhood: "I'd say I have one really close friend who I met in high school here, and he is Persian, and he lives really close to where I live". Hamed, a 33 years old full-time employed man, describes a similar experience: "It happened that, when I moved and he was here so we can be like really happy now, we are good friends and we are close by".

In sum, since most respondents not know their neighbours or just say hi and bye when they meet them, my study confirms that "infrequent interactions with neighbours are the norm" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241). Also, since immigrants who indicated to know friends in the neighbourhood often were lucky enough to know these friends from back home or meet new friends in Toronto that happened to live in the same neighbourhood, neighbouring seems to attribute very little to the making of new friends. When looking at reasons respondents give for not knowing their neighbours, some blame that their own personality, others stress that they find it hard to meet neighbours because of the absence of any real place to meet them, and again others signal that a lack of time is the most important reason for not being more neighbourly.

Conclusion

In contrast to former studies, my study indicates that pre-existing social contacts do not shape immigration to Canada to a large extent, but that structural factors, such as the difficulty of getting into the USA and the willingness of Canada to accept Iranian immigrants, are more important. When it comes to neighbourhood choice, I find mixed evidence for the proposition that pre-existing social networks shape the immigrants their choice for a specific neighbourhood to reside in, since some immigrants clearly chose to live in a neighbourhood where friends or relatives where already living, while other did not. With regards to immigrants who indicated not to have friends or relatives living in their neighbourhood, and who lived in North York, an array of different reasons for picking their particular neighbourhood is given, amongst which its convenient location near public transport, the presence of good schools, and the Iranian community. Although some immigrants clearly stress that the presence of the Iranian community was an important reason to choose the neighbourhood, others make clear that this was not one of their considerations at all.

With regards to social contacts in the neighbourhood, a lot of respondents only have very few friends or family living in their neighbourhood. What's more, most respondents also indicated not to know their neighbours or just say hi or bye when they met them, a finding in line with former studies in which it is argued that only a very small share of recent immigrants know many of their neighbours and that for most people "infrequent interactions with neighbours are the norm" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p.241). Since the majority of the respondents who indicated not to have any friends in their neighbourhood are recent arrivals, my study seems to confirm previous studies that have found that this is mainly due to the fact that recent arrivals have less free time to devote to developing and maintaining local social contacts. However, I do not find evidence for this in my study.

When it comes to neighbouring, mixed evidence is found for the idea that a constrained activity space, e.g. due to unemployment, leads to developing more local social contacts, but, the findings of my study do seem to be in line with the idea that full-time employed and full-time students socialize less with their neighbours compared to unemployed or retired respondents. When it comes to the Iranian businesses that are present in the residential concentration area of North York, most respondents, both living within and outside of North York, indicate to go to these stores regularly to get some special Iranian ingredients or products. However, the large majority of the respondents also indicate that they don't go there for socializing. In this same realm, most respondent living in North York seem not to affiliate strongly with the Iranian community, and some even indicate not to trust fellow Iranians. However, others who indicate not to affiliate strongly with the Iranian community, signal an abstract sense of belonging that living amongst fellow Iranian brings about.

Although at first sight it seems that a lack of friends in the neighbourhood goes hand in hand with a lack of neighbouring, this conclusion cannot be so easily drawn. Of the respondents who indicated to have friends in the neighbourhoods, these friends were rarely found through neighbouring activities, but instead the respondents happened to know these contacts upon arrival in the neighbourhood, or met new friends in Toronto who happened to live in the same neighbourhood. Some respondents blamed their own personality for not being more neighbourly, in being shy or just not feeling like talking to the neighbours, others felt that Canadians were not very eager to socialize with other ethnic groups. Again others stressed a lack of time and the fact that they knew they were going to move soon as reasons for not socializing with the neighbours. The absence of any real place to meet other neighbourhood residents also seemed to be a dilemma for some as well.

CHAPTER 8: HELP and SUPPORT

Introduction

Social networks and the support individuals can get from them are often taken for granted. In other words, it is a well-know fact that individuals receive support from social contacts in their networks, however, little attention is paid to how this actually works and to the different types of social networks that exist and the different types of support that can be accessed through these networks (Ryan et al., 2008). Some studies that have paid attention to this, have pointed towards the specialized nature of most support (Ryan, 2007; Wellman and Wortley, 1990). And, in this realm, my study will investigate these claims further by addressing the different types of support that people get from different social contact in their networks. The chapter will start off by focusing on help and support immigrants have received upon initial settlement, with the aim of answering the following research question: What kind of support do immigrants get upon initial settlement and from which social contacts in their network do they receive this support? The focus of the next section is more general in nature and investigates who has received what kind of support from whom. In other words, it will be investigated per category of support – emotional, informational and instrumental- which social contacts in one's network are most helpful, in order to answer the following research question: What kind of support, either instrumental, emotional or informational, is received through which social contacts in immigrant's their social networks, and how important are neighbourhood based contacts is this realm? Last but not least, the chapter will focus on a special type of support that has received a lot of attention since Granovetter's publications in the 70s, and investigates whether, and if so, from whom immigrants receive help with finding a job.

Help and support upon initial settlement

Immigration in itself is a life-turning experience and will for many not prove to be an unproblematic phase in life. Leaving behind the home country is a big step, such as Fatemeh, a 43 year old woman who immigrated to Canada 3 years ago describes: "We are new here, immigration is I think a big step in life that we did, and we lost a lot of friends from back home". Also, getting settled in the host country will often be 'accompanied' by all kinds of difficulties and problems, such as the narrative of Firouz, a 51 year old man who came to Canada 2 year ago clearly indicates: "Immigrant people live on the edge of a knife, it is a very difficult position and we need to get support, emotional and positive". Tahmineh, a woman in her early 30s who moved to Canada 2 years ago, also clearly expresses how she faced problems when she first arrived:

> "When I came in Canada it was so hard for me because we don't have any relation, oh my god I have a lot of problems and I don't have anybody to talk to, I am not going to ask for help, but I don't have anybody to talk to and I couldn't tell my family, my mother and father that I have those problem here because they cannot do anything for me, that's why we have a hard time, but after a while it got better".

With regards to problems that many immigrants face when they first arrive, seeking support from others seems a logical step to take, and indeed most of the respondents in my study sought and received some kind of help or support from others upon initial settlement, confirming many studies that have indicated that when immigrants arrive in a new country they will rely on friends and family in the host country for support (e.g. Grönqvist, 2006).

Also, my study confirms the idea that in the beginning, immigrants often rely on other co-ethnics for help and support, since most immigrants initially indeed relied on Iranian friends, Iranian acquaintances or family members for support (Ryan et al., 2008).

In line with Grönqvist (2006) and others (e.g. Quadeer, 2004), my study finds first of all that upon initial settlement, friends and family in the host country are a very important source of support with regards to finding a place to stay. In line with Quadeer (2004), almost all of the respondents indicated to have stayed at the house of a relative or friend for some time before finding their own place, such as the experiences of the following immigrants indicate:

> *"First when I came here I stayed with my friend for a week, he was very supportive, helped me a lot and yeah I know if I had a problem, that they would help me".* [Naser, man, 29 years old]

> *"I have a relative here, in the same apartment that we rented, we moved to his house, his apartment actually, for a week and then we rented an apartment in the same apartment building".* [Hassan, man, 46 years old]

> *"We stayed one week at one of our friend's house [..] and then they found the condo for us and then we moved there".* [Jamileh, woman, 29 years old]

Confirming Quadeer (2004), who found that friends and family in the host country were often turned to for advise on buying a property in Toronto, my study indeed finds that, besides friends or family members in Toronto providing respondents with a roof above their heads the first days or weeks, in a lot of cases these same friends or family members helped them with finding a permanent residence in Toronto, signalling that indeed "newcomers, especially visibly minorities, are likely to use informal social networks rather than formal institutions in their search for housing" (Murdie, 2003, p. 185). Furthermore, besides housing, the respondents were often helped with other practical issues related to for example choosing a good school for their kids, getting insurance, buying a car, the application for a work permit etc. The narratives of Firouz, a 51 year old man who moved to Canada 2 years ago, and Jabil, a 36 year old man who moved to Canada 3 years ago, are good examples of immigrants who have received help upon initial settlement not related to housing:

> *"In the first time we were guest in my uncle's home for 50 days, and my uncle is a dentist here and he helped us a lot [..] he helped me to choose a good lawyer [..] my uncle choose this area and he helped us about everything in the first time, for example buying an apartment, and choose my daughter's high school and anything else".* [Firouz]

> *"I couldn't communicate well, I couldn't call by myself. I asked my aunt call this centre, immigration centre, and ask about my situation [..] or when I wanted to apply for my health card, she came with me, she took me [..] she support me like this [..] And also when I wanted to open a bank account, my aunt came with me and, because I couldn't do by myself, and she was very nice".* [Jabil]

What is interesting as well is that these friends or family members, who proved to be important sources of support upon initial settlement, were not always close friends or close family members. Actually, in some cases these contacts were far away relatives or old friends

from back home, the respondent had not been in touch with for some time, such as Davood, a young man in his 30's who moved to Canada 8 years ago, clearly illustrates:

> *"Actually the person who I rented from, I stayed in his, he was my close friend, and actually I hadn't seen, at that time I was not in contact with him for maybe four, five years after he left Iran himself, so but we were in like, but email once in a while and the last time he came to Iran he mentioned that if you come here give me a call, I can help you, he picked me up from airport and basically he helped me to find, I rented his place".*

Also, in some cases, immigrants indicated not even to know the people that helped them upon initial settlement, but where introduced to them by friends from back home such as the narrative of Fatemeh, a 43 year old woman who moved to Canada 3 years ago, makes clear:

> *"When we came in Canada, one of my friend in Iran he introduced somebody here to us, our friend, and they are the best people in the world to support us for every single step [..] we didn't know them, we, how can I say, we find them here by our friend, and they, the first time they found for us the apartment that we rented and they showed step by step what we should do, and then also they helped us to find a house".*

In sum, as former studies have indicated (e.g. Grönqvist, 2006; Ryan et al., 2008), when immigrants first arrive, many indeed rely on friends and family members in the host country for support, in particular with regards to housing. Not only are immigrants often invited to stay at their friends of families house initially and helped to find a permanent place to stay, immigrants are also often helped with other practical issues such as applying for working permits, insurance, buying a car, looking for a school for their kids, opening a bank account etc. What's more, it seems that the closeness of the relationship does not determine whether immigrants receive help or support from friends or family members in Toronto upon initial settlement: friends and family members seem to help each other no matter how close their relationship is. Thus, when it comes to help and support upon initial settlement, immigrants their 'local' social contacts in Toronto seem to be most helpful, and, more often than not, these contacts do no live in the same neighbourhood. In other words, not so much one's neighbourhood but the social contacts in Toronto -no matter where they live in the city- are important sources of support upon initial settlement.

Who receives what from whom?

It is a commonly assumed that people receive support from the social contacts in their networks (e.g. Wellman and Wortley, 1990; Ryan et al., 2008), and, the findings of my study indeed confirm this, since all of my respondents indicated to receive or have received some kind of support from contacts in their social network since they have immigrated to Toronto. Therefore, one can say that all of my respondents 'possessed' social capital since they were able "to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures"(Portes, 1998, p. 8). What type of support they have received, either emotional, instrumental or informational -a characterisation based on Schaefer et al. and used in Ryan et al. (2008)- and from whom they received this support, differs per individual, however, some clear patterns are visible that will be discussed in this section.

Emotional support

With regards to emotional support, despite the fact that the majority had extensive social networks with friends and family living scattered across the globe, most of my respondents indicated that they sought and received emotional support from a selective group of social contacts in their network only. This finding seems in line of expectation, since problems of the heart are not something one shares with everybody, and indeed my study finds that immigrants sought emotional support only from their closest friends and family members, confirming Wellman and Wortley's findings (1990) that strong ties are the biggest sources of emotional support. However, differences between the immigrants are found, and although some preferred to share their emotions with close friends, others signalled that close family members, such as spouses, parents or siblings, were most important sources of emotional support. What is also important to note is that emotional support comes in many forms, and although for one individual talking to a friend or family member about problems might provide emotional support, someone else derives emotional support just from being around friends or going out to dinner. Jamileh, a 29 year old full-time student who lives together with her family, is a good example of a respondent who indicates that her close family is most important to her for emotional support:

> *"Family for me is the first thing [..] for my studies my mom gave me a bit support, I was so stressed out, I was on exams [..] when I get stressed out I do bad on exams like I can't sleep the whole night and in the morning I do so bad. My mom was talking to me like even if you don't get admission don't worry nothing will happen, you try another year".*

She goes on by saying that the emotional support she gets from close friends, is more with regards to daily problems, but she doesn't share with them her deepest emotions:

> *"I don't talk to people so much about my problems, unless I am so depressed, about like break-up and everything, but about other, like my father is sick and none of my friends know, I never talk about these things".*

On the other hand, Ramin, a 24 year old student who goes to med school and who lives together with his family, is a good example of someone who finds his close friends very important sources of emotional support:

> *"When I don't feel as happy or I feel kind of like my mood is not as well I would go out, I went actually for dinner last week with a few close friends and that helps that always helps, makes me feel better".*

Besides the above stated findings that immigrants receive emotional support from a selective group of close contacts in their social network, and that emotional support comes in many forms, I find that when it comes to emotional support, it does not seem to matter how close contacts live, either back in Iran, in Toronto or in other cities or countries in the world. Therefore, my study confirms that geographical proximity is not important when it comes to providing emotional support, and confirms previous studies that have found that emotional support is often provided by close social contacts 0either friends or family- who do not live close, and are for example contacted over the phone (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007). Moreover it was interesting to find that some immigrants indicated that, although they kept in close touch with close family in Iran, they did not like to share with them emotional problems,

such as the narrative of Fatemeh, a 43 year old woman who moved to Canada 3 years ago, clearly indicates:

> *"I contact with them [her brothers] but I don't like to tell them, if we find some problem I never tell them, they are important, I talk to them but I never tell them, for example my husband got laid off, but I didn't tell them [..] because I don't want make them worry about us".*

She goes on by saying that she only shares her daily life with her close family back home, and not really emotional problems she encounters:

> *"I just share my normal life with them [..] I don't want to share my bad feelings with them because they are far and they miss us and they don't know the life here because it is totally different".*

Informational support

When it comes to informational support that respondents have received since their immigration, e.g. with regards to housing, jobs, applications for university, buying a car etc. most indicate that it comes from a wide array of different sources, ranging from close friends, to acquaintances and the internet. Also, my study confirms that most informational support comes from people that are not family (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007) and that weak ties are indeed important sources of informational support (Granovetter, 1973). Ramin, a 24 year old full-time med student for example, makes clear that he has received a lot of help from people that were no close friends of his but who went to medical school before him:

> *"I knew some people who went to medical school before I got in so, they helped me through the admission process, even tips on the interview or how to write my personal essay, yeah so I would say a lot of people on facebook for example helped me with that".*

Mina, a 46 year old woman who moved to Canada 7 years ago, signals that a friend of her husband has given them valuable information with regards to buying a car:

> *"My husband's friend [later she says he is more of an acquaintance], he works at the [she asks her son to translate and he says: "selling cars"] and then we want to buy a car, we called him and we asked him about the, how we can lease the machine, it's better to lease or to buy or what kind of insurance is better, and he gave us a lot of information and we decided".*

Zohreh, a 42 year old woman who moved to Canada 7 years ago, points out that her Canadian husband is very important for informational support:

> *"My husband is the source for information for everybody, he has a very, very good general knowledge, because he is Canadian first of all he knows everything here so its very easy for him to even guide everybody around me what to do about things".*

Others, like Afshin, a 45 year old man who moved to Canada 4 years ago, make clear that not social contacts, but instead the internet is a very important source of information: "Myself I try to find the answer in the Internet, mostly I didn't prefer to ask any special person". What's

more, although the respondents indicated to receive informational support from a wide range of social contacts, friends and family in Iran or in other countries abroad were rarely or never asked for informational assistance, since they would not know about the situation in Toronto, such as the narratives of the following immigrant indicates:

> *"Because they [his parents] are not living in Toronto and Canada they don't have any information that is useful for me, they can not help me about living in Toronto".* [Jabil, man, 36 year old]

Instrumental support

With regards to tangible instrumental support –thus excluding financial help- most respondents indicate to have received such support from friends or family members in Toronto since they've arrived, such as Naser, a 29 year old full-time employed man, who received help from a friend with the application for a work permit: "And then I had my classmate, I met him and like he helped me for, I had to apply for a work permit and so he helped me out with that". Jabil, a 36 year old unemployed man, explains how he got help from a close friend in Toronto while applying for a car insurance:

> *"The first time I wanted to apply for my car insurance I didn't have any idea which company is better, he helped me [..] first time he talked on behalf of me because my English wasn't good and because sometimes when you call somewhere their accent is very, I don't know, I cannot understand the accent".*

And Amir, a full-time student in his 20's, signals that his friends from university in Toronto provided him with some old tests in order for him to study for upcoming exams:

> *"I was looking for an old test to see what they test, the Prof's going to ask, so I called my friend [..] they give me some old tests, or Farhad [who is a good friend] for instance he gives me old tests".*

Other respondents, such as Afshin, a 45 year old man who has recently been laid off, indicate to have borrowed items from someone in their social network:

> *"I borrowed some tools for when I bought the home, the house, there was, it needed some innovation, some work in different sections of the home and my friend gave me many tools to do that, for borrow, I borrowed them".* [Afshin]

However, although some respondent indeed borrowed items from contacts in their networks, this rarely happened between neighbours. Therefore, my study finds evidence for Wellman and Wortley's finding that only a very small share of people receive support from their neighbours, and if they do so, this mainly encompasses for example borrowing tools (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). Furthermore, my study confirms that tangible instrumental support indeed is mostly provided by geographically close relations (Ryan, 2007; Willmott, 1987 in Ryan, 2007), signalling that geographical distance is important when it comes to the exchange of this type of support, such as Hamed, a 33 year old full-time employed engineer, clearly indicates:

> *"Oh actually where you live definitely affects that one, because you know you don't like drive, I don't know, again like 40 km to get a tool or a hammer right, so it makes sense to be close by, so definitely where you live, if your friends are close by, definitely affects like how instrumental they can be".*

However, when it comes to intangible instrumental support such as financial aid, it becomes clear that geographical distance between social contacts is not that important, since my respondents indicated that both social contacts in the home as well as in the host country provide this type of support, confirming Wellman and Wortley's findings (1990). Furthermore, most financial aid is only exchanged between family members -no matter where they live- but not between friends, confirming Wellman and Wortley's (1990) finding that family acts differently from friends when it comes to support giving, and, more specifically, that when it comes to instrumental support such as financial help, mostly close family members – especially parents and grandparents- seem to provide this type of support (Wellman and Wortley, 574; also Adams 1968; Fischer 1982 in Plickert et al., 2007).

It is also interesting to see that quite some immigrants do not like to ask for any type of instrumental support but rather try to solve the problem themselves, of whom Hamed, a 33 year old man, is a good example:

> *"Instrumental, to be honest I don't get that much, like you know usually you try to be independent and you don't ask, but yeah I may ask friends yeah.. like I may ask friends".*

Having now discussed what kind of support immigrants receive from whom, it is also important to note that the above described trends with regards to emotional, informational and instrumental support are general in nature, and that there are exceptions even within certain categories, for example between someone's close friends. In other words, respondents turn to different friends for different types of support, or to different family members for different types of help, confirming that "most relationships provide specialized support" (Wellman and Wortley, 1990, p. 558). The narratives of Tahmineh, a 33 year old woman, and Amir, a full-time student in his 20s, clearly illustrate this specialized nature of support:

> *"It depends on the subject, for example for buying something here or do something legal here we consult with the other one, other friends that are living here more than twenty years [..] those friends actually cannot support me emotionally you know, so I have a connection to other people, to other friends".* [Tahmineh]

> *'Well it depends what I am looking for, but Ramin [friend from high school in Toronto] is always helpful [..] he is a good guy, helps a lot [..] I never like to share with him my, despite that I am really close, I know him for so long, but emotionally I never talk to him, so mostly like serious stuff we are talking about".* [Amir]

In sum, the findings of my study confirm that close family is an important source of support for many immigrants -even if they are not geographically close- especially with regards to emotional and instrumental -financial- support (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). Conversely, my study also finds that some respondents, even if they have close family left in Iran who they are in close touch with, they do not like to share with them (emotional) problems in order not to worry them, and rather share those problems with friends or family members who are living in Toronto. In addition, I find that close friends -even if they are not geographically close- are important sources of emotional support as well, and in the case of them living in

Toronto, they prove to be important sources of both instrumental and informational support. However, friends -even if they are close ties- are rarely found to provide financial aid. Less close ties, such as acquaintances, friends of friends, colleagues etc. seem in many cases to be sources of information, but other than that they mostly do not provide any other type of support. In sum, immigrants receive help and support from many contacts in their social networks, and it seems that geographical proximity is important for the receiving of some types of support, but not for others. However, since the largest share of social contacts of whom immigrants receive help or support live somewhere else in the city or in Iran, it seems that -in general- for most immigrants the neighbourhood is not that important for receiving help and support.

Getting a job

People find jobs through various channels, amongst which adds in the newspaper or on the Internet, through job agencies or via friends and family. However, in hard economic times such as these, finding a job through any of these channels proves to be a difficulty for many, no matter what education level obtained. Being an immigrant makes things even harder, amongst others because of language barriers and a lack of knowledge about where and how to look for jobs. What's more, even though recent immigrants have on average higher qualifications and skills than Canadian-born, these qualifications and skills seem often not to be recognized by employers (Omidivar and Richmond, 2005). Indeed, many immigrants in my study had a hard time finding a job that levelled their qualifications, and, in general, those that were most successful in finding jobs that levelled their qualifications had done part of their studies in Canada. With regards to how immigrants found their jobs, my study indicates that, in line with many other studies (e.g. Burns et al., 2010; Mouw, 2003; Franzen and Hangartner, 2006; Loury, 2006), many people find jobs through friends, family members or acquaintances, thus finding evidence for Granovetter's hypothesis that almost half of all job-seekers find their job through their social network (Franzen and Hangartner, 2006). This section will specifically concentrate on how respondents got their jobs and more specifically, which social contacts have been most helpful in the process.

As indicated above, many immigrants in my study found jobs through the contacts in their social network, such as Zohreh, a 42 year old woman who works at Ontario's Ministry of Health: "My husband searches the online jobs a lot, and he saw this job and because he knows my background and my education so he thought that this is a very good job for me so he forced me to apply [she laughs] and I applied". Hamed, a 33 year old full-time employed engineer, is an example of another immigrant who found his (previous) job through his network:

> *"Like for my first job my Professor helped me out a lot [..] he introduced me to his connections right, so he is my student he is looking for a job [..] So definitely you send you resume through different channels. I don't know eventually how I got in, but I know like from this person like a friend of mine and through my Professor and different sources".*

Other respondents such as Davood, a full time student who works in IT, indicates that a friend of his working in the company he now himself works for, helped him to get the job:

> *"It is very difficult to get in, and it was my friend, I couldn't get in really, it was through him I asked advice how to write my resume, who I send the resume, actually he talked to the owner of company [..] if it was not him I couldn't get into this job, this job was particular, like they need some certain degrees which I don't have [..] yes it was through him".* [Davood]

However, other respondents indicated to have found their jobs themselves, for example Afshin, a 45 year old man who has been recently laid-off:

> *"I've send my resume and cover letter to many, many companies, even those who had not any hiring, I just emailed them [..] and about two month after applying for that company somebody called me from their HR of that company and talked to me on the phone for 10 minutes and again after the afternoon she called me back again and ask me for an interview, I went two times for an interview and I got the job, it was very good".*

It has become clear that a considerable degree of my respondents were indeed helped by friends, family members and acquaintances to get a job, and, this section of this chapter will now investigate Granovetter's strength of weak ties hypothesis, in which it is argued that weak ties are more helpful in getting a job since they provide new, non-redundant information about jobs. First of all, some participants who found their current or former job through their networks indeed indicated that they were helped by 'weak ties' such as Hamed, a 33 year old engineer, who was helped by his Professor at University: "For example if you want to look for a job, not necessarily friends, like for my first job my Prof helped me out a lot [..] he introduced me to his connections right". Others, such as Davood, a full time student in his 30s who works in IT, makes clear that he was helped to get his first job through an acquaintance who had immigrated at the same time:

> *"I went there, I was looking for a job, I saw like another, not, we came almost the same time, so he was working in Wallmart and thru him I know ok this is a good place to work and I went there, I submitted my resume, I had interview and I got accepted".*

Although the above examples seem to provide evidence for Granovetter's strength of weak ties hypothesis, I also find evidence against the statement, while respondents also indicate to have found their jobs through close relatives and friends, such as the narrative of Mina, a 46 year old woman who works in a store, clearly illustrates:

> *"I think, my job, my friend helped me to find the job since I think this is important for me, because of her support, she talked to her manager about me, she gave her my resume, and then she, if she wasn't there maybe I couldn't find this job, or more difficult".*

In sum, although I find evidence suggesting that a lot of immigrants find their jobs through their social network, many others have found their jobs through other channels. Also, I find mixed evidence for Granovetter's assumption that weak ties, because of their ability to generate new information about jobs not available through one's stronger ties (Yakubovich, 2005; Aguilera, 2008), increase the probability of getting a job: my study finds quite some examples of immigrants who have found jobs through their stronger ties, such as close family members or friends. It is also important to note that immigrants' local social networks in

Toronto are most important for providing this type of support: none of the immigrants indicated to receive help with finding a job from friends or relatives outside of Toronto.

Conclusion

Since many immigrants face problems when they first arrive, it seems logical that they seek support from others. In this realm, the findings of my study confirm that many immigrants receive help and support from friends, family members and acquaintances when they first arrive in Toronto, especially with regards to housing. Also, my study sees many examples of immigrants who, upon initial settlement, have received help from friends and family members, with regards to insurances, buying cars, working permits etc. What is also interesting is that in many cases it does not seem to matter how close the relationship between the immigrant and the social contact in Toronto is for receiving help upon initial settlement: besides close friends and family members, also far away relatives or friends who they have not been in touch with seem to be important sources of help and support. In some cases, the 'provider' of support is not even a far away relative or distant friend, but a contact of a friend or family member back home, who the immigrant did not know before arrival in Toronto. In sum, when it comes to help and support upon initial settlement, not so much one's neighbourhood, but the social contacts in Toronto -no matter where they live in the city- are important sources of support.

In general, family seems to be an important source of support for immigrants, even when they live far away, and specifically when it comes to emotional support or financial aid. Close friends also prove to be important sources of emotional support, and as is the case with family, it does not seem to matter where they live. In addition, friends –when they live in Toronto- are also found to be important sources of informational and instrumental support, but are rarely found to provide financial aid. Less close ties such as acquaintances, colleagues, friends of friends etc. are found to be important sources of informational support only, in some cases with regards to jobs. In sum, immigrants receive help and support from many contacts in their social networks, and it differs per type of support if geographical proximity is important or not. However, in general it seems that the neighbourhood is not that important for receiving help and support, since for many immigrants the largest share of their friends and relatives live somewhere else in the city or in Iran. Focussing on help with finding jobs, the findings of my study are in line with other studies that have found that many people find jobs through their social network. What's more, only immigrants their local social networks in Toronto seem to provide this type of support. When it comes to Granovetter's strength of weak ties hypothesis, my study finds mixed evidence since many immigrants found jobs through both weak, as well as strong ties.

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

As signalled in the introduction, and emphasized throughout the thesis, there is no doubt about the fact that developments in especially communication and transportation technologies have, figuratively spoken, led to the 'shrinking' of our planet. This is nothing new, and indeed many studies have indicated that the meaning of time and space have altered in the light of these new developments, and have given birth to terms such as time-space compression and relative distance. For immigrants especially, these development have had huge implications. Sometimes I try to imagine how it would have been to migrate in the 1950s, getting on a boat to New York and leaving your country and dear ones behind, with no other way of communication mail or very expensive long-distance calls. Nowadays, with the spread of the internet throughout most "western' destination countries, it is very easy and above all cheap to stay in touch with family and friends in the home country, for example through Skype, email or chat, which probably makes the immigration experience a little easier. Many studies undertaken in the field of international migration and transnationalism have indeed indicated that a new kind of migrant has been 'born', who's life takes place in multiple 'localities', with social networks that stretch the globe.

When immigrants arrive in their 'new' country, it is commonly assumed that they are supported by friends and relatives in the host country. Also, ethnic enclaves are often thought of as safe places for these immigrants to arrive, since they can count on the help and support of other co-ethnics. However, besides these positive effects of living in an ethnic enclave, many studies have also claimed that the residential concentration of specific groups of (disadvantaged) people, such as newly arrived immigrants, has negative effects upon all kinds of individual outcomes such as educational attainment, job status and social mobility. These so called neighbourhood effects studies are numerous, and focus on the impact of one's locale on a wide range of outcomes. When looking at the mechanisms identified in these studies, through which neighbourhood effects are assumed to operate, it becomes clear that the common assumption of these studies is that people socialize in their neighbourhood and that the neighbourhood is an important locale in people's lives. But, to what extent do people really socialize in their neighbourhood? And, in the case that most people don't, how do the 'allegations' of neighbourhood effects studies hold? What's more, if where you live is less important than who you know, don't we need a new perspective on residential concentration?

In order to investigate these claims, my study has focused on social networks, and more specifically, has provided insight into the way migrant social networks operate in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration. In other words, not one's locale or neighbourhood is taken as the starting point in studying how someone's life is shaped, but instead, the social networks one is part of are taken as the point of departure. Thus, one's immediate locale is not seen as the pivot in shaping someone's live, but is merely seen as one piece of the puzzle. While investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration, my study has also paid attention to some important gaps in the social networks literature, especially when it comes to spatial dynamics of social networks and how social networks really work, e.g. how do immigrants gain access to social networks after immigration and what contacts provide what type of support. Before answering my main research question: how do social networks of immigrants in cities operate and what is the role of the residential neighbourhood in these social networks? I will first per sub-question give a brief summary of my findings and suggest ways in which these findings have implications for theories relating to transnationalism, social networks, and neighbourhood effects. Thereafter I will draw attention to the limitations of my research and propose areas of further research.

Before starting of with answering the first research question, this section will briefly discuss the methodology used, as well as the group under study. From the midst of January to the end of March 2010, a qualitative study has been conducted, interviewing Iranian immigrants in Toronto, Canada. While using a semi-structured interview schedule to collect the data, 18 Iranian immigrants were interviewed living in the City of Toronto. Out of Toronto's many ethnic groups, Iranians were selected for several reasons. First of all, because members of the Iranian community in Canada were –in general- reasonably proficient in English, which would enable successful communication. Secondly, the Iranian residential concentration area was well accessible with public transport. Thirdly, at the time of my study the Iranians were the 11th most residentially concentrated group in Toronto, which enabled – amongst other- studying Iranian community affiliation and residential clustering. Last but not least, Iranians seemed an interesting group and had not been studied extensively yet. By means of snowball and purposive sampling the Iranian where 'recruited', and most of the interviews –which were all voice recorded- took place in public spaces such as café's and coffee corners either downtown Toronto or in the North York area. The characteristics of the Iranians in my study were for a large part in line with the Toronto average of Iranians, however my sample sees an slight over-representation of higher educated and higher-paid Iranian-Canadians.

Transnational social networks

RQ1) To what extent are immigrants part of transnational networks?

The findings of my study indicate that most immigrants are part of complex social networks that stretch the globe, confirming previous studies (e.g. Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1992; Diminescu, 2008). Not only have developments in Communication and Transportation technologies –think e.g. of skype and email- made it more easy to keep in touch with friends and family members no matter where they live, also, the increased affordability of these technologies -think for example of cheap charter flights- has positively influenced the ease and frequency of communication and transportation (e.g. Kelly, 2003; Vertovec, 2001; Mills, 2005). With regards to social contacts in the home-country, all respondents indicated to have left behind either family members or friends in Iran, most of whom they have been in contact with since their immigration, indicating that immigrants are indeed part of transnational social networks. However, clear differences between the frequency and nature of the contact respondents have with friends or family members are found. On average, close family members are contacted over the phone weekly, and, as nothing more than a mere addition to this phone contact, they are emailed regularly as well. On the other hand, the contact respondents have with friends back home is often less than that with family members, and, instead of the phone, e-email seems the preferred way of contact. Due to the fact that many of the younger generation immigrants their friends have immigrated themselves as well, many younger immigrants indicated to have no or very few friends left in Iran. Thus, most younger immigrant's in my study were not part of transnational social networks as much as their older fellow immigrants.

The differences found between the frequency and nature of the contact immigrants have with family members and friends back home might be due to the fact that many people feel some kind of obligation to keep in touch with their family, and less so with friends. However, many immigrants also really seemed to enjoy talking to their family members in Iran regularly, and, this seems to suggest that more so than a mere obligation to family members, it seems that 'connections of the blood' are valued and treated differently than friendships. Besides lots of family and friends still living in Iran, many respondents also

indicated to know friends and/or family members in other countries in the world, such as the UK or the USA. However, the contact with these friends and family members was on average not as intense as with friends and family in the home country: although some respondents indicated to keep in regular touch, others did not so or only very rarely. However, it should be noted that the frequency and nature of the contact of course also heavily depends upon the strength of the tie. For example, one might expect that a sister in France is contacted much more often than a far away relative in Sweden.

When it comes to geographical proximity, studies have indicated that people have more contact with those that live geographically closer (e.g. McPherson, 2001; Wellman and Wortley, 1990). My study confirms this since most of my respondents indicated that they had more face-to-face contact with social contacts that lived close –as in living in Toronto- as compared to those that lived farther away –as in other cities in Canada or abroad- , showing that physical proximity makes face-to-face contact easier. However, when looked at the contact over the phone or the internet that respondents had with relatives and friends that lived far away, the frequency of this contact often levelled that of the contact with friends and family in Toronto, finding evidence for Kaufer and Carley's finding (1993) that developments in ICT have "loosened bounds of geography by lowering the effort evolved in contact" (Kaufer and Carley, 1993 in: McPherson, 2003). What is interesting as well is that despite the growing importance of the internet, many immigrants still found the phone a very important mode of communication, suggesting that although this seems an old fashioned communication mode, it is often more reliable than the internet and should not be forgotten! What's more, in line with former studies that have indicated that more face-to-face contact does not automatically lead to stronger relationships (e.g. Wellman, 1996 in: McPerson, 2001; Wellman and Wortley, 1990), my study finds that although geographical proximity influences the frequency of face-to-face contact, more frequent face-to-face contact does not automatically lead to stronger ties: many respondents had close friends or family members living scattered across the globe with whom they had no regular face-to-face contact.

Taking onboard the findings of my study as summarized above, one can say that in order to assess to what extent immigrants are part of transnational networks, it depends on how transnational networks are defined. Clearly, my respondents were part of transnational networks in the sense that they kept in touch with social contacts, whether it be family members, friends or acquaintances across the globe, but not in the 'extreme' sense that researchers such as Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) and Diminescu (2008) have signalled. In other words, Although my respondents had indeed created social networks that included family members and friends in the home country, abroad and in Toronto and Canada, I do not feel that the respondents in my study –of whom most had only gone back to Iran once or even less- fit into the characterization of the so called new migrant. According to Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) and Diminescu (2008), this new migrant is some kind of highly mobile and flexible individual who travels back and forth between its home and host-country and who's life -'networks, activities and patterns of life' (Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton, 1992, p.1)- takes place in both locales. However, I did find some examples in my study of respondents who indicated that their father or husband lived both in Canada and Iran and travelled back and forth throughout the year. In my opinion, these immigrants fit better into the category of the new migrant, as described by Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton (1992) and Diminescu (2008), but, since it only seems to be a small share of the immigrants who fit into this category, future studies should be aware that only focusing on this type of highly mobile migrant leaves out many others, increasing the odds of a distorted image of today's immigrants, a standpoint also taken by Portes et al. (1999).

Issues of access and ethnic homophily

RQ2) How do immigrants gain access to new social networks and develop new social ties after immigration, and to what extent does ethnic homophily play a role?

It is often taken for granted that immigrants simply slot into existing social networks and create new social ties upon immigration. Not many attempts have been made to study how social networks actually work and how immigrants gain access to social network upon immigration. Although all of the respondents indicated to have friends in Toronto at the moment of the interview, from their stories it became clear that some respondents really had problems with getting to know new friends and thus developing new ties after immigration, signalling that there is more to getting access to new social networks than just 'slotting' into them.

Looking more specifically at how immigrants claimed to get to know new friends, in line with e.g. Gans 1962 and Ryan 2007, my respondents indicated that they found their kids very helpful in getting access to new ties, and, more specifically, many respondents with children indicated they had become friends with some of their children's friends parents. Others indicated that they found friends through language classes, or through high school and university, confirming that schools are important places to meet new friends (Ryan, 2007). However, in contrast to Ryan's finding that workplaces are also important locales to meet new friends (Ryan, 2007), only a couple of respondents indicated that they had found friends through their work. Moreover, I found that another important way of creating new ties was through others. In other words, quite some immigrants indicated to have found friends through other friends or relatives in Toronto, or through their spouse. Some even indicated that they were introduced to friends of friends, or friends of family members back home, and that they had formed new friendships like that. With regards to the importance of the neighbourhood in finding new friends, in contrast to Ryan's findings that the neighbourhood is an important locale for getting to know new friends (Ryan, 2007), very few respondents actually found friends through neighbouring.

There have been numerous studies that have pointed towards homophily, a tendency of people to associate with the same sort of people (McPerson, 2001). With regards to ethnic homophily, my study is in line with Ryan et al. (2008) who argue that there are large differences between the ethnic composition of immigrants their social networks –i.e. the extent to which social contacts in one's network have the same ethnicity or not-. I indeed find large differences between the immigrants' ethnic composition of their social networks, and while some have many non-Iranian friends, others mainly socialize with co-ethnics and again other have more 'ethnically mixed' social networks. At the same time, my findings are in contrast with a study by Ray and Preston, in which it is found that many immigrants have culturally diverse social networks (Ray and Preston, 2009). However, it should be noted that, although their study was also conducted in Canada, the immigrants in their study were culturally/ethnically heterogeneous, and that the differences found between my and their study may be attributed to that. In other words, it can be expected that the ethnic composition of the social networks of different groups of immigrants differs, and that some groups of immigrants have more heterogeneous networks than others. However, when all groups are taken together, extremes are levelled out and some sort of average is created.

Looking for reasons behind the differences found in the ethnic composition of the social networks of the respondents, age does not seem to explain this very well, since I find that both older and younger generation immigrants have ethnically homogenous as well as more ethnically mixed social networks. Zooming into those respondents who did develop ties to others outside of their close social circle -so called weak ties- the findings of my study

indicate that these respondents did this out of preference and choice, as well as been entrenched in an environment, such as a university or workplace, where they were able to meet other ethnic groups, confirming a study by Ryan et al. (2008). Thus, in line with the contact hypothesis (Mollica et al, 2003), many respondents who formed friendships with non-Iranians went or have gone to school in Canada where they were likely to be 'exposed' to a variety of different people with different backgrounds and different ethnic origins, raising the probability of forming friendships with others than Iranians. In contrast, I also find evidence against the contact hypothesis, since there are also immigrants who have gone to University in Canada and who still have mainly Iranian friends, signalling that in some cases, homophily persists in students' networks (Mollica, 2003).

What's more, of the respondents who had mainly non-Iranian friends, quite some argued that their will to learn English or their eagerness to learn about Canadian culture has stimulated them to find non-Iranians as their friends and thus develop ties across wider society. Unfortunately, from my interviews it does not become clear which ideas and desires are 'hidden' underneath wanting to learn English and 'exploring' Canadian culture. Of course one can do some guesswork and argue that, since all respondents indicated to have the desire to stay in Canada, the underlying mechanism of the desire to learn English and explore Canadian culture is a will to integrate into wider Canadian society in order to for example find a good job. However, since the findings of my study cannot confirm this, it seems to be an interesting direction for further research. What's more, it should be noted that, despite the fact that there were quite some respondents who indicated to have mainly non-Iranian friends, most of these non-Iranians were immigrants themselves, confirming Ryan et al. (2008) that most of the immigrants are befriended with other immigrants and not with non-immigrants. Indeed, only a couple of respondents had formed friendships with non-immigrants -Canadians- suggesting that "It may be particularly difficult for newly arrived migrants to establish weak ties vertically" (Ryan et al. 2008, p. 682).

When looking specifically at those respondents who had mainly Iranian friends, the findings of my study contrast Ryan et al. (2008), since very few respondents agued that language barriers restricted them from contacting with non-Iranians. However, respondents did signal culture differences and the closed mentality of Canadians towards other ethnic groups as reasons not to have, or only have few non-Iranian friends. Also, quite some immigrants who had mostly Iranian friends indicated they would like to get more non-Iranian friends, amongst others to improve their English. And, if we again see wanting to learn English as an proxy for their will to integrate, one can argue that having little non-Iranian friends does not come forth from a disinterest to integrate in Canadian society. Also, since many respondents in my study were 'exposed' to other ethnic groups e.g. at their workplace, the language-class or school, it might simply be a case of preference to form relationships with people that are similar to you and have the same 'tongue'.

Pre-existing kinship networks and neighbourhood choice

RQ3) How are pre-existing kinship networks important in influencing one's choice for a specific neighbourhood to reside in?

Logically, the decision to move to a certain country precedes that of neighbourhood choice. And, thus, before looking at the importance of the presence of friends or relatives when choosing a neighbourhood to reside in, I have also paid attention to the importance of 'pre-existing kinship networks' (Ryan, 2007, p. 300) in steering immigrants' migration decision to Canada. In contrast to previous studies (e.g. Winchie and Carment, 1989 in: Walton-Roberts 2003; Ryan, 2007), my study finds that the presence of friends and relatives in Canada was

not an important reason for immigration. However, the political situation in Iran, a lack of opportunities in the homeland and a stricter immigration regime in the USA were all often named as important reasons for immigration to Canada. Thus, 'pre-existing kinship networks' did not seem to be too important when it came to the decision to move to Canada. However, although people not directly named the presence of family or friends as one of the first reasons for immigration to Canada, it does not mean that it did not play a role, and it might have given the immigrants 'the final push' to choose Canada –where they for example already knew some friends- over for example Australia –where they did not know friends- since it is always 'safer' to move to a place where you already know people who you can possibly rely on.

Now moving on to neighbourhood choice, most of the immigrants who did indicate to have family members or friends living in their neighbourhood, indicated that the presence of these friends or family members indeed was an important reason to move to that particular neighbourhood. However, these findings do not tell us enough, and, it should be noted that there were also quite some immigrants who indicated not to have chosen to reside in a neighbourhood where relatives or friends where already living. Thus, mixed evidence is found for the argument that 'pre-existing kinship network" (Ryan, 2007, p.300) steer immigration decisions at the local neighbourhood level. The choice to reside in a neighbourhood where no friends or relatives are already living, might for example be due to a lack of choice e.g. because the residences in that particular neighbourhood were too expensive, or pure preference to live in another neighbourhood because of certain amenities and the closeness to e.g. work and school. When looking at respondents who indicated not to have friends or relatives living in their neighbourhood and who lived North York, different reasons were given for neighbourhood choice, and, amongst the most named reasons were the convenient location near the subway line, the presence of good schools, North York being a good and safe neighbourhood, and the presence of the Iranian community.

Neighbourhood and neighbouring

RQ4) To what extent do immigrants socialize in their neighbourhood and engage in neighbouring?

Very few respondents indicated to have family members living in the neighbourhood, and also quite some immigrants signalled that they did not have friends living in their neighbourhood. Furthermore, the large majority did not seem to associate with their neighbours. At first sight these findings seem clear and indicate that the neighbourhood is not that important for most immigrants when it comes to social contacts. However, the quality of the contacts is also very important, and one good friend or close relative living close by, might mean more than 5 other friends together who live somewhere else in the city. Indeed, some of the immigrants who did have friends or relatives living in the neighbourhood indicated that these were important social contacts. Since most of the respondents who indicated not to have friends living in their neighbourhood were recent arrivals (2-5 years in Canada), these findings also seem to indicate that "recent arrivals have less free time to devote to developing and maintaining local social contacts" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 229). However, none of the respondents gave these reasons for not knowing any of their neighbours, and thus, other factors must be at play which are unfortunately hard to uncover from the narratives of my respondents.

Furthermore, I find mixed evidence for Ray and Preston's (2009) argument that a 'constrained activity space' leads to having more local social contacts: most of the respondents who engaged in neighbouring were unemployed, and it might be carefully

assumed that those people have a more constrained activity space than their employed or school-going peers. However, my study also finds evidence against this statement since there were also unemployed who did not know their neighbours at all and thus did not engage in any kind of neighbouring. Furthermore, and again in line with Ray and Preston (2009), I find that people who have more time on their hands to socialize, will know more of their neighbours. More specifically, none of the full-time employed or full-time students socialized with the neighbours, in contrast to a couple of unemployed and retired respondents who did. These findings do not seem surprising as the more time you have to 'spend' in the neighbourhood, the more likely it is that you will socialize with your neighbours. However, besides having time to socialize in the neighbourhood, personal preference might also play a role since some people just like to socialize with others and engage in neighbouring, and others are much less neighbourly.

Confirming that an ethnic enclave can serve as a good market for ethnic products, the largest concentration of Iranian shops and services catering the needs of Iranians from all over Toronto was indeed found in the Iranian residential concentration area of North York (Light and Rosenstein, 1995). Most of the respondents indicated to go to the Iranian stores in this area regularly, in order to get some special Iranian products or ingredients that were not available in regular food stores. Although I had expected these shops to be important social meeting places for fellow Iranians, all of my respondents were very clear in that they only went to the Iranian stores for shopping, but that there was absolutely no social aspect to it. In the same line, most respondents living in or close to the core Iranian residential concentration area, seemed not to affiliate strongly with the Iranian community and some even signalled that, other than their friends or relatives, they did not really trust fellow Iranians, confirming Ryan et al. (2008) who found that some immigrants perceive other co-ethnics as sources of competition and distrust. Surprisingly, some immigrants, although arguing they did not affiliate strongly with the Iranian community, signalled that they did feel some kind of abstract sense of belonging that living close to fellow co-ethnics brought about.

All in all, it might be that people don't like to admit that they prefer to be around the same sort of people –the principle of homophily-, but instead want to come across as independents and not depending upon fellow Iranians. However, I can imagine that arriving in a place where you have more people around like yourself, keeps you more in your comfort zone and makes you feel less out of place, especially in the initial phases of immigration. Thus, although many respondents indicated not to strongly affiliate with the Iranian community, some of them probably 'secretly' did like being around other co-ethnics, although not specifically saying so.

When it comes to neighbouring, my study confirms that only a small share of recent immigrants know many of their neighbours and thus that 'infrequent interaction with neighbours are the norm" (Ray and Preston, 2009, p. 241). Indeed, most respondents indicated not to know their neighbours at all or just say hi and bye when they met them for example on the street or in the elevator. For not knowing their neighbours, the respondents gave an array of reasons amongst which their own personality, for example being shy or not 'neighbourly', that they found it hard to meet neighbours since there was not really a place to meet them, or just simply a lack of time. In sum, neighbouring seems not to attribute much to making new friends and, most immigrants who do have friends living in their neighbourhood indicate that they knew these people from back home or that they met new friends in Toronto that happened to live in the same neighbourhood. In other words, for most immigrants the neighbourhood seemed to be mostly a place to sleep and to eat, and did not seem to be a 'breeding place' for new social ties.

Help and support upon initial settlement

RQ5) What kind of support do immigrants get upon initial settlement and from which social contacts in their network do they receive this support?

Immigration proves to be a difficult process for many, and indeed quite some immigrants in my study also indicated that they encountered problems upon initial settlement. What's more, whether it be emotional, instrumental or informational problems, the majority of the immigrants indicated to have sought and received help and support from friends or family members who had moved to Toronto before them. Therefore, my study confirms that immigrants often rely on friends and family in the host country when they arrive (Grönqvist, 2006) as well as on other co-ethnics for help and support (Ryan et al., 2008). More specifically, in line with e.g. Quadeer, local social networks in Toronto proved to be extremely important when it came to receiving support in the realm of housing: many immigrants were first welcomed in their friend's or family member's home after arrival in Toronto, and were often helped by these same contacts to find a more permanent place to stay. Not only did these local social networks prove to be important for support in the realm of housing, also other practical matters such as help with applying for a work-permit, getting insurance, buying a car etc. were often named by the respondents as support received upon initial settlement. Thus, in the initial stages of the immigration process, these local social networks that already 'existed' upon immigration where very important in providing all kinds of practical instrumental –and informational- support, support that friends and family in the home county were not able to provide. However, this does not mean that social contacts in the home country were not important upon initial settlement, in contrast, they were important also, albeit in a more 'intangible' way. For example, immigrants would receive financial support from relatives in Iran for buying a property in Toronto, or receive emotional support from a friend back home over the phone.

It was surprising to see that those friends and family members who proved to be such important sources of support upon initial settlement were not always close friends or close family members. In some cases these contacts were far away relatives or old friends that the immigrants had not been in touch with for a long time. In some cases, immigrants had even received help and support from people that they had never met before, and who they were introduced to by friends or family members in Iran. Interestingly, these findings indicate that no matter how close the relationship or how strong the bond between individuals, people seemed to help each other, signalling some kind of sympathy amongst fellow immigrants and a desire to help others that are going to a process that you have gone through before. This leads us back to they idea of reciprocity (Plickert et al., 2007) in which it is argued that people help others the way they have been helped before.

Who receives what from whom?

RQ6) What kind of support, either emotional, instrumental and informational, is received through which social contacts in immigrant's their social networks, and how important are neighbourhood based contacts in this realm?

First of all my study confirms that people receive support from others in their social networks (e.g. Wellman and Wortley, 1990; Ryan et al. 2008) and thus that the immigrants in my study 'possessed' social capital since they were able to gain help and support through their membership in social networks (Portes, 1998, p. 8). When it comes to receiving emotional support, some clear patterns are visible. First of all it is very clear that immigrants sought and

received emotional support from a limited group of close friends and/or family members only, confirming Wellman and Wortley, who argued that strong ties are the most important sources or emotional help (1990). When it comes to geography, social contacts that proved to be important sources of emotional support did not necessarily live close or in the neighbourhood. Instead, close family members or friends back in Iran or abroad were often important sources of emotional support. In sum, the findings of my study indicate that geographical distance does not seem to matter when it comes to giving and receiving emotional support, confirming previous studies (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007). These findings might not seem surprising since developments in communication and transportation technologies have made it quite easy, and above all, much cheaper than ever before to keep in touch with friends and relatives not matter where they live. And, since emotional support is often intangible, it can be 'received' over the phone and through the internet.

With regards to informational support, respondents indicated to have received this type of support from different contacts in their social networks, ranging from close friends to acquaintances. Furthermore, my study confirms that informational support is often provided by social contacts that are not kin (Granovetter, 1973 in Ryan, 2007), and that so called weak ties -ties to others outside of your close social circle- are indeed helpful when it comes to receiving informational support. This seems not surprising since informational support is very 'low key' and it often does not cost a lot of time or money for others to 'provide' it. In sum, when it comes to informational support, the immigrants their local social networks in Toronto were important in providing this type of support, in contrast to ties to the homeland which were rarely helpful in this realm.

When it comes to tangible instrumental support, the majority of my respondents indicated to have received such help, think for example of help with applying for a work permit or buying a car, and borrowing 'household' items. Mostly this support came from friends and family in Toronto, and little 'exchange' found place between neighbours, confirming that not many people receive support from their neighbours and if they do, mostly with regards to borrowing 'household' items or tools (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). In other words, people's neighbourhoods did not seem to be important when it came to tangible instrumental support. However, it should be noted that if respondents had had more friends in the neighbourhood, these findings might have been very different. Furthermore, my study found that social contacts that lived close were more important than contacts that live far away when it came to providing this type of support, and thus, the findings of my study confirm that instrumental support is mostly provided by contacts that live geographically close (Ryan, 2007; Willmott, 1982 in Ryan, 2007).

With regards to intangible instrumental support such as financial aid -which can be transferred electronically- my study finds that distance does not seem to matter when it comes to financial aid: immigrants indicated to have received this type of support from contacts in their social networks both geographically close as well as geographically far away, confirming previous studies (Wellman and Wortley, 1990). What is interesting as well is that none of the respondents had received significant financial aid from friends, but only from family members, confirming that friends act differently from family members when it comes to help and support (Wellman and Wortly, 1990) and that especially parents are important (e.g. Wellman and Wortly, 1990; Adams 1968; Fischer 1982 in Plickert et al, 2007). Although quite some respondents indicated to have received financial help, quite some others indicated that they rather did not ask for this type of support and tried to deal with it themselves.

In my study I have also paid special attention to one specific type of support, support with finding a job. First of all, many immigrants in my study had a hard time finding a job that levelled their qualifications, and the ones that were successful in doing so, had often obtained a degree in Canada. This does not seem surprising since foreign degrees were often

not recognized or seen as 'inferior', and thus, having a Canadian degree automatically increases one's changes on the job market. In this realm, I have heard of many cases in which highly skilled and trained doctors or engineers from Iran had a hard time getting a decent job in Canada upon immigration, and had to go through retraining processes which often took years. When it comes to how my respondents found their jobs, many had found jobs through contacts in their social networks confirming previous studies (e.g. Burns et al, 2010; Mouw, 2003; Franzen and Hangartner, 2006; Loury, 2006). However, some immigrants indicated not to have received any kind of help or support from others in their social networks or that this help had not been successful, and that they had found the job themselves. With regards to Granovetter's strength of weak ties hypothesis, in which it is argued that weak ties provide new/non-redundant information about jobs that is not available through one's stronger network ties, my study finds mixed evidence for this proposition. Although quite some immigrants signalled that they were helped by 'weak ties' in their social networks, such as acquaintances and ex-colleagues, quite some immigrants also indicated that they were helped by strong ties in their networks, such as close relatives or friends.

In sum, although I have found clear patterns when it comes to receiving emotional, informational and instrumental support, exceptions where found, providing evidence for Wellman and Wortley's finding that "most relationships provide specialized support" (1990, p.558). In other words, although an immigrant would turn to friend A for help with buying a car, he or she would turn to friend B for emotional support, and not to friend A. When it comes to the question if and how distance matters for receiving support, the findings of my studies were also quite clear. For some types of support, such as tangible instrumental help, it seemed that distance did matter. Not that surprising since it is hard to "transport a cup of sugar electronically' (Plicker et al., 2007, p. 424). For other types of support, such as emotional and financial support, distance seemed to matter much less. Again, not surprising since money can be transferred electronically and emotional support can be given over the phone or the internet, and thus, these types of support can be 'exchanged' between network members no matter how far apart they live. Thus, I do agree with Plickert et al. (2007) that 'neighbouring still pays off' (p. 424) for certain aspects, but that the importance of people's neighbourhoods is increasingly losing meaning and by no means dominates people's social networks anymore (Plickert et al., 2007). However, it can be expected that there are differences between immigrants, and although some might 'use' their neighbourhood merely as a place to eat and to sleep, others will be much more actively involved in their neighbourhood.

A new perspective on residential concentration?

Main Research Question: How do social networks of immigrants in cities operate and what is the role of the residential neighbourhood in these social networks?

On the basis of the answers on the research sub questions, I have provided insight into the way immigrants' social networks operate. Not only have I shown that immigrants are part of social networks that stretch the globe, thereby often keeping strong links to the home country, I have also demonstrated that geographical proximity indeed matters for the frequency of face-to-face contact, that many immigrants access new social ties at schools, workplaces and via other social contacts in their network, and that most immigrants have other immigrants as their friends. Also, I have found mixed evidence for the pre-existing kinship network argument, showed that there a great differences in the ethnic composition of immigrants their social networks and indicated that geographical proximity is important for receiving some types of support, but not for others. Also, I have also paid special attention to the

neighbourhood and the importance of the social contacts in them. In a nutshell, for most of the respondents it seemed that who they knew was more important than where they lived, since my study found that most people rarely associated with neighbours or found neighbours as their friends, and very rarely exchanged any type of help and support with neighbours. Also, of the immigrants who lived in or close to North York, many did not seem to affiliate strongly with the Iranian community and some even signalled a feeling of distrust towards other co-ethnics other than close family members and friends. In other words, for many immigrants the neighbourhood seemed to be a place to eat and sleep, but did for most not significantly contribute to their social lives. Instead, immigrants had social networks that stretched the globe, of whom their friends and family members in Toronto more often than not, lived outside of their neighbourhood.

However, although the neighbourhood did not seem to contribute much to people's social lives, many respondents indicated that they regularly made use of Iranian stores/businesses and institutions in the neighbourhood, signalling that the neighbourhood functioned as an important locale for daily activities, such as shopping, going to ESL class etc. What's more, the findings of my study have scientific relevance since they contradict with one of the most important underlying assumptions of neighbourhood effect studies, in which it is argued that people socialize in their neighbourhoods. Therefore, the findings of my study might make one wonder whether neighbourhood effect studies really 'measure' what they think they are measuring. In other words, how can the social composition of one's neighbourhood affect upon individual outcomes when for many people the neighbourhood is nothing more than a place to eat and to sleep? Should we not focus more on people's social networks -without denying the importance of social contacts in the neighbourhood- and less upon people's immediate locale as an important factor in explaining how people's lives are shaped? Besides this scientific relevance, the findings of my study also have implications for society. Mixed housing policies in for example the Netherlands have been shaped upon the underlying assumption that people socialize in their neighbourhoods, and are aimed at diversifying the social composition of neighbourhoods in order to increase the liveability. More specifically, it is thought that people with higher socio-economic positions that move into a 'disadvantaged' neighbourhood, function -amongst others- as good role-models for others living in the same neighbourhood. However, since the findings of my study suggest that people rarely socialize in the neighbourhood, and mixed housing policies are build upon the assumption that people do, aren't mixed housing policies doomed to fail? Thus, the findings of my study signal that it is indeed time for a new perspective on residential concentration.

Limitations of my study and directions for further research

A limitation of my research is the fact that it might be rather place specific. Not only will the findings of my study conducted in Toronto possibly differ from comparative studies in other big cities in Canada such as Vancouver and Montréal, it might also differ from other cities in other parts of the world. In this respect, in one of the interviews I had with key persons, it was suggested that Iranian Immigrants in Toronto where indeed different from those in Vancouver, since Iranian immigrants to Toronto were often skilled workers and engineers drawn to Toronto because of the industrial character of the city, in contrast to Iranian immigrants in Vancouver who were often entrepreneurs and investors still working in Iran and therefore not depending on work in Vancouver, but sending their family to Canada -Vancouver preferred over Toronto for its warmer climate- for better opportunities and good schooling. However, although this is an interesting comment, more research is needed to back these propositions up, signalling an interesting direction for future research in which the experiences of Iranian

Immigrants from different large cities in Toronto are compared. Furthermore, it would also be interesting to conduct a similar study in Europe, and seeing how these findings compare with the North American findings. Besides the fact that my study might be rather place specific, my study might also be rather group specific. While analyzing my data this crossed my mind more than once, and it seems likely that the results of my study will have looked differently if I had for example gone into Chinatown in Toronto and had interviewed residents there. In no respect, the Iranians in my study seemed to be part of a disadvantaged group of poor immigrants, but instead seemed to be in such a financial position to be able to afford looking for better opportunities outside of Iran. Thus, the fact that my research is group-specific also signals an interesting direction for further research in which the experiences of different immigrant groups are compared.

An other limitation of my research is that I have allowed immigrants themselves to define what they believed to be 'their neighbourhood', and, although studies have indicated that people mostly consider their neighbourhood to be a small area around their own house, respondents might have had different ideas about what their neighbourhood was, biasing my study. Furthermore, although my study provides insight into the way immigrants their social networks operate, e.g. with regards to how immigrants get access to new social networks, how they create new ties upon arrival and the specialized nature of help and support from many contacts in one's social network, more research in this realm is needed. Also, the way immigrants their social networks evolve over time is an interesting direction for future research since not many studies have taken the dynamic nature of immigrants their social networks into account even though it is likely that immigrant rely more on specific social contacts and social networks in certain periods of their life, instead of having a static social network (e.g. Ryan et al 2008). Therefore, a longitudinal study investigating the way migrants' social network evolve in the course of life would be an interesting direction for future research.

Last but not least, since my study is qualitative -which does not allow to generalize and simply extrapolate my findings to other contexts or groups as indicated above- it might be interesting to conduct a more quantitative study in which different groups are compared in order to produce quantifiable data for testing theories. For example, one can investigate the experiences of members of five specific ethnic groups in Toronto, by means of a questionnaire or a structured interview. Also, it might be interesting to conduct a quantitative study in which different contexts are compared. For example the experiences of recent immigrants -no matter what ethnic group they belong to- both living in Toronto and Vancouver are investigated, e.g. by means of a questionnaire, in order to investigate -possible- differences and similarities between the experiences of recent immigrant in Toronto and Vancouver. Besides studying immigrants in different cities in Canada, it would also be interesting to investigate the experiences of immigrants in major European cities such as London and Paris, and compare these to major Canadian or American cities, such as New York and Toronto.

References

Adams, B. (1968), *Kinship in an Urban Setting*. Chicago: Markham Publishing Company.

Aguilera, M. (2008), Personal networks and the incomes of men and woman in the United States: Do personal networks provide higher returns for men or women? In: *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 26, pp. 221-233.

Antcliff, V., R. Saundry and M. Stuart (2007), Networks and social capital in the UK television industry: The weakness of weak ties. In: *Human Relations* 60(2), pp. 371-393.

Atkinson, R. and K. Kintrea (2001), Disentangling Area Effects: Evidence from Deprived and Non-deprived Neighborhoods. In: *Urban Studies* 38(12), pp. 2277-2298.

Baker, R. (1989), The Adaptation of Polish Immigrants in Toronto: The Solidarity Wave. In: *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 21(3), pp. 74-90.

Bates, T. and C. Dunham (1991), *The Changing Nature of Business Ownership as a Route to Upward Mobility of Minorities*. Paper presented at the conference on Urban Labor Markets and Labor Mobility, March 7-8, Arlie House, VA.

Bolster et al. (2007), Neighbourhoods, households and income dynamics: a semi-parametric investigation of neighbourhood effects. In: *Journal of Economic Geography* 7, pp. 1-38.

Borjas, G. (1990), *Friends or Strangers, the Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy*. New York: Basic Books.

Borjas, G. (1995), Ethnicity, neighbourhoods, and human capital externalities. In: *American Economic Review* 85, pp. 365-390.

Bourdieu, P. (1985), The Forms of Capital. In: J. Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology Education,* pp. 241-258. New York: Greenwood.

Boyd, M. (1989), Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas. In: *International Migration Review* 23(3)*,* pp. 638-70.

Brannstrom, L. (2004), Poor Places, Poor Prospects? Counterfactual Models of Neighbourhood Effects on Social Exclusion in Stockholm, Sweden. In: *Urban Studies,* 41 (13), pp. 2515-2537.

Bridges, W. and W. Villemez (1986), Informal Hiring and Income in the Labor Market. In: *American Sociological Review* 51, pp. 574-582.

Bryman, A. (2008), *Social Research Methods*. New York: Oxford University Press. Third edition.

Buck, N. (2000), *Identifying neighbourhood effects on social exclusion*. Paper presented at ESRC Cities Neighbourhood Colloquium, Liverpool.

Burns et al. (2010), Social networks, employment and worker discouragement: Evidence from South Africa. In: *Labour Economics* 17, pp. 336-344.

Buzzelli, M. (2001), From Little Britain to Little Italy: an urban ethnic landscape study in Toronto. In: *Journal of Historical Geography* 27(4), pp. 573-587.

Campbell, K. and B. Lee (1992), Sources of personal neighbor networks: Social integration, need or time? In: *Social Forces* 70(4), pp. 1077–1100.

Carey, E. (2001), High-rise ghettos: In Toronto, visible minorities are pushed into 'pockets of poverty'. In: *Toronto Star*, February 3.

Caulfield, J. (2005), Toronto: the form of the city. In H. Hiller ed., *Urban Canada: Sociological Perspectives*, pp 311-342. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Clark, K. and S. Drinkwater (2002), Enclaves, neighbourhood effects and employment outcomes: Ethnic minorities in England and Wales. In: *Population Economics* 15, pp. 5-29.

Coleman, J. (1988), Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. In: *American Journal of Sociology* (94), pp. 95-120.

Coleman, J. (1990), *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Corcoran, M. et al. (1980), Information and Influence Networks in Labor Markets. In: G.J Duncan and J.N Morgan, eds., *Five Thousand American Families: Patterns of Economic Progress*, pp. 1-37. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research.

DeFilippis, J. (2001), The Myth of Social Capital in Community Development. In: *Housing Policy Debate,* 12(4), pp. 781-806.

Diminescu, D. (2008), The connected migrant: an epistemological manifesto. In: *Social Sciences Information* 47(4), pp. 565-579.

Ellen, I. and M. Turner (1997), Does neighborhood matter? Assessing recent evidence. *Housing policy debate* 8(4), pp. 833-866.

Franzen, A. and D. Hangartner (2006), Social Networks and Labour Market Outcomes: The Non-Monetary Benefits of Social Capital. In: *European Sociological Review* 22(4), pp. 353-368.

Friedrichs et al. (2003), Neighbourhood Effects on Social Opportunities: The European and American Research and Policy Context. In: *Housing Studies* 18(6), pp. 797-806.

Galster, G. (2007), Should Policy Makers Strive for Neighborhood Social Mix? An Analysis of the Western European Evidence Base. In: *Housing Studies* 22(4), pp. 523-545.

Gans, H. (1962), *The Urban Villages*. New York: The Free Press.

Garousi, V. (2005), Iranians in Canada: A Statistical Analysis. Proceedings of the 3rd Scientific Seminar on the Discourse of Overseas Iranian Youth, Tehran, Iran Summer 2005.

Gilbertson, G. and D. Gurak (1993), Broadening the Enclave Debate: The Labor Market Experience of Dominican and Colombian Men in New York City. In: *Sociological Forum* 8(2), pp. 205-220.

Graaf, N. de and H. Flap (1988), With a Little Help from My Friends: Social Resources as an Explanation of Occupational Status and Income in West Germany, The Netherlands and the United States. In: *Social Forces* 67, pp. 452-472.

Granovetter, M. (1973), The Strength of Weak Ties. In: *The American Journal of Sociology* 78(6), pp. 1360-1380.

Granovetter, M. (1974), *Getting a Job*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gregg, A. (2006), Identity Crisis. In: *Walrus Magazine*, pp. 38–47.

Grönqvist, H. (2006), Ethic Enclaves and the Attainments of Immigrant Children. In: *European Sociological Review* 22(4), pp. 369-382.

Guarnizo, L. (1992), The emergence of a transnational social formation and the mirage of return migration amongst Dominican transmigrants. In: *Identities* 4, pp. 281-322.

Homans, G. (1961), *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Hulchanski, J. D. (2007), The Three Cities Within Toronto: Income polarisation among Toronto's neighbourhoods, 1970-2000. In: *Research Bulletin* 41, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, Toronto.

Ibarra, H. (1993), Personal networks of women and minorities in management: A conceptual framework. In: *Academic Management Review* 18, pp. 56-87.

Jann, B. (2003), Old Boy Network. Militärdienst und ziviler Berufserfolg in der Schweiz. In: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 32, pp. 139-155.

Johnston, R. et al. (2005), Neighborhood social capital and neighbourhood effects. In: *Environment and Planning A* 37, pp. 1443-1459.

Kelly, P. (2003), Canadian-Asian Transnationalism. In: *The Canadian Geographer* 47(3), pp. 209-218.

Kelly, P. and T. Lusis (2006), Migration and the Transnational Habitus: Evidence from Canada and the Philippines. In: *Environment and Planning A* 38(5), pp. 81-848.

Khanlou, N. et al. (2008), Cultural Identity and Experiences of Prejudice and Discrimination of Afghan and Iranian immigrant Youth. In: *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 6, pp. 494-513.

Kloosterman, R. and J. van der Leun (1999), Just for Starters: commercial gentrification by immigrant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam and Rotterdam neighbourhoods. In: *Housing Studies* 14, pp. 659-677.

Korenman, S. and S. Turner (1996), Employment Contacts and Minority-White Wage Differences. In: *Industrial Relations* 35, pp. 106-122.

Lazarsfeld P. and R. Merton (1954), Friendship as a social process: a substantive and methodological analysis. In: M. Berger, ed., *Freedom and Control in Modern Society,* pp. 18-66. New York: Van Nostrand.

Lewis, O. (1986), The culture of poverty. In: R.T. LeGates and F. Stout, eds., *The City Reader*. London/New York: Routledge.

Ley, D. (1999), Myths and meanings of immigration and the metropolis. In: *The Canadian Geographer* 43, pp. 2-19.

Li, P. (2003), *Destination Canada: Immigration Debates and Issues*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Light, I. and C. Rosenstein (1995), Expanding the interaction theory of entrepreneurship. In: A. Portes, ed., *The Economic Sociology of Immigration*, pp. 166- 212. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lin, N. (1999), Social Networks and Status Attainment. In: *Annual Review of Sociology* 25, pp. 467-487.

Lin, N. (2001), *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Actions*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Loury, G. (1977), A dynamic Theory of Racial Income Differences. In: P. Wallace and A. LaMond, eds., *Women Minorities, and Employment Discrimination,* pp. 153-188. Lexington, MA: Heath.

Loury, L. (2006), Some Contacts are More Equal than Others: Informal Networks, Job Tenure and Wages. In: *Journal of Labour Economics* 24(2), pp. 299-318.

Magocsi, P.R., ed. (1999), The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Marsden, P. and J. Hurlbert (1988), Social Resources and Mobility Outcomes: A Replication and Extension. In: *Social Forces* 66(4), pp. 1038-1059.

Martin, P. and M. Olds, eds. (2003), Geografica. De grote wereldatlas met landenprofielen. Groningen: Textcase. Herziene editie.

McPherson et al. (2001), Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks. In: *Annual Review of Sociology* 27, pp. 415-444.

Mills, B. (2005), The Transnational Community as an Agent for Caribbean Development. Aid from New York City and Toronto to Carriacou, Grenada. In: *Southeastern Geographer* 45(2), pp. 174-191.

Mollica, K. (2003), Racial Homophily and Its Persistence in Newcomers' Social Networks. In: *Organization Science* 14(2), pp. 123-136.

Montgomery, J. (1992), Job Search and Network Composition: Implications of the Strength-Of-Weak-Ties Hypothesis. In: *American Sociological Review* 57(5), pp. 586-596.

Mouw, T. (2003), Social Capital and Finding a Job: Do Contacts Matter? In: *American Sociological Review* 68(6), pp. 868-898.

Murdie, R. (2003), Housing Affordability and Toronto's Rental Market: Perspectives from the Housing Careers of Jamaican, Polish and Somali Newcomers. In: *Housing, Theory and Society* 20, pp. 183-196.

Murdie, R. (2008), Diversity and Concentration in Canadian Immigration. In: *Research Bulletin* 42, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto.

Murdie, R. and C. Teixiera (2003), Towards a Comfortable Neighbourhood and Appropriate Housing: Immigrant Experiences in Toronto. In: P. Anisef and M. Lanphier, eds., *The World in a City*, pp. 132-191. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Murray, C. (1984), *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980*. New York, Basic Books.

Musterd, S. et al. (2003), Neighbourhood Effects and Social Mobility: A Longitudinal Analysis. In: *Housing Studies* 18(6), pp. 877-892.

Musterd, S. et al. (2008), Are immigrants earnings influenced by the characteristics of their neighbours? In: *Environment and Planning A* 40, pp. 785-805.

Musterd, S. and R. Andersson (2006), Employment, Social Mobility and Neighbourhood Effects: The Case of Sweden. In: *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30(1), pp. 120-140.

Omidvar, R. and T. Richmond (2005), Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada. In: *Policy Matters* 16, CERIS, Toronto.

Opoku-Dapaah, E. (1995*), Somali Refugees in Toronto: A Profile.* Toronto: York Lanes Press.

Patterson, R. (2006), Transnationalism: Diaspora-Homeland Development. In: *Social Forces* 84(4), pp. 1891-1907.

Plickert, G. et al. (2007), It's not who you know, it's how you know them: Who exchanges what with whom? In: *Social Networks* 29, pp. 405-429.

Portes, A. (1995), *The Economic Sociology of Immigration: Essays on Networks, Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Portes, A. (1998), Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. In: *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, pp. 1-24.

Portes, A. (2009), Migration, Integration, Development: What can we learn from Mexico and the United States? Presentation on the 18th of June, 2009, Utrecht University.

Portes, A. et al. (1999), The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and the Promise of an Emergent Research Field. In: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2), pp. 217-37.

Portes, A. and J. Sensenbrenner (1993), Embeddedness and immigration: notes on the social determinants of economic action. In: *American Journal of Sociology* 98, pp. 1320-1350.

Portes, A. and M. Zhou (1996), Self-Employment and the Earnings of Immigrants. In: *American Sociological Review* 61(2), pp. 219-230.

Putnam, R. (1993), The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life. In: *American Prospect,* spring, pp. 35-42.

Quadeer, M. (2004), Ethnic Segregation in a Multicultural City: The Case of Toronto, Canada. In: *Policy Matters* 6, CERIS, Toronto.

Ray, B. and V. Preston (2009), Are Immigrants Socially Isolated? An Assessment of Neighbors and Neighboring Canadian Cities. In: *International Migration and Integration* 10, pp. 217-244.

Roberts, B. et al. (1999), Transnational migrant communities and Mexican migration to the US. In: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2), pp. 238-266.

Ryan, L. (2007), Migrant Women, Social Networks and Motherhood: The Experience of Irish Nurses in Britain. In: *Sociology* 41(2), pp. 295-312.

Ryan et al. (2008), Social networks, social support and social capital. In: *Sociology* 42(4), pp. 672-689.

Schiller, N.G, L. Basch and C. Blanc-Szanton (1992), Transnationalism: a new analytic framework for understanding migration. In: *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 645, pp. 1-24.

Sharma, A. (2003), Come home, we need you. In: *Far Eastern Economic Review* 23, pp. 28-32.

Staiger, D. (1990), *The Effect of Connections on the Wages and Mobility of Young Workers.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Teixeira, C. (2007), Toronto's Little Portugal. A Neighbourhood in Transition. In: *Research Bulletin* 35, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, Toronto.

Urban, S. (2009), Is the Neighbourhood Effect an Economic or an Immigrant Issue? A Study of the Importance of the Childhood Neighbourhood for Future Integration into the Labour Market. In: *Urban Studies* 46(3), pp. 583-603.

Vertovec, S. (1999), Conceiving and researching transnationalism. In: *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2), pp. 447-462.

Vertovec, S. (2001), Transnationalism and Identity. In: *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27(4), pp. 573-582.

Waldinger, R. (1996), *Still the Promised City?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walton-Roberts M. (2003), Transnational geographies: Indian immigration to Canada. In: *The Canadian Geographer* 47(3), pp. 235-250.

Waters, J. (2003), Flexible citizens? Transnationalism and citizenship amongst economic immigrants in Vancouver. In: *The Canadian Geographer* 47(3), pp. 219-234.

Wellman, B. (1996), Are personal communities local? A Dumptarian reconsideration. In: *Social Networks* 18(3), pp. 347–354.

Wellman, B. and D. Tindall (1993), Reach out and touch some bodies: how telephone networks connect social networks. In: *Progress in Communication Science* 12, pp. 63-94.

Wellman, B. and S. Wortley (1990), Different Strokes from Different Folks: Community Ties and Social Support. In: *American Journal of Sociology* 97(3), pp. 558-588.

Wieditz, T. (2007), Liberty Village. The Makeover of Toronto's King and Dufferin Area. In: *Research Bulletin* 32, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, Toronto.

Wierzbicki, S. (2004), *Beyond the Immigrant Enclave: Network Change and Assimilation.* New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Willmott, P. (1987), *Friendship Networks and Social Support.* London: Policy Studies Institute.

Wilson, W. (1987), *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy.* Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Wilson, W. (1996), *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Wilson, K. and A. Portes (1980), Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami. In: *American Journal of Sociology* 86, pp. 295-319.

Winchie, D. and D. Carment (1989), Migration and motivation: the migrant's perspective. In: *International Migration Review* 23, pp. 96-104.

Yakubovich, V. (2005), Weak Ties, Information, and Influence: How Workers Find Jobs in a Local Russian Labor Market. In: *American Sociological Review* 70, pp. 408-421.

Appendices

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Date: January 12, 2010

Study Name: "Where you live versus who you know". A study investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

Researcher: Zita Ingen-Housz, MSc student, Department of Human geography and planning, University of Utrecht

Purpose of the Study: To provide insight into the way social networks of Iranians living in Toronto operate and evolve during the course of life, thereby contributing to our knowledge on the Iranian community in Toronto and investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research: You will be interviewed by the researcher and this interview consists of three parts, (a) a brief questionnaire on general characteristics, (b) life-history calendars, and (c) a face-to-face interview, which together will approximately take one hour of your time.

Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you can decide not to answer certain questions or stop participating anytime. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be destroyed.

Confidentiality: Our conversation will be voice-recorded for analyzing purposes, using a digital audio recorder. Please note that all data recorded will be held in confidence and used for my own study purposes only. Your data will be safely stored in a locked facility and password protected computer and only I and my supervisor will have access to this information. Please note that parts of the interview might be used in my thesis/publication (e.g. as quotes), but your name will not appear in any reports or publications of my research.

Questions About the Research? If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Zita Ingen-Housz either by telephone at 416-577-4743 or by e-mail (zita.ingen.housz@gmail.com)

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I_____consent to participate in: "Where you live versus who you know". A study investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration by Zita Ingen-Housz. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature_____   **Date**_____
Participant

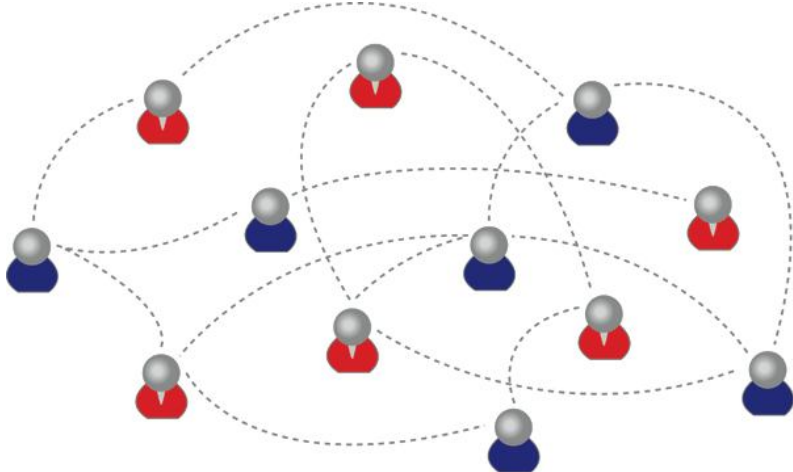**Signature**_____   **Date**_____
Researcher: Zita Ingen-Housz

Where you live versus who you know. A study investigating the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

By Zita Ingen-Housz (BSc), Utrecht University, The Netherlands

What is my research about? In a nutshell I am researching social networks with a special interest in the Iranian community in Toronto. The goal of my research is to provide insight into the way social networks operate and evolve during the course of life, in order to investigate the need for a new perspective on residential concentration.

Why the Iranian community? Unfortunately, not much research is done on the Iranian community in Canada and Toronto in particular. Therefore, I hope my study contributes to our knowledge on the Iranian community here in Toronto and Canada, and provides better understanding of the way social networks shape their lives.

What are the interviews like? The interviews consist of a brief questionnaire and a face-to-face interview, which together will approximately take one hour to an hour and a half of your time.

I need your help: I am looking for members of the Iranian Community to interview (born in Iran and above the age of 18) and who are willing to talk to me about their experiences, both living inside of the Willowdale East neighbourhood (Between Yonge street, Highway 401, Finch Ave. and Willowdale Ave.) and in other neighbourhoods in the GTA

113

Appendix C: Questionnaire

A) Questionnaire on individual characteristics

- What is your marital status?

  ○ Married
  ○ Living common-law
  ○ Widowed
  ○ Separated
  ○ Divorced
  ○ Single, never married

- Status

  0 Canadian Citizen
  0 Landed Immigrant (permanent resident)
  0 Temporary Resident (e.g. on a work or study permit)
  0 Other……….

- Year of birth
  ………………………………

- Country of birth
  ……………………………….

- Year of immigration to Canada
  …………………………………

- What ethnic group would you say you belong to?

  0 Iranian
  0 Persian
  0 Azeri
  0 Gilaki
  0 Mazandarani
  0 Kurd
  0 Arab
  0 Lur
  0 Baluch
  0 Turkmen
  0 Other…………..

- What religion do you affiliate with?

  0 No religion (Agnostic, Atheist)
  0 Roman Catholic
  0 Islam (Muslim)
  0 Judaism
  0 Hinduism
  0 Buddhism
  0 Other…….

- What is the highest level of education that you have attained?

  ○ less than a high school diploma
  ○ secondary (high) school diploma or equivalent?
  ○ trade/vocational certificate?
  ○ apprenticeship certificate?
  ○ community college, CEGEP, or nursing school diploma?
  ○ university certificate or diploma below Bachelor's?
  ○ bachelor's degree (B.A., B.Sc., B.Ed.)?
  ○ university degree, certificate or diploma above a Bachelor's
  (LL.B., M.D., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.V.M., O.D., M.A., M.Sc., M.Ed.,
  Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Ed.)?
  ○ other: …………………..

- Where did you attain this level of education?

  ○ Iran
  ○ Canada
  ○ Other: …………...

- Could you please indicate your main activity (the activity that takes most of your time):
  (Note: If you feel like you have more than one main activity, please tick multiple boxes)

  ○ Maintaining a household
  ○ Paid worker (Full-time)
  ○ Paid worker (Part-time)
  ○ Self-employed
  ○ Looking for work
  ○ Working in a family business
  ○ Going to school/studying (e.g. college/university) -> **please specify** (e.g. which
  program/which year) ………………………………………………………………
  ○ Retired
  ○ Caring for family members
  ○ Ill for a long time or disabled
  ○ Doing volunteer work
  ○ No main activity
  ○ Other…..

- If you have a paid job or are self-employed, could you please indicate what kind of business, industry or service you work in? (e.g., health,
  education, government, construction)?
  …………………………………..

- If you have a paid job or are self-employed, could you please indicate what kind of work you do in this job (e.g., doctor, nurse, teacher,
  office clerk, plumber)?
  …………………………………..

- If you have a paid job or are self-employed, could you give me a rough indication of your yearly wage/salary before taxes or deduction?

  ○ Under $5,000
  ○ $5,000 to $9,999
  ○ $10,000 to $19,999
  ○ $20,000 to $29,999
  ○ $30,000 to $39,999
  ○ $40,000 to $49,999
  ○ $50,000 to $79,999
  ○ $80,000 or more

- Please indicate you living situation:

Note: A household is defined as being composed of a group of persons who co-reside in, or occupy, a dwelling. However, room-mates who share a dwelling are not considered to be a household.

  ○ part of a household
  ○ living on my own, no shared facilities (e.g. own apartment)
  ○ living on my own, shared facilities (e.g. room in student house)
  ○ other: ……………………………………………………………………………………………

- If you are part of a household, could you please indicate how many people this household contains and briefly describe your relationship with each of the household members and the main activities of each household member? *Example: 4 persons in the household, husband (50 years old, full time job in construction), daughter (12 years old, elementary school) and son (9 years old, elementary school).*
  ………
  ………
  ………
  ………
  ………

Note: The following questions only apply when you are married or living common-law.

- Status **Partner**
  0 Canadian Citizen
  0 Landed Immigrant (permanent resident)
  0 Temporary Resident (e.g. on a work or study permit)
  0 Other……….

- Year of birth **partner**
  ……………………………..

- Country of birth **partner**
  ……………………………….

- What ethnic group would you say your **partner** belongs to?

  0 Iranian
  0 Persian
  0 Azeri
  0 Gilaki
  0 Mazandarani
  0 Kurd
  0 Arab
  0 Lur
  0 Baluch
  0 Turkmen
  0 Other…………..

- What religion does your **partner** affiliate with?
  0 No religion (Agnostic, Atheist)
  0 Roman Catholic
  0 Islam (Muslim)
  0 Judaism
  0 Hinduism
  0 Buddhism
  0 Other…….

- What is the highest level of education that **your partner** has attained?

  ○ less than a high school diploma
  ○ secondary (high) school diploma or equivalent?
  ○ trade/vocational certificate?
  ○ apprenticeship certificate?
  ○ community college, CEGEP, or nursing school diploma?
  ○ university certificate or diploma below Bachelor's?
  ○ bachelor's degree (B.A., B.Sc., B.Ed.)?
  ○ university degree, certificate or diploma above a Bachelor's
  (LL.B., M.D., D.D.S., D.M.D., D.V.M., O.D., M.A., M.Sc., M.Ed.,
  Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Ed.)?
  ○ other: …………………..

- Where did **he/she** attain this level of education?
  ○ Iran
  ○ Canada
  ○ Other: …………..

Could you please indicate your **partners** main activity (the activity that takes most of his/her time).
(Note: If you feel like you he/she has more than one main activity, please tick multiple boxes)

- ○ Maintaining a household
- ○ Paid worker (Full-time)
- ○ Paid worker (Part-time)
- ○ Self-employed
- ○ Working in a family business
- ○ Starting a business
- ○ Going to school/studying (e.g. college/university)
- ○ Retired
- ○ Looking for work
- ○ Caring for family members
- ○ Ill for a long time or disabled
- ○ Doing volunteer work
- ○ No main activity
- ○ Other…..

- If **your partner** has a paid job or is self-employed, could you please indicate what kind of business, industry or service you work in? (e.g., health, education, government, construction)?
  ………………………………………..

- If **your partner** has a paid job or are self-employed, could you please indicate what kind of work you do in this job (e.g., doctor, nurse, teacher, office clerk, plumber)?
  ………………………………………..

- If **your partner** has a paid job or is self-employed, could you give me a rough indication of his/her yearly wage/salary before taxes or deduction?

- ○ Under $5,000
- ○ $5,000 to $9,999
- ○ $10,000 to $19,999
- ○ $20,000 to $29,999
- ○ $30,000 to $39,999
- ○ $40,000 to $49,999
- ○ $50,000 to $79,999
- ○ $80,000 or more

Thank you for you cooperation!

Appendix D: Interview guide semi-structured interviews

B) Interview Guide semi-structured interviews

<u>Introductory Questions </u>(to break the ice, get an idea of the 'background' of their immigration)

- I see you that you moved to Canada in ……..
- Did you directly move to Canada from Iran or did you move to an other country first?
- What was your or you family's main motivation for immigration to Canada? (part of family reunification, economic reasons etc.)
- Why Canada and not.. Germany?
- Are you planning to stay in Canada or do you have intentions to move back to Iran in the future?

<u>Residential moves</u>

- What is the closest major intersection near your current residence?
- Did you move residences since you arrived in Canada in…….?
- If yes, ask them how many times they moved, the major intersection/characteristics of these residential locations etc. -> fill in live history calendar!
- Ask them for **reasons of residential moves** and **why they chose a certain area** to live (e.g. Persian community, Persian shops, close to work, at TTC line …..)

<u>Job changes (if applicable)</u>

- So is see you currently work as ………………….
- Did you change since you arrive in Canada?
- If yes, ask them about these different jobs (fill in life history calendar)
- Ask them for **reasons of job changes**

<u>Specific Questions</u>

Part 1: Operation of social networks

This set of questions is about the span of your social networks and the characteristics of the people in those social networks.. it's about your current situation..

- Could you give me an idea of the people that you are in contact with in your neighbourhood? (e.g. do you have contact with your neighbours, do you have friends/family living in the neighbourhood?)

*While they talk about these people I will ask them about their **characteristics** (their relation to them (e.g family/friends) ethnicity, age), **how they got in contact with them** (knew them from back home/collegues job Toronto) and follow up with questions about the contacts they have in Toronto (+the characteristics of these people), the contacts they have outside of Toronto (but in Canada) and the contacts that they have abroad and in Iran while at the same time asking about the characteristics of these people (age, ethnicity). Also ask how they keep in touch with those friends in different localities.*

- Would you say that most of your contacts at this moment in time are from back home (knew them before) or would you say that they are 'new'?

- How did you get in contact with these 'new' friends/meet them?

- If you have a job, what is the contact with your colleagues like?

- Do you keep in touch with relatives/friends/acquaintances abroad/back home (e.g. Iran) and can you tell me something about your relation to them? (e.g. do you still have lots of family members/friends in Iran?)

- If so, by what means (phone/email/travel….) and how often?

- Do you engage in virtual activities? (I am talking about your use of internet for social contacts -> e.g. chat, skype, email, facebook)

- With whom (relatives/friends/acquaintances) do you engage in these virtual activities, and how often/when?

- Let's say you wake up on a for you standard week day, could you walk me through your day and tell me what activities you perform (e.g. work, shopping, visiting friends, emailing) and where you perform those activities (in your neighbourhood or somewhere else?) (**do they make use of Iranian business strip north york**?)

- Whom of all the people we just talked about (so friends in Toronto, family abroad etc.) do you consider to be your most important social contacts, and why? Is this also the person you have MOST contact with or is that somebody else? (you also need to find out where these social contacts live and what is the nature of the social contact is)?

- How important do you find the contacts that you have in your neighbourhood, as compared to social contacts outside of your neighbourhood? (LET THEM EXPLAIN)

- How important are neighbourhood based contacts as compared to contacts through virtual channels?

Help and Support

*Now I want you to think about the help/support that you derive from social contacts in the social networks we talked about before. Examples of support: **money/help with child care (instrumental), mental support (emotional), tips about jobs/housing (informational).***

- From whom in your social networks do you derive help and support? So for example lets start with the contacts you have in your neighbourhood.. do you derive help and/or support from these contacts? (could you make sure that these examples are kind of representative for the contacts in this locality?)

- What about the contacts in Toronto, outside of your neighbourhood?

- What about contacts in other places in Canada?

- What about contacts abroad/ back home?

When they start talking about certain persons and examples of help/support the derived from them, I will ask them what the nature of the support is (borrowing tools,, helping with finding a house or buying a car, picking kids up from school etc.), and who these people are (some characteristics like ethnicity, age etc) If they don't know anything I will steer them a bit more: e.g. What if you need emotional support.. who would you turn to?

- Do you derive help and support through virtual channels such as email/skype /chat /facebook? *If so, please explain! (e.g emotional support? Or information?)*

- Could you give me an example of help/support you actually received from and have given to contacts in your social networks this last month (last 30 days)? (e.g. borrowing tools, picking up kids from school etc.).

- Could you indicate if you have ever received help and/or support that resulted in getting a job or finding a place to stay or anything else in this realm? *If yes, ask about characteristics social contact, where they live etc. (e.g. whom helped with moving/ getting a new job?)*

- Whom do you find most important for getting:

- emotional help/support
- informational help/support
- instrumental help/support

- How important do you find contacts through virtual channels for help and support as compared to neighbourhood based contacts?

Part 2: Development of social networks

RQ2a) How does the balance between different types of immigrant social networks change through life, and how does the role of the residential neighbourhood change therein?

This second part of the interview will focus on the development of your social contacts over time since you moved to Canada. The following questions will therefore invite you to go back in time.

- Could you say something about the development of your social contacts over time from the moment you moved to Canada until now? e.g. gradually less contact/ more contact/…)

    - contacts in your neighbourhood (even if you moved)
    - outside of their neighbourhood (other Toronto)
    - Canada
    - Abroad/Iran (family/friends back home)

- How did the use of virtual channels for social contacts (e.g skype, email, facebook) develop from the moment you moved to Canada until now?

RQ2b) How does the importance of social contacts in the neighbourhood as sources of help and support, change through immigrants their lives as compared to other social support networks?

- How important do you find the contacts in your neighbourhood for providing help and support as compared to other contacts at this moment in time? (outside of your neighbourhood -Toronto, Canada, abroad, Iran) ?
- If you think about when you first arrived here in Toronto, how important were contacts in the neighbourhood for help and support as compared to contacts abroad/ back home for help and support?
- How important were contacts in you neighbourhood for help and support upon initial settlement as compared to contacts in other neighbourhoods in the GTA or other cities in Canada?
- Can you identify periods in your life in which you felt that the contacts in your neighbourhood were the mort important source of help and support?

RQ2c) In what way do the life course events as immigration, residential moves and job changes influence which social networks are drawn upon by immigrants?

- Upon arrival in Canada, whom proved to be most important as sources of help and support and could you also say something about the nature of this support?

- Did you receive help and or support in the process towards immigration to Canada? If so, could you tell me something about those people (characteristics)

- If not yet talked about, ask who helped them with getting a new job/ new place to stay (also ask about their characteristics) (e.g. colleagues sending resumes etc)