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**"Migration, Diaspora and Transnationalism:
Transformations of Religion and Culture in a Globalising Age"**

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Autobiographical Out-Takes: Irish Catholics and Punjabi Sikhs Overseas

As an undergraduate student during the late 1980s, I encountered (what was still called) 'Comparative Religion' for the first time. As part of the course, students were introduced to the religions and cultures of so-called 'ethnic minorities', especially South Asian heritage Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Parsis. While preparing for end of term examinations, I remember very clearly, a long, early summer's day spent reading a study of migration from rural India. An educationalist's account of the significance of family, home, language and religion for the children of Indians overseas, it explores 'how far the social traditions of the Punjabi villages are being maintained in Sikh households' (James, 1974: 2).[1] This early study of how religion and culture 'travel', how they alter and change as people move, mix and re-make their lives in new settings, what they 'preserve', 'lose' and 'gain', and the impact of all this on their identification with 'homes' new and old, really captured my interest. Although, I did not consciously make such a connection at the time, I imagine now that it had much to do with my own sense of identity. As with so many people, in so many different places, during the modern period, my family history has been shaped by forces of international migration.

Like the Punjabi Sikhs described by James, I grew up with a strong sense of religious and cultural distinctiveness. In a small market town in the English Midlands I did not experience the overt hostility often shown to 'people of colour'. However, against the general context of John Paul II's papal visits and a 'civil war' in 'the North', growing up in a nationalist family from rural Ireland ensured a very ambiguous sense of belonging to 'Protestant' England. My early life and socialisation in the 1970s and 1980s revolved around various Catholic institutions: a church with an Irish parish priest; three schools often staffed by Irish teachers; and a social club where the 'navvies' drank and Irish bands played ballads about rebellion and the migrant's sense of opportunity and loss. A deep connection with Catholic Ireland was reinforced by visits 'home' every summer and the regular arrival, from across the water, of St. Patrick's Day cards and religious paraphernalia from rosaries to relics. Broader but less intense links were maintained with 'the Yanks' (unfamiliar Irish-American relatives) who arrived periodically for weddings and funerals and Catholic missionaries who returned from India or Africa to raise funds and remind us that 'the poor' would eventually be sending missions back to us.[2] The latter, in particular, pointed beyond attempts to reproduce and encapsulate Irish Catholic 'tradition' in a alien setting, attempts which could not resist broader and more organic processes of cultural exchange and 'translation'. My local 'community' included some Catholics who were not Irish - Italians, Poles, Yugoslavs, even one or two

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[1] For other accounts of the Sikh diaspora see the relevant chapters in Ballard (1994), Hinnells (1997), Cohen (1997) and Coward et al (2000), as well as Tatla (1999).

[2] For an account of the Irish Catholic diaspora in England see Fielding (1993) and in America see McCaffrey (1997).

Africans and Pakistanis - and as a teenager especially, I was acculturated to (increasingly commodified and globalised forms of) English popular culture (mostly music and football).

Deciding to study Theology and Religious Studies at university opened up more cosmopolitan experiences. In multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-faith Manchester I found myself embracing the diversity of the city both intellectually and emotionally and my intended focus on Christian Theology was soon dropped in favour of Comparative Religion. Towards the end of a vacation spent packing eggs back in Nottinghamshire, 'inter-railing' around Europe, and meeting my future (English, non-Catholic) wife, I was also given the chance to spend one week studying religion more intensively 'in the field'. John R. Hinnells, Professor of Comparative Religion in Manchester at the time, had arranged for a small group of interested students to practice what John always preached, that is, 'get your hands dirty with religion'. We would stay at a United Reformed Church under the supervision of the resident minister, someone who was actively engaged in multi and inter-faith work in the West London suburb of Southall.

Doing Comparative Religion in 'Chota (Little) Punjab'
Southall, perhaps like parts of Houston, Washington D.C. or Northern California in the United States (Jurgensmeyer, 2002: 3), is one of any number of the world's 'chota (little) Punjabs'. It is seen by some as a 'ghetto' and by others as the busy, if slightly tatty, 'capital' of South Asian Britain (Baumann, 1996: 38). In 1991, just a few years after my stay, the decennial national census suggested that around 60% of Southall's 61,000 population were of South Asian heritage (1996: 48). Sikhs are the largest single religious grouping in the town, representing around 40% of the population (1996: 73). Like so many 'Chinatowns' or 'Little Italys' in today's global cities, institutions, organisations and businesses owned, and run, by people who trace their cultural heritage overseas have transformed the ecology of Southall's main streets. As well as gurdwaras (Sikh temples), mandirs (Hindu temples) and Muslim mosques, there are numerous 'Asian' grocers, pubs, butchers, video and music stores, jewellers, curry houses, sari shops and the offices of Des Pardes (Home and Abroad), the largest Punjabi language newspaper in Britain. Southall, then, is what anthropologists sometimes call 'institutionally complete' – it is 'a home abroad' to all things South Asian. Because of this, the town is a magnet for Asian family and visitors from the rest of England. It has even featured heavily in so-called 'Asian cool' movies such as Bend it Like Beckham (2002).

With all this on the doorstep, and briefed with a little local knowledge, I was encouraged to go out into Southall and simply 'do' Comparative Religion. I should attempt to produce, in outline, my own 'religious map' of the area, visiting places of worship and community organisations, observing and talking to people as best I could about such matter as:

- the background to, and history of, their migration;
- places of worship and their associated rituals;
- different religious movements, organisations and their leaderships;
- issues of gender and generation;
- the question of public recognition and multi-cultural / inter-faith relations;
- and, finally, continuing links with the Indian subcontinent and beyond.

Looking back now, there was a danger of becoming a 'Comparative Religion tourist' and unreflectively 'consuming' the 'difference' and 'exotica' around me. After all, 'why should people want to talk to me?', 'what did I have to offer?' and 'could I possibly hope to give

anything back?'. Nevertheless, somewhere in between the fear and the exhilaration of awkwardly made dialogues and connections, I was able to reflect that, given a general concern to 'maintain' religious and cultural identifications while all the time adapting to new circumstances, something that set them apart from the (ir)religious 'ethnic' majority in Britain, the South Asian heritage people I had met and spoken to in Southall probably had much in common with the parents and grandparents of the (admittedly increasingly assimilated) O'Sullivans, Passaseos and Heidukewitschs I had been to school with.

<u>Where Do We Go From Here? Reflection and Overview</u>
My experiences as a Catholic of Irish heritage, and those of Southall Sikhs of Punjabi heritage, provide just two ethnographic 'snapshots' of a diverse and complex global phenomenon, which since the 1990s especially, has often been described as 'diaspora religion' (Hinnells, 1997). The examples I have given locate both me and my academic career firmly in England, however 'diaspora religion' is, of course, 'everywhere'. In the United States, for example, The Pluralism Project at Harvard University has sought to map the changing religious landscape of America since the early 1990s. As director of the project, Professor Diana L. Eck (2002), argues, diversity is now a feature of 'Main Street' USA.[3] In Boston, The Pluralism Project has documented the history of 13 traditions and interfaith groups. One of the most prominent and long-standing of these is, undoubtedly, Irish-American Catholicism. Between 1820 and 1920, a massive four and a half million people left poverty and famine in Ireland for life in a modern American city in the making. Dominated by the 'New England' Protestant establishment, Boston in the nineteenth century was nevertheless increasingly the home of Italian and other Catholics from Southern and Eastern European, as well as Jews and Orthodox Christians. Today Irish Catholics in Boston are themselves part of the 'establishment', but they still share something of a 'transnational' tradition with newcomers such as the Vietnamese who have arrived in the city since the Immigration Act of 1965. While Irish Catholics in Boston and the English Midlands have quite different histories, I have no doubt that many of the themes in 'my story' would still have much resonance there.

Whether taken in America or in England my 'snapshots' of 'diaspora religion' are intended to give a certain depth and texture to a topic which, after all, is primarily concerned with the 'living religions' of 'real people'. 'We' are these people, or at least many of us will meet 'these people' on an everyday basis. Therefore, just as my own account reveals something of 'who I am' and 'where I'm coming from', I hope readers will be prompted to reflect on how they and their families, or at least the neighbourhoods, cities and countries in which they live, have be impacted by migration, diaspora and transnationalism. At its best, the study of religions and cultures should always provoke us to ponder the risks and rewards of learning about our 'selves' as we encounter the 'difference' of 'others'. Moreover, as we are beginning to see, diaspora religion is by no means confined to the experiences of 'people of colour' or the 'visible minorities' who have migrated from Asia, Africa and the Middle East in the post-war period. Discussions which mention both Irish and Vietnamese Catholics in the same breath, never mind Punjabi Sikhs, may be rare. However, history teaches us that migrants and diasporas do share many continuities of experience for all their differences. Indeed, what remains perhaps most interesting are the products of 'our' interactions, whoever 'we' are anymore.

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[3] A number of other resources have been produced including a CD Rom, On Common Ground: World Religions in America, Columbia University Press, 1996 / 2000. See http://www.pluralism.org.

In the rest of this chapter I will explore how the relatively new field of 'diaspora religion' has evolved and developed within what is variously identified as Comparative Religion, the History of Religions, Religious Studies and the Study of Religion. For pragmatic reasons, I draw no particular distinctions between these different labels here. Indeed, I tend to use them interchangeably. The chapter continues with some general definitions of 'migration', 'diaspora' and 'transnationalism', drawing out the distinctions made by Professor Steven Vertovec (2000a), director of the recently completed Transnational Communities Programme at the University of Oxford.[4] Vertovec's key points are illustrated with further reference to James' Sikh Children in Britain (1974: 30-52).

My next task is to contextualise the current prominence of Diaspora and Trans-national Studies in the academy. While Professor Robin Cohen's (1997) excellent survey, Global Diasporas, demonstrates that the field has a long history often associated with Judaism, its contemporary high profile is closely linked to recent developments in globalisation and post-modern theory. Whereas, hitherto, there was a focus on the study of migrants and minorities within particular states, the emphasis now, is on the way that diasporas sustain both imagined and actual connections across borders, challenging the very idea of the nation. At this point I shall also move beyond commonsense definitions of other vocabulary I have begun to use, for example: 'culture', 'identity', 'hybridity', 'race', 'ethnicity', 'community' and 'multiculturalism'.

In terms of beginning to locate the Study of Religion in the context of these developments, an extremely helpful account is provided by Martin Baumann (2001), Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland.[5] In current genealogies the late Professor Ninian Smart (1987), of Lancaster and Santa Barbara Universities, is identified as the first to use the term. However, this fact should not obscure, as it sometimes does, that the roots of a distinctive research agenda for Religious Studies in this field actually lay elsewhere. My focus here is on the early work of one of the Religious Studies scholars working on migration and ethnicity during the 1980s, my colleague at the University of Leeds, and Director of the Community Religions Project, Professor Kim Knott (1986; 1992).[6]

The final parts of this chapter return us to an account of some of the main theoretical debates and empirical patterns and trends of the last decade or so. I explore the question of whether 'religions' can truly be considered 'diasporas', reflecting on the distinctions that are sometimes made between so-called 'ethnic' and 'universal' traditions. However, I also argue that it is the truly comparative mapping of migrant, diasporic and transnational religion that stands as the major achievement of scholars such as Professor Hinnells, both in his New Handbook of Living Religions (1997) and elsewhere.[7] By way of conclusion, I shall be arguing that, in the future the Study of Religion should pay greater attention to theorising the different types of 'work' done by religions in spaces of migration, diaspora and transnationalism.

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[4] See http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/. A number of papers referring to religion and transnationalism, including Vertovec (2000a), can be downloaded from this site.
[5] For an online copy of this and other papers on diaspora and migration, as well as materials on Buddhism in the West and Tamil Hindus in Germany, see Baumann's well-stocked homepage, http://www.baumann-martin.de/. See also Prebish and Baumann (2002) on Buddhism in the West.
[6] For a list of the Community Religions Project's publications see http://www.leeds.ac.uk/trs/respub/crp.htm. Notably, globalisation theory led Knott not so much into the study of diaspora but the study of locality and thence to the study of space. See The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis, London, Equinox Books, 2005.
[7] See also Hinnells' (2005) account of the Zoroastrian diaspora in eleven countries.

Migration, Diaspora and Transnationalism: Distinctions and Illustrations

> Diasporas arise from some form of migration, but not all migration involves diasporic consciousness; all transnational communities comprise diasporas, but not all diasporas develop transnationalism. (Vertovec, 2000a: 12)

Having outlined the general thrust of this chapter, my first task now is to suggest certain definitions and distinctions in terms of our main vocabulary of 'migration', 'diaspora' and 'transnationalism'. In this respect it will be useful to begin by reflecting on the significance of the above quotation from Vertovec (2000a). At first glance, perhaps, it seems to resemble a riddle. However, in essence, what Vertovec is suggesting here is that 'migration', 'diaspora' and 'transnationalism' are three separate, but related, terms. Each can be associated with particular patterns of socio-religious continuity and transformation, and scholars and students alike should seek to distinguish between them more carefully.

For Vertovec 'migration' involves movement and re-location from one place to another, something that has prompted people throughout the ages to 're-construct', or 're-make', their life-worlds in new contexts. Migrants very often form a 'minority' marked out from the 'ethnic' majority in terms of 'race', language, culture and / or religion. While 'diaspora' also suggests a community 'dispersed' or 'scattered' away from the homeland, Vertovec insists that it should be defined in terms of the continuing 'consciousness' of a connection, 'real' or 'imagined', to that homeland and 'co-ethnics' in other parts of the world. In the present age of accelerated globalisation, time and space are compressed by advances in communications technology to such an extent that people increasingly experience the world as 'a global village' or 'a single place'. Under these conditions diasporas can become 'trans-national', in the sense that social, economic, political and cultural 'circulations' or 'flows' between the homeland and its diasporas become very real indeed. However, this was not always the case historically and diasporas may have struggled to maintain contact and communication with the homeland while still imagining a sense of connection to it.

While lacking the more discriminating theoretical framework of Vertovec, James' study of Sikhs in a northern British town illustrates the distinctive notions of 'migrant', 'diasporic' and 'transnational' religion very well. In the early stages of settlement during the late 1950s and 1960s, the people James lived amongst had not sufficiently re-constructed their 'religious worlds' to be able to celebrate Diwali (the winter festival of light). This was because, living away from India, they lacked access to the knowledge of when it should 'properly' be observed (1974: 42). As wives and children began to join their husbands and fathers in England, some Punjabis acculturated to life in Britain by taking on various local customs such as marking birthdays, Christmas and Easter. Into the 1970s, by which time the 'community' was well established, the main Sikh festivals were being commemorated but, interestingly, many highly localised ritual celebrations linked to particular villages of the Punjab, had not survived (1974: 42). Religious and cultural re-construction can therefore involve processes of 'standardization' whereby those practices that command 'particular' rather than 'universal' allegiance do not 'travel' very well and are lost.

In a similar fashion, many Sikhs who had observed kesh (uncut hair) in the Punjab actually cut their hair and shaved their beards in Britain so as to look less conspicuous (1974: 49). However, as the numbers of migrants grew and families reunited, communities became more confident and keeping kesh became increasingly common. Moreover, when the wearing of turbans at work became a matter of controversy with employers, there were mass khande di

pahal (Sikh 'initiation' or 'baptism') ceremonies in places like Southall (1974: 47-8). Observed rigorously by only the minority in India, these became ritual and symbolic vehicles for the assertion of collective pride and resistance in the face of discrimination in Britain. Indeed, while never the whole story, the politicisation of religious identity can play an important role in the growth of 'revivalism' amongst migrant communities.

James suggests that, in theory at least, there are no specifically religious reasons for Sikhs to 'remember' the Punjab (1974: 43). Indeed there is a general question about whether 'religious' (as opposed to 'ethno-national' groupings) can truly be considered diasporas, a debate we shall return to in due course. Nevertheless, from their arrival in Britain, Sikhs have sustained numerous imagined and more tangible connections with the subcontinent. They are not required to make pilgrimage to the Punjab but many British-Sikhs do return for this purpose, especially to the symbolic centre of the faith, the Golden Temple at Amritsar (1974: 43-44). In the age of international jet travel, Sikhs from Britain were also able to charter aeroplanes to travel to Talwandi (in modern Pakistan) on the five-hundredth anniversary of Guru Nanak's birth in 1969 (1974: 44). However, even in the 1970s the traffic between Britain and the Punjab was never 'one-way'. For example, sants (saints) from the subcontinent would tour Britain, giving sermons, leading devotions and collecting donations and gifts, both to fund their trips but also to finance educational institutions and charitable concerns back in India (1974: 42-3). Coupled with the obvious importance of migrants' remittances, this underlines the reliance of the homeland on the diaspora, as well as vice versa.

'Babylon' and Beyond: The Study of Diaspora and Transnationalism

Now that we have some feel for the complexity and texture of our subject, there is a need to contextualise the growth, particularly in Diaspora Studies, over the last few decades. Describing something of a 'takeover' in the humanities and social sciences especially, Baumann (2001: 2) cites Khachig Tölöyan, the editor of Diaspora: a journal of transnational studies (launched 1991). Tölöyan argues that the new surge of popularity in Diaspora Studies has been accompanied by a 'decisive shift' in focus for the field. The term 'diaspora' was once used only in relation to the 'classical' Jewish, Greek and Armenian diasporas. However, its meaning now has expanded to encompass a much wider 'semantic domain' (Baumann, 2001: 2). Those social groups hitherto identified as 'immigrants', 'ethnic minorities', 'exiles', 'expatriates', 'refugees', 'guest-workers' and so on, have all been re-imagined as 'diasporas' today.

Cohen suggests that 'The word "diaspora" is derived from the Greek verb speiro (to sow) and the preposition dia (over)' (1997: ix). The ancient Greeks thought of this 'sowing over' mainly in terms of migration and colonisation. However for the Jews especially, it had the more negative connotation of enforced exile, whereas still others who have lived 'at home abroad', can be categorised neither as 'colonists' nor as 'victims'. Therefore the characteristics of 'diasporas' settled in specific places at specific points in time vary significantly. Indeed, Cohen (1997: x) produces a typology of diasporas, each 'type' exemplified by the experiences of particular 'ethnic groups':

- victim diasporas (e.g. Jews, Africans and Armenians);
- labour diasporas (e.g. Indians);
- trade diasporas (e.g. Chinese and Lebanese);
- imperial diasporas (e.g. British);
- cultural diasporas (e.g Caribbeans).

Here Cohen is not implying that the Jews can only be regarded as a 'victim diaspora'. At different times in history, they have been successful labour, trade and cultural diasporas (1997: xi). Indeed, given the variety of experiences subsumed by the term, he judges 'a grand overarching theory…impossible' (1997: xii). Nevertheless, Cohen still accumulates a list of what he regards as diasporas' 'common features' (1997: 26). This is reproduced here in a somewhat abbreviated form:

- i) dispersal from a homeland to two or more foreign regions;
- ii) or, expansion from a homeland in search of work, trade or empire;
- iii) a collective memory and myth about the homeland;
- iv) an idealization of the ancestral home and collective commitment to it;
- v) a return movement;
- vi) a strong ethnic group consciousness of distinctiveness over a long period;
- vii) a troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance;
- viii) a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnics elsewhere;
- ix) the possibility of enrichment in host countries tolerant of pluralism.

While all of the above suggests that it is no longer necessary to take Jewish experiences as the only paradigm of diaspora, it is clear from the literature that Judaism has a special place in Diaspora Studies.[8] For example, of 106 results produced in a search for 'religion and diaspora' titles at Amazon online bookstore (30 April 2004), 47 (nearly 50%) related to Jewish studies. Of course, Jews were made captives and exiles after Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians in the 6th century BCE and thereafter the idea of 'Babylon' became synonymous with oppression and exile in an alien land. However, as both Cohen (1997) and Ter Haar (1998) remark, even as the Jews of the diaspora 'remembered Zion', there was opportunity and creativity in 'Babylon' as many integrated and made their home there. Indeed, 'the Jewish communities in Alexandria, Antioch, Damascus, Asia Minor and Babylon became centres of civilisation, culture and learning' (Cohen, 1997: 5). For example, 'the term 'diaspora' itself became widely 'used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures explicitly intended for the Hellenic Jewish communities in Alexandria (circa 3rd century BCE)' (Braziel and Mannur 2003: 2). In a similar way, reflecting on the time of St. Paul, Jurgensmeyer describes Rome, Antioch and Corinth as 'multi-ethnic…urban melting pots' where Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Persian religions competed with, and left their mark upon, both Judaism and Christianity (2002: 4-5).

Before the 1960s, however, the study of diaspora was largely confined to more traditional approaches to Jewish and Christian Studies. Baumann suggests that much of this scholarship was 'historically descriptive' (2001: 2) and demonstrated little interest in the sort of theory or comparison that occupies many scholars today. In other academic circles, the study of diaspora first came to prominence in African Studies during the 1950s and 1960s. However, Baumann remarks that it took until the mid-1970s for interest to mushroom as 'diaspora' became associated with contemporary 'black' politics and memories of the impact of the transatlantic slave trade.[9] Clearly there are a number of parallels with the Jewish experience

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[8] For the Jewish diaspora, historical and contemporary, see the relevant chapters in Cohen (1997) and Ter Haar (1998) as well as Barclay (1996), Kaplan (2000) and Gilman (2003). See also the website of 'Beth Hatefutsoth', the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, at http://www.bh.org.il.

[9] Ter Haar (1998) notes that the African diaspora in Europe, as opposed to America and the Caribbean, has had rather different experiences. For religion in the African diaspora see also the chapter in Hinnells (1997), as well as Pitts (1993), Murphy (1994) and McCarthy Brown (2001).

here, including the biblical symbolism of living under oppression in 'Babylon' and the emergence of modern 'return' movements which often found a religio-nationalist expression, for example in Rastafarianism.

It was from African Studies that the term 'diaspora' entered the social sciences in the 1980s. By the 1990s, Sociologists, Anthropologists, Political Scientists and Cultural Studies scholars were all using the term to refer to various 'transnational communities'. A key feature of this and related literature has been close attention to the theorisation of such concepts as 'culture', 'identity', 'hybridity', 'race', 'ethnicity', 'community' and 'multiculturalism'. What follows next is a brief outline of some of these ideas.

Diaspora and the Global Post-modern: Culture, Hybridity and Ethnicity
The current salience of Diaspora Studies cannot be understood without reference to recent developments in globalisation and post-modern theory. As well as reproducing 'uneven' power relations between 'the Rest and the West', Hall (1992: 304-5) argues that the impact of globalisation has been contradictory. On the one hand, it has given rise to processes of cultural homogenisation whereby transnational corporations have exported the consumer-capitalism of the West worldwide. For obvious reasons, this is often known as the 'McWorld' phenomenon. On the other hand, because globalisation has also had the effect of relativising *the discreteness of different 'cultures'*, it has given rise to a defence of particularistic identities (Hall, 1992: 304). This second set of processes is what concerns us especially here and we shall now explore the twin notions of hybridity and ethnicity in more detail. Hybridity can be seen in terms of 'the fusion and intermixture of cultures' whereas ethnicity represents 'the reassertion of cultural distinctiveness'. In both cases, theorisations of culture are key.

Globalisation has intensified the 'de-territorialisation of culture'. That is, 'cultures' have become separated from any absolute connection with localities, regions or nations 'of origin'. In very general terms, earlier theories tended to conceive culture as 'something' unified and undivided, a list of essentially unchanging traits and customs contained by social structures and boundaries. However, anthropologists now speak of 'travelling cultures' (Clifford, 1994), breaking any necessary link between 'culture' and 'place'. Today, culture is understood as a practice rather than a characteristic, something people are in the continuous process of making and remaking, rather than something they have (Baumann, 1996; 1999).

Such a perspective reflects the influence of 'post-modernism'. Put simply, this suggests that the 'old certainties' and 'universal claims' associated with post-Enlightenment thinking are now in crisis. They are giving way to an acknowledgement of more uncertain and relative, more plural and contingent, constructions of identity and ways of knowing the world. For example, in modernist thinking identity was seen as relatively unified, stable and autonomous (Hall, 1992). However, such a view has gradually been replaced by more social and dialectical notions, where 'self' identifications are shaped and modified contextually in relation to the (often false) ascriptions of 'others'. Indeed, in the post-modern age, it is usual to talk about 'multiple' and 'criss-crossing' identities constantly under revision.

As 'migrants', 'diasporas' and 'transnationals' cross the borders of contemporary nation-states, their cultural identities are unconsciously hybridised. Bhabha (1994) suggests that this renegotiation takes place in the 'translated' spaces in-between 'cultures'. It is here that 'newness enters the world'. Indeed, it is now common to speak of 'hyphenated' 'African-American' or 'British-Asian' identities. Rather than the youth of diasporic communities being 'caught between two cultures', this suggests the emergence of a generation of 'skilled multi-

cultural navigators' whose practices cannot be contained by assumptions about their 'roots' as they improvise 'routes' in new directions (Gilroy, 1993; Ballard, 1994).

Moreover, the hybridity associated with boundary crossing also unsettles the powerful and highly politicised ideas about 'purity' and 'origins' still prevalent in society today (Gilroy, 1993; Brah, 1996). Modern genetics has shown that there are no separate 'racial' groups within humankind. In fact, the arguments of nineteenth century 'scientific-racism', which maintained that there was a hierarchy of 'races' among the people of the world, each with their own hereditary characteristics, are worthless. Nevertheless, in contemporary 'racisms', 'nationalisms', 'ethnic absolutisms' and 'religious fundamentalisms', it is common to find the mistaken suggestion that there are 'innate' cultural, as opposed to biological, differences between certain 'peoples', 'communities' and 'civilisations'.

There is no doubt, then, that hybridity alerts us to the ways in which apparently 'unified' cultural traditions are actually 'invented', reflecting specific historical contexts and power relations (Asad, 1993). It illuminates that significant exchanges have long existed between 'black' and 'white', 'the West' and 'the Rest'. However, for those not part of the cosmopolitan jet-setting elite that self-consciously 'celebrates difference', the intermixing and fusion of cultures can appear somewhat threatening (Werbner, 1997). Not least for diasporas, hybridity can be experienced in terms of transgression, doubt, crisis and alienation. In such a context, nostalgic emphasis on the particular 'chains of memory' and social networks associated with 'tradition' and 'community' can restore certainty in the face of cultural 'translation' (Hall, 1992).

What is equally clear, here, is that an effective 'politics', one that seriously challenges the uneven distribution of power and resources between 'majorities' and 'minorities', especially in the ghettoes of the world's global cities, has not emerged from the endless shifting of cultural boundaries (Asad, 1993). To be sure, we all have multiple identities (Hall, 1992). However, we must also 'speak from somewhere'. 'Being heard' requires an act of prioritising, of naming oneself, of coming into representation, if only momentarily. So, often 'blocked out' of identifying with countries of settlement because of racisms and nationalisms, Eastern European Jews, Irish Catholics, African Caribbean Christians and South Asian Muslims, have all turned to 'invented traditions' to find a political voice in diaspora (Hall, 1992). Such a response represents no literal 'return' to the past or simple 'reproduction' of traditional culture. Rather, what social anthropologists call ethnicity involves a dynamic 're-making' of cultural distinctiveness' in a new context. Notions of communal identity are organised symbolically through the construction of boundaries marked by signifiers such as language, custom and / or religion. It is the resulting solidarities that help groups to advance their own interests in competition with others outside such boundaries.

In the plural societies of liberal democracies, for example, these 'fictions of ethnic unity' have been useful in binding individuals together periodically, not least when diasporas have addressed themselves to the state or wider society (Werbner, 1997). Indeed, for both pragmatic and political reasons, the main vehicle for the public recognition of 'ethnic minorities', multicultural policy-making, has tended to promote the idea of 'communities' each with their own distinctive 'cultures'. Nevertheless, communities, whether ethnic, national or religious, are routinely made up of individual differences, conflicting constituencies and relations of power which silence women and young men especially. Indeed, as Cohen (1985) argues, it is only their 'symbolic form', and not their 'content', that is held in common. This

means that the multiple interpretations and meanings attached to such symbols can be reconciled.

Depending on the dynamics of any given context, then, and who one might be interacting with, people both hybridise and ethnicise their identities, that is, routinely cross and dissolve, as well as re-make and fix boundaries (Baumann, 1996; 1999). They take part in a wide range of overlapping 'cultures' and 'communities'. My contention is that only against the context of such theorising can an adequate account of 'diaspora religion' be given. In the second half of this chapter we trace the recent impact of Diaspora Studies on the Study of Religion.

The Study of 'Diaspora Religion':
In 1997, Hinnells' New Handbook of Living Religions was published. Since its first publication in 1984 the Handbook had acquired seven additional chapters 'on the subject of religion in migration, or diaspora religion' (1997: 1). By contrast, the 1984 edition had restricted any mention of diaspora to just two index entries ('Diaspora China' and 'Diaspora Jews'), while fleeting references to 'emigration', 'ethnic communities' and 'Asian immigrants' pointed only to a general chapter on the increasingly pluralistic and post-Christian patterns of religiosity in the West. If the New Handbook is anything to go by, then, 'diaspora' would seem to have arrived in Religious Studies.

Hinnells explains why he thinks the Study of Religion should take 'diaspora religion' seriously. In terms of promoting the relevance of the Study of Religion per se, both to potential students and those who fund education at all levels, he insists that the challenges posed to plural societies by recognising religious and cultural differences have been tremendously important (1997: 1-2). Indeed, elsewhere in the New Handbook, Hinnells argues that the presence of 'world religions' in global cities has raised the profile of religion generally, both encouraging new religious movements and reinforcing the public position of historic churches (1997: 845). However, despite this, and the fact that, contrary to many expectations, 'migrants are more rather than less religious after migration' (1997: 683), Hinnells observes that scholars of migration and diaspora in other disciplines have tended to overlook the significance of religion. Moreover, he also laments that, despite their growing size and evidence of their impact on migrants' homelands, diasporas are still of 'marginal' interest within Religious Studies (1997: 682).[10]

Hinnells is not alone in making these observations. Baumann, for example, suggests that in other disciplines the significance of religion is underplayed 'in favour of ethnicity and ethnic adherence' (2001: 7) while, for its part, 'The discipline of the history of religions is a real late-comer in adopting the diaspora term' (2000: 1).[11] We shall return to Baumann's point about religion and ethnicity in due course but his remarks about the History of Religions are worth pursuing briefly. He insightfully observes that, for sound academic reasons, many in this area of the field have been reluctant to embrace a term that they still associate with Jewish Studies:

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[10] For example, Braun and McCutcheon (2000) include entries on 'Ethnicity' and 'Culture' and Taylor (1998) 'Culture' and 'Territory' as well as a mentioning 'nomadization' in his introduction. However, there is no reference to migration, diaspora or transnationalism in either.

[11] Sharpe (1975 / 1986) does not mention the study of religion and migration, even in a footnote. A new chapter, added to map the field of Comparative Religion since 1970, was written in the mid-1980s, a time when 'diasporas' were beginning to make demands for recognition in respect of public services. Nevertheless, Sharpe does anticipate something of post-modernism and especially post-colonialism, trends that would ultimately make some areas of Comparative Religion hospitable to this new field.

the caution was (and is) in many cases also based on the knowledge of the term's origins and soteriological connotations, stirring up various problems for a cross-cultural, generalized application. (2001: 4)

Such comments begin to reveal the broad differences in attitude and approach that exist between the different methodological sub-fields of the Study of Religion, from mainly textual and historical, to mainly empirical and socio-cultural, studies. Despite the reticence of the former, by the mid-to-late 1990s diaspora had become the 'self-evident' term to describe religious communities settled overseas for the latter (2001: 4).

Notwithstanding the relatively late appearance of 'diaspora' in the Study of Religion, recent surveys are unanimous in tracing the first discussion of its significance to Ninian Smart. Baumann (2000; 2001), Vertovec (2000b) and Hinnells (2005) all follow Cohen (1997) in mentioning a short paper, 'The Importance of Diasporas', published in 1987. As Cohen suggests, the contribution is 'not fully theorized' (1997: 187). Indeed, there is perhaps an assumption that 'religious homelands' are the equivalent of 'ethno-national homelands' and little attempt is made to differentiate 'diaspora' from 'globalisation'. Nevertheless, both in this 'somewhat hidden article' (Baumann, 2000: 1) and a more easily accessible textbook of the late 1980s (Smart, 1989), patterns and trends in 'diaspora religion' are identified that other Religious Studies scholars would ultimately research in more depth.

Smart (1987) argues that, given the global communications revolution, more than ever before, religious communities are in a position to sustain contacts, not only with their homelands, but also with the sacred centres of their faith. Globalisation has intensified the possibilities for religions both to imagine and actively reproduce a sense of 'community' amongst co-religionists, for example during great pilgrimages such as the Muslim Hajj. As we have seen already, religions exhibit both continuity and transformation as they adapt to new contexts. However, Smart (1987) underlines that, generally speaking, rather than assimilate or liberalise, under the pluralizing conditions of contemporary globalisation, diasporas tend to emphasise 'universalising' religious tendencies such as 'ecumenism', 'orthodoxy' or 'fundamentalism'. Certainly, this chimes with what we heard about 'hybridity' and 'ethnicity', 'translation' and 'tradition', in the previous section. Indeed, Smart (1987) maintains that 'universalising' processes can be observed even amongst Hindu traditions, often characterised as essentially pluralistic and resistive of singular definitions. The self-consciousness of 'difference' provoked by interactions with 'others' in a diasporic context, both with the state, wider society and a broader range of co-religionists, has seen diasporas in 'the West' produce increasingly 'rationalised' and 'homogenising' accounts of their traditions. As Smart aptly puts it: 'though 'Buddh*ism'* [my emphasis] may not quite have existed before, it does now; and the same for all the other religions. Self-definition is becoming the order of the day' (1989: 556). Finally, Smart (1987) suggests that the centres of gravity within traditions are shifting and that it is unnecessary, now, for 'Western' scholars of religion to travel 'East' to study the various dimensions of Hinduism, Buddhism or other world faiths. Instead, there is no reason why they should not be studied 'at home'.

Since the publication of Smart (1987) the study of 'diaspora religion' has been elaborated significantly. Baumann notes that 'the term was applied with more rigor…during the mid-1990s' (2001: 4). In his New Handbook, for example, Hinnells (1997) 'named factors for a religion's change and continuity in diaspora situations and differentiated seven areas of research' (Baumann, 2001: 4). However, Baumann does not acknowledge that this agenda for research was adopted from those scholars who pioneered the study of religion, migration and

ethnicity during the 1980s. In many respects all that has changed in the shift from 'migration' to 'diaspora', at least in Religious Studies, is the vocabulary. So, to suggest that the study of 'diaspora religion' was 'new' in 1990s, as many scholars do, requires further qualification. However, before we say any more about the 1990s, I want to discuss some of the early work of my colleague, Professor Kim Knott, who has worked on the Community Religions Project at the University of Leeds since the mid-1980s. Knott did not especially anticipate the 'decisive shift' to 'diaspora' associated with globalisation and postmodernist theory. However, as we shall see, she was amongst the first to systematically analyse i) the theoretical relationship between religion, ethnicity and identity and ii) how the empirical 'content' of religion was changing, having been 'transplanted' overseas.

Religion, Migration and Ethnicity: Research Agendas for Religious Studies

> there have been relatively few accounts of migration and settlement in which religion has been described as having any significance for individuals and communities beyond its role in assisting them to organise, to reap material benefit or to enter dialogue or competition with the wider society…religions do perform these functions in many situations. However, they also have their own dynamics which, though related to social, political and economic contexts, are explained from within rather than from without (with recourse to their historical development, texts, value systems, ritual practices, socio-religious organisation etc). (Knott, 1992: 13)

These comments are taken from Knott's research paper, The Role of Religious Studies in Understanding the Ethnic Experience, first presented at a conference in Warsaw, Poland, in September 1989. Foreshadowing a similar assessment by both Hinnells (1997) and Baumann (2001), they represent a plea to Religious Studies scholars to be more active in the study of 'ethnic minority' religions, at least in part because the accounts of other disciplines have proved limited. Reflecting on the work of sociologists and anthropologists, Knott argues that 'with a few notable exceptions, they have failed to provide plausible accounts of the role and significance of religions in the lives of the groups they have described' (1992: 4-5). At the same time, Knott admits that, 'The discipline of Religious Studies in Britain or elsewhere has not so far developed a coherent perspective on ethnicity' (1992: 11). She suggests that this is partly because the study of 'migrant religion' is still new to the discipline, as is the idea of taking the 'social context of religion' seriously. Moreover, the dominant paradigm of Religious Studies, Phenomenology, had also tended to emphasise description over explanation. As a result social scientific assumptions about religion have often gone unchallenged.

In this respect Knott's main concern is that the literature on religion and ethnicity generally fails to distinguish sufficiently between the two. Religion is often seen merely 'as the passive instrument of ethnic identity' or 'in the service of ethnicity' (1992: 12). For Knott, while there is no doubt that religion can operate in this way, such an approach has obvious limitations: 'there are times when religion plays a more <u>active</u> role in the definition of an ethnic group's identity and behaviour than many of these accounts suggest ' (1992: 12). Knott identifies the work of Hans Mol, a sociologist of religion, as of particular use here. She finds his notion of religion as 'harnesser of change' and 'sacralizer of identity' especially suggestive. Mol is perhaps too quick to generalise about the 'essential function of religion', its 'most universal form', 'basic human needs' and so on (1979: 34). Nevertheless, he clearly elaborates on the remarks we have encountered so far about the significance of 'tradition'.

> Religion…seems to have more to do with an already established system of meaning, a stable tradition, an orderly delineation of a potentially disorderly existence. The essential function of religion cannot therefore be exhaustively summarized in terms of 'creative change'. Rather religion in its most universal form seems to function as an antidote to change, or as the 'harnesser' of change. If religion then somehow is bound up with a basic human need for delineation, order, one may define it as 'the sacralization of identity'. (1979: 34)

> It directs the attention to the boundary maintenance of an embattled ethnic culture in a strange environment. Religion seems to be always bound up with the clearer delineation of a culture…it also provides…an island of meaning, tradition and belonging in the sea of anomie of modern industrial societies. (1979: 37)

For Mol, religion, as a 'resource' with which to 'mark' ethnic identity, offers something that other 'cultural stuff' cannot. Backed by 'sacred' authority, religious boundaries would seem to provide more 'universal', and so less readily negotiable, vehicles for the articulation of distinctiveness than those associated with the customs of particular peoples and places. According to Mol, the function of religion is at least as much to do with an *'orderly delineation' and 'harnessing' of change* as opposed to *'creative change'*, a comment we might relate, once again, to the contrast between ethnicity and hybridity, tradition and translation, discussed earlier. In contrast to Mol, I would suggest that even the reproduction of a 'stable tradition' is always a creative act – to say the same thing in a new context is always to say something different (Baumann, 1996; 1999). Nevertheless, Mol's work very effectively underlines the fact that an emphasis on 'tradition' amongst many migrants, at least initially, represents no simple 'refusal to change', as sometimes suggested, but rather a dynamic adaptation strategy in the undeniable face of change.

If Mol's emphasis is on the function of religion in contexts of migration, elsewhere Knott (1986) argues that Religious Studies scholars must also be attentive to what happens to its specific content in such circumstances. 'How does a religion and the religiousness of its people change in an alien milieu? How are they different from their parent traditions in the homeland?' (1986: 8). Further to this empirical 'comparative religion exercise' (1986: 8), Knott has proposed a much cited and elaborated framework (see, for example, Hinnells, 1997; 2005), which allows us to 'map' the range of factors which might contribute to 'new patterns and forms of religious behaviour, organisation, experience and self-understanding' (1986: 10). These are the very factors which, as noted in the previous section, Baumann (2001) traces back only as far as Hinnells (1997). Indeed, writing slightly earlier, Knott covers the same ground as Smart (1987) only in more detail. The only difference would seem to be in terminology, 'migration' instead of 'diaspora'. In any case, Knott's (1986: 10-12) 'original factors' can be summarised thus:

- a) 'Home traditions' – i) the nature of the religion itself (e.g. its universality or ethnic particularity) and ii) the nature [and impact] of other cultural factors such as language, customs, food and dress, etc.

- b) 'Host traditions' – cultural, political, legal, educational, welfare, immigration and settlement procedures [e.g. the place of religion in society].[12]

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[12] The idea of 'host' societies is now inappropriate given the emergence of second and third generations born in the diaspora (Hinnells, 1997). However, Ter Haar (1998) argues that 'diaspora' can itself re-inscribe a focus on overseas 'origins' which places 'minorities' outside the nation.

- c) 'Nature of migration process' – from the homeland or other migration contexts [e.g. people who are 'twice migrants']; are migrants sojourners or settlers, economic migrants, exiles or refugees?

- d) 'Nature of migrant group' – religious and ethnic diversity, group size, geographical dispersion, division and cohesion (origin, history of settlement, caste and kinship, [social class and educational background]).

- e) 'Nature of host response' – social attitudes [discourses and practices] rather than cultural traditions, e.g. racism, attitudes to assimilation and integration, ecumenism.

For Knott, it is the complex relationships between these different factors that begin to explain the sheer diversity of expressions and trajectories of religions in contexts of migration. As well as choosing 'to standardize their beliefs and practices, to reject their 'little' traditions at the expense of their 'great' traditions' (1986: 13), religious individuals and communities may opt for, 'Increased traditionalism, new sects, unlikely religious unions, conversion and mission' (1992: 10). All form part of the re-making of religious traditions in new contexts. Looking to the future Knott argues that 'the Religious Studies approach…[is] in great need of unleashing' (1986: 13). However, in the mid- to late 1980s, the project of mapping the evolution of religious continuity and transformation had only just begun. In our penultimate two sections we trace how Knott's agenda for the study of migration and ethnicity in Religious Studies has developed since the 1980s, firstly in theoretical terms and then in more empirical terms.

Theorising 'Diaspora Religion': 'Ethnic' and 'Universal' Traditions?

> In general, I would argue that religions can provide additional cement to bind a diasporic consciousness, but they do not constitute diasporas in and of themselves…an overlap between faith and ethnicity is likely to enhance social cohesion…[but] The myth and idealization of a homeland and a return movement are also conspicuously absent in the case of world religions. Indeed one might suggest that their programmes are extraterritorial rather than territorial…On the other hand…spiritual affinity may generate a bond analogous to that of a diaspora. (Cohen, 1997: 189) [my emphasis]

The question of whether a particular tradition, or religions in general, can properly be described in terms of 'diaspora' has been one of the more obvious theoretical issues to occupy scholars in the last decade or so. However, ironically, perhaps the first thing to say about Cohen's discussion of religion and diaspora here is that it is immediately reminiscent of the social scientific conceptions of religion, migration and ethnicity examined by Knott (1986; 1992). In the same way that religion 'reinforced' ethnicity', Cohen suggests that religion provides 'additional cement' to diasporas and 'is likely to enhance social cohesion'. Indeed, for Cohen, diaspora is essentially an ethno-national phenomenon, something to do with peoples and places. Therefore religion can only ever be a supplementary factor, one of a number of 'cognate phenomena' (1997: 187). Referring to Hinnells' work on the Parsis, for example, Cohen argues that those Zoroastrians who migrated from Persia to India so as to 'survive' the Islamisation of early Muslim Iran, represent 'not so much a travelling nation then, as a travelling religion…Parsees…do not seek to return to, or to recreate, a homeland (1997: 188-9).

In his most recent monograph Hinnells (2005) takes issue with Cohen's arguments about the Parsees and religion per se. First, he notes that orientation to the homeland can be manifest in many ways to various degrees of intensity and, for some, cultural identification with the homeland may be far more important that return (Brah, 1996). Hinnells insists that many Parsis do still speak of themselves as 'Persians' and not 'Indians'. Not least because of the Islamic Republic in contemporary Iran, few currently consider 'retuning' to live there. Nevertheless, the Parsis do express their 'love for Persia' in various ways. For example, they furnish their homes with books, artefacts and symbols of ancient Iran and organise religious tours as and when possible. Second, Hinnells suggests that Cohen's comments also raise questions about what is meant by the term 'world religions'. If this simply suggests a tradition to be found in many countries around the world, and so related to globalisation and international migration, then Zoroastrianism would 'qualify', as would most other 'faiths' today. However, if, as Cohen suggests (1997: 188), a 'world religion' is a tradition open to all people in the world, particularly one for whom 'renewal' is linked to 'proselytism', then Hinnells (2005) is clear that not only Zoroastrianism, but also Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism, are not really 'world religions'.

Vertovec (2000a) takes up this debate in a somewhat different way. He is less concerned with what constitutes a 'world religion' than the distinctions that can be made between different 'types' of traditions. For example, Vertovec reminds us that, given the existence of the 'Zionist' and 'Khalistani' movements, Judaism and Sikhism are both exceptions to Cohen's general 'rule' about religions and homelands. Both 'religions' are in effect 'discrete ethnic groups' (2000a: 10). Indeed, he argues that if Judaism and Sikhism can be considered 'exceptions', as Cohen agrees they can, then so, too, can Hinduism. The emphasis here is on 'a place' as much as 'a people': 'no matter where in the world they live, most Hindus tend to sacralize India…[as] a spiritual homeland' (Vertovec, 2000a: 10).[13] As Hinnells (2005) remarks, Cohen's 'rule' is clearly one with a lot of exceptions. Nevertheless, if, following Knott (1986:11) and others, we differentiate between so-called 'ethnic' and 'universal' traditions, then Vertovec's distinctions make good sense. 'Ethnic' religions may properly represent 'diasporas'. However, for other, more 'universal' and missionary religions, less obviously tied to particular peoples or places, for example Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, the relationship with ethnicity can be very different:

> It broadens the term far too much too much to talk – as many scholars do – about the "Muslim diaspora", "Catholic diaspora"…and so forth. These are of course world traditions that span many ethnic groups and nationalities...Hinnells (1997) himself flags up one problem…are Muslims in Pakistan part of a diaspora religion because Islam is derived from and broadly centred on Mecca? (Vertovec, 2000a: 11)

Perhaps, in the case of 'universal' religions, then, it would be better to speak only of 'migration' or 'transnationalism'? However, Vertovec does not make such a suggestion. Indeed, accounts that explicitly identify 'transnational religion' are still quite small in number.[14] Moreover, it also seems clear that apparently 'ethnic' and 'universal' traditions can

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[13] Vertovec's arguments are expanded in 2000b. For other accounts of the Hindu diaspora see the relevant chapters in Ballard (1994), Hinnells (1997), Ter Haar (1998) and Coward et al (2000), as well as Burghart (1987) and Baumann (2000).

[14] While my search for 'religion and diaspora' at Amazon online bookstore (30 April 2004) produced 106 results, 'religion and transnational' produced just 20. Of that 20, 60% were studies of the more 'universalising' traditions, especially Islam and Christianity (mainly Catholicism in America, Europe and China, as well as Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America). The rest were general collections, e.g. Hoeber (1997). Only 25% were published prior to 2000.

'behave like each other' in different situations. For example, we have seen already how Smart (1987) argues that plural Hindu traditions are exhibiting a tendency to 'universalize'. Similarly, traditions such as Christianity and Islam have always been 'ethnicised' and 'territorialized' in practice.[15] To spread their messages successfully and stay meaningful through time and across space, both have had to be flexible enough to adapt to local circumstances. Indeed, once people are gradually 'born into' universal traditions, religion becomes 'indigenized' and so, for many adherents, essentially a matter of custom and descent.

Of course, religion remains a matter of custom and descent for many in the world today with only limited efforts to distinguish the two. However, in the diaspora especially, many second and third generation youth are disentangling what they see as the 'universals of religion' from the 'localised custom' they associate with their parents' and grandparents' homelands. One way of analysing this situation is to relate it to Mol's (1979) conception of religion as the 'sacralizer of identity' and 'harnesser of change'. Because religion, backed by 'sacred' authority, has such great potential for articulating distinctiveness in its own right, this can open the way for other potential markers of 'ethnic' identity to become more negotiable as time passes and those born in the diaspora establish their own priorities. So long as religious boundaries are maintained – and, recalling Cohen (1985), this does not require unchanging 'content' - language and aspects of custom, as well as attachment to the 'homeland' per se, can become relatively less important. All this without the 'risk' of losing continuity with the past, all the threads in a chain of memory. Indeed, the prioritisation of 'religion' over 'custom', especially for those with most invested in new contexts, can facilitate adaptation and acculturation, while all the time retaining a sense of pride in 'distinctiveness' and rejecting outright 'assimilation'. Ter Haar (1998), for example, shows how many African Christians in Europe are 'forward', rather than 'backward', looking. They see themselves as part of an 'international' rather than an 'ethnic' church, deliberately using religion as a 'bridge' to reach out beyond the 'bonding' provided by cultural heritage.

In a roundabout way then, Cohen's account of religion does actually strike the right chord, even though, perhaps not surprisingly, he shows little real awareness of the significance of what he says for the Study of Religion. On the one hand, religions, (both supposedly 'ethnic' and 'universal'), can and do provide 'additional cement' and 'cohesion' to 'territorial' ethno-national diasporas (1997: 189). However, in different contexts, the very same traditions can challenge and transcend ethnicity (as well as the nation-state) by forging multi-ethnic and more universalising networks and linkages. They can point beyond the 'territorial' to the 'extraterritorial' (1997: 189), whether that be in terms of the convergences of a global 'ethics' and 'civil society' or the conflicts of 'transnational terrorism' (Jurgensmeyer, 2002). In either case, 'ethnic' or 'universal', the shift in emphasis here is from what religions 'are' to what work they 'do', that is the 'uses' of religious symbols, discourses and practices in particular contexts. In our penultimate section I briefly outline how Religious Studies' more empirical agenda, in terms of mapping contemporary patterns and trends, has evolved in the last decade or so.

Mapping 'Diaspora Religion': Contemporary Patterns and Trends
Perhaps the main characteristic of contemporary scholarship on 'diaspora religion' has been the growth of studies documenting the 'content' of religious continuity and transformation in various local, national and international contexts. In many ways this is more representative of

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[15] For Muslim heritage 'diasporas' and 'transnational' Islam, see chapters in Ballard (1994), Hinnells (1997) and Coward et al (2000), as well as Fischer and Abedi (1990), Metcalf (1996), Mandaville (2001) and McLoughlin (forthcoming).

the research that has been completed than the theoretical debates considered in the previous section. To give a flavour of this empirical work, and provide an opportunity for further reading, studies of contemporary Sikhs, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Buddhists and Muslims, have all been cited in footnotes throughout this chapter. The majority focus on North America and Europe although the processes described are by no means confined to 'the West'. With just a few exceptions, all were written in the 1990s or 2000s. This reflects the fact that, in the last decade or so, diasporas established in the post-war period have begun to 'mature' and are increasingly 'visible' in public life (Coward et al, 2000). Most accounts tend to focus on one religious tradition and / or ethnic community. However, some scholars have sought to analyse the more general patterns and trends that emerge from comparison across traditions, communities and contexts. Indeed, Hinnells (2005) argues that comparative studies should be more of a priority. It is this sort of analysis that I want to dwell on in this section.

In the same way that Knott's (1986; 1992) theoretical agenda for Religious Studies is closely related to current debates, so too her framework for mapping the factors affecting religions in migration remains a starting point today. Instead of Knott's five 'factors', mentioned earlier, for example, Hinnells (1997) produces a ten-point framework and Vertovec (2000b: 21-3) goes even further, reminding us of a seventeen-point framework he and others first devised back in 1990. However, as both Hinnells and Vertovec cite Knott with approval, and her framework is the most manageable, I do not propose to elaborate further here. All that remains to be said is that attention to such factors in a comparative perspective begins to reveal important differences within and between traditions, depending upon the particularity of different migrant groups and local as well as national contexts. What may be more useful is to turn our attention to patterns and trends in contemporary empirical research.

Writing in the mid- to late 1980s, Knott understood that, although already established for two to three decades, the dynamics of post-war migration to, and settlement in, the West were still very much unfolding. Therefore in various publications she listed potential topics for future studies. In the 1990s and 2000s, others have adopted many of these.[16] Hinnells, for example, draws upon themes identified by Knott to elaborate an ambitious international comparison across the major religious traditions of South Asian diasporas in Australia, Britain, Canada and the United States.[17] We have already mentioned some of these, notably 'individual identity', 'group identity', 'leadership' and 'universalization'. However, other trends that Hinnells takes up - 'the place of language', 'the transmission of the tradition', and 'the impact of western religious ideas' (1997: 826-35) – are also worthy of brief discussion.[18]

Hinnells, for example, argues that, in general, South Asian diaspora traditions have been impacted by 'Western' perceptions of the category 'religion', so much so that they often exhibit a syncretistic tendency towards 'Protestantization' (1997: 829). In this regard, he cites the increasing desire for English language 'translations' allowing access to the 'meaning' of sacred texts and rituals, the liberal project of inter-faith relations, as well as the influence of

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[16] Baumann (2000), traces the different 'stages' or 'phases' in the process of religious continuity and transformation, which for present purposes, can be summarised very briefly thus: i) migration and arrival; ii) 'communities' become established; iii) gradual engagement with the 'host'; iv) acculturation or retreat depending on 'host' response; v) simultaneous efforts to both adapt and maintain difference.

[17] This comparison, minus its Australian dimension, where developments are at an earlier stage, is further developed in Coward et al. (2000). Elsewhere, Ter Haar (1998) attempts a smaller scale mapping of Africans in Europe (Germany, Britain and the Netherlands) and Vertovec (2000b) Hindus in the Caribbean and Britain.

[18] To this list Knott (1992: 20-21) adds: the impact of ethnicity on religion including its ability to survive and grow; stages in the process of religious change following migration; how religions cope with change, e.g. generational change; interfaith dialogue; the use of places of worship; mission; and sectarianism.

rationalised and decontextualised accounts of 'world religions' routinely reproduced in school-based Religious Education. Hinnells also compares the dynamics of different national contexts. For example, since the 1960s, when South Asian migration to Canada and the United States began, newcomers have tended to be educated professionals more likely to integrate and produce innovative religious scholarship (1997: 837, 840). In Britain, by contrast, because of its colonial connections to the subcontinent, diasporas are longer-standing and comprise a higher percentage of unskilled workers although this is rapidly changing especially amongst Hindus and Sikhs (1997: 836). Finally Hinnells compares the 'experiences' of the various religious traditions associated with South Asian diasporas. For example, Muslims are most ethnically diverse in the United States and Canada whereas in Britain South Asians predominate (1997: 841). Of the Jains, Hinnells remarks that, given their low public profile and numbers, for pragmatic reasons they will often tolerate the 'outsiders' perception of them as part of the Indian, or Hindu, scene rather than as something different' (1997: 843).

Clearly, it is extremely difficult in a general survey to do justice to the numerous empirical studies that have been conducted, or even Hinnells' more comparative synthesis of such material. Nevertheless, by way of drawing different threads together, and so dealing rather more systematically with the empirical realities of 'diaspora religion' only alluded to in this chapter, I want now to present my own rather tentative summary of various theories, factors and trends. My starting point for this was initially a list of the things I thought I had learned whilst involved in the religious mapping of Southall back in the late 1980s. For example, I will never forget being told how, when during 1984 the Indian government stormed the Golden Temple at Amritsar in their attempt to capture religious nationalists hidden within, media footage of demonstrations in Southall had provoked a further upturn in tensions back in the Punjab. However, once I began to write it was, of course, impossible to exclude my subsequent experiences as a researcher and teacher in Islamic, South Asian and Religious Studies or, indeed, new insights gleaned from reading and re-reading the likes of Hinnells, Knott, Vertovec and Baumann while preparing this piece.

- 1) The context of migration, migrants' socio-economic and cultural backgrounds – their social or cultural 'capital' - as well as the timing and circumstances of their migration, all have consequences in the diaspora. For example, initially at least, rural uneducated migrants who move to urban contexts tend to emphasise 'tradition' over 'translation', 'ethnicity' over 'hybridity'. Those 'twice migrants', who already have experience of life in the diaspora, may prosper because they are well practiced in developing effective adaptation strategies.

- 2) Similarly, the context of settlement also has massive consequences in shaping the dynamics of a diaspora. Factors deserving of consideration include the extent of citizenship rights, the nature of immigration legislation and levels of protection from discrimination, the status of religion in a society, employment and educational patterns, social attitudes to cultural pluralism, the numbers of 'co-ethnics' and 'co-religionists' settled in an area, the size and presence of other 'religious' and 'ethnic' groups.

- 3) Religious beliefs and practices have been pivotal to many ordinary people in terms of adapting to, and reorganising, both their domestic and public lives in a new environment. For example, the idea of a 'congregation' can become more significant than in the homeland, as public meetings for worship provide an opportunity for

socialising. Similarly, amongst women especially, domestic rituals performed collectively can be an important part of reproducing the 'community'.

- 4) Huge moral and economic investments have been made by diasporic communities to establish and sustain religious institutions, movements, organisations and associations. These often represent quite different and competing denominations and orientations. Such investments were often accelerated with the emergence of generations born in the diaspora as the need to transmit traditions overseas was brought sharply into focus.

- 5) Facilitating an imagined sense of continuity with the past is an important function of religion in diaspora. In the first stages of settlement at least, people have tended to become 'more religious'. Nevertheless, compared to what was commonplace in the homeland, traditional practices can be elaborated or abbreviated, and even disappear, overseas. Innovation may ease transmission but such changes are also part of global processes of religious homogenisation and universalisation.

- 6) Religious communities are divided amongst themselves, so much so that ethnic, sectarian and other divisions can result in open conflicts. So while communal 'fusion' and cooperation is another feature of early settlement, 'fission' and fragmentation is quick to develop as 'communities' mature. Nevertheless, as leaderships seek to present a common front to outsiders, especially when seeking recognition from the state in respect of planning permission, animal sacrifice, school uniforms, burial or cremation arrangements, 'fusion' reasserts itself temporarily in the shape of local, national and international 'umbrella' organisations.

- 7) Leaders (both religious specialists and communal representatives) can marginalize the interests of women and young men in their 'communities', especially over such matters as education, marriage and work. Similarly, despite young people's protestations about their lack of appropriate skills, 'elders' may still prefer to 'import' functionaries from the homeland. Traditional male leaderships are also being challenged by the political participation of well-educated professional women in public spaces.

- 8) While religion can undoubtedly reinforce ethnicity, the children and grand-children of migrants, born and socialised in quite different contexts to their parents, increasingly produce their own local-global interpretations of traditions, often arguing for the separation of religious 'universals' from cultural 'particulars' in ways their parents and grandparents rarely did. Cosmopolitan encounters with 'others' of the same faith tradition in diaspora have broadened awareness and self-conscious explorations of global religious identities at the expense of ethnicity. This is manifest in religious dress, student societies, camps, magazines, web-sites and so on.

- 9) In a globalising world, transnational contacts are maintained between diasporas, ethno-national 'homelands' and sacred 'centres' of faith traditions. Such networks are sustained by pilgrimages and holidays, various media including satellite television, the visits of religious and political leaders, as well as international movements and world organisations. Political crises 'there' continue to impact communities and identities 'here' and vice versa. Indeed, perhaps because of nostalgia, or a lack of access to

power, diasporas have played a significant role in supporting not only homeland movements, but also religious nationalism and even transnational terrorism.

- 10) For good or ill 'religion', at least as much as 'race' or ethnicity, has become one of the main ways of identifying the 'difference' of migrants, diasporas and transnationals amongst both 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in contemporary societies.

Conclusion:

The project of empirical mapping remains a hugely important one. To cite the editor of this collection one last time, all students of Comparative Religion should seek to 'get their hands dirty with religion'. Indeed, with its emphasis on the complex continuities and transformations of lived experience, the study of 'diaspora religion' has already played a significant, but rarely acknowledged, role in taking Religious Studies beyond the outdated 'World Religions' paradigm. Nevertheless, as Hinnells (1997: 683) himself implies, compared to fieldwork based studies theoretical discussions have not been taken up as vigorously as they might. Recent interventions have to some extent 'replayed' the debate about religion and ethnicity, although it is now much clearer that religion has become 'disembedded' from, and can work 'against', ethnicity at least as much as it works 'with' it (as it does with and against the nation-state). By way of conclusion, then, I want to argue that there is now an opportunity and a need for more intense theoretical reflection on the significant body of data that has been collected over the last twenty years or so.

Flood (1999) maintains that 'after Phenomenology' Religious Studies is at something of a theoretical and methodological crossroads and needs to engage more openly across disciplinary boundaries. Given the wide-ranging interest of other disciplines in migration, disapora and transnationalism, and the continuing salience of religion for these issues and related public policies, the study of 'diaspora religion' ought to be one area where the prospects for such engagement are good. However, it is striking that most of the literature considered here, whether produced by scholars of Religious Studies or the social sciences, still rarely theorises religion with the same level of sophistication as culture, hybridity, ethnicity and so on. Therefore while Religious Studies may begin to relocate in terms of broader disciplinary contexts it must also start to 'export' more sophisticated accounts of religion to those for whom such a task is less of a priority. Future success in this respect will involve building upon the empirical mapping of religion as 'content' and thinking seriously about its relationships to other concepts discussed in this chapter. This could begin to reveal more clearly the particular sorts of 'work' that religions 'do' in a wide variety of socially, politically, economically and culturally constructed spaces.

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