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Post-Multicultural Cities: A Comparison of Minority Politics in Amsterdam and Los Angeles, 1970–2010

Walter Nicholls and Justus Uitermark

Amsterdam and Los Angeles show divergent trends in minority politics. In Los Angeles, minority organisations that were divided along ethnic lines in the 1960s and 1970s joined together in a broad alliance for social justice in the 1980s and 1990s. In Amsterdam, by contrast, minority organisations became increasingly divided. Whereas, in the 1970s and 1980s, minority organisations were central actors in a broad alliance for social justice, they were marginalised in the 1990s. Contemporary leaders of minority background in Amsterdam do not call for social justice but, instead, in complete contrast to their counterparts in Los Angeles, allocate responsibility for minorities' marginalisation first and foremost to individual migrants and their culture. This paper develops a specific variant of field analysis to chart and explain these divergent developments in minority politics in both cities. It argues that the progressive alliance of Los Angeles could flourish because the local state did not have the capacity to selectively co-opt migrant organisations. The Amsterdam government, by contrast, saw an increase in its power to selectively co-opt them.

Keywords: Minority; Politics; Multiculturalism; Urban; Amsterdam; Los Angeles

Introduction

This paper addresses profound changes in the minority politics of Amsterdam and Los Angeles over the last three decades. Both cities enacted variants of multiculturalism in the 1970s and, in both cities, these kinds of policy came under attack during the 1990s. Though the critiques of multiculturalism were in many ways similar in the two cities,

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they have resulted in divergent outcomes. In the city of Los Angeles, minority associations joined up with unions to create a broad social and political movement underpinned by the principles of social justice. The power generated through this movement has enabled minorities to play a more empowered role in shaping local policies towards their communities. In Amsterdam, ethnic minorities faced fewer opportunities to develop an autonomous base of political power, allowing city officials to dominate policies directed at minority communities. We believe that these cases provide strategic windows into the divergent directions of post-multicultural politics: with the first case reflecting a model of 'bottom-up' empowerment firmly rooted in a discourse of 'social justice', and the second a model of 'top-down' control aimed at disciplining and civilising minority groups. Comparing these cases provides important insights into the contrasting types of minority politics emerging after the demise of multiculturalism.

The paper uses these cases to excavate the key features of these two variants of post-multicultural strategy, but it also develops a 'field analysis' to explain the changing character of minority politics in cities. The unique advantage of this theoretical approach is that it allows us to analyse minority politics as a set of dynamic relational exchanges subject to consolidation, challenges and change. Thus, the aims of the paper are two-fold: to outline the trajectories of post-multicultural strategies, and to develop a theoretical framework that will allow scholars to better interpret the dynamics of minority politics.

In this paper we examine these issues in three sections. First, we develop a specific variant of field analysis that explains changes in minority politics. Second, we analyse the consolidation of a regime for multicultural governance in Amsterdam and its subsequent erosion and displacement. Finally, we zoom in on Los Angeles and show how the multicultural regime in this city was first eroded and then displaced by another regime.

Explaining Change: A Field Analysis of Minority Politics

This paper examines important changes in minority politics in Los Angeles and Amsterdam. By multiculturalism we refer to a strategy whereby political elites recognise inequalities between racial and ethnic groups, develop policies to address these inequalities (for example, affirmative-action programmes), and provide opportunities for greater political participation of ethnic organisations (Bloemraad 2006; Castles 1995). By 'post-multiculturalism' we mean strategies that are based on the idea that multiculturalism failed and that new ways of dealing with inequality and diversity are called for. Both cities departed from multiculturalism but they followed very different paths. While Los Angeles has pursued a strategy focused on the mitigation of class inequalities in the name of social justice and bottom-up empowerment, Amsterdam has pursued a strategy of top-down containment to avert the conceived problems that minority groups, and especially Muslims, pose.

The Contours of the Urban Political Field

Studies in Europe and the United States show that the position of minorities within polities differs strongly between cities. Depending upon the context, minorities can subsume themselves in working-class organisations, mobilise as religious groups or operate under a broad category of 'blacks' or 'foreigners'. To account for such variation, a number of authors have developed what we may refer to as an institutional paradigm. Researchers have demonstrated that state institutions influence the forms (i.e. formal politics or movements), scales (i.e. local, national, transnational) and frames of minority politics (Alexander 2003; Favell 2001; Fetzer and Soper 2005; Ireland 1994; Koopmans 2004). These studies work on (and often corroborate) the hypothesis that there are distinct discursive and institutional structures that channel minorities in a variety of political directions.

These approaches have provided important insights into how *institutions* stabilise minority politics through path-dependent mechanisms. According to Bader, 'path dependency' overemphasises past institutional regularities but underemphasises emergent forces that may serve as the basis for change at a later date (2007: 875). While institutions are important because of their stabilising functions, in any stable system contradictions, conflicts and crises emerge, introducing alternative options that make change possible. We therefore recognise the importance of institutions but also turn to theorists who stress the dynamic nature of relations in making and breaking stable political systems. In particular, we draw from theorists who have stressed both the centrality of cooperative relations in constituting political power ('power to'), but also how these relations necessarily result in hierarchies ('power over') which, in turn, introduce conflicts and contradictions in stable political systems (Elias 1994; Katznelson 1981, 1992; Mann 1986; Stone 1989, 1993). These theorists are steeped in different traditions—Marxist, Weberian, neo-Pluralist—but they all emphasise the dynamic nature of relations underpinning political systems (as opposed to path-dependent approaches). In addition to institutions and relations, we examine how actors ascribe meaning to reality and frame policy problems and solutions. Discourse plays a key role in legitimating and critiquing political systems (Bourdieu 1994; Fraser 1991) and we thus look at the ways in which actors challenge or confirm how diversity and inequality are perceived and managed.

In short, we look at the institutional, relational and discursive mechanisms that play distinctive yet complementary roles in shaping minority politics. We use the concept of the 'political field' to describe how the relational, institutional and discursive mechanisms described above intersect (Bourdieu 1994; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Wacquant 2005). We define the political field as a space regulated by 'rules of the game', where actors associated with political parties, private interests and civil-society associations compete and cooperate to define, and act on, issues of public interest. In what follows, we first identify the mechanisms through which power relations are consolidated and then identify the conditions that precipitate change in the urban political field.

Consolidating Power Relations

First, power relations consolidate when elite networks thicken. Strong elite networks permit the exchange of scarce information, facilitate shared understandings and meanings of their political worlds and enable the coordination of action (Elias 1994; Mann 1986; Stone 1989). Effective control over the political field is thus only possible when elites maintain cohesive ties to one another. When they succeed in fostering inter-elite linkages (i.e. economic, political, intellectual elites), such alliances allow them to concentrate the key resources of power among themselves, enabling them to not only outline the broad measures that need to be undertaken in the city but also to set and enforce the rules of the urban political game (Stone 1989).

Second, power relations consolidate when elite rules are enforced through the development of institutional techniques that connect elites with minority communities in the urban political field. Elites develop various techniques to co-opt and control community leaders and civil associations (Garbaye 2005; Katznelson 1981). These techniques include patron–client relations, service contracts or partnerships between associations and city governments, and corporatist institutions that mediate relations with different minority communities. Elites diffuse scarce monetary, political and symbolic resources to targeted minority groups through community leaders or what we call 'civil brokers'. Positioned between minority communities and elites, civil brokers enjoy power and prestige in their communities because they are gatekeepers to scarce government resources (i.e. jobs, infrastructure, influence, etc.). Brokers gain compliance from their communities by employing their access to these scarce resources as 'selective incentives' (Stone 1989: 186)—distributing money and influence to those who comply with the rules and denying these resources to those who transgress. Just as importantly, brokers use the trust and prestige in their communities to legitimate elite rules and cajole potential challengers into compliance. In this way, elites enforce the rules of the game by developing institutional techniques to penetrate and steer complex community networks, with the civil brokers playing a crucial mediating role between elites and the urban grassroots.

Third, power relations consolidate when they are undergirded by legitimacy. Power is enforced in part through defining the limits of 'acceptable' political speech and behaviour (Bourdieu 1994). Elites acting through the state wrest the power to define social reality from other actors. When this is achieved, symbolic power can be routinely exercised, as potential minority challengers cannot fundamentally question the discursive frameworks that orient and legitimise state action (Loveman 2005). Actors who employ discourses or display behaviours that conflict with the underlying rules of the game can be stigmatised as deviants incapable of reasonable negotiations within the political field. They are considered 'noises' from a disruptive mob rather than the 'voices' of a legitimate political subject (Dikec 2005). Stigmatisation not only banishes these outsiders to the margins of the political field but also sets the threshold for acceptable language and behaviour. Actors labelled as deviant are shown to have values, manners of speech, dispositions and ideas that threaten the norms of political

civility. Minority actors seeking to improve their positioning within the field adopt *legitimate* cultural and symbolic practices and distance themselves from illegitimate talk, symbols, practices and people. Social and political distancing further marginalises outsiders and seals their fate as outcasts with no real prospects of political power within the field.

It follows from the above three points that power in a field is consolidated when (1) elite *networks* are cohesive, (2) *institutional* techniques ensure compliance, and (3) dominant *discourses* mark the thresholds of legitimate behaviour and speech. Facing cohesive elites with extensive institutional and symbolic powers, minority challengers have few alternatives but to conform to the dominant rules of the game. They must present their claims in a language that complies with dominant norms, they must develop alliances with civil brokers to transmit their concerns and wishes to elites, and they must avoid discourses, practices and people that could precipitate their marginalisation. When challengers operate in consolidated political fields, they can only improve their positions by recognising and accepting the basic rules (Bourdieu 1994; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992)

Changing Power Relations in the Political Field

While elites can achieve a certain degree of hegemony within the field, cracks emerge which precipitate changes and transformations in power relations. We highlight below three main factors that can weaken elite power and open up possibilities for change.

First, *elite fragmentation* weakens the capacities of elites to define a cohesive governing agenda and build a consensus about the basic rules of the urban political game. As the governing consensus breaks down between elite factions, certain of them may become willing to offset losses of support with past allies by developing new alliances with outsiders and challengers (Tarrow 1998). Elites therefore have greater difficulty in setting common rules and also become more willing to accept alliances with outsiders who may have been shunned in the past.

Second, *weakened institutional capacity* can result in a failure to effectively incorporate minority groups and ensure their consent. The declining ability of elites to maintain channels to minority communities through corporatism, patronage and partnerships makes it difficult for civil brokers to gain the compliance of others in their communities. Civil brokers facing less access to government resources (e.g. money, jobs, infrastructure, influence, status, etc.) have greater difficulty in gaining community compliance through selective incentives. Their prestige and influence, therefore, depend on the support made available by local and national government institutions. When these institutions withdraw support for civil brokers, the prestige and influence of these latter decline within minority communities, making it more difficult to achieve 'order-maintenance' functions within them. The declining position of civil brokers can open up a 'power vacuum' in minority communities. Such vacuums can precipitate chaos but they can also present increased opportunities for challengers to realign

minority community networks around themselves. These challengers can include, *inter alia*, religious organisations, unions, parties and criminal organisations. When challengers deploy their own autonomous resources and gain sufficient levels of support across community networks, they can assert themselves as the dominant forces in their communities and in the broader political field.

Third, *discursive challenges* can undermine the naturalised constructs and categories that undergird extant power relations. Minority challengers facing greater freedom can employ alternative media and work with insurgent intellectuals to produce alternative representations that resonate with large segments of their community. This discursive work helps to create legitimacy for a political vision that was once unthinkable. While these subversive ideas are fostered outside of the formal public sphere, in what Fraser (1991) refers to as 'counter publics', opportunities made available because of elite fragmentation open the door for challengers to diffuse their discourses in the broader political field, with reduced risk of banishment.

The breakdown of power relations usually takes a long time. Intra-elite conflicts can simmer below the surface for years, institutional controls may be neglected but still maintained, traditional civil brokers may be weakened but still powerful enough to dominate challengers, and alternative discourses may take time to develop sufficient resonance within minority communities and across the broader field. Change in the political field is therefore more piecemeal than revolutionary and the piecemeal nature of these changes introduces innumerable interstitial cracks into slowly declining fields. The incremental decline of elite power within a political field can, however, be disrupted by critical events. Contingent historical events like riots, assassinations, financial crises, etc. introduce important breaches which can accelerate the decline of old power alignments and the emergence of new ones (Sewell 1996).

Research Approach and Data

Our theoretical framework for analysing urban minority politics starts from the assumption that there are three core mechanisms which constitute the process of making consolidated power relations: the formation of elite alliances (coupled with the fragmentation of outsiders' networks), the monopolisation of discursive constructs (coupled with the stigmatisation of alternative discourses and their agents) and the provision of institutional resources through civil brokers (coupled with the inability of outsiders to access different sources). However, none of these three mechanisms of consolidation is ever permanent or complete. Slowly evolving forces present challengers with openings to create different alliances, develop alternative discourses and find other institutional resources. Disruptive events can accelerate these changes by presenting challengers with important opportunities to offer themselves and their visions as viable alternatives to the *status quo*. In applying this theoretical framework to the cases of Amsterdam and Los Angeles, we identify the processes that resulted in the consolidation of multicultural political fields, the factors

that precipitated the weakening of power relations within these fields, and the reasons why they took such divergent paths in recent years.

These are very different cities with different ethnic mixes and embedded in very different nation-states. While we cannot control for many context-specific variables (Przeworski and Teune 1970), juxtaposing these cases, nevertheless, generates insights which can contribute to our understanding of the dynamic nature of minority politics in these and other cities. National support for multiculturalism declined precipitously in the Netherlands and the United States in the late 1980s and 1990s, contributing to the undermining of the legitimacy of local multicultural strategies. In spite of these commonalities, both countries pursued very different strategies of welfare-state restructuring, with the US rolling back important public resources to big-city governments, while the Netherlands continued to provide city governments with substantial levels of support. At a time when multiculturalism was losing its legitimacy in both countries, local elites had very different institutional resources with which to develop post-multicultural strategies. In this sense, our analytical focus is on urban-level mechanisms but we stress the nation-state's importance in shaping the options of local actors.

The empirical material is derived primarily from interviews and secondary research conducted during previous projects on Los Angeles and Amsterdam. The Los Angeles case is based on 15 semi-structured interviews carried out in 2002 and 31 in 2010. The respondents were directors of immigrant and minority associations, union leaders and others active in minority politics. The interviews focused on political developments and power relations during the 1980s and 1990s. Secondary scholarship provided additional insights into the broader context of minority politics (Milkman 2006; Soja 2010; Sonenshein 1993). The Amsterdam case is based on 20 semi-structured interviews conducted in 2004 as part of a joint research project and 25 conducted between 2007 and 2009 as part of a PhD thesis (Uitermark 2012). As in the case of Los Angeles, the interviews focused on the position of actors within the dynamic urban political field. In addition, the case study draws on secondary research as well as archival research into subsidy relations between minority associations and the government (Fennema and Cadat 1996; Fennema and Tillie 1999; Vermeulen 2006).

Minority Politics in Amsterdam: From Class Empowerment to Religious Containment

Consolidating Power Relations in the 1970s and 1980s: Multicultural Corporatism

The arrival of sizeable groups of migrants in the 1970s coincided with the proliferation of new social movements. The squatting movement established countless autonomous social centres throughout the city. The student movement revolted in and outside the university. Labour-union radicals fought against corporate downsizing and for workers' rights. Actors from these various sectors forged coalitions, of which migrant groups formed an integral part. Left-wing political refugees from Turkey and Morocco,

in particular, were very active in progressive and radical circles. Moroccan dissidents were united in KMAN, Turkish communists in HTIB, Turkish socialists in DIDF and Kurdish separatists in FKN. Guestworkers formed the numerical majority in these associations but political refugees controlled the leadership. The left-wing associations and their radical leaders were officially recognised as civil brokers in the new minority policy field that was forming in the late 1970s and early 1980s because they were part of cohesive networks, mobilised powerful discourses and tapped into institutional resources.

Political refugees and militant workers formed an integral part of the progressive movement scene that was booming in the 1970s and 1980s. Associations like KMAN and HTIB played central roles at May Day demonstrations, protests for migrant rights and campaigns against the various wars. No progressive protest against imperialism or racism was credible without a considerable presence of migrants, which the left-wing minority associations could provide. The associations, in turn, could connect their constituents to a large and resourceful progressive network. Activists, volunteers and state-employed community workers gave Dutch lessons, helped out with forms, lobbied politicians and so on. The left-wing associations thus strengthened progressive networks and were, in turn, strengthened by them.

The cohesion of progressive networks was thus predicated in part on the exclusion of large groups of migrants who did not fulfill progressive norms. Some organisations indeed served as an extension of the Moroccan regime (the *Amicales*) or were militantly opposed to the left (the Turkish Grey Wolves). Other organisations were simply indifferent or culturally conservative (including mosque associations). The fascist groups were meticulously monitored and occasionally confronted on the streets but all non-left groups were discursively excluded. In discussions, progressives were careful to say that *democratic* minority associations should be included, implying that non-left associations would not be considered legitimate partners.

The discursive division between democratic and undemocratic associations not only mediated access to the progressive networks but also to the institutional resources available within the policy field. In the early 1980s, the Amsterdam government began erecting a comprehensive institutional structure consisting of advisory councils, specialised welfare organisations and subsidy funds. The governance field that then emerged in Amsterdam can be characterised as *ethnic corporatism*—elite actors were connected to minority communities through ethnic advisory councils and representatives (Soysal 1994). The secretaries of the councils had contracts as civil servants and were stationed at city hall. Thanks to their strong connections and the stigmatisation of their opponents, the left-wing minority associations could obtain many of the resources available within this unfolding field. Under ethnic corporatism, subsidy relationships and political representation went hand-in-hand: associations with a central place in advisory councils also received substantial structural subsidies. Between the full consolidation of ethnic corporatism in 1985 and its erosion in 1995, left-wing associations received well over 70 per cent of the subsidies (Uitermark 2012: 150).

Eroding Power Relations and the Slow Decline of Multicultural Corporatism

Between 1975 and 1985, left-wing associations consolidated their position. With the help of their allies and thanks to their privileged access to resources, the associations were able to develop extensive institutional infrastructures and move to the core of the policy field. However, the networks, discourses and institutions that had given wings to the left-wing associations started showing fissures over the course of the 1990s.

Left-wing organisations thrived on the progressive momentum of the 1970s and 1980s, though this withered away as the 1980s drew to a close. As leftist associations thus lost some of their natural allies, they were increasingly forced to cooperate with their conservative counterparts. Conservative associations occupied a marginal position within ethnic councils due to the factors identified above but, as time went on, they became more vocal. Within the Moroccan council, left-wing associations reluctantly agreed to work together with mosque associations. This broadened the coalition of Moroccan associations but the old lefties and the conservative elderly were not welcoming to younger generations. The Turkish associations were traditionally better organised than their Moroccan counterparts (Fennema and Tillie 1999) and did not face the difficulty of attracting young recruits (Sunier 1996). However, the strength of conservative organisations increasingly posed a problem for the left-wing elite. Turkish mosque associations, especially *Millî Görüş*, had no interest in reproducing a structure controlled by their opponents. Conservative organisations *did* take seats in the council and established ties to left-wing organisations (Vermeulen 2006) but, at the same, by-passed them and connected directly to the government. In short, the political refugees dominating left-wing organisations had been the most assertive within their ethnic communities when they arrived in the Netherlands but the strength and cohesion of their networks eroded as they failed to incorporate younger generations and conservatives.

The demise of the old order also had a discursive dimension. Left-wing associations organised on the basis of ethnicity but articulated their claims through a broader discourse opposing racism and social inequality. While they stuck to this discourse, public discourse moved in another direction. In the late 1980s there were growing concerns over the high levels of unemployment and crime among second-generation youth (e.g. WRR 1989). Although, after the rise of Fortuyn in 2002, problems of migrants were routinely framed as cultural pathologies, policy-makers in the 1990s focused attention on the accumulation of problems among migrants (e.g. Gemeente Amsterdam 1989). As the privileged partners of the government, left-wing associations were the first to be asked for advice but they did not give the concrete and targeted proposals the government demanded. In response, the Labour Party and senior civil servants increasingly referred to left-wing organisations as 'old'. A new class of professionals specialising in minority affairs responded to the demand for 'new' initiatives. Some of these professionals argued for a strict approach while others adopted an optimistic 'can do' attitude. Diversity, they said, was not a problem but an

opportunity (Uitermark *et al.* 2005). These professionals—who were younger, better educated and more often born and raised in the Netherlands—offered a welcome alternative to policy-makers as they did not persistently blame the government (nor racism or capitalism) for the precarious position of migrants. The left-wing associations responded to these challenges by defending their turf and criticising the professionals but only ended up confirming the idea that they were the anachronistic remnants of a bygone era.

While the alliances and discourses of left-wing associations weakened, the institutions on which they had relied eroded. The subsidies that the leftist organisations had secured were so-called structural subsidies for which reservations are made on the municipality's budget. Structural subsidies fit in a model where the government funds civil society associations without demanding (exactly) what they do. This model came under pressure in many policy domains in the 1990s. Administrators, politicians and civil servants increasingly felt that the government should ensure efficiency and compliance. Structural subsidies were abolished in 1997 and replaced with projects— for activities rather than organisations—and periodic subsidies (allocated for a maximum of one year). These changes marked a move away from ethnic corporatism and undermined the power of the left-wing associations, which now had to compete with other organisations. Whereas 22 organisations received subsidies in 1995, the number grew to 42 in 2000 and to 62 in 2005 (Uitermark 2012: 179). Left-wing organisations increasingly had to do the government's bidding to retain funds. Moreover, the advisory councils that left-wing organisations had traditionally controlled were marginalised over the course of the 1990s and formally abolished in 2003 (Uitermark *et al.* 2005).

In sum, between 1995 and 2005, left-wing associations lost their central position in the field. They suffered from the growing power of challengers and the withering of their allies. Changes in the rules of the game meant that they had to prove their worth to retain their position whereas, before, they were considered as the only legitimate partners of the government. The erosion of their position and the emergence of challengers was a long-term process but it was marked by events which revealed the inadequacies of the *status quo* and unleashed questions over the possibility of alternatives. Here we focus specifically on the demonstrations in which the leftist elites were involved.

Disrupting Events: Accelerating the Decline of Multiculturalism

The institutions of ethnic corporatism—the advisory councils, the structural subsidies, the support of professionals—functioned not only as an infrastructure for service provision but also as a base from which large-scale demonstrations were developed. These projects were reasonably successful in that they allowed minority associations to present themselves as and alongside central actors.

However, the protests organised by left-wing groups became less significant over time. The protests of Moroccan left-wing associations for Palestine, especially,

increasingly turned into fiascos. This was one of the few issues around which they could mobilise a relatively large crowd of migrants and native Dutch. But the protests against Israeli violence resulted in media coverage that stigmatised the protesters. The most extreme example was a protest in support of the Palestinian *intifada* in 2002, when a number of banners compared Israel with Nazi Germany, equating the swastika with the Star of David. Youths also attacked a gay night club—the It—with stones. They assaulted people whom they recognised as Jews and threw stones at the Krasnapolsky Hotel (Krebbers and Tas 2002). The stewards of the organisation unsuccessfully tried to persuade protesters to remove the anti-Semitic banners and to prevent a confrontation with the police. Other protests where the organisers lost control over groups of second-generation migrant youth included those following confrontations between youths and police (in 1998 and 2003) and further protests against Israel (in 2000 and 2004). While politicians and civil servants had become increasingly annoyed by left-wing leaders (who had lost power but not their righteous anger), these events confirmed the bankruptcy of ethnic corporatism to audiences beyond the state bureaucracy.

Reconsolidating a Post-Multicultural Field: Religious Containment

By the time Theo van Gogh was killed, the leftist elite had already been marginalised and there were no clearly defined rules and institutions to effectively deal with multicultural tensions. The sudden discovery of Islamic extremism in Amsterdam and the need for initiatives for civil repair (Alexander 2006) triggered attempts on the part of the government and its social-democratic ruling elite to recreate a regime capable of dealing with social tensions. The assassination thus accelerated processes of reconsolidation.

Already in 2002, Amsterdam's mayor, Job Cohen, had stated that he sought to connect migrants to Dutch society through religion (Cohen 2002). His appointment tipped the balance in favour of social-democrats who wanted to use religious institutions to incorporate minorities. The most privileged partners in this endeavour were liberal Muslims who had roots in Islamic communities and were members of the Labour Party. Central figures included the *Millî Görüş*' liberal leader, Haci Karacaer, the spokesperson for the Moroccan mosque association, Ahmed Marcouch, and the alderman for diversity, Ahmed Aboutaleb. Apart from consolidating a small core of Labour elites committed to promoting liberal Islam, networks were created between traditional, conservative and orthodox associations. They received invitations to engage in dialogue meetings and funding to support to initiatives.

The new alliances were undergirded by new discursive categories. Moroccans and Turks were no longer addressed as ethnic groups but as putative Muslim citizens (*cf.* Buijs 2009). Cohen's mission to 'keep things together' in practice meant that the city tried to connect Muslims and non-Muslims, though the former received much more attention than the latter. Through large public events and community initiatives, the government and its elite partners attempted to diffuse the idea that a commitment to

Islam allows or even implies adherence to civil norms. Whereas the old leftist elite had identified inequality and racism as the main factors behind high crime rates and poor school performance, the new elite argued that these should be seen as cultural pathologies resulting from bad morals and a tendency among minorities to blame others for their insolence and misbehaviour.

The new generation of civil leaders (liberal Muslims at the top of the Labour Party) received not only symbolic but also institutional support. Some smaller organisations, like the Muslim Youth Amsterdam, were created on the initiative and with the financial help of the government. The government made comparatively large funds available to subsidise the festival of Ramadan; a programme of events organised throughout the Islamic month of fasting. The government, moreover, provided funds to *Marhaba*, a centre for debate on Islam; the initiator was the former director of *Millî Görüş*, Haci Karacaer, and the board consisted in large part of liberal Muslims, including several prominent figures from the Labour Party. The government also provided the liberal leadership of *Millî Görüş* with a discount of several million euros on a vacant plot in the hope of keeping the organisations out of the control of conservative financers.

In sum, between 2000 and 2005, new alliances were created, alternative discourses developed and new institutional resources made available, often with the express purpose of incorporating minority communities as Muslim citizens. By sponsoring these liberal Muslims affiliated with the Labour Party, the government hoped to marginalise radical and extremist elements and to engage indifferent or recalcitrant Muslims. The elite alliances were united in their conviction that Islam was a key political marker and that (liberal interpretations of) religion can and should be used to combat cultural pathologies.[2]

Minority Politics in Los Angeles: From Multicultural Clientelism to Class Empowerment

Consolidating Power Relations: Multicultural Clientelism

During the 1960s, Blacks and Latinos experienced some success in building up new political machines, financed largely by the local Democratic Party and marginalised Jewish elites. Black and Latino politicians employed this support to build a political infrastructure among the many minority associations concentrated in these areas. The election of liberal African American Tom Bradley as mayor in 1973 transformed this alliance into a successful electoral coalition (Sonenshein 1993). The new governing coalition was therefore characterised by an alliance between economic and emergent minority political elites on the one hand and connections to working-class minority communities through civil brokers—i.e. Churches, community organisations etc.— on the other. This ushered in a period of multicultural clientelism.

An emerging and increasingly dominant discourse in urban politics concerned racial justice and multiculturalism. The Black and Latino associations operating in the city viewed the struggles to 'empower' their communities as part of the broader

struggle to achieve racial equality. Within these minority communities, there were strong currents that embraced more-radical anti-colonial and ethno-nationalist themes. Bradley and his associates believed that the discourses of radicals alienated white middle-class liberals. This required him and his allies to distance themselves from radicals and categorise their discourses as illegitimate (see Pulido 2002). In this way, the emergent regime constructed a non-radical multicultural discourse that stressed the importance of ethnic-racial injustices and proposed reforms to distribute government resources (e.g. money, jobs, infrastructure, influence etc.) more equitably between ethnic and racial communities.

The political elite employed federal welfare funds to provide their supporters in Black and Latino communities with public jobs, infrastructure and help for community associations and programmes. National funding for these programmes increased dramatically during the early years of Tom Bradley's administration, with the 'urban' part of the federal budget growing from 2 to 12 per cent between 1968 and 1973 (Florida and Jonas 1991: 374). The mayor's office distributed these new resources to organisations in Latino and Black neighbourhoods in exchange for ensuring order and stability within these communities. In Black neighbourhoods, the Black pastor assumed the pivotal role as civil broker, while radicals were systematically marginalised (a similar situation was found in New York; see Katznelson 1981). As the Catholic Church played a marginal role in Latino politics, a handful of community development organisations assumed a similar role in Latino neighbourhoods (Pulido 2002; Valle and Torres 2000).

Eroding Power Relations and the Slow Decline of Multicultural Clientelism

The foundations of multicultural clientelism were eroded during the 1980s and early 1990s. In the 1980s, rivalries between liberal and conservative elites turned into open conflict, while economic restructuring resulted in rising levels of unemployment, crime and poverty in minority communities (Soja *et al.* 1983). Furthermore, national discourses increasingly stigmatised Black and Latino inner-city residents as the 'undeserving poor' and attributed the decline of inner-city areas to their moral failings rather than to broad structural forces (Davis 1990; Wacquant 2008). These discourses, coupled with severe economic restructuring, aggravated the fears of 'dangerous' minorities among middle-class voters and weakened their overall support for the multicultural *status quo*. Responding to the fissures in the Bradley coalition and a turning away from this multicultural *status quo*, conservative elites in the 1990s launched a new electoral coalition made up of themselves and the disenchanted middle class.

In addition to changes in alliances and discourses, institutional support for multicultural clientelism eroded during the 1980s. Following the passage of Proposition 13 in 1977, revenue from property taxes in California fell far below the national average. By the mid-1990s, the average resident of California paid 38 per cent less in property taxes than residents of New York (Davis 2000). At the same time, federal funding

for urban programmes declined dramatically, with annual funds being reduced from $6.3 to 4 billion for Community Block Grants, $14.3 to $4.2 billion for Employment Training, and $26.8 to $8.9 billion for Assisted Housing (Eisinger 1997: 3). The 'urban' part of the federal budget fell from around 12 to nearer 7 per cent between 1978 and 1984 (Florida and Jonas 1991: 374). This meant that 'The average federal share of the municipal income stream declined from 22 per cent in 1980 to a mere 6 per cent in 1989, while the share of funding from states remained constant' (Davis 1993: 11).

Declining revenues contributed to an important realignment in the city's power relations. The priority for city officials was now to attract investments from tax-generating middle-class residents and new business elites. The Bradley regime invested approximately $1 billion in public money to make Los Angeles into a 'world-class city' (Davis 2000). As scarce public resources were diverted into projects that benefited the upper-middle-class and business elites, the city cut economic development pro-grammes to low-income areas by 82 per cent, to housing programmes by 78 per cent and to job-training programmes by 63 per cent. The city sought additional savings by outsourcing many of its social-service functions to professional non-profit organisa-tions (Wolch 1990, 1996). This severely impacted on local minority associations and civil brokers. First, civil brokers and traditional associations were compelled to compete with highly professionalised non-profit organisations for declining government resources. The smaller associations disappeared and the more powerful ones barely held on to fraying patronage ties. Second, declining access to government patronage and influence resulted in a decline in prestige for civil brokers in minority communities, undermining their ability to exert community control on behalf of local authorities. In the eyes of these increasingly neoliberal authorities, civil brokers had ceased being of value because they no longer fulfilled their 'order maintenance' functions in these neighbourhoods. Thus, a sharp decline in tax and federal revenue required the city to restructure the institutional underpinnings of the political field, binding city officials to pro-growth, neoliberal elites and marginalising their traditional support bases in minority and working-class communities.

As discursive and political support for traditional minority civil brokers declined, new challengers emerged in Latino communities and presented a new pole of contention within them. First, a large influx of political refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala spurred the emergence of a new cluster of activists. Solidarity associations financed by liberals and the Catholic Church became magnets for left-wing refugees with already developed pools of 'activist capital'. These organisations served as the launching pads for a new generation of immigrant and minority-rights associations (Hamilton and Chinchilla 2001). In addition to this, the Catholic Church provided financial and moral support to the emerging immigrant associations (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2008). Second, a new generation of labour union militants emerged, trained by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers and various civil rights struggles during the 1970s (Milkman 2006). These militants targeted immigrant-saturated service industries, adopted social-movement tactics and employed social-justice discourses. The first campaign to put these principles into practice was Service Employee

International Union's 'Justice for Janitors' campaign in 1987 (Waldinger *et al.* 1998). This and a series of other campaigns resulted in new partnerships between immigrant associations, churches and university intellectuals.

In response to the declining resonance of 'multicultural' discourses in the broader public, these new Latino activists (i.e. militant unionists and political refugees) began to formulate an alternative discourse. Union militants, in particular, in collaboration with university intellectuals, had begun to fuse discourses on ethnicity with those on class, creating a new discourse that centred on the concept of social justice (Nicholls 2003; Soja 2010). This new discourse posited that Blacks and Latinos occupied the same class position as a hyper-exploited urban proletariat in the global city. Conceived in this way, working-class minorities were presented with a strong rationale for struggling together for greater social justice rather than competing against one another for diminishing government patronage. While these discourses remained subordinate during the 1980s, they nevertheless provided a potent alternative to the neoliberal discourses of the emergent conservative block.

Lastly, these new challengers possessed alternative resources to finance their operations. Labour militants depended on the resources of their national organisations and membership dues, and immigrant associations depended on local and national foundations. Thus, these changing institutional conditions severely weakened traditional brokers in Black and Latino neighbourhoods, but these same conditions limited the co-optation capacities of the local government and carved out a space for a new generation of Latino activists to organise in relative autonomy.

Disrupting Events: Accelerating the Decline of Multiculturalism

Several major events in the mid-1990s dramatically accelerated the pace of change described above. The first major event of the decade was a large-scale riot that resulted in 53 deaths and $1 billion of property damage. The riots combined with a series of natural disasters and a deep recession to create a permanent sense of disenchantment among the city's white, middle-class residents. This political sentiment accelerated the demise of multiculturalism, politically and ideologically. In 1994, Richard Riordan—a well-established real-estate developer—won the mayoral race on a law-and-order and neoliberal platform. In the same year, residents of the state voted overwhelmingly to support a referendum (Proposition 187) to cut all assistance to undocumented immigrants. Two years later, Proposition 209 was passed with another strong majority, banning 'affirmative action' in the state. Lastly, in 1998, Proposition 207 banned bilingual education in public schools.

Reconsolidating a Post-Multicultural Field: Social Justice and the City

The rightward shift prompted union activists and immigrant organisations to accelerate their own activities. In particular, the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor provided resources to assist immigrant-rights associations to naturalise immigrant residents and organise them into a new electoral block. The share of this

Latino electorate in California increased from 7 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 2000 (Barretto *et al.* 2005). This increased to an estimated 16 per cent in 2010 (Baldassare *et al.* 2012). By 2001, the alliance between immigrant-rights associations and labour unions came into full force. The two main candidates in the run-off for the mayor's election were left-wing progressives. In exchange for the support of the Latino-dominated County Federation of Labor, elected officials (from the city to the state) were expected to support labour and immigrant activists in their various campaigns. In sharp contrast to the top-down Bradley government, the power in this new alliance largely rested with labour unions and their allies in immigrant and social-justice associations.

This insurgent political force was rooted in the Latino community but the County Federation of Labor sought also to create an alliance with the Black community based on common class positions. While the older generation of Black civil brokers (mostly church Pastors) remained resistant to these entreaties, a younger generation of Black activists was more willing to develop relations with the new labour movement. Pivotal figures like Karen Bass, Anthony Thigpen and Mark Ridley-Thomas were the first of this generation to work directly with the County Federation of Labor on common areas of concern. Lastly, the Federation also launched an effort to gain the support of wavering clerics by forming a new clergy-based association, Clergy and Lay United for Economic Justice (Hondagneu Sotelo 2008). By recruiting a number of influential pastors, labour hoped to use their prestige and social networks to build support among other pastors in the Black community. The County Federation of Labor therefore aimed to create its own civil brokers who would assist their efforts to realign grassroots networks away from ethnic patronage and towards a new logic of multi-ethnic class empowerment.

The leadership of the labour movement embraced a class-based social-justice discourse over traditional discourses that stressed racial distributive justice and multiculturalism. Ethnic differences and claims were by no means silenced but they were made subordinate to commonalities based on social class. The more the unions became a powerful force in the political field, the more their discourses of social justice became commonplace among important segments of the political class. Political elites remained dependent on economic elites but their dependence on unions and immigrant associations for funds and electoral support required them to adopt the social-justice discourses of the movement.

The election of a new progressive block in 2001 and new revenue from economic growth made new institutional resources available to support associations in Latino and Black neighbourhoods. While many associations began to receive public subsidies for various programmes, they also received much of their funding from local and national foundations. The diversified funding base enhanced the autonomy of minority and immigrant associations. Moreover, union and association leaders were appointed to important governing commissions—including the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA)—and commissions charged with the management of the Port of Los Angeles and the airport. They used their influence to create a more supportive environment for the different campaigns, including efforts to unionise the ports and

airport, provide affordable housing and make the Port of Los Angeles more ecologically sustainable. Thus, alliances, discourses and institutions aligned in a way that not only shifted the field away from ethnic and towards class politics, but also introduced a period of 'empowered' governance for minorities and their organisations in the city.

Conclusion

The political fields of Amsterdam and Los Angeles have been drastically transformed over recent decades (see Table 1). Old players have withered, new players emerged and the rules of the game changed. Between the 1970s and 1980s, the ties between political elites and minority communities helped to give rise to distinctive 'multi-cultural' strategies in both cities. Whereas associations expressing ethnic-racial visions were favoured in Los Angeles, associations offering a more Marxist reading of multicultural politics were preferred in Amsterdam. From the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s, the field of minority politics underwent important changes. In Los Angeles, immigrant associations joined with labour unions and later with a new generation of Black associations to create a broad alliance based on the principles of class and social justice rather than of ethnicity and multiculturalism. The high mobilisation capacities of this coalition and its financial independence have allowed the coalition to elect friendly politicians and pressure them to support social-justice issues. In Los Angeles, change in the field of minority politics is thus characterised by a double shift: a discursive shift from multiculturalism toward social justice; and an institutional shift from clientelism toward bottom-up and empowered governance. In Amsterdam, by contrast, the fading of ethnic corporatism has given way to growing concerns over the integration of Muslims. This has prompted city officials to shift their support from leftist minority associations to 'moderate' religion-based associations. The aim has been to employ religious leaders as civil brokers to contain the perceived threats emanating from minority groups. In Amsterdam, change in the field of minority politics is also characterised by a double shift: from minority corporatism to ethno-religious containment; and towards the increased power of local government over the networks of minority associations.

We therefore explain these divergent expressions of post-multicultural politics by highlighting the strategies and capacities of elites to steer the behaviour and discourses of minority actors. When confronted with the slow demise of leftist civil brokers in Amsterdam, city officials possessed the institutional capacity to select and support new civil brokers and provide them with the material and symbolic resources needed to achieve control in minority communities. By contrast, Los Angeles officials lacked this institutional capacity and were unable to respond to the decline of multiculturalism in the same way because of severe revenue cuts. Such cuts undermined the ability of the elite to provide old or new minority actors with the resources needed to maintain control in their communities. This presented an opening for challengers to construct an autonomous base of power and contribute to reshaping minority politics from the bottom up. These findings suggest that the vibrancy and cohesion of coalitions for social

Table 1. Consolidating, eroding and reconsolidating power relations in minority politics in Los Angeles and Amsterdam

	Amsterdam	Los Angeles
1970s and 1980s	**Consolidating power relations: multicultural corporatism**	**Consolidating power relations: multicultural clientelism**
Alliances	Strong alliance between left-wing minority associations and other progressive-movement organisations	Strong elite alliances (minority political elite & white economic elite) & top-down incorporation of minority organisations
Discourses	Focus on the class emancipation of migrants and the exclusion of 'undemocratic' minority associations	Focus on racial-ethnic justice and the redistribution of opportunities to previously excluded minority groups
Institutions	Left-wing associations incorporated with structural subsidies and through ethnic councils	Federal subsidies used to support minority organisations on an *ad hoc* basis
1990s	**Eroding power relations and the slow decline of multiculturalism**	**Eroding power relations and the slow decline of multicultural clientelism**
Alliances	Internal friction within ethnic councils	Intra-elite conflict and declining support for coalition
Discourses	Focus on diversity and individuals rather than marginal groups	Urban problems associated with behaviour & values of minorities & less on racial injustices
Institutions	Project subsidies for associations willing to cooperate	Declining revenue to support minority organisations
2000s	**Reconsolidating a post-multicultural field: religious containment**	**Reconsolidating a post-multicultural field: social justice and the city**
Alliances	Government, specifically the Labour Party, establishes relations with prominent Muslims and Islamic associations	Labour unions and immigrant associations establish a social justice alliance
Discourses	'Keeping things together': religion is viewed as a social cohesion tool	Social justice: class is viewed as primary basis for making rights claims in the city
Institutions	Differential inclusion: incentives for most assimilated Muslims, disincentives for stigmatised groups	Bottom up: political and symbolic resources concentrated in hands of social justice alliance

justice today may be inversely related to the level of social-movement incorporation in the 1980s. These derivations are obviously tentative but our goal was less to come to definitive conclusions than to show that field analysis opens up new avenues for studying the contentious dynamics of urban politics.

Notes

[1]   Governments in the Netherlands are typically coalitions, both at the municipal and the national level. The Labour Party has been dominant within Amsterdam's coalitions. In the Netherlands, mayors are appointed through an intricate consultative procedure which does not formally take into account the party affiliation of candidates; however, Amsterdam has always had a mayor from the Labour Party.

[2]   This regime was not fully consolidated. It was precarious because some of its key proponents left Amsterdam and because it drew a lot of criticism for its tendency to breach the division between church and state. Amsterdam's current mayor, Eberhard van der Laan, does not thematise Islam and integration as much as his predecessor.

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