RELIGION AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION:
Vietnamese Catholics and Buddhists in Denmark

Abstract
This article is based on a quantitative study of two rather distinct religious traditions (Buddhism and Christianity) sharing the same ethnic origin (Vietnamese) in the same host nation (Denmark). It investigates the possible relations between religion and acculturation, and looks at whether various forms of religiosity and religious belonging are plausible variables in acculturation perspectives. Our analyses suggest that there is a clear tendency that Catholics, on a number of variables, are more likely than Buddhists to be oriented towards own ethnic and religious identity, and that religion and religiosity seem to be negative factors in integration processes. However, we also conclude that a broader complex of variables defines the field of study, including type of religion, religious engagement, socialisation, and general relations to host culture.

Keywords
Acculturation • Buddhists • Catholics • diaspora • integration • migration • Vietnamese

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1 Introduction

Religion, migration and acculturation, and the relations between these entities in a global and more or less multicultural setting, are at present a fast-growing research area, which has been the focus of intense research during recent years. This article takes its point of departure in a different field, namely a diasporic frame with two rather distinct religious traditions (Buddhism and Christianity) sharing the same ethnic origin (Vietnamese) in the same host nation (Denmark). As refugees, or "boat people", the "Overseas Vietnamese" (*Viet Kieu*) arrived in waves to the West following the fall of Saigon in 1975, until the mid-1980s. Most of them wished to go directly to the USA, but many ended up in Europe, especially because of the international agreements on quotas. Denmark received 4,000 Vietnamese refugees during this period, primarily from 1980 onwards. In 2010, the number of people of Vietnamese origin has grown to almost 14,000, or 3% of the immigrants from non-Western countries. Half of them came in as refugees, the rest are descendants or came through

the family reunification program, and 71% of them have Danish citizenship. There are equal numbers of men and women, but a large majority of them are below 50 years of age (83%). Four Buddhist monks and four Catholic priests serve the 3,000 Buddhist and 3,000 Catholic members of the religious communities and an even greater number of individuals (up to 8,000 Buddhist and 5,000 Catholic "users") at festivals and rites of passages in the six Buddhist temples and the eight Catholic churches that have Vietnamese masses.

Whereas research in religion and immigrants with an Asian background in a Western setting is still sparse in the European context, it has a longer tradition in American history; surprisingly, little has been written on the Vietnamese religious diaspora (see, however, Adam 1995 on *Vietnamese in Australia*; Baumann 2000 on *Vietnamese in Germany*; Borup 2005, 2011 on *Vietnamese in Denmark*; Dorais 2005, 2007 on *Vietnamese in Canada*; Rutledge 1992, Zhou & Bankston 1996 and Caplan, Choy & Whitmore 1991 on *Vietnamese in USA*, Rönnqvist 2009 on *Vietnamese in Sweden*). Apart from the sheer quantitative differences, making research into major minority

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groups more reasonable, there is an underlying argument of having overlooked this group – seen as the perfect silent *other* living in a "silent exodus" (Chai, quoted by Cadge & Ecklund 2007: 368) – which may be parallel to the basic argument that religion in the USA until recent years has been overlooked in immigration and integration studies (Foner & Alba 2008: 360); these groups are simply not seen as problematic enough to achieve political and scholarly attention. As is the case in other Western countries, the Vietnamese are often conceived of as being "model immigrants" (one among several Danish newspaper headlines, including also "The Pattern Breakers", "The Silent Minority", "The Discreet People", "The Silent Others", see Borup 2011). The few examples of integration research in Denmark that have actually included this group also seem to suggest positive tendencies of social and economic integration. The average personal income is the second highest among the migrant groups (Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration 2005: 184), the young have successful education results (Tænketanken om udfordringer for integrationsindsatsen i Danmark 2005, Hvidtfeldt & Schultz-Nielsen 2008), and rates are relatively low for unemployment (Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration 2009), crime (Statistiske Efterretninger 2008: 8), sickness (Schläger, Rasmussen & Kjøller 2005), suicide (Sundaram, Qin & Zøllner 2006), and perceived discrimination (Tænketanken 2007B: 105), all being factors fostering the image of the diligent Vietnamese working their way up from bottom to top, examples of which have also been portrayed in several newspaper articles.

This article attempts to analyse whether, and to what extent, religion, and different religious belonging amongst a segment of the Vietnamese, can be said to relate to acculturation in a Danish context. After a short introduction to acculturation theories and methods used in this survey, data will be analysed with regard to (a) identity and acculturation and (b) religion, followed by a discussion of the possible relations and causality between religion and acculturation.

2 Acculturation theories

The whole spectrum of ideas and concepts related to the situation of migrants who meet and adapt to new host cultures is manifold and broad, and it is to a very large extent shaped by, reflected in, and itself inspiring the social, political, and historical context in which it is embedded. In a way the whole debate and terminology are social constructs, always dependent on the "prevailing ideological climate" (Cheong et al. 2007: 5). The social theories of the Chicago School in the 1920s on how immigrants became incorporated into the American society thus assumed a three-stage model of contact, accommodation, and assimilation, the latter expressing the natural and normative goal of the time and context in which the immigrants were thought to eventually let go of their original culture, beliefs, and language, adhering to the standards and ideals of the host country and its Americanised melting pot. In the social sciences, economic

integration and social integration have often been given higher priority than more slippery and "soft" factors, such as religion, culture, and values. Such a distinction has already been conceptualised by Milton Gordon as *structural assimilation* as opposed to *cultural assimilation* (Gordon 1964). The concept and strategy of assimilation has been criticised for its essentialist and teleological assumptions of automatic and irreversible incorporation into apparently monocultural settings, and more nuanced definitions and models have argued for much more multidimensional and relational models in multicultural settings, either by reinterpreting assimilation in a new key (as for instance "new assimilationism" with no presupposed societal core; Alba & Nee 2003), or by using other terminology. Though there has been no consensus on the definition and use, the concept of *integration* has often – in migration literature and public debate – been associated with a more flexible idea of immigrants in multicultural settings being incorporated into new host cultures. In the sense of ideally blending in with the majority population by participating in political, social, and economic spheres while maintaining aspects of the cultural and religious features of their origin, it has thus been considered semantically close to *adaptation*, *acculturation*, *social incorporation,* or *cultural integration* (Baumann & Salentin 2006; Foley & Hoge 2007; Martikainen 2005). In recent years, network relations have been discussed as being mechanisms of cultural integration, cf. especially Putnam's notion of social capital (2000, see also Smidt 2003; Furseth 2008). The central idea of this concept is that the belonging to a network is in itself a valuable resource and serves as a powerful basis of social coherence in local communities. Especially in acculturation processes for immigrants living in diaspora, it seems constructive to further distinguish the concepts into two modes, *bonding social capital* being "ties to people who are like you in some important way" and *bridging social capital* being "ties to people who are *unlike* you in some important way" (Putnam 2007: 143). Whereas the lack of the latter *can* have negative consequences, resulting in cultural isolation, segregation, and parallel societies, the former is often in itself a constructive strategy (as Zhou & Bankston 1996 exemplified by Vietnamese immigrants in USA).

Acknowledging different kinds of acculturation and different ways and mechanisms (one of them being the "social capital argument", Foley & Hoge 2007: 29) of achieving more successful social incorporation is in itself a challenge, but it is an even greater task to suggest theories, models, and methods to actually measure and operationalise such fields and processes. One example of this is John Berry's multidimensional acculturation model of different ways for immigrants to be incorporated into a new host culture, defining four types of acculturation based on identity and relation to other groups. *Integration* in such a conceptual framework is one such instance of acculturation, in which "there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, while at the same time [there is also participation in] the larger social network" (Berry 1997: 9), the others being *assimilation* (in which the immigrants choose to adapt wholly to the host culture while abandoning their original culture), *separation* (in which they

hold on to their original culture without aspiring to become part of the host culture), and *marginalisation* (in which they have little interest in having relations either with representatives of the host culture or with representatives of their original culture). Berry's model has been widely used (also in Scandinavian contexts, e.g. Tænketanken 2007b, Valtonen 1994, see also Martikainen 2005). Different ways have been chosen to operationalise it into actually "measuring" acculturation types (e.g. through survey questions focussing on identity), and though the model as well as the attempts to use it in concrete projects can be questioned, such a conceptual framework, however, does not necessarily presuppose mono-identity or one-way causality. Rather than merely being a subjective strategy, the whole immigration and acculturation situation involves the immigrants as well as the migration process, the host culture, and the whole relational network of agents, institutions, laws, debate climates, etc. surrounding them, and thus "a mutual accommodation is acquired for integration to be attained" (Berry 1997: 10). Being inspired by Berry's model, which is "good to think with", we understand acculturation to be a neutral umbrella concept of a taxonomic higher level, indicating different ways for individuals and groups to interact in relation to ethnic and cultural diversity in a multicultural society.

3   Culture, religion, and acculturation

Culture and ethnicity have for long been key (and contested) concepts important in ethnography and often downplayed in social studies. The concepts are, of course, problematic if considered and strategically used as essential and static features of a given group of people (Wikan 2001), and cultural explanations can easily obscure social factors also in political discourses. However, culture and ethnicity sometimes do matter and seem to be relevant variables also in acculturation research. For instance, in a recent Danish state-sponsored research project showing people of Iranian and Vietnamese origin to be closest to some defined "Danish values" (Tænketanken 2007b: 206-210),[2] ethnicity was found to be the main single dominant variable, even if correlated with socioeconomic variables such as education, age, gender, income, and religious belonging. Rather than assessing some single explanatory factors generating such cultural rationale, "culture" is naturally also related to the networks of social and structural factors, such as standards of education, politics of gender equalisation, levels of economy and democracy, etc., lying behind culture (i.e. norms, ideals, values, etc.). From an integration perspective, it might be argued that such culture explanation seems to rest on the logic of similarity as, according to Berry, "the greater the cultural differences, the less positive is the adaption" (1997: 23). The ethnic groups that are closest to Danish values (e.g. Iran and Vietnam) might thus be geographically far away, but culturally close. Many Vietnamese refugees came from westernised contexts in South Vietnam, having been brought up with Western ideals, and many diaspora Vietnamese are generally

still very pro-Western and pro-democratic – 98% favour democracy (Tænketanken 2007a: 71). Many Vietnamese escaped to their host country because they felt suppressed in a communist context, where entrepreneurship and a (Confucian) work ethic (Caplan et al. 1991: 139 and 161), stressing education and social mobility, were not applauded as in the West. An endeavour to flee and migrate to a culture in which such ideals are valued – in themselves factors contributing to developing human resources – and the Vietnamese proverb "in a ball you must be round, in a pipe you must be long" might be suggestive of a culturally based acculturation strategy which is also idealised and stored in the host culture.

The concept of religion should equally be treated carefully in order to not end up in essentialised ideas and models, distorting interpretations of other relevant variables. But the neglect of its role and significance as a key factor in migration and acculturation processes can similarly lead to the baby being thrown out with the bath water. Although neglected or sidetracked in social studies of acculturation, there has been an emphasis on religion in the post-secularisation-theory years (e.g. Baumann 2000, 2002; Cadge & Ecklund 2007; Ebaugh & Chafetz 2000; Martikainen 2005; Yang & Ebaugh 2001). Also, case studies have shown different aspects of religion diminishing or getting renewed significance by becoming ethnicised or universalised in migration and integration contexts. Though there have naturally been examples suggesting the opposite, the USA has become a classic example of a society where religion and ethnicity have had positive effects on integration (Hirschman 2004). There is "a series of arguments about the protective effects religious communities have in helping young second-generation immigrants adapt to American society" and "as immigrants become more American they may also become more religious, a process that may influence the development of a civic identity" (Cadge & Ecklund 2007: 368).

The different ways and degree to which different kinds of religion and religiosity integrate into different diaspora contexts are indeed plausible areas of investigation. It has thus been argued (a) that belonging or converting to Christianity in the USA has a positive impact on the process of acculturation (Foner & Alba 2008: 366), (b) that certain countries of origin have had positive effects from using their ethnicity and religiosity, such as Korean Protestants (Min 2005),[3] and that the belonging to a certain religion, such as Catholicism, in itself makes positive acculturation and social mobility possible (Cadge & Ecklund 2007: 363; Baumann & Salentin 2006: 300).

Assuming that different types and degrees of religiosity and ethnicity have positive effects on acculturation processes, we could also expect that, in the Danish context, Vietnamese Christians, even though the vast majority are Catholics and thus do not belong to the Protestant national church of Denmark, would adopt easily the values and "codes of conduct" of their host nation. Apart from having a long tradition in Denmark – Catholicism was given status as a recognised religious community as early as 1682 (Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs) – the existing networks, institutions, and strategies of

enculturation were thus already at hand before immigration, giving the religion some significant advantages, as opposed to Buddhism, which did not have any networks on its arrival and is still considered a foreign religion in Denmark. Theologically, it could be argued that, from a wider perspective, religious exclusivists and those with strong religious conviction – assumed here to be represented by the Catholics rather than the Buddhists – could be recognised as "better survivors" than the non-exclusivists (lacking the ability to generate belonging) (Stark 2005). This could especially be plausible, if we assume that "religious commitments are stronger if a faith expects conformity to principles, and enforces obligations by creating a strong sense of community" (Hirschman 2004: 26).

4 Methods

Two hundred and fifty Vietnamese (immigrants and descendants aged above 15) were asked to fill out questionnaires consisting of 36 questions related to cultural and religious identity and practice. These were handed out and collected by one of the authors (Jørn Borup) in 2007 and 2008. Occasions with connection to religious meetings (Buddha's birthday and "Mother's day" at two Buddhist temples and Catholic service as well as celebration of the 117 martyrs at a Catholic church and centre) and cultural meetings (an annual festival of the Vietnamese Culture Association) were chosen as generally representative of Buddhist, Catholic, and nonreligious gatherings. Of these, 236 questionnaires were usable. As the absolute majority of Vietnamese Christians are and refer to themselves as being Catholics, we will use this categorical emblem to designate them. Though most of the Vietnamese Buddhists in Denmark belong to the Mahayana line, sectarian divisions are less important; most often they simply refer to themselves as "Buddhists". Hence, it might be categorically confusing, but self-referentially and pragmatically plausible, to keep the emblems "Buddhists" and "Catholics".

Because of the context of sampling, the responses are *not* generally representative of people with a Vietnamese origin in Denmark as such. Assuming, however, that our sample is representative of people attending special religious events, we will use Pearson chi-square as our main measure of the strength of association between variables. The data thus constitutes a "stratified sample" focussing on the more religious segments among both Buddhists and Catholics of Vietnamese origin living in Denmark, of whom there are 127 (54%) and 78 (33%), respectively. The remaining respondents either said they were non-religious, seekers, belonging to the three teachings (*tam giao*: Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism as interrelated traditions in a syncretic whole), or didn't mark any of the given alternatives. No less than 86% of those respondents indicating a religious belonging, almost half going to temple/church at least once a week, and only 3% claimed never to do so. In this regard, our sample is very different from a previous survey from the Ministry of Refugee,

Immigration and Integration Affairs' Think Tank (hereafter referred to as Think Tank) with a random sample of Vietnamese immigrants living in Denmark with 506 responses (211 individuals (42%) designating themselves as Buddhists and 189 (37%) as Catholics) (Tænketanken 2007a, 2007b). That study shows that, on the one hand, 27% never go to church/temple and 19% do so less often than at the more important religious festivals and, on the other hand, 30% do so at least once a week. When appropriate, we have used data from this general survey to contextualise and generalise aspects of our data from a focussed segment. Religious demography should always be treated carefully, especially from Asian (or nonmonotheistic) religions, where it is even more challenging to count affiliation and "membership". Compared to statistics of religious belonging in Vietnam, the number of religious people in general and Catholics in particular are somewhat overrepresented, especially in the Think Tank's survey.

It does, however, make sense. Firstly, because we presume that the number of religious people is higher among the Vietnamese diaspora than among the Vietnamese in Vietnam, since many refugees fled the communist regime because of their religious and ideological ideals. Also, there is an overrepresentation of Catholics in general among overseas Vietnamese, both because most of them came from the South (where Catholicism is stronger) and because many Christians often have a closer religious and mental relation to cultures with Christian dominance.

5 Vietnamese and cultural integration

The Vietnamese may be economically integrated, but when we look at *cultural integration*, the picture is more ambiguous. Our respondents identify themselves primarily as Danish or Vietnamese, 14% say Danish, and 60% Vietnamese. For the majority, identity is therefore associated with their country of origin. Identity, however, is not one-dimensional, which becomes obvious when we consider the percentage identifying themselves as both Danish and Vietnamese. One out of four think of themselves as having a "mixed" identity, a figure in the survey from the Think Tank being even higher (37%), which in Berry's model is itself an indicator of integration (Tænketanken 2007b: 90).[4] The trend of giving children both a Danish and a Vietnamese name is a symbolic practice indicating such possibilities and challenges of double or hybrid identity (Table 1).

The ethnicity of their friends' parents and the ideal ethnicity of their spouse are indications of what could be called *cultural belonging*, which is also an important factor in regard to the degree and type of acculturation that the individual experiences. An index of these two variables shows that the vast majority are mostly connected to the Vietnamese culture. Even among those claiming to have a Danish identity, more than 50% express that they have a Vietnamese cultural belonging (see further).

Table 1. Cultural belonging in relation to identity. (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

Cultural belonging	Identity			Total
	Danish	Both	Vietnamese	
Danish	10 (44)	3 (9)	7 (7)	20 (13)
Vietnamese	13 (57)	31 (91)	87 (93)	131 (87)
Sum	23 (101)	34 (100)	94 (100)	151 (100)

Comment: Pearson Chi-Square; 21.62, 2, 0.000.

In spite of the strong sense of Vietnamese culture, no less than 86% express a wish to stay in Denmark on a permanent basis, and 80% to be buried there. This expresses something significant about the multidimensionality of acculturation; in some respects, they are mentally oriented towards the Vietnamese culture, in others towards Denmark. Here again, a differentiation between cultural and economic integration is necessary. Even if, on a cultural level, they identify themselves with their country of origin, it is obviously quite natural for them to wish to remain in Denmark. Many of them, presumably on pragmatic grounds, find it more economically favourable to live in a welfare society – where a large majority of the Vietnamese have some kind of paid occupation – than to live in Vietnam with a lower standard of living. There may also be another explanation for their wish to stay in Denmark. Though globalisation and economic liberalisation, to a certain extent, have improved the situation of discrimination against overseas Vietnamese (*Viet Kieu*) in Vietnam – which many consider as their "spiritual homeland" – it is still problematic as a Danish–Vietnamese to be (re)integrated in Vietnam.

The sense of cultural belonging is to a high degree correlated with whether they have a Danish "basic socialisation" (individuals who were born in Denmark or who arrived in Denmark before 12 years of age) or a Vietnamese "basic socialisation" (all others). One third of those who have a Danish basic socialisation experience and cultural belonging to Denmark while the corresponding proportion of those with a Vietnamese basic socialisation is less than one out of ten (Table 2).

Table 2. Cultural belonging in relation to basic socialisation (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

Cultural belonging	Basic socialisation		Total
	Danish	Vietnamese	
Danish	16 (32)	5 (8)	21 (19)
Vietnamese	34 (68)	58 (92)	92(81)
Sum	50 (100)	63 (100)	113 (100)

Comment: Pearson Chi-Square; 10.67, 1, 0.001.

The above analysis not only shows a tendency for respondents to be more connected to Vietnam than to Denmark, both in regard to identity and cultural belonging, but it also shows that most of them want to stay in Denmark. Those who grow up in Denmark, however, are more likely to have a cultural belonging to Denmark, but this does not exclude the possibility of multiple identities. This conclusion is further underlined by the fact that identity as such is independent of basic socialisation. Whether an individual has grown up in Denmark or in Vietnam has no direct effect on their sense of identity. Nor has basic socialisation any significant effect on whether they wish to stay in Denmark or their decision on where to be buried.

The data does suggest different patterns of cultural orientation, and socialisation might point to cultural contexts of belonging and identifying. The Vietnamese in Denmark generally trust the society (Tænketanken 2007a, 2007b), which is a healthy sign of social capital. But the above-mentioned tendencies to focus primarily on bonding social capital within their own ethnic boundaries tend towards a segregation into parallel communities.[5] Being a member of an association can in itself indicate an ambition to "earn" more bridging social capital. Amongst the Vietnamese, these associations are thus also characterised by intra-ethnic networks, which socially reflect the occupational tendency of many to be engaged in Vietnamese family restaurants and business networks. Such networks "can help Viet Kieu to escape total assimilation to their host societies" (Dorais 2005: 173) and even "close off some options that are objectively open to them" (Desbarats 1986: 425).

6 Religion and integration

It could be argued that to compare the religiosity among Buddhists with that of Christians is like comparing apples and pears. Although it could be argued, for example, that Catholics are *supposed* to go to church whereas the Buddhists are not required in the same way to engage in temple worship, it does, however, say something about the different types and engagements with religion, and it is thus a plausible object of study and comparison. To operationalise religion with indexes of practice, belief, and ethics does show remarkable differences between Catholics and Buddhists. The Catholics go to the church three times as often as the Buddhists go to the temple. Generally more Catholics than Buddhists practice their religion; six out of ten Catholics have a relatively high degree of religious practice compared to three out of ten Buddhists, based on an index of church/temple attendance and weekly activities such as prayer, meditation, and sacrifices. There are twice as many Catholics as Buddhists who have a belief/strong belief, based on an index created out of the responses to different belief-related questions. There are twice as many Catholics as Buddhists who are less liberal in relation to moral conviction, based on an index with responses on questions related to attitudes to abortion, intercourse before marriage, homosexuality, and divorce. The Catholics ascribe more importance to religion

in their daily life; their almost unanimously claim that religion is important to them, either very important or rather important. The Catholics are more exclusivist than the Buddhists in negating the possibility of having more than one religion and being religious without attending services in church; twice as many Buddhists as Catholics agreed that one can be religious without attending service in temple/church, and while a third of the Buddhists found it in order to have more than one religion, the figure among the Catholics was only 15%.

Whether there is a causal relation between religion and integration, of course – as mentioned earlier – to a great extent depends on the definition and operationalisation of the two concepts. If we use felt identity as the sole variable in relation to Berry's model, more Catholics (77%) than Buddhists (55%) feel they are Vietnamese (and can therefore be categorised as "separated"), while a larger percentage among the Buddhists (32% compared to 14% among the Catholics) see themselves as both Danish and Vietnamese ("integrated") (Table 3).

Table 3. Cultural belonging in relation to religion (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

	Religion		
Identity	**Buddhist**	**Catholics**	**Total**
Danish	15 (14)	7 (10)	22 (12)
Both/and	35 (32)	10 (14)	45 (24)
Vietnamese	60 (55)	57 (77)	117 (64)
Total	110 (101)	74 (101)	178 (100)

Comment: Pearson Chi-Square; 10.22, 2, 0.008.

Considering cultural belonging (ethnicity of the parents, of friends, and the ideal ethnicity of spouse) the same tendency occurs. While one-fifth of the Buddhists have a Danish cultural belonging, the same is true for just one-tenth of the Catholics (Table 4).

Table 4. Cultural belonging in relation to religion (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

	Religion		
Cultural belonging	**Buddhist**	**Catholics**	**Total**
Danish	16 (20)	6 (10)	22 (15)
Vietnamese	65 (80)	58 (90)	123 (85)
Total	81 (100)	64 (100)	145 (100)

Comment: Pearson Chi-Square; 2.92, 1, 0.084.

If we look at other possible variables of acculturation, the same tendencies appear.

A higher rate of Catholics than Buddhists (a) often use Vietnamese language, (b) have Vietnamese amongst their acquaintances, (c) put emphasis on their children marrying other Vietnamese, (d) are in associations with clear ethnic or religious relation, and (e) wish to bring up their children to Vietnamese customs.

It thus seems as if Catholics are less culturally integrated than Buddhists and that inclusivism and "weak religiosity" could be a constructive resource in integration processes. The seemingly better integration of the Buddhists might be explained by the stronger religiosity and more explicit strategic efforts of Catholics towards ethnification compared to those of Buddhists, whose religion enjoys the benefits of symbolic capital not only by being generally popular in the West as a "spiritual" religion (among converts) but also by being a religion not "too religious" (among the ethnic Buddhists), as opposed to Catholics (and Muslims, who for various reasons are often seen to be "too religious" and generally have become symbols of problematic religious acculturation (Foner & Alba 2008)).

If, however, we look at the data from the larger, general survey carried out by the Think Tank (Tænketanken 2007a, 2007b), there are no significant differences in relation to religion, and there seems to be no significant difference between the integration of Buddhists and Catholics. Also, when controlling for other variables in both our survey and the Think Tank survey, the differences diminish. While in the Think Tank survey, according to Berry's model, the figures in the categories "integrated" and "separated" show that people see themselves as religious or very religious (68% and 63%), the figures

Table 5. Self-evaluation of religiosity in relation to forms of acculturation (in percentage)

Forms for acculturation					
Self-evaluation of religiosity	**Integration (n =172)**	**Assimilation (n =145)**	**Separation (n =111)**	**Marginalisation (n =29)**	**Total**
Very religious	24	9	20	10	17
Religious	44	38	43	31	41
Not especially religious	21	34	24	35	27
Not religious at all	9	18	12	24	13
Don't know	2	1	1	0	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Tænketanken (database).

for assimilation and marginalisation are correspondingly lower (47% and 41%), a tendency which in less-pronounced degree also occurs in relation to religious participation (Table 5).

This could indicate that religion is an important identity factor for those identifying themselves mostly as Vietnamese or as "hyphen-Danish", while it is less important for those identifying themselves mostly as Danish or "without identity". This becomes even more obvious when considering the relation between general

religious engagement[6] and cultural belonging in our study. Almost everyone (97%) of those with a high religious engagement also have a Vietnamese cultural belonging, while more than a third (35%) of those with a low engagement have a Danish cultural belonging (Table 6).

Table 6. Religious engagement in relation to cultural belonging (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

Religious engagement	Cultural belonging		
	Danish	**Vietnamese**	**Total**
High	1 (5)	38 (43)	39 (36)
Medium	6 (32)	28 (32)	34 (32)
Low	12 (63)	22 (25)	34 (32)
Total	19 (100)	88 (100)	105 (100)

Comment: Pearson Chi-Square; 13.32, 2, 0.001.

In a similar way, acculturation is dependent not only on religious belonging and religious engagement, but also on basic socialisation. For respondents in general (and especially for Catholics), there is a greater probability that those born in/grown up in Vietnam have a high religious engagement and those grown up in Denmark have a low religious engagement. In other words, the differences between Buddhists and Catholics in relation to cultural belonging disappear when taking into consideration the variable basic socialisation; almost all of those grown up in Vietnam (93% of Buddhists and 96% of Catholics) also have a Vietnamese cultural belonging (Table 7).

Table 7. Basic socialisation and cultural belonging in relation to religion (Absolute figures, percentage in parenthesis)

Basic socialisation			Religion	
			Buddhist	**Catholic**
Danish	Cultural belonging	Danish	10 (36)	4 (27)
		Vietnamese	18 (64)	11 (73)
Vietnamese	Cultural belonging	Danish	2 (7)	1 (4)
		Vietnamese	26 (93)	25 (96)

Furthermore, when relating to the lack of correspondence between this survey (respondents with a certain probability of being more religious) and the larger (and more generally representative) survey by the Think Tank, it seems justified to argue that *only difference of religion in relation to religious engagement is significant in relation to integration*. Being a Buddhist or a Catholic is not in itself a determining factor in relation to or degree of integration. If, on the other hand, we combine this variable with religious engagement and socialisation and further take into consideration the difference between the two respondent groups, we can assume that *religiosity is likely to play a less important role the more the individual identifies him or herself as Danish* while *religion and religiosity play important roles for those primarily identifying themselves as Vietnamese or having a "double identity"*.

7 Conclusion

Whereas economic integration is somewhat measurable, cultural integration or acculturation is definitely more fluffy and complex. When using a battery of variables to measure identity and cultural belonging as indicators of acculturation, it appears that many Vietnamese are *not* assimilated but could rather be classified as "separate" or "marginal" in the terminology of Berry's acculturation typology. If integration understood as "double identity" or "double cultural belonging" is the ideal, the picture is more positive. We acknowledge that identity should be seen as hybrid and relational, that different segments have different forms and degrees of acculturation, and that segregation does not necessarily mean negative acculturation. Data from this survey combined with previous surveys, however, also suggests that it does seem possible to be socially and economically integrated without being culturally integrated, and that achieved or ascribed identity and ethnicity does not in itself oppose issues relating to values and ideals of social cohesion.

If we compare adherents of the two main religions in relation to acculturation, the analyses will show quite significant differences. It seems that belonging to a "strong" exclusivist religion which is theologically and historically closer related to the (religion of the) host nation itself does *not* bring more successful cultural integration. In fact, by isolating religious belonging as an independent variable, the contrary conclusion could be drawn: There is a clear tendency that Catholics on a number of variables are more oriented towards their own ethnic and religious group than Buddhists.

Seen in isolation as a single acculturation factor, it seems that being religious plays a negative role if the ideal is assimilation. More people with strong religiosity are less assimilated, and tend to be more oriented towards their own culture. If the ideal is integration with focus on both Danish and Vietnamese cultural belonging, the relationship and causality is more blurred. For some, ethnicity and religiosity seem so closely intertwined that bonding – rather than bridging – social capital seems to be the most obvious and realistic goal of achieving network resources, while for others, these factors can also be seen as catalysts for integration, making it easier for them to feel both Danish and Vietnamese.

However, rather than distinguishing solely between being Buddhist or Catholic, and whether religious or not, the analysis also pointed to a more complex combination of defining factors, including religious adherence, religious engagement, and context of socialisation, which appeared to be at least as important as causal variables. Religion and religiosity in this survey appears thus only to be *relationall*y important as factors in acculturation processes.

As the object of this survey was a segment of Buddhists and Catholics, it obviously cannot be used as a generalisation of all Vietnamese residents in the country. More research needs to be done on this as well as other minority groups in Scandinavia, especially on their relations to culture and religion. This article, however, has

demonstrated that the reality does not fit the stereotype of the well-integrated Vietnamese, that the relations between culture, religion, and acculturation should be seen as an interrelated complex, and that methods and analytical tools with which to approach these fields are challenges that require continuous reflection.

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Notes

1   This article is part of a broader research project on the religious and cultural identity and practice of "Danish" Vietnamese conducted by Jørn Borup (see Borup 2011).

2   From an American context, a parallel conclusion of another investigation said about Vietnamese ethnicity: "Ethnicity, therefore, has a considerable effect on cultural adaption, and this effect appears to be largely independent of either the pre-migration characteristics of the refugees or the resettlement context" (Desbarats 1986, 420). About the Vietnamese Caplan et al. say that "it is because they have skillfully used their cultural heritage that they have made such progress in this country" (1991, 93).

3   Korean-American Christians are known to be very religious (with 83% attending church once a week or more (Min 2005) compared to all other (also immigrants) Christians, and the "Italian problem" with very little Catholic engagement compared to, for instance, the Irish Catholics' much higher level of religious engagement (Hirschman 2004:13) are examples of differences across cultural boundaries within the same religious groups. Kwon argues that Christians have an advantage in their integration with American society since Christianity in Korea already is associated with American culture (Kwon 2003).

4   Valtonen in her analysis based on interviews with Vietnamese in Finland also concludes that, according to Berry's model, "the pattern of their adaption is integration" (1994, 76).

5   Segregation need not in itself be contradictory to be consistent with "Danish values" (such as democracy, freedom of speech etc., all of which are described in Tænketanken 2007a: 4-5). Conscious segregation or lack of interest in accumulating social capital by network building *can* be experienced as something positive if feeling a sense of belonging to a global and international community as one's identity is not restricted by cultural markers.

6   This index is created from the questions regarding belief in an afterlife, belief in the ancestors, attendance at church/temple services, time spent on religious activities, the importance of religious upbringing of children and the importance of religion in everyday life.

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