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## **Cultural Diversity and Social Inequalities**

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN WESTERN EUROPE HAS GROWN ONCE again, as evidenced by the increasing heterogeneity of migration in terms of countries of origin, ethnic and national groups, religions, languages, migratory channels, and legal status. In recent years the number of countries of origin from which people migrate to destinations in Europe has multiplied. For example, the proportion of newer, smaller groups to older, larger groups of migrants has grown. The changes in German cities like Cologne, Hamburg, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, and Munich in the past three decades are representative of large German cities. In particular, the share of the population of Turkish descent is declining whereas the share of migrants from Poland is on the increase and, most interestingly, some groups that were hitherto not especially strongly represented, such as migrants from Ukraine, the Philippines, Togo, Vietnam, and India, show particularly large growth within just a few years. Similar tendencies, often in an even more pronounced manner, apply to other European cities such as London, Lisbon, Barcelona, Milan, Amsterdam, and Copenhagen (Alexander 2004: 60). The general population structure has also become more heterogeneous through migration. Moreover, intra-European migration by workers, students, and pensioners has contributed to increasing heterogeneity. From a historical perspective, current developments represent a reverse of the trend toward cultural homogenization that took place from the First World War until the early 1950s (cf. Vertovec 2007).

Public and academic debates have often drawn close links between migrant cultural diversity and social inequalities. For example, the headscarf worn by some Muslim women has turned into a favorite battleground over issues of gender equality. And transnational linkages of migrants, expressed in marriage patterns and homeland TV consumption, are seen as an expression of increasing social segregation, mirrored in poor educational credentials and high unemployment rates of migrant children. Needless to say, the relationship between diversity and inequality is much more varied than suggested in such renditions (for example, Crul and Heering 2008; Faist 1994). Yet little is known of how cultural differences exactly matter for social upward and downward mobility.

That increasing cultural diversity is portrayed as a new phenomenon in West European societies may seem surprising. Aristide Zolberg has reminded us that cultural “heterogeneity was the more usual state of affairs” and certainly not “a departure from the norm” (Zolberg 2004: 5). Also, in addition to long-standing ethnic and national minorities, most European countries, throughout the centuries, have experienced considerable flows of migrants (Zolberg 1978), some of which were religious refugees while others were labor migrants. What is different today is not the advent of diversity but the altered circumstances under which it is taking place (cf. Zolberg 1974).

The argument advanced here is that diversity as a concept and a set of—not necessarily coherent—policies, programs, and routines straddles several worlds: it appeals to those who emphasize individual economic competence and self-reliance of migrants (“neoliberals”), those who cherish the public competence of immigrants in public affairs (“republicans”), as well as to those, like the European Commission, who push for structural reforms to turn incorporation in a two-way process (Commission of the European Communities 2003). In particular, the adaptation of organizations to “cultural” factors, the economic use of soft skills, and service delivery to a culturally heterogeneous clientele come to the forefront. While assimilation focuses on individual migrants passing into mainstream society and while multicultural-

ism, in some varieties, emphasizes the rights of migrants as a means to increase their sense of recognition and belonging and also overall national unity, diversity approaches can be seen as concentrating on the level in between—on organizations. In the context of migration we can even observe the emergence of new forms of diversity, namely transnationality, as a way of life. Transnational social spaces imply not only interconnectedness of networks, organizations, and communities across the borders of national states but also certain segments of migrants leading cross-border lives regarding family, friends, business partners, political participation, and cultural exchange (Faist 2000). Nonetheless, while the focus on the level of organizations may be an important addition in that it is linked to the “civil sphere” of incorporation (Alexander 2006), the problem is that diversity as a management technique in organizations does not address issues of social inequality. Therefore, we need to go beyond an understanding of diversity as an organizational technique and start with considering diversity in the sense of heterogeneities along the boundaries of, for example, class, gender, religion, ethnicity, age, and transnationality. This understanding will allow the tracing of the mechanisms of how differences or diversity turn into social inequalities.

The following analysis first traces the many meanings of the term diversity, which explain part of its appeal. Second, the analysis deals with the main challenge ahead: to connect cultural diversity to boundary making and the production of social inequality via social mechanisms. Third, the discussion enters an emerging field of study, transnationality, as a characteristic of diversity. The account concludes with a focus on political contestation and the role of social scientists’ own distinctions around diversity and social inequalities.

## **THE MULTIPLE LAYERS OF DIVERSITY**

Definitions of diversity are seldom enlightening: “Diversity refers to any mixture of items characterized by differences and similarities” (Thomas 1996: 5). We know since Ludwig Wittgenstein that the meaning of a term can be inferred much better from the way it is used. Diversity is

currently en vogue in many public debates and academic disciplines ranging from cultural anthropology to microeconomics and biogenetics, as in “biodiversity.” In the sociopolitical and economic realms it can be found—to present an incomplete list—in the context of ethnicity, culture, gender mainstreaming, age, class, sexual orientation, religion, professional function, educational background, mental and physical capabilities, and health (Wood 2003). In the context of migration it is often used to refer to a plurality of languages, religions, and ethnic groups.

Diversity is not a presocial category but always loaded with attributed meanings. It is the perceived, evaluated form of (cultural) difference. It is thus constructed by societal agents by drawing demarcation lines between classifications with social meanings and sometimes defining certain classifications as the dominant ones. In most observations, diversity has appeared to be mainly a characteristic with positive connotations for economic efficiency, social trust, and the common good. Yet one should not forget that its many meanings give ample room for divergent interpretations. For example, at a macrostructural level, econometric studies endeavor to provide evidence that around half of the variance in welfare state expenditure between the United States and Europe can be attributed to the higher degree of ethnic diversity in the United States (Alesina et al. 2003). This would suggest that increased heterogeneity is a major causal factor of low measures of welfare statehood. Meanwhile, however, a growing number of enthusiasts claim that under certain circumstances cultural diversity can lead to greater innovative potential, as exemplified in the “creative class” of young, highly qualified professionals who congregate in ethnically mixed residential districts (Florida 2005). What is usually not highlighted is that these districts are also quite homogenous regarding socioeconomic class positions—this time not at the lower end.

A preliminary analysis of the term “diversity” brings forth three meanings pertaining to three different societal levels. The first meaning refers to diversity as a characteristic of societies. “Diverse societies” is a term often used self-descriptively and synonymously with multi-

cultural societies such as Canada. More particularly, it relates to the deconstruction of notions of normality and dominant cultures as well as perceived inclusion through recognition (Fraser and Honneth 2003). Often, on this first level diversity is a synonym for cultural pluralism to be accommodated by multicultural policies. At the next level, and this is the one that currently dominates academic and public discussions, diversity concerns organizations. This includes the observation that organizations of the mainstream society adapt their practices and that routines take cultural heterogeneity into consideration. Behind the talk of diversity is, or at least is claimed to be, the understanding that organizations of the majority society should not discriminate against their staff, their members, or their clientele on the grounds of cultural characteristics, but rather should be sensitive and responsive to these characteristics. Hospitals can serve as an example from the public sector: in many inner-city hospitals across Western Europe, between 20 and 40 percent of patients are migrants or the children of migrants (Healy and McKee 2004). They are adjusting their practices and routines—for instance, with respect to staff recruitment and interpreting services. Finally, at the individual level, diversity refers to the intercultural competences of a person in forms such as multilingualism. A connection between the latter two dimensions ensues when organizations—in particular commercial organizations or organizations delivering public services—attempt to enhance their efficiency by recruiting staff on the basis of such competences as part of “managing diversity.” In its typical articulation, diversity as a management concept is generally presented in a fashion that manages to blend or blur its utility as an analytic concept with its expression as a normative precept, similar to multiculturalism.

Diversity as a potential mode of incorporation in Western Europe circumvents criticisms of multiculturalism (for many, see Gitlin 1995 and Barry 2001), first, in not emphasizing the rights of migrants or national-cultural minorities but on the positive effects of cultural plurality and competence for private companies and public service delivery. Correspondingly, there is a semantic shift from the recognition of

collective identities to that of individual competences. This facilitates a connection both to the individualization discourse and to notions of individual entrepreneurial spirit. Second, the diversity discourse is not simply focused on migrants who are just one of many categories to be considered. This helps to connect multiple programs, such as “gender mainstreaming” and “diversity management.” Moreover, cultural difference is only one characteristic: others include gender or sexual orientation. In sum, from a semantic point of view, the change regards not so much the modes of incorporation as such but the emphasis taken. Therefore, the evidence should not simply be read as the supplanting of earlier concepts, such as assimilation and multiculturalism, with that of diversity. One could rather speak of a continuing vibrancy of multicultural sensitivities on the level of organizations, especially with respect to economic efficiency and service delivery. Yet, in order to avoid obvious criticisms waged against multiculturalism, some of the debate and practices have shifted from a rights-based to a competence-based agenda.

The very language of individual “competence”—in line with policies designed to increase “employability” of persons in member states of the European Union (EU)—is one that decidedly has moved away from concerns with disadvantages and structural discrimination to favor what individuals may contribute to the efficiency of organizations. This overall trend goes well beyond cultural diversity to include all forms of social diversity. The key terms here are diversity management or managing diversity in the private sector, and an interculturalist approach or intercultural opening in the public sector. Diversity can be analyzed from a perspective internal to national states, looking at organizations in immigrant countries. Programs of diversity management change the decision-making structures, routines, and personnel of organizations in sustained ways (for example, Frohnen 2005). Organizations transform entities from culturally indifferent to culturally plural. Culturally plural organizations display cultural diversity as a resource, offer training programs to increase the intercultural competence of staff, implement criteria for personnel recruitment, and offer special services to

clients and customers. It is above all membership in organizations that signifies shifting boundaries between the private and the occupational realm. Culturally indifferent organizations usually respect a rather strict divide between private and occupational; markers such as ethnic heritage belong to the personal realm. Diversity programs, by contrast, connect membership roles in organizations with knowledge and skills from the personal realm. In addition to ethnic markers such as knowledge of certain languages, it is also lifestyle, cultural, or sexual preferences that serve to increase economic efficiency and productivity. In such an intellectual and an organizational policy agenda, a concern for social inequalities necessarily gets sidelined.

### **BRINGING IN SOCIAL INEQUALITY THROUGH SOCIAL MECHANISMS**

Concepts of diversity zero in on organizational adaptation to cultural pluralism and the utilization of individual competences to facilitate full inclusion in the civil sphere—keywords are terms such as intercultural opening of public administration—or competition in markets—characterized by concepts such as diversity management. Organizations use and thus constitute cultural markers in order to “mainstream” their structures and routines. Such characteristics may signal social inequality and uneven distribution of power between groups made up or split along ethnic, gender, class, or religious lines. Through the application of diversity programs, inequality along such lines may be reified, or newly created and legitimized. For example, managing diversity programs runs the danger of reinforcing categories such as ethnicity (Wrench 2005), not to speak of the maintenance or production of noncultural markers such as social class. Thus the risk is high that cultural differences are perpetuated by diversity programs, while racial or ethnic inequality in access to positions and within organizations is regarded as a problem to be addressed by management techniques. The danger is that cultural difference is separated from issues such as social inequality along class and gender lines by compartmentalizing it as the management of individual competence for organizational effi-

ciency. In essence, future research needs to heed the conclusion arrived at in empirical analyses of fields such as labor markets that “far too little attention has been paid to the relationship between diversity and inequality and to the contextual importance of intergroup relations in the larger society” (DiTomaso, Post, and Parks-Yancey 2007: 474).

One of the research frontiers is to use the analysis of boundary making in situations of diversity, and extend it to the production and reproduction of social inequality. Existing studies on boundary making have focused mostly on ethnicity, enriched with additional aspects of diversity, such as legal status, language, and religion (cf. Bauböck 1993; Zolberg and Long 1999). Above all we need to consider that (cultural) differences as such do not necessarily imply social inequality. We easily find both cases in which differences regarding religion do not serve as a basis for exclusion, closure, and exploitation in Europe anymore (for example, among Christian denominations such as Protestants and Catholics), and cases in which religion has more recently evolved as a marker of boundary distinction, as between “Muslim” immigrants and the dominant population in Western Europe (Alba and Foner 2008).

In order to unearth social mechanisms of how diversity turns into inequality, it is helpful to extend the definition of immigrant incorporation to include not only aspects of resource distribution as the differences and similarities between migrants and nonmigrants in crucial spheres of life but also aspects of perception and thus boundaries between categories such as groups. Two patterns of boundary making are of particular relevance here, namely boundary shifting and boundary blurring. In Germany, for example, data from the General Survey in the Social Sciences (*Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften*, ALLBUS) suggests that in between 1996 and 2006, significant changes in boundaries between migrant groups and the majority group (German-Germans) took place. First, boundary shifting can be discerned: the majority group clearly perceived certain migrant groups—Italians, Spaniards, Greeks—as being part of its own. The latter groups are now counted as being part of the majority population. However, there were also categories toward which no change or even an increase in



dissimilarity occurred, such as “Muslims.” Second, boundary blurring can be detected between 1996 and 2006 regarding certain categories: for example, the majority population consent to the claim that those born in the country should also be given a right to naturalize increased. Changes indicated by the shifting and blurring of boundaries do not yet answer the question about which interactions are regarded by the various groups as equal or unequal. Social class, among other markers, makes a difference in how ethnic categories are evaluated. Field experiments—quasi-experimental research regarding hiring in labor markets—suggest that discrimination is starkly reduced if the interaction partners are perceived to be equals regarding social status. Socioeconomic positions and ability in the language of the majority group are strong predictors (Fincke 2009).

Existing accounts of boundary making (Wimmer 2008, for example) do consider social inequalities. Yet inequalities are mostly seen as part of one marker of heterogeneity only, that is ethnicity, and are not distinguished from other markers that can be a precondition for establishing inequality but do not constitute inequality as such. Take religion as an example. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the various strands of Christian religion do not mark social class (for example, differences between Protestants and Catholics). While this was hugely different in past centuries throughout Europe, it is nowadays above all cultural differences between Christians and Muslims that are taken in public debates and academic research as signals for social differences along class and status. In effect, research so far has paid too little attention to the fact that cultural differences are not only socially constituted categories of differences, but that they do not in themselves constitute inequality.

Social mechanisms constitute a conceptual element to start accounting for the processes leading from diversity to social inequalities. A social-mechanistic explanation aims to provide a causal reconstruction of processes leading to defined outcomes. The term social mechanism refers to recurrent processes or pathways, linking specified initial conditions (not necessarily causes in the strict sense) and specific

outcomes, the latter of which can be effects produced or purposes achieved. Social mechanisms can be therefore defined as “a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001: 24). Mechanisms are not correlations and thus can usually not be observed as such. Mechanisms are largely imperceptible; they must be conjectured (Bunge 2004).

Mechanismic explanations thus do not look for statistical relationships among variables but seek to explain a given social phenomenon—an event, structure, or development—by identifying the processes through which it is generated. This kind of explanation is geared toward looking at causality in pathways (Mayntz 2004). Mechanismic statements are midrange generalizations about recurrent processes. There is no claim that such mechanisms are akin to covering laws—that is, laws providing true general statements. Social mechanismic explanations would claim that certain outcomes occur sometimes. Mechanisms as causal elements can be used in various theories, links in theories, or parts of theories. There are probably no universal mechanisms, hence no panaceas; all mechanisms are domain-specific and issue-dependent (Bunge 2004: 195). Social mechanisms producing or ameliorating social inequalities may work on various scales: local, national, transnational, international, and global. Here, a short reference to four distinct social mechanisms must suffice: inclusion and exclusion; exploitation; hierarchization; brokerage and opportunity hoarding (see Tilly 1998 and Therborn 2006 for lists of mechanisms involved in the generation of inequalities).

As to *inclusion* and *exclusion*, citizenship is a prime example. It is an instrument of social closure, including full members as citizens and distinguishing them from nonmembers, aliens. Debates and legislation on dual citizenship over the past decades suggest the altered boundaries around which access to full citizenship is granted. Whereas virtually all countries around the globe made renunciation of the original citizenship a precondition to acquire a new citizenship about 50 years ago, the situation has changed completely nowadays. More than half

of all states on earth tolerate dual (multiple) citizenship in some form or other. The main driving force has been a lock-in and path-dependent mechanism that originated in international conventions in the late 1950s. It stipulated that women could not be forced to renounce their original citizenship and take up automatically the citizenship of the husband. This norm penetrated international and national legislation and, along with other changes, such as a quasi-right to citizenship, did lead to significant openings in the rules for citizenship acquisition, even in countries that do not yet provide for dual citizenship as a norm (Faist and Kivisto 2008).

*Exploitation*, another important social mechanism generating inequalities, is the use for ethically unacceptable purposes of an economic resource, in this case labor power. It thus presupposes clear normative standards of what is acceptable and fair in employer-employee relations. Migrants' informal work and irregular work in households, sometimes even without a legal residence permit, entail practically no legal recourse because the worker has to fear expulsion on the grounds of irregularity—even though courts may fine the employer. Institutionally, exploitation refers to redistribution across regions, in two ways. First, one can observe a “care drain”—a specific type of “brain drain”—from East Europe to West European countries; that is, some of the domestic workers in such immigration destinations are skilled nurses trained in the countries of origin. As a consequence, the investment in training is lost, and shortages of labor in the care sector of the locales of origin may arise. It stands to reason that there may be losses for the sending regions involved; especially for those that cannot replenish the loss of workers or skilled personnel through their own training institutions or from importing labor from abroad, that is, brain or skill cascades (cf. Faist 2008). Second, not necessarily off-setting the losses just mentioned, are remittances from destination to origin—above all financial—by women who work as domestic helpers or caregivers. While one may engage in endless calculations and debates over the amounts transferred back and forth, the implications for social inequality are probably stark.

There is growing inequality on the micro- and household level in both sending and receiving regions. Clearly, in the regions of origin not all households participate in international migration, mostly those tuned into migrant networks. Not all benefit equally from remittances; the spillover effects are unclear. In destination regions, such as Italy, the employment of often irregular domestic workers adds another layer of inequality into households (Piperno 2007). This observation leads to another question, namely the implications for social inequalities on other scales, for example, regions of origin/return and destination. On a regional level, there is the risk of adverse redistribution of resources from origin to destination regions. Not only is there a “care drain” involved in migration but also the risk of reverse remittances. We know from quite a few migration experiences that migrants often need to invest considerable sums in order to establish themselves in the destination regions (for example, getting papers to work) (Jordan and Düvell 2001).

Of central importance for the production of inequalities are the intersectional patterns of heterogeneities along the hierarchies of markers such as ethnicity, gender, and class. Incorporation may involve processes of *hierarchization*, such as declassing (for example, skills not transferable officially across borders, such as a Ukrainian medical doctor migrating to Germany) or engendering (women slotted into irregular domestic and care work or men into agriculture, for example). Yet this is only one side of the coin. To start with, ethnicity is one of the markers that are often used to slot migrants into certain occupational niches, thus (re)producing labor market inequalities. At the same time, and this constitutes the other side of the coin, ethnicity can function as a basis of self-ethnicization by migrants who typify themselves as belonging to a particular group and thus have access to positions these persons desire. Thus, there may be instances of *self-ethnicization* or *self-engendering*. As a response to the existing hierarchies of diversity and in order to gain access to jobs or to make successful referrals for friends, relatives, and acquaintances, migrants engage in practices of self-ethnicization. For example, some migrant men from the Ukraine refer

to their ethnicity to gain access to agricultural jobs in Germany; and migrant women from similar regions refer to ethnic networks in order to work in the domestic service sector (Amélinea 2009). While from a systemic perspective ethnicization serves to uphold and create structures of occupational inequality through exclusion, from a relational perspective—in this case from the view of migrants themselves—it serves as a mechanism of *opportunity hoarding*. Migrants are sometimes proud to broker jobs in ethnic networks. Ethnicity is thus intricately related to class.

Eventually, a social mechanismic account of tracing the generation of social inequalities out of (cultural) differences must consider the macro-structural conditions under which these processes occur. Also, it needs to address seemingly contradictory trends. For example, while boundaries have been built in many West European societies vis-à-vis categories such as Muslims, macro-institutional efforts have mushroomed in countries such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany to bring in Muslim organizations into the core institutional framework in which organized religion is dealt with. In Germany, for example, the Islam Conference, initiated in 2006, has sought to establish cooperation partners with whom German state authorities may negotiate concerning the further establishment of semi-public religious bodies on the Muslim side. After all, in order to participate fully in the German public sphere and to enjoy full status, religious organizations need to be recognized by state authorities as “corporations of public law.” We thus observe two counteracting trends on different scales. While boundaries versus Muslims as a category have been reinforced over the past 10 years, as indicated by public surveys, negotiations in the public realm have striven to establish Islamic organizations as part of public debates. The interesting question then is under which conditions religion turns into a marker of inequality on a categorical-individual level and into a marker that signals an accepted partner in public negotiations on a collective level. It may well be that the two trends are concomitant in that both result from conflictual accommodation.

## **AN EMERGING RESEARCH SITE: TRANSNATIONALITY AS A DIVERSITY CHARACTERISTIC**

The transnationalization of social formations has resulted in transnationality as a new form of diversity—that is, cross-border life styles—adding and interacting with known ones such as gender, religion, language, and social class. Many migrants maintain ties to their countries of origin, or links to other regions after settling in immigration countries. A variety of close, continual ties arise within families in the case of chain migration, in religious communities, in ethnic diasporas, via migrants' human rights organizations, and through academic or business cliques. Such cases are known as transnational social spaces, whereby not geographical mobility, but rather the continued contacts between migrants and relatively immobile correspondents across borders are decisive. Such transnational ties are nothing new and have existed for a long time. In the age of nationalism Max Weber used the term “communities abroad” (Weber 1980 [1921]: 234), thereby referring to groups and associations of German migrants in North and South America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The technological possibilities of communication, which took off in the nineteenth century with steamboats and the telegraph, have burgeoned since then once again.

The implications of transnational lifestyles for social inequalities are hotly debated, especially regarding incorporation of migrants in national realms. While systematic research on transnationality is still to come, the discourses seem to be dualistic. While academic and public discussions often refer to geographic mobility and transnational networks of higher income and education categories as part of their upward mobility (Kuznetsov 2006), transnationality in the case of categories such as labor migrants often seems to be associated with downward mobility and a failure of incorporation (Esser 2004). Research indicates that so-called highly qualified persons have networks with a wide geographical range and frequently maintain intensive (professional) contacts across borders (Meyer and Charum 1995). For categories such as professionals, cross-border social and symbolic ties are

central elements and indicators for transnationally oriented careers. Correspondingly, multinational and export-oriented companies value linguistic and “multicultural” skills as positive attributes and indeed look for such characteristics. A positive connotation can be seen in the new discourse on migration and development in which entrepreneurial migrants and sometimes their associations figure as highly mobile, highly skilled, and well-incorporated newcomers in societies of immigration. By contrast, those with or without migration experience but with lower occupational qualifications are less likely to be involved in work-related transnational networks. Not surprisingly, negative connotations also abound. Regarding asylum seekers, the transnational ties and activities of refugees and irregular migrants are often portrayed as detracting from incorporation into countries of immigration. Transnational activities such as foreign television consumption are thought to contribute to widespread segregation. The main point of debate is on how to make sure that such categories of migrants incorporate into the national society at hand and to terminate undesirable transnational contacts (Scheffer 2008).

The constitution of transnationality as a positively connoted diversity marker is especially pertinent in the field of migration and development. Over the past few years, for example, migrants have been constituted as new development agents in development cooperation by immigration and emigration countries. Migrants are thought to engage in *brokerage* between immigration and emigration countries and thus “development.” The fundamental idea behind this kind of brokerage in transnational diversity management is that due to their loyalties and ties as well as their local knowledge of the needs of so-called developing countries, migrants are important mediators for initiating socioeconomic development or for engaging in conflict mediation. Financial transfers back home, the transfer of ideas—“social remittances”—and knowledge, but also capabilities and competences—the insider advantages that migrants have such as linguistic competences, social contacts, familiarity with bureaucratic processes—are thought to benefit development cooperation. Making

use of the competences of migrants as development brokers and mediators with knowledge of local conditions is part of a new “mantra” (Kapur 2004) of migration and development.

It is not new that—beyond sending financial remittances—migrants do remain in contact with those back home. This has been verified in numerous cases over the past century (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918, vol. 5: 98-127). Nonetheless, technological opportunities and multicultural sensitivities have enlarged the space for cross-border interactions. What is novel, however, are the greater incentives for civil society agents to replace the old, state-centered, development policy paradigm of the 1960s and build on the market paradigm of the 1980s and the 1990s. Programs based on such approaches have been pushed, for example, by international organizations such as the World Bank and national states as well as development cooperation organizations. European immigration countries concentrate their development cooperation policies on countries bordering the EU in the south and the east, such as the Joint EU-Africa Strategy. EU policies and public policies of member states increasingly couple development cooperation with migration control and put more emphasis on the legitimacy of national economic interests in hiring highly qualified workers. In emigration countries, the image of migrants has changed from that of “turncoats” to “heroes.” Many states—for instance, Russia, Ghana, Mali, Mexico, and the Philippines—have meanwhile established diaspora ministries. Measures taken include tax relief for emigrants who may live and work in Silicon Valley and invest in India, and symbolic-practical policies such as the tolerance of dual citizenship help to uphold the loyalty of emigrants (Faist 2008).

The deployment of migrants as development agents can be observed on two levels. At both these levels there are increased endeavors by international organizations, states, and NGOs to create incentives for migrants to become involved in promoting development. On one level, diasporic migrants return as highly qualified workers for brief assignments to their countries of origin, or develop small-scale projects on their own initiative—for example, medical doctors in the health



sector. On a second level, it is individual migrants and migrant collectives, from families to migrant self-organizations, who not only support relatives and friends in their country of origin but also become involved in activities such as building wells or schools. In some European countries there are now state programs that combine the periodic return of migrants and their involvement with development cooperation. It should be noted, however, that such programs—the *co-développement* scheme in France for instance—were originally created to encourage the return of migrants to their home countries, and are built on close and politically asymmetric ties from colonial times.

In the light of these new policy measures for promoting migrants as development agents and brokers, certain attributes of migrants that were hitherto regarded as drawbacks—“fence sitting,” for example—are re-interpreted as mobility competences and thus selling points. In short, cross-border ties and associated resources—that is, the very transnationality of migrants—become a characteristic of diversity. This characteristic refers to, for instance, commitments in migrants’ regions of origin, which were formerly seen as an indicator for nonintegration in immigration states. Incorporation in the country of immigration, from the perspective of such policies, is by all means compatible with transnational involvement and commitments in the country of origin. Empirical studies show that incorporation in the country of immigration is virtually a pre-requisite for meaningful involvement in development policy activities (Portes, Escobar, and Radford 2007). Transnational activists as a rule still have their local roots in their regions of origin and use them as a basis for transboundary involvement. This is testified by the activities of African organizations in Germany that are involved in development cooperation and help with activities such as the building of schools or water supply systems. Nonetheless, it should be borne in mind that development objectives and interests are sometimes subject to dispute between migrants and those who remained behind (Sieveking, Fauser, and Faist 2008). This suggests that the problems encountered in cooperation with migrant organizations are in principle no different from the

problems that emerge between established development aid organizations and the addressees of cooperation.

While the transnationality of professionals in contexts of development cooperation is welcomed in the political pronouncements of the world of development and followed also by grass-roots organizations, cross-border ties and loyalties of labor migrants related to other social practices such as marriage partners from the homeland or TV programs received from the country of origin are often seen in a negative light, especially when it comes to issues of incorporation in immigration countries. In many cases, transnational engagement (and the maintenance of immigrant cultures and traditions) is seen to create a barrier to integration into the receiving societies; and vice versa, failed incorporation is blamed for transnational orientations of migrants (cf. Koopmans and Statham 2003 on political participation). It has long been implicitly or explicitly assumed that incorporation will almost automatically lead to a decreasing orientation on origin countries. The prevalent view in Europe has been that immigrants would migrate from one country to another, would settle for good in the receiving country, while integrating into the dominant society's economic, political and sociocultural institutions. At the same time, they would progressively disengage from loyalties and attachments of their home countries. The renewed public policy emphasis on these views has fostered a growing conviction—also to be found in academic writings—that the transnational orientation of immigrants, as manifested in transnational marriages, cultural and religious orientations, watching home country television, and retaining dual citizenship, are harmful for integration; remitting money, as we have seen, has been taken off this list. The dominant perception in these new policy discourses is that, through the maintenance of transnational ties, immigrants do not develop the necessary understanding of the culture and language of the receiving country, leading to an array of problems such as practicing religions and “homeland” cultures that are allegedly incompatible with the values of Western democracies (for example, “honor killings”), and a lack of participation in economic and social institutions of the immigration state (comparatively high unem-

ployment rates and low educational credentials). Frequently, the consequences of transnational behavior, such as importing marriage partners from the country of origin are cast in anecdotal accounts as a case of negative social capital; that is, the social mechanism of *generalized reciprocity* in kinship networks which contributes to social segregation in the country of immigration (Kelek 2005). While transnational social practices are indeed of great interest when it comes to the question of whether they constitute a jumping board toward incorporation or a cul de sac and thus a step toward segregation, the available evidence points towards a rather varied picture (Faist and Özveren 2004). In sum, in the current public debates across Europe, transnational orientations and practices are more and more seen as a manifestation of the (deliberate) refusal of migrants to embrace the receiving countries' culture, language, and values and a cause for their supposed lack of social, cultural, and economic integration in immigration societies.

The actual functioning of crucial social mechanisms, such as brokerage in the case of migrants' involvement in development cooperation and the actual workings of negative or sour social capital in the case of migrant exclusion, is still contested. What can be said with some certainty, however, is that it is necessary to take a closer look at the actual mechanisms associated with transnationality. In order to arrive at meaningful findings the issue is not simply whether transnationality contributes to incorporation or nonincorporation—there is evidence for both claims (see, for example, Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller 2003; Snel, Engbersen, and Leerkes 2006)—but how this works and under what conditions (see Glick Schiller et al. 2005).

The analysis of transnationality requires us to go beyond a national “container” view, and to complement the logic of comparing national states with an approach of looking at exchange across the borders of national states. A case in point are strategies of social protection. Social protection clearly extends across the borders of national states. Already more than 10 percent of Dutch public old-age pensions, for example, are paid to recipients who are living outside the Netherlands (Toyota, Böcker, and Guild 2006). The mobility of persons,

groups, the transnational activities of organizations and the international coordination of states is involved in the social protection of, for example, German pensioners living in Spain, but also former labor migrants from Morocco in France returning to the region of origin, or domestic care workers from Ukraine working in German households and the ensuing restructuring of care work in the region of origin—to mention just a few examples. In all of these cases social protection is not necessarily provided and consumed within the territory of a single national welfare state.

A contrasting example is that of EU citizens migrating within the EU to Spain or Turkey, on the one hand, and former labor migrants moving between immigration countries and their countries of origin (Böcker 1993), on the other. We see in addition to the usual markers of class, gender, and ethnicity the marker of transnationality, which is a marker connected to the production of inequality. The opportunities for leading a transnational lifestyle are not only connected to financial means and social resources (for example, networks of friends and kin) but also to the macro-political regulation of mobility and settlement and thus to legal status (Gustafson 2008). EU citizens moving within the EU and countries associated with the EU, for example, either congregate within ethnically and/or citizenship-wise fairly homogeneous enclaves in countries such as Spain or Turkey, or blend on a more individual basis with the local resident population. The former pattern can be discerned among middle-class pensioners with little knowledge of the language of the destination country; the latter among higher-class pensioners who consciously choose to settle outside pensioners' enclave communities, having at their disposal not only sufficient financial means but also linguistic and cultural skills; for example, speaking the language(s) in the country of settlement. In a very crude way, many pensioners' colonies in Spain and Turkey made up of British or Dutch citizens correspond to the former, individualistic pensioners in Tuscany to the latter type (cf. King, Warnes, and Williams 2000). Again, as in the case of care workers, legal status makes a notable difference. This is obvious in the differences between intra-EU mobility of citizens

of member states vs. former labor migrants who return to the countries of origin on a regular basis. For many pensioners who worked as labor migrants, it is important to be able to move back and forth in order to access health services. Yet for former labor migrants from non-EU countries this is not self-understood. To be eligible for public health care schemes in the Netherlands or Germany, retired Moroccan or Turkish migrants, for example, need to maintain permanent residence in the immigration countries. If not, they are simply cut off from health care standards they are used to. In stark contrast, free mobility to partake in social insurance schemes across borders of member states is usually not an insurmountable obstacle for EU citizens moving inside the common European sphere.

Overall, a transnational lifestyle is enabled by national welfare state policies and leads to *opportunity hoarding*. In Europe, migration by pensioners was initially an option for high income groups, yet this has changed over the past decades. Nowadays, middle-income pensioners can afford to relocate abroad. A growing percentage not only of the so-called highly-skilled and professionals, merchants, and businesspeople, and other selected categories of persons engage in a transnational lifestyle, but also groups not active in labor markets but living off transfer income. Transnationality is thus enabled by national welfare state policies. Pensioners afford to hoard opportunities in selecting appropriate climate zones throughout the year, and—depending on material resources and legal status—select the services most important to them, such as health and care, always according to life-course specific needs.

### **NULLIUS IN VERBA: THE PERCEPTION OF DIVERSITY AND THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

It is of great importance for researchers to carefully consider which markers and dichotomies are introduced in public and academic debates on cultural diversity and inequality. For example, one of the lead distinctions not only of development but also migration studies has been between tradition and modernity. With respect to diversity, this distinction has more than once resulted in propositions about immi-

grants having to transit from traditional to modern forms of cultural, political, and economic organization. What such a perspective neglects is that there are manifold milieus among migrants and nonmigrant groups. This state of affairs is all the more reason to regularly check the fundamental categories underlying the analysis of diversity. One of the tasks of social scientists is both to establish the practices of agents from various categories and to reflect on how academic categorizations in turn may contribute to the use of cultural markers.

A reflexive use of categorizations may help to identify dichotomizations in a field which is characterized by strong positive and negative connotations. Since the embrace of diversity as an academic and public-political concept is a new trend, it is all the more reason to be concerned with how the terms of the debates are set. Overall, social scientific theorizing has been slow to respond to the implications of cultural diversity or heterogeneity for crucial social and political questions. Seen in a longer historical view, the emphasis on diversity signals a turning point and a move away from the rather more skeptical evaluations of diversity in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At that time, prevalent social and political theory took a critical stance toward the relation between diversity, on the one hand, and equality and democracy on the other. John Stuart Mill, for instance, can be seen as a classic proponent of the skeptical standpoint (Mill 2006 [1861]; see also Weber 1988 [1895]). Not until the late 1980s did reasoning in favor of the compatibility of liberal universal ideas and cultural difference gain hold in Will Kymlicka's concept of multicultural citizenship (1995). The turn to diversity is a further continuation, this time in organizations and the civil sphere.

The attention to diversity is helped by public contention and thus the struggle for equal rights in Western Europe. Struggles around both recognition and redistribution constitute a mode of democratic incorporation and citizenship practices. This applies equally to cultural, political, and social rights. To avoid disconnecting diversity programs from actual political and societal practices, the diversity paradigm needs to be extended beyond organizational concerns and connected

to democratic contention. This means that diversity has to be linked with actually voiced demands for equal chances of participation in order to understand the problems connected with social inequality. It is a central feature of all democratic societies that political processes are shaped by demands for material and symbolic equality (Tocqueville 1988 [1835, 1841]).

Thus, if the current discussion on diversity is to go beyond the narrow emphasis on organizational change and the efficient use of individual competence that is based on the increasing significance of diversity as a set of personal characteristics and policies, the insights gained from sociological research on multiculturalism need to be heeded and further developed. At least from the perspective of decisionmakers and most of the political advocates of multiculturalism, the other objective of multicultural and thus also diversity policies is to bring heretofore marginalized groups into the political sphere and the societal mainstream. As is evidenced in actual practices of multiculturalists, there is constant reference to a civil-society discourse. In other words, multiculturalism in a democracy constitutes a mode of incorporation that is characterized by a particular type of civil participation. This type of engagement is part of what Alexander (2006) calls the “civil sphere.” The focus of the civil sphere is the political realm, which is prior to the official relations between states and citizens and rests primarily on the resources of the citizens themselves. Diversity thus adds another layer in bringing in not only rights but also the civil sphere. Central resources of the civil sphere are solidarity and trust, without which democracy cannot be conceived (Offe and Preuß 1991). This insight is particularly relevant for the debates on diversity because, at first sight, it seems that the organizational level on which diversity programs are conceptualized and implemented is a realm outside the civil sphere and thus democratic deliberation. However, there is a nexus: it is only in this organizational and associational realm that the civil sphere can effectively take hold. This idea applies to both organizations of the respective dominant groups and migrant groups.

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