Part IV

Encounters and diversity
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Diversity unpacked
From heterogeneities to inequalities

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Diversity and heterogeneities

No matter which words we use – integration, assimilation, incorporation, or insertion – all of these normatively loaded terms hold the promise of equality for immigrants. Nonetheless, the other side of the coin reveals manifold inequalities, such as high unemployment, residential segregation, or religious extremism. Diversity, along with assimilation, has been one of the main paradigms of integration and of policy aimed at addressing such inequalities.

And even though diversity may mean many different things – a demographic description, an ideology, a set of policies, or a political theory of modern society – one can discern a core tenet in its normatively oriented intellectual lineage: to overcome social inequalities based on cultural markers (heterogeneities) by shaping cultural, civic, political, and economic relations via public policies. In essence, diversity as a concept and a set of – not necessarily coherent – policies, programmes, 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 those, like the European Commission, who push for structural reforms to turn incorporation into a two-way process. In particular, the adaptation of organizations to ‘cultural’ factors, the economic use of soft skills, and the delivery of service to a culturally heterogeneous clientele come to the forefront.

While the focus of assimilation is on individual migrants passing into mainstream society and of multiculturalism, in some varieties, on the rights of migrants as a means to increase their sense of recognition and belonging and also overall national unity, the emphasis of diversity approaches can be seen to lie on the level in between – on organizations. 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 (Diewald and Faist 2011).

Here, heterogeneity is used to denote markers such as gender, class, ethnicity, or nationality because the term seems to be more neutral compared to the alternatives of diversity and...
difference. The term diversity already contains within itself that which is to be explained, namely the perception and valuation of difference, and often in a quite positive sense, such as in ‘diversity management’ (see Wrench, this volume). In notions of diversity management or managing diversity, the issue of inequality is almost absent. It is not part of the concern. Instead, in the private sector it is hitherto ‘private’ competencies, such as knowledge of languages useful for the company, which come to the fore. In the public sector, such as in hospitals, schools, or the police, the main goal in serving groups with migrant or minority backgrounds is improving service delivery (Faist 2010). Furthermore, the terms diversity and difference mostly refer to cultural markers. Yet such a limitation is already part of the problem because cultural markers (e.g. ethnicity or religion) interact with non-cultural ones (e.g. class, see Gordon’s (1964) early concept of ‘ethclass’). In order to avoid policy valuations as much as possible, it is helpful to return to a sociological use of the term heterogeneity (Blau 1977: 77). We can distinguish various sorts of heterogeneities: they can (a) be ascriptive, as with age, ethnicity, nationality, or gender; (b) refer to cultural preferences, dispositions, or worldviews; (c) relate to competencies or qualifications as societally legitimated mechanisms of attributing life chances; and finally (d) refer to activities, such as wage and household labour.

Inequalities arise from categorizations of heterogeneities. Such categorizations generate unequal access to resources (redistribution), to status (recognition), and to decision-making (power). Rewards based upon the categorizations of heterogeneities are differential, such as gendered wage differences. In short, inequalities are those categorizations of difference based upon heterogeneities which generate unequal returns and have been institutionalized (using somewhat different terms: Tilly 1998). Resulting inequalities then refer to both statistical distributions of resources (objective positions) and the perceptions of inequalities.

Social mechanisms: from heterogeneities to inequalities

Social mechanisms can be 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 et al. 2001: 24) and ‘[p]rocesses are frequently occurring combinations or sequences of mechanisms’ (Tilly 2005: 28). The term social mechanism thus 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. Formally, one can thus define a social mechanism (M) as a link between initial conditions (input I) and effect (outcome O). M explicates an observed relationship between specific initial conditions and a specific outcome. The short formal expression then is: I-M-O.

A social mechanism-based kind of explanation aims toward causal reconstruction of processes leading to defined outcomes. Mechanism-based statements – not to be confused with mechanistic statements, since most social mechanisms are not mechanical, as in machines – are generalizations about recurrent processes (Mayntz 2004). Mechanism-based explanations do not look for statistical relationships among variables (Bunge 2004) but seek to explain a given social phenomenon – an event, structure, or development – by identifying the processes through which it is generated. There is no necessary claim that such mechanisms are akin to covering-laws. A social mechanism-based explanation would claim that certain outcomes occur sometimes. Mechanisms can be analyzed on various levels of aggregation – for example, socio-psychological mechanisms such as agenda-setting or stereotyping, social-relational ones such as opportunity-hoarding, or macro-structural mechanisms such as ‘structural violence’ (Galtung 1969).

Examples of social mechanisms significant for the (re-)production of inequalities are – in addition to boundary-making – exclusion, opportunity-hoarding, exploitation, and hier-
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Archization (see Table 28.1), while inclusion, redistribution, de-hierarchization, and ‘catching up’ constitute mechanisms which can further equality between categories of persons and groups (see Table 28.2). The following discussion sketches selected general and specific social mechanisms. The preliminary list of general mechanisms presented here draws on old and new classics in the social sciences, such as inclusion and exclusion and opportunity-hoarding (Tilly 1998) as variations of social closure (Weber 1972 [1922]), exploitation (Karl Marx) and redistribution, and hierarchization and de-hierarchization (Therborn 2006: 13). These general mechanisms are specified by concrete mechanisms in order to link them to empirically observable processes.

In addition to the general social mechanisms just mentioned, there is another general mechanism that should not be forgotten, namely boundary-making. The perception and evaluation of heterogeneities is important, as heterogeneities are always perceived and evaluated, and actors use such valuations in the process of producing inequalities.

One pattern of boundary-making is of particular relevance here, namely boundary-shifting. In Germany, for example, data from the General Survey in the Social Sciences (Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften, ALLBUS) suggest that between 1996 and 2006 significant shifts took place in boundaries between migrant groups and the dominant group (‘German-Germans’). The dominant group in 2006 clearly perceived certain migrant groups – Italians, Spaniards, and Greeks – as being part of its own. Rapprochement seems to have taken place (see Table 28.2). However, there were also categories for which no change occurred or which even experienced an increase in dissimilarity, namely ‘Muslims’ (Fincke 2009). In the case of this category, there is evidence of greater social distance, and the mechanism of distantiation (see Therborn 2006: 12) seems to have been at work. In a way, one could even speak of a new boundary, as ‘Turks’ have during this time metamorphosed into ‘Muslims’. This mechanism of distantiation has created social distance between the dominant group and minority groups by way of defining the ‘other’ as culturally distinct in religious ways. Social distance has probably been reinforced by mechanisms such as stereotyping, but also by thematization and agenda-setting: the ‘Muslim’ has variously served not only as an object of social integration, but also as the ‘other’ in the context of terrorism, securitization, and an impending ‘clash of civilizations’.

An intersectional analysis is necessary to overcome unjustified simplifications. The changes just explained by the shifting of boundaries and the concrete mechanisms involved do not yet serve to answer the question of which interactions are regarded by the various groups as equal or unequal. Social status, among other markers of heterogeneity, makes a difference in how, for example, ethnic or religious categories are evaluated by dominant groups. Field experiments – quasi-experimental research regarding hiring in labour markets – suggest that discrimination is starkly reduced if the interaction partners are perceived to be equals with respect to social status. Socio-economic positions and majority group language skills are strong predictors (see de Beijl...
2000 on discrimination in recruitment processes). We thus encounter intersections of ethnic belonging, status, and language competencies.

Since it is usually much easier to exit from groups, organizations, and states than to enter them, mechanisms of closure assume an important role in accounting for the genesis of inequalities. One of the central questions involved is: Who belongs to ‘us’? At least part of the answer can be found in rules of admission and membership. For admission on the state level, immigration policies make the differential inclusion and exclusion of categories quite obvious. In most Western immigration countries nowadays, the so-called highly skilled are bound to experience a fast track to residence and citizenship, while the low-skilled service population is expected to rotate. Again, this is pushed one step further in neoliberal, populist discourses of boundary-making: it is only the economically active segment of the population – high achievers in formal labour markets – which is valued (Sarrazin 2010). For membership on the state level, citizenship rules constitute a rather mixed bag and point to contradictory developments. On the one hand, the liberalization of rules has been quite visible in the past few decades (e.g. eased access to citizenship in terms of requirements such as length of stay, shorter waiting times). On the other hand, the requirements for those ‘wanted but not welcome’ (Zolberg 1987) have been stepped up, as can be seen, for example, in labour market activation policies. The latter are clearly exclusionary and have led from a social right to welfare to workfare. Interestingly, this broader pattern applies not only to immigrants, but also to those dependent on subsidies from the welfare state.

Opportunity-hoarding, in the words of Charles Tilly (1998), occurs ‘when members of a categorically bounded network acquire access to a resource that is valuable, renewable, subject to monopoly, supportive of network activities, and enhanced by the network’s modus operandi’ (Tilly 1998: 91). In a way, even (international) migration could be labelled an overall strategy of opportunity-hoarding. There are numerous examples in the literature of migrant groups who have successfully occupied and monopolized economic niches (e.g. Light et al. 1990). Nonetheless, by bringing in co-villagers or co-ethnics, dependencies are also established, such as indebtedness, which can lead to increasing hierarchization within such groups.

Another concrete mechanism of opportunity-hoarding is brokerage, namely migrants serving to fill structural holes by connecting persons and organizations which have no direct links. As the new ‘mantra’ of migrants-as-development-agents suggests, international migrants’ financial remittances are greater than the funds for Official Development Aid (ODA) (though reverse remittances flowing from developing to developed countries are conveniently forgotten). It is clear that opportunity-hoarding occurs when organizations in the development cooperation sector try to co-opt migrant associations to serve their need to ensure a constant flow of public resources for their own work (Faist et al. 2011). Of interest in this case is not only opportunity-hoarding, but also a ‘new’ kind of heterogeneity usually not regarded as such: transnationality. Transnationality, that is, persons, groups, or organizations building and maintaining relatively continuous cross-border transactions, is not – contrary to many claims – simply a resource which is either positive (e.g. enhancing educational careers by shifting children to the most appropriate location) or negative (e.g. transfers from one educational system to another as a dead end). Instead, we need to account for how transnationality becomes a positive or negative resource, i.e. how it turns from a heterogeneity marker to a characteristic of social inequality.

Normally we speak of exploitation when powerful persons command resources from which they draw significantly increased returns. These dominant agents pool these returns so that they exclude those outside their group from the full value the latter add to the effort (Tilly 2005). Exploitation occurs, for example, in the case of employment of migrant women in irregular conditions through the imposition of rules (e.g. working hours and the working schedule;
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Orozco (2007). In particular, in irregular care work, power asymmetries between employer and employee have repercussions for family relations of the employer and employees. The employers’ labour market participation is enhanced, whereas for the migrants problems arise in managing transnational families.

Hierarchization (Therborn 2006: 13) refers to the existence of positions in formal organizations differentially endowed at least with rights, duties, and resources, as seen in informal systems of roles and cultural hierarchies. Not only do organizations themselves create hierarchies through the layering of positions, reward and remuneration systems, and career ladders; there is also an interplay of organizations and informal networks. For instance, if children of labour migrants compete with German youth on the basis of equal educational (high school) credentials, informal hiring networks assume importance. For many young persons of Turkish descent (so-called second generation), parental networks no longer function because of de-industrialization. Their parents’ employment concentration in a small number of economic sectors, such as the manufacturing and steel industries, has become disadvantageous over time, as there are often no informal networks reaching into new and attractive sectors of the labour market (Faist 1995). Again, an intersectional approach becomes relevant. For example, in organizational hierarchies in firms or even labour markets, the confluence of ethnic and occupational or class hierarchies can be decisive. In ‘split labour markets’, a concept which has been usefully applied to white settler colonies with slavery in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (e.g. the American South or South Africa), labour markets are divided along ethno-racial lines. Ethnic antagonism and ethno-racial hierarchies resulted from this kind of hierarchization, as did outright exclusion of groups from certain labour market segments (Bonacich 1972).

Social mechanisms: the production of equalities

Multicultural citizenship promoting equalities is very much tied to the public policies of an intervening welfare state. This relationship is a complex one because we are dealing not only with negative rights (‘freedom from’), but also so-called positive rights (‘freedom to’), and thus the enabling aspect of citizenship. As in the preceding analysis, we also need to consider a universe of policies and politics that is broader than those imagined by multiculturalism. Networks of trust, such as rotating credit associations, mutual aid societies, and homeland associations, are also important.

On the societal level, inclusion points toward formal equality and substantive equality (equality of outcomes). Opportunities for resident migrants to achieve legal equality, such as the

| Table 28.2 General and specific social mechanisms in the production of equalities out of heterogeneities |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| **General social mechanisms (selection)** | **Specific social mechanisms (examples)** |
| Boundary-making | Rapprochement |
| Inclusion | Liberalization of citizenship acquisition (e.g. dual citizenship); human rights enforcement; denizenship |
| Redistribution | Subsidies for public institutions (e.g. child care, educational institutions) |
| Catching up | Anti-discrimination, affirmative action |
| De-hierarchization | Special representation rights in political parties, unions, etc. (claim-making) → de-intersectionalization |

possibility of acquiring citizenship, seem to have improved. Citizenship rules have been liberalized; for example, some European countries complemented *ius sanguinis* with *ius soli* laws for persons born in the country; reduced the time of residence required for application for citizenship; and/or have increased toleration of dual citizenship. Another example is the introduction of far-reaching social rights for resident immigrants (denizenship). Still, inclusion in the legal sphere does not necessarily imply inclusion in substance, as the example of informal networks for obtaining access to organizations in the labour market suggests. Organizations may take account of equality explicitly in applying anti-discrimination rules, or may simply pretend to do so, or ignore it altogether.

Positive rights usually demand redistribution through taxes. Intervention in schooling, such as the provision of comprehensive schools or day-long instruction, requires additional resources. These universal policies are most often ‘colour blind’, however, and it is an empirical question whether certain universal policies favour privileged groups (e.g. the child allowance in Germany). While most policies that address heterogeneities require state intervention, they do not depend heavily on redistribution via tax resources (income redistribution), as, for example, in the case of affirmative action.

Another general mechanism advancing equality is that of ‘catching up’. Again, in this case we need to consider not only official public policies, such as affirmative action, but also trust networks, such as professional networks and cliques. Affirmative action explicitly takes heterogeneities such as gender, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation as a point of departure. The basic idea is that there has been a historical injustice which calls for remedial action and/or there is empirical evidence that (institutional) discrimination along the lines of such heterogeneities is still prevalent. In its weak form, such as the EU directive dealing with anti-discrimination, the idea of ‘catching up’ is not fiercely contested in public debates. It is implemented into national law and often upheld by the respective courts. Nonetheless, there is wide latitude in implementing the directive and corresponding national legislation, and questions revolve around whether such legal instruments advance the goal of anti-discrimination effectively. In addition to public policies, trust networks are decisive in helping less represented categories to catch up with established and dominant ones (see also opportunity-hoarding). Even if anti-discrimination policies contribute to a higher degree of equality for historically underrepresented groups, the effects of public contention are worth considering. The strong claim by the critics of multiculturalism is that cultural pluralism and the perception of cultural relativism may undermine solidarity with certain groups; one has only to think of the charges against affirmative action as ‘reverse discrimination’.

De-hierarchization as a general mechanism is certainly very much connected to claims-making of immigrants. Two classic examples are unionization and the setting up of political organizations to achieve political empowerment. The mechanism of de-hierarchization is particularly important because it reminds us that debates on multiculturalism need to look not only at redistribution and recognition, but also at participation in political decision-making as a third dimension of equalities and inequalities. Mobilization around religion, religious freedom, and representation in public life is a prominent current example of efforts at de-hierarchization on the part of certain immigrant groups. The example of the category ‘Muslim’ discussed on p. 267 on the production of inequalities through boundary-making and social distantiation is illustrative. It is around this category that substantial mobilization has occurred in European countries. In Germany, for example, one of the central issues has been the representation of Muslim organizations in the corporatist system of interest articulation. Note that this mobilization has been paralleled in public discourses by a seminal shift of the marker of heterogeneity from ethnicity/nationality to religion. Quite a few Muslim organizations have tried to become
incorporated as a ‘corporation of public law’ (Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts), thus entitling them to practices of inclusion such as the state collection of taxes by the state from registered believers, representation on the boards of public mass media, and extension of religious instruction in public schools.

Yet, and this is leading us to the duality of mechanisms producing equalities and inequalities, de-hierarchization may go along with essentialization and identity politics. The Deutsche Islamkonferenz (DIK) is a convenient lens through which one may analyze de-hierarchization through the inclusion of groups, in this case through religious organizations (cf. Modood 2007), and the possible re-essentialization of collective identities. Obviously, the inclusion of Muslim organizations refers not only to the legal-political inclusion of Islamic groups and organizations into the corporatist system, which has been an ongoing concern for state and religious associations and established churches alike. Through DIK, religion is co-constituted as the main axis of immigrant integration politics and policy (Tezcan 2013). The focus on Islam in the context of a specific corporatist mode of religious institutionalization denotes an entire population of persons, namely those who (allegedly) hold Muslim belief. As a result, in public debates the individuals in question are not Muslims who have a religious identity in addition to their class, gender, or ethnic identity. Rather, their entire collective identity is defined by religious belonging. We could call this process one of de-intersectionalization. It is well worth studying the actual effects of specific interfaces such as the DIK. The question would be whether members of the category in question withdraw their commitment from other boundaries, for example those defined along class or national lines, as they focus increasingly on allegiance to the boundary defined in religious terms.

Outlook: transnationality as a heterogeneity

We need to make a clear distinction between heterogeneities and inequalities. It is only by means of a close examination of how initial conditions of heterogeneities turn into equalities and inequalities that we can begin to understand the social mechanisms involved. Needless to say, the distinction between heterogeneities and (in)equalities is an analytical one since heterogeneities such as gender and ethnicity always come with a history and are loaded with meaning and valuation in one form or another. It should also be emphasized that we are dealing with recursive processes. The perceptions of heterogeneities are also a product of inequalities and equalities, and heterogeneities are the basis for boundaries between categories. Nonetheless, the differentiation allows us to specify the claims of critics and defenders of multicultural citizenship.

The approach roughly outlined here allows us to bring in ‘new’ heterogeneities such as transnationality. It connotes the social practices of agents – individuals, groups, communities, and organizations – across the borders of nation-states. The term denotes a spectrum of cross-border ties in various spheres of social life – familial, socio-cultural, economic, and political – ranging from travel, through sending financial remittances, to exchanging ideas. Seen in this way, agents’ transnational ties constitute a marker of heterogeneity, akin to other heterogeneities, such as age, gender, citizenship, sexual orientation, cultural preferences, or language use. In short, transnational ties can be understood as occupying a continuum from low to high – that is, from very few and short-lived ties to those that are multiple and dense and continuous over time. For example, migrants may remit varying sums of money or none at all. This is also to say that, for our purposes, migrants and non-migrants should not be considered simply as transnational or not, but as being transnational to different degrees. Transnationality is characterized by transactions of varying degrees of intensity and at various stages of the life course; it is not restricted to
geographical mobility. For example, non-mobile family members of migrants may engage in transnational practices.

Transnationality has implications for other heterogeneities and raises the question whether and to what extent markers such as ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, and sexual orientation are all (also) constituted across borders of national states. If the question is answered affirmatively, we arrive at a transnational puzzle: cross-border transactions among categories such as migrants (both mobile and non-mobile) constitute a significant part of overall ties and practices. Yet public resources and institutions such as redistribution and institutional regulation intended to address the implications of diversity are mainly national.

Note
1 The main ideas of this contribution are based on Faist (2013).

References


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