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Re-thinking Diversity

Multiple Approaches in Theory, Media,
Communities, and Managerial Practice

Management – Culture – Interpretation

Edited by
Andreas P. Müller
Stephan Sonnenburg

The book series of the Karlshochschule International University explores new ideas and approaches to management, organizations and economy from a cultural and interpretive point of view. The series intends to integrate different perspectives towards economy, culture and society. Therefore, management and organizational activities are not seen as being isolated from their context, but rather as context-bound and dependent on their surrounding cultures, societies and economies. Within these contexts, activities make sense through the allocation, the interpretation and the negotiation of meanings. Sense-making can be found in performative processes as well as the way social meaning is constructed through interactions. The series seeks innovative approaches, both in formulating new research questions and in developing adequate methodological research designs. We welcome contributions from different interdisciplinary and collective ways of thinking and seeking knowledge which focus on the integration of "Management – Culture – Interpretation".

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Introduction: Re-thinking Diversity from a Cultural Science Perspective

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Introductory Remarks

Diversity is a term that has been discussed widely and from many different angles. Even the proposal to re-think it is not totally new. But, instead of re-thinking something that has already been re-thought, the contributions in this volume attempt to reach out for some new insights and bring different things together at the same time.

The notion of diversity has been used and determined in multiple ways. Generally speaking, diversity is a poly-functional term used to describe and analyze the complex dynamics in today's society. Within the contexts of the usage of the term, as well as on the edges of it, at least three major tasks can be identified:

– First, as we deal with matters of a complex nature, a survey of the theoretical state-of-the-art in relation to diversity is necessary.
– Second, we argue that diversity is a social reality, which is constituted by and within communicative action. The task should, therefore, be to discuss and establish a methodological grounding for research on diversity.
– Third, there is a strong need for empirical analyses that show the qualitative dynamics of diversity in different societal domains, i.e., organizations, urban environments, companies, families, TV and social media, universities, and so on.

These tasks can and will not be accomplished by just one publication. We believe, though, that there should be equal attention paid to each. The present volume is based on a conference that took place at Karlshochschule International University in 2012. The layout of the venue was designed as a creative space for debate and exchange on the mentioned tasks. Researchers and practitioners met in arenas of discussion, where both the involved disciplines and the representatives of different levels of applied research and work could interact and argue in order to create synergies and find innovative ways of dealing with diversity.

One headline could and still can be given to all the discussions in these are-nas. Diversity cannot be reduced to a set of criteria that helps us to nail social differences; diversity is an integrating momentum of life.

The Notion of 'Diversity'

Diversity can be re-thought in interdisciplinary and intercultural ways. We argue that diversity should be understood as a socio-discursive construction (Foucault 1996) and as a contingency of identities, which are diverse in the sense that di-versity is an expression of their relation (Derrida 2000). This said, we want to examine the extent to which a political, social, and organizational innovation is possible through an integrated view on the socio-discursive construction called 'diversity' and through the perspective that interprets diversity as a relation. Moreover, we will ask what kind of diversity is imaginable in our scientific and everyday discourse.[1]

Following Engel (2002), we suggest differentiating three dimensions of anal-ysis: a symbolic, social, and individual dimension. By maintaining these dimen-sions, we try to avoid reducing the complexity of diversity, which in the normal case is multi-dimensional. In order to face this challenge, we argue that we need a culturalistic perception of the facts. Much too often, both in public and in sci-entific discourse, criteria like race, gender, age, or ethnicity are pre-determined as analytical categories. Cultural data and ideological underpinnings are thus clustered into the stereotypes of trivial observation and the unquestioned catego-ries of social sciences. We interpret diversity instead as a continuous socio-discursive process of the constitution of social systems. We also consider it to be a part of a socio-cultural and inter-subjective debate within the system.

When talking about identities we do not assume an ideal of constant and co-herent identity, but rather a process of performative repetition of continuous instability. In this regard, and referring to Judith Butler (Butler 1990), the ques-tion arises concerning the extent to which diversity can be deconstructed as a product of socio-cultural regime and power. And we refrain from referring to transsexualism as uniquely in the context of Butler's work, but suggest transfer-ring her findings to other social contexts. Diversity can be thought of as a per-formative model, in which it is an ongoing and recursive interpretation of behav-ior, habits, and feelings. How far, then, can diversity be interpreted as something that is associated with discursive norms or ethical constraints? And to what ex-tent do we acknowledge the relevance of a hierarchical discourse of diversity for

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[1]   A part of these thoughts, with specific attention to age-related issues in organizations, can be found as well in Braedel-Kühner and van Elst (2012).

systems, cultures, societies, and one's own, individual subjectivity? Even more questions can be derived from this thought: For example, to what extent does the productivity of normative discourse about diversity result from the functionality of languages as communicative and social practices in power relations?

We assume that there is potential in breaking with the categorized orders of diversity in society for achieving political and organizational innovation. Ambiguities and destabilization may be alternatives when attempting to overcome the difficulties that actually result from the discourse about diversity. But do they help to eliminate normative inclusion and exclusion processes and, thus, develop social innovation?

Differences are caused by giving things a categorical order. Therefore it might make sense to remove the disambiguation of differences by an irreducible difference of the others (Lévinas and Wenzler 1995), by adopting an understanding of difference as a continuous movement ('différance', Derrida 1967) or as performativity (Butler 1990). However, the concept of a radical singularity will not necessarily help us to rethink diversity. The 'phantasm' of an autonomous individual is misleading, because power and leadership relations are not kept in mind (cf. Butler 1990, p. 98). Instead, the concept of 'relational singularities' as proposed by Gutiérrez Rodríguez (1999) and a complementary socio-historical positioning of the phenomena could lead to a construction of social diversity. Following this perspective, we consider diversity to be phenomenologically differentiated in terms of relational singularities. Diversity is specific in that sense, but it is not categorical.

Exclusion Mechanisms and the Question of Social Sustainability

One of the focuses of this volume will be on any kind of discrimination processes in societies and organizations. Persistent stereotypes and myths of diversity in societies and cultures exercise a certain influence on the attitudes and behaviors of gatekeepers. But as we look at diversity from a constructivist standpoint, we will also argue that it is exactly because of these attitudes and behaviors of gatekeepers and leaders in society (Luhmann 2005) and in organizations (Nassehi 2006) that diversity is perceived in a specific way (cf. Ilmarinen 2001, Ortlieb and Sieben 2008, Dobbin et al. 2011).

Niklas Luhmann's theory of *inclusion* and *exclusion* explains discrimination phenomena and unequal treatment as a result stemming from cultural and ideological imprintings; interactive leadership behavior is strongly related to the functions of status and power in a given socio-cultural environment: "inclusion

(and accordingly exclusion) can only relate to the way in which people are in-
volved in the communication context and are therefore considered relevant"
(Luhmann 2005, p. 241). Nassehi transfers this observation from society as the
reference system to the organization as the reference system, thus analyzing
inclusion and exclusion processes in organizational settings and exploring life
situations and individual courses of life in particular (Nassehi 2006). In this re-
gard it is of special interest to have a look at the movement from the center of the
group to the "zone of integration" and through the "zone of vulnerability" (vul-
nérabilité) to the "zone of disaffiliation" (désaffiliation) (Castel 2008, p. 13).
Finally, Murphy points out that the study of domination in societies requires the
analysis of its rules of exclusion. While closure theory can clarify the processes
of exclusion (its nature, sources, and consequences), domination can be analyzed
in terms of the relations of power and control. Thus, closure theory can help to
decipher exclusionary codes and to understand societal domination. Exclusion is
seen as fundamental to maintaining or changing societies (Murphy 1988 and
1986, Roscigno et al. 2007).

When analyzing discrimination, it is also important to consider individual
identities together with processes of social mobility, relations of power, econom-
ic, cultural, and social differences. According to Böhnisch and Schröer (2004),
discrimination and social inequality require a new way of understanding of how
social worlds ('soziale Räume') are acquired and how the social tasks related to
these worlds are accomplished. In the inner circle of their model, personal atti-
tudes towards the accomplishment are analyzed; the outer circle is formed by the
socio-structural constraints of accessibility and availabilities. The inner circle is
characterized by psycho-social ambition towards actionability, consisting of
stable self-esteem, social appreciation, and the experience of self-efficacy. The
outer circle is composed of socio-structural contextualization. Whenever the
socialization of the individual and his or her capacity of accomplishing tasks
heads towards social sustainability, then the biography has to offer generally
applicable ways of accomplishment, multiple possibilities, and stimulation struc-
tures (cf. Böhnisch and Schröer 2004). Therefore, discrimination and the inclu-
sion and exclusion processes in society can be analyzed on an ontogenetic and
phylogenetic level.

The Cultural Turn in Research on Diversity

A major area of research is dedicated to the question as to how segregation pro-
cesses and the establishment of hierarchies in organizations and in socio-political
systems take place (horizontal and vertical differentiation). The issue can be

approached from different perspectives. We prefer a 'culturalistic' point of view that denominates diversity as a topic in its own right. As stated above, diversity is an integrating momentum of life; it can hardly or only heuristically be split from the study of social structures and the 'Lebenswelt' of people in social worlds. More recent approaches, such as the concept of multiple collectivities, or the notion of 'super-diversity' (Blommaert and Varis 2013, Vertovec 2007) try to grasp this growing complexity.

Multiple collectivity or multi-collectivity was proposed as a complement to the concept of multi-culturalism in order to detach the discussion of interculturality research from the coherence paradigm in general cultural research and to meet the current, increasing complexity of diverse societies (cf. Rathje 2006, Hansen 2011, and Bolten 2007, 2011). Collectivity refers to the affiliation of members to communities, commonly understood as a formal membership, while cultural affiliation is bound to behavioral habits, process-related mechanisms, and social procedures for producing cohesion. From this perspective, a cultural community can basically no longer be described only on the basis of the nationality of its members or other primordial parameters such as race or skin color. Rather, it can be assumed that cultural communities have recently been enriched, especially by the immigration of people from other, possibly new countries; therefore the 'other' can no longer be regarded as monolithic and mono-causal. In this context, 'super-diversity' designates the new, continuous, and dynamic layers in multi-collective communities (cf. Vertovec 2007). Diversity is a momentum in society. One of the objectives of the next few years will be to transform this momentum into implementations and applications, both from an organizational perspective in the form of entrepreneurial motivations and in the ways in which civic participation is fostered and supported.

Another tendency can be identified with the fundamental observation that in recent times the coherence of cultural communities has been decreasing in favor of superficial cohesion and networking processes. This observation supports the need for a distinction between collective and culture; it is connected with the fact that the part of the population with experience of migration and, for example, multilingualism, is of increasing importance. Plurality does not only involve sharing a homogeneous view of the world or having a presumed common ground of a collective social cognition, a common 'Lebenswelt'. Radical individuality rather leads to shortcuts on the surface of social (and organizational) discourses; the definition of social subjects in the sense of the postmodern subject and identity theory has to be renewed in the sense of a new appreciation of cohesion (cf. Blommaert and Varis 2013, also see recent media and communication theory).

Methodological Challenges

In a vast majority of cases, research on diversity has mainly focused on one of the specific variables that are normally conceived as sociological categories, such as age, gender, ethnic origin, etc. What has been neglected, on the one hand, is the fact that diversity manifests itself as multiple structuring, which in its textual layering is constituted by more than one of these categories. On the other hand, research has mainly treated synchronous and non-temporal aspects of diversity by analyzing the status quo of attitudes, ideological underpinnings, the background of behavioral aspects, and so on, without taking into account the discursive processes in social arenas where the issues that are related to diversity are touched and developed.

There is an understanding, of course, of how diversity is established along different axes of demographic change. However, the dynamics of how diversity develops in interactive environments, e.g., in arenas of social and political interest where the representatives of the pertinent societal groups meet, has not yet been shown sufficiently. We need, therefore, an analysis on the meso-level of societal discourse, e.g., a media analysis, the analysis of communicative genres of different kinds, the way in which agendas are set, an analysis of what the visible and what the unsayable portions of discourse are (cf. Fairclough 1995, Foucault 1996, Blommaert and Varis 2013). We need a detailed re-construction of the social suspense that lies in the ongoing and unstable process of the communicative constitution of diversity.

Diversity is the product of a continuous process of constitution in social systems. What is pertinent for the interaction between the members of these systems or collectivities is a result from a continuous negotiation among the members. But the negotiation does not lead to results. There is no *achievement*, as some micro-sociologists might like to assume. Diversity is, if at all, an unstable category of the relations between people, and its components are derived from conventionally set social cognitions.

Therefore, the main categories of diversity are not stable and they are not bound exclusively to sociological dimensions, but, for example, are also bound to the question as to how participants and stakeholders in the communicative household of society arrange their everyday Lebenswelt and how they interpret it (cf. Müller 2006, Fairclough 1995, van Dijk 1995). The components of this household are critical in the dimension of their ideological meaning. They are continuously evaluated and considered on the level of collective social cognition. Which factors play a role in the determination of diversity and its relevance for societal groups is part of the discursive construction of society. The analysis is, therefore, challenged to re-construct the processes of this discursive construction

and to separate its sequencing and modalities heuristically. The main challenge lies, from what we can see, in the analytical re-construction of how members in systems use patterns of diversity in their discourse, thereby giving order to societal structures and implying sensefulness to their own action.

We need a discussion about the methodological consequences of this view in order to install a perspective for further research. We want to argue that a critical perception of how the notion of diversity has been used both in public and in some research discourse can be useful for overcoming the barriers that hinder a productive way of dealing with it. Therefore, we argue in favor of a pluri-methodical approach, i.e., an application and addition of qualitative methods to the canon of research on diversity. Detailed, deeper analyses of the social sense-making processes that are related to diversity issues are most promising. As a matter of fact, they are still present in a minority of research approaches (cf. Wodak and Meyer 2009).

Practical Cases

An additional aim of the present volume is the integration of the practitioners' view. Therefore, some of the contributions will discuss practical cases, be it a focus on urban life and governance or an examination of specific issues in an organization.

As we have already said, there is a strong need to conduct empirical research on ongoing societal change, on the complex mechanisms of social structuring, and on the role diversity plays in it. If the institutions of a society have to change, first the social cognition and the social ideologies have to be made transparent and brought to the surface of analytical evidence. Only then can we seek for new ways and innovative solutions. The practical cases can shed light on some of the related possibilities.

About this Volume

Diversity is a complex phenomenon. Dealing with it offers many different perspectives, both from theoretical and from practical points of view. The phenomenon can be focused with a narrow or a wide angle lens, the analyzed data can stem from a multitude of contexts, and the empirical standards applied are just as manifold as the disciplines involved. Many studies on diversity concentrate mainly, if not exclusively, on one aspect, such as gender or age. Others intend to explicitly clarify the influences of a bundle of surrounding factors. Thus, in a

volume with many different contributions, it is hard to make all perspectives coalesce into a general consensus. What we find is a polyphony of voices, a diverse result in itself.

The attempt to approach and rethink diversity from different angles led us to the conviction that we needed to divide the volume into several chapters. The arrangement of the contributions in a specific chapter may give rise to a controversial discussion. In some cases there is considerable overlap; some contributions could very well have been categorized differently. However, we found certain logic in our systematics.

The first chapter is entitled *Approaching Diversity*. The contributions in this chapter are dedicated to particular questions within the theoretical and methodological framework of diversity. Claire Bynner shows that diversity might be caused and fostered by the loss of trust and reciprocity in social networks. Her approach is based on an analysis of interactions. Daniela Gröschke addresses the question of whether diversity is dealt with from an objective point of view or if its meaning depends more on subjective perceptions. Her examples are taken from an organizational background. Nevertheless, the range of the results goes beyond this field of observation. We find another field of observation in the area of public administration. Here, social divisions based on nationalities, ethnic differences, and specific formal constraints play a crucial part in the perception and treatment of individual needs. In this regard, Helena Desivilya Syna analyzes phenomena of exclusion and discrimination. The last article in this chapter finally offers a perspective that is different to the ones before. Anneli Kaasa deals with the potential for innovation of some of the European Union and neighboring states by analyzing the relationship between some of the well-known cultural dimensions and the innovativeness of these countries. This gives us some hints on the complex and dynamic background of our issue.

The first chapter of the volume obviously brings together different approaches to diversity, and these are of course only a few of the multitude of possibilities that exist. The second chapter is more focused; the articles and the interviews conducted with some of the contributors are dedicated to *Diversity in Organizations*. The first contribution continues, nevertheless, with reflections on the unexpressed and ideological underpinnings of diversity. Alexandra Kalev and Vincent J. Roscigno argue that some of the problems related to diversity actually are a consequence of an existing bias between the way diversity is perceived – and even the own activities related to it – and how these activities continuously and systematically pin down diversity. Alois Moosmüller invites the reader to go on a tour d'horizon, describing some historical developments of cultural diversity and its potential. He refers to a series of cases in industries and to some of his own research findings and finally emphasizes the need to acknowledge 'intercul-

turality' in order to guarantee future economic success. Next, Renate Ortlieb adds some more thoughts about managerial functions and needs. She stresses that the way organizations handle diversity affects their potential for innovation – a fact that often escapes the attention of management. Francesco Marcaletti and Emma Garavaglia especially focus on 'age', a specific challenge in human resource management that organizations currently have to face. They propose a tool for action-research activities that help management to improve the results of age-related working processes. With regard to 'age', Juhani Ilmarinen formulates some fundamental, deeper thoughts on today's working situation and demographic change. Finally, the chapter closes with a summary on the diversity management activities of Germany's DAX30 companies. Clemens Werkmeister analyzes some of the reports of these companies; his findings bring to light that there is still a remarkable emphasis on gender issues.

With the contributions in the third chapter, *Diversity in the Community*, we move to a different field of action. The phenomena that are related to diversity in today's societies have been systemized and categorized in many different ways. Typically, notions such as 'critical' or 'transformative' multiculturalism have been coined in order to deal with different ways of institutionalizing cultural or ethnic diversity in society. Zvika Orr pleads for a discussion that goes beyond this kind of labeling and argues for further analyses of complex cases. At this point, the presentation of craft communities in Northern India by Meera Velayudhan presents a persuasive case study in this area of activities. She demonstrates how diverse communities are socially embedded; thus, she leads to an interesting 'Lebenswelt' perspective on the phenomena. Cassandra Ellerbe-Dück, Bettina Schmidt, and Czarina Wilpert give many more examples of the complex inter-relations between actors from civil society organizations, public authorities, NGOs, business, etc. Finally, there are two more contributions in this chapter. Both explore representations of diversity in media. Csereklye Erzsébet develops systematics for the analysis of multi- and intercultural discourses in films portraying culturally diverse settings. Different types of discourses are differentiated according to the way in which the norms and rules of sub-cultural groups are interpreted in society, for example. Levent Yılmazok focuses especially on the Turkish cultural identity and the way the perception of it is represented in movies funded by European institutions. He shows that there is a remarkable diversity of facets and perspectives both in the Turkish society and in its cinematographic representations, thus disproving the essentialist presumption of cultural homogeneity.

The last chapter of this volume is dedicated to some practical cases and applications. The fields of work that these cases have been taken from could not possibly differ more from each other and, likewise, the positions that are taken.

Adelheid Iken presents an approach towards the increasing cultural diversity among students on the university campus. Her (re-)thinking of the benefits as well as the risks related to these diversity phenomena leads to the question as to what universities can do to face the challenges and to leverage the potential of these students. The answer can be understood as an opportunity to create global citizens and to overcome diversity-related issues. Jona M. Rosenfeld adopts the perspective of an "outsider" in the field of his work and displays his thoughts and the practical work of the institutions he works for in Tel Aviv. Diversity, he argues, has to be considered as a value. If we disseminated this position, we would be able to experience an impact on the understanding of social and cultural differences and gain new perspectives for treating and moderating conflicts and difficulties that may be caused by the perception and interpretation of diversity. The last slot in the final chapter of the volume is reserved for the observations of Viktoria Jamšanova. She also highlights the interpretation of cultural differences as values. Contrary to the other contributions, she focuses on the semantic architecture of cultural key terms, such as 'humbleness' and 'patience', and shows that the lexical meaning, as well as the pragmatic-historical usage of these terms differs significantly from one speech community to another.

The final contributions bring us back to some of the fundamental terms within the discourse on diversity. The ongoing debates and the terminology that is in use for describing and analyzing the phenomenology of diversity can sometimes be reduced to major terms in the social sciences. Our attempt in this introduction was, therefore, to contribute to the discussion by especially emphasizing the relational character of 'diversity' and the risk of taking it as an established analytical category. The varied contributions in this volume demonstrate just how diverse the debate is.

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Approaching Diversity

Towards an Intercultural Approach to Social Cohesion

Claire Bynner

Introduction

Within the fields of urban governance and public policy there has been renewed interest in the effect of increasing ethnic and migrant diversity associated with new migration over the past two decades. A paper published in 2007 by Robert Putnam reignited the debate with the claim that immigration and diversity has a universally negative effect on social cohesion. This paper argued that increasing diversity is associated with weaker social networks and an erosion of trust and reciprocity (Putnam 2007). Most of the empirical studies in Europe that have tested Putnam's thesis contest these findings and argue that social contact is not weakened by diversity. It is economic deprivation not diversity that has the most damaging effect and this effect is mediated by mutual support and contact between neighbours (Becares et al. 2011, Gesthuizen et al. 2009, Hooghe et al. 2009, Laurence 2011, Letki 2008). Concurrent to the academic debate on Putnam's thesis, there has been a backlash against policies of multiculturalism in European politics (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010) and a move towards interculturalism. This was demonstrated by the designation of 2008 as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID). Interculturalism has been described as an 'updated version of multiculturalism' (Lentin 2005: 394), one that gives more prominence to dialogue and communication and to a wider notion of cultural relations which extend beyond ethnic differences to other forms of identity (Meer 2014: 59-64).

While some academics argue that politically interculturalism offers little that is substantively new or distinct from multiculturalism (Meer and Madood 2012), others suggest that a 'soft' form of interculturalism, one that gives greater attention everyday interactions can provide important insights into diversity and social cohesion. This form of interculturalism gives less attention to the role of national politics and more attention to the 'micropolitics' of the neighbourhood and to everyday social relations (Amin 2002). This chapter examines the literature on everyday interactions between individuals and groups from diverse back-

grounds at a local level and presents four types of interactions which may be important sites for intercultural dialogue and communication.

The chapter is structured into three parts, the first section examines the problematisation of diversity and social cohesion in public policy, the second section considers the paradox of multiculturalism in its promotion of both unity and separation and the final section presents forms of intercultural cohesion which provide a focus and framework for further research into social cohesion and diversity.

Diversity and threats to social cohesion

Whilst recognising that there are critical viewpoints on the term 'social cohesion', related to the 'social' as potentially implying conformity to dominant values, and 'cohesion' as implying cultural unity (Arneil 2006) this paper begins with the explicit assumption that human well-being is facilitated by a sense of connectedness to other people. Social cohesion is the most widely researched concept which expresses this human connectedness in the civic and public realms and therefore the concept provides a relevant and useful starting point.

The concept of social cohesion in the simplest terms describes a society which 'hangs together'. In a cohesive society, "all the component parts somehow fit in and contribute to society's collective project and well-being" (Forrest and Kearns 2001, p.996). In their analysis of social cohesion, Forrest and Kearns (2001) highlight the tensions and paradoxes inherent in the concept. Social cohesion can be interpreted in both positive and negative terms, and different levels of cohesion can contradict each other in terms of their effects. Territorial gangs and criminal activity can be based on cohesive groups; a cohesive neighbourhood can have an antagonistic relationship to other neighbourhoods and increased cohesion at one level can cause fragmentation and division at higher geographical levels (consider nationalist movements within Europe e.g. Scotland and Catalonia).

Therefore social cohesion is not inherently a good thing from the point of view of policy makers and strong in-group cohesion can coexist alongside strong inter-group antagonism. Social cohesion as a policy goal presents an essential paradox, described here by Kearns and Forrest (2000) in relation to the city:

> For some, the city has to be comforting and stable; for others, vibrant and perhaps even slightly threatening. The city of diversity and difference is also the city of division and fragmentation. As cities have become more globally embedded and city life and civic culture becomes more hybrid-

ised and multicultural, this paradox has become more evident and this underlies the increasing policy preoccupation with social cohesion. (Kearns and Forrest 2000, pp.1013-1014)

In 2007, Robert Putnam published a paper entitled "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the 21st-Century". He chose this title with reference to the American seal 'out of many, one' and as a reminder of the historical struggle of the US to create a single, cohesive, nation. The data in Putnam's research is based on over 40 cases and 30,000 people within the United States. His findings show that, other things being equal, more diversity in a community is strongly correlated to less trust both between and within ethnic groups. Social trust is taken as an indicator of social capital and is measured in terms of how much the respondent trusts other races and trusts their own race.

Putnam (2007) finds a linear relationship between increasing neighbourhood ethnic diversity and social withdrawal:

> Diversity does not produce 'bad race relations' or ethnically-defined group hostility […] Rather, inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours, regardless of the colour of their skin, to withdraw even from close friends, to expect the worst from their community and its leaders, to volunteer less, give less to charity and work on community projects less often, to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform more, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference, and to huddle unhappily in front of the television. (Putnam 2007, p.150-151)

This study, known as "Putnam's Diversity Thesis", has been widely criticised for overlooking the exceptionalism of the US in terms of race relations and for failing to fully consider other causes for social withdrawal such as economic individualisation, the digital age, globalisation and fragmentation. Nevertheless, Putnam's study has triggered a plethora of empirical research examining whether these claims can be substantiated.

On the whole the evidence from Europe rejects Putnam's thesis. The findings from most European studies suggest that there that economic deprivation 'drowns out' any negative effect of diversity on social capital and that the issue is not lack of sociability in the neighbourhood but lack of access to resources such as employment, housing and welfare (Becares et al. 2011, Gesthuizen et al. 2009, Hooghe et al. 2009, Laurence 2011, Letki 2008). A few exceptions that appear to support Putnam's thesis are studies from the Netherlands such as Gijsberts et al. (2011).

In the UK, Letki (2008) analysed the 2001 UK Citizenship Survey and found that when the correlation between diversity and deprivation is accounted for, ethnic diversity has no effect on levels of informal and formal interaction in the neighbourhood. Behaviours towards neighbours, measured in terms of informal socialising and organisational involvement, are not affected by ethnic diversity. However, there is a negative effect on attitudes towards the neighbourhood in general:

> Although people living in racially diverse neighbourhoods do not interact less with their neighbours they declare less trust in them and less satisfaction from living in their neighbourhood. (Letki 2008, p.121)

Part of the challenge in unravelling this contradictory and complex relationship is that empirical studies testing Putnam's thesis are inconsistent in how they measure diversity, deprivation and social capital and therefore some studies emphasise the effect of ethnic diversity more than others. This is because poverty and social disorder are both highly correlated with ethnic diversity (Sampson and Groves 1989). Overall, the findings from Europe tend towards a deprivation hypothesis whereas studies from the US tend to support Putnam's thesis.

Therefore a review of the US and European literature on diversity and social cohesion suggests that ethnic diversity, migrant diversity and poverty are all likely to have a negative effect on trust in neighbours and attitudes towards the neighbourhood. However, negative attitudes do not necessarily affect everyday behaviours. The nature of intercultural relations and civic involvement is likely to depend on the specific context and the extent to which there are opportunities for social contact between groups**.**

Multiculturalism and inter-cultural dialogue

In 2005, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia found that approximately one quarter of the EU-15's population does not share the notion that "the diversity of a country in terms of race, religion or culture is a positive element and strength" and two thirds of the population are convinced that "multicultural society has reached its limits" (Coenders et al 2005). Across Europe, migration, instead of being perceived as a cultural asset, is increasingly associated with a social and economic threat.

Underpinning this backlash is the argument that that multicultural policies have leaned too far towards cultural tolerance. Multiculturalism is blamed for a sense of moral and cultural disorientation, political correctness and an inability to

challenge and debate cultural practice. By promoting cultural recognition, multi-culturalism is also accused of undermining national citizenship. The reaction against multiculturalism has led to careful language from politicians and avoidance of the 'm' word in political discourse. Steven Vertovec, an academic working for the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in the UK, noted that he was asked by civil servants to remove all references to multiculturalism in his reports for the commission (Vertovec 2007a; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010).

In place of multiculturalism there has been a greater emphasis on promoting all things 'intercultural' (Meer and Modood 2011, Parekh 2000, Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). 'Interculturalism' has been presented in recent political debates as a political alternative to multiculturalism which placing a greater emphasis on communication and common values (Meer and Modood 2011). Meer (2014) summarises four aspects of interculturalism that are cited within the academic debate as marking a distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism. The first is a greater emphasis on communication, dialogue and openness between different cultures, the second, is a wider definition of culture, beyond the multicultural focus on cultural groups which aligns to an interest in local and civic encounters, third, an interest in the whole population, rather than in specific groups and minorities, and fourth, a greater emphasis on liberal values and protection of individual rights.

However Meer and Modood (2012) argue that the fundamental assumptions of both perspectives are the same. According to Parekh (2000) the assumption of multiculturalism is that human beings are culturally embedded. Human beings are understood as being shaped by culture and therefore cultural well-being is as important as economic well-being in terms of equality and notions of social justice. Multiculturalists argue that cultural diversity is of value to society and provides an asset in itself. Distinct cultural communities cannot be easily assimilated into a single mainstream culture, and assimilation is undesirable. Therefore in common with interculturalism, the multicultural response to cultural diversity is to acknowledge its existence, secondly to proclaim the benefits of cultural diversity and thirdly to realise those benefits through cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue (Parekh 2000, 2004).

Intercultural dialogue relates to an exchange of ideas and cultural perspectives on ways of life and well-being that occurs through participation in political processes. Parekh (2000) describes intercultural dialogue as taking place within the context of 'public values'. These are not common values in the sense of personal, cultural or political values. These are values which support the process and procedures of government, law and justice, and that influence how people conduct themselves in their daily lives. These common values include civic norms and everyday behaviours such as civility, relations between neighbours, queuing

for public services etc. and are underpinned by a commitment to the political process. They form the framework for discussion and the basis for evaluation of contested cultural practices. The outcome of this deliberation may result in changes to the law or enforcement or greater acceptance and accommodation. The ultimate outcome depends on the extent to which public values and cultural values can be reconciled.

Parekh's views are close to those who argue for deliberative democracy and the centrality of intercultural communication and dialogue (e.g. Habermas 1991). However, he emphasises that the space for this dialogue should be expanded to include dialogue between liberal and non liberal views of society and human well-being including the extent to which autonomy of individuals should be valued over social solidarity. From this dialogical perspective, a society where people 'keep themselves to themselves' and avoid contact with other people, is more problematic than one which is antagonistic yet politically engaged. This is a vision of a vibrant and open political community based on rights of citizenship and the struggle for locally negotiated social justice. The political community and participation in it, is an end in itself.

In intellectual terms 'interculturalism' appears to offer no distinct answer to the questions faced by multiculturalism such as which common values to emphasise: commitment to political participation, national citizenship or liberal values (Modood and Meer 2012, Kymlicka 2012, Werbner 2012, Levey 2012). Nevertheless, from a pragmatic perspective a 'turn' to interculturalism may be useful, not in order to provide an alternative to multiculturalism, but to shift the emphasis of multicultural policy and examine more closely its intercultural challenges and assumptions. This is an argument for a 'soft' version of interculturalism (Levey 2012), an intercultural cohesion that focuses on local 'encounters of difference' (Modood and Meer 2012) and emphasises communication and interaction across diverse individuals and groups. This intercultural approach could be positioned, not as a political alternative to multiculturalism, rather as a development of a core aspect of multicultural theory.

Intercultural cohesion in the neighbourhood

Recent studies have shown that despite the national debates over multiculturalism, at a local level, attitudes appear to be more complex and nuanced. Narratives of fragmentation and disorder debates do not necessarily affect everyday interactions such as the informal contacts that facilitate 'good' neighbour relations (van Eijk 2012). Intercultural relations at a local level may be characterised less by a desire for face to face interaction and cultural recognition and more by

a milder attitude of living side-by-side with diversity (Tonkiss 2003, van Leeuwen 2010). The literature on everyday interactions provides evidence of indifference towards diversity and the attitude that diversity is considered to be normal and unremarkable. Van Leeuwen (2010) conceptualises this response to diversity as 'side by side citizenship', Noble (2009) refers to 'unpanicked multiculturalism', Neal et al (2013) use the description 'cool convivality' and Wessendorf (2010) develops the concept of 'commonplace diversity'.

A review of the literature in this area for the purpose of planning a PhD research highlighted four forms of intercultural contact at a local level between individuals from diverse backgrounds. These forms are presented and discussed here. See *Table 1*.

Interaction Type	Description	Examples	Core Interaction
Deliberative	Interactions involving dialogue between individuals or representatives of local groups in relation to addressing problems and issues within the neighbourhood. Implies a common interest in neighbourhood issues and local politics	Formal community participation structures, community forms, neighbourhood groups, community councils, tenants and residents groups (see Meer and Madood 2012)	Representation
Transformative	Interactions through situations which require "a need to 'get along' as a coping mechanism or to achieve **common ambitions and interests**" (Clayton 2009, p. 494) Similar to 'growth' interactions which involve learning from others and expanding perspectives (SHM 2007)	Action based clubs and groups facilitating shared interests, e.g. a political campaign, a community project (for other examples see Amin 2002, Wessendorf 2014)	Group activity

Neighbour	Interactions through the **use of common and parochial spaces**. Inter-action is with people who are known and familiar and living in close prox-imity. Communication may concern practical issues such as security, cleansing, rubbish and recycling.	Communal relations between neighbours through sharing common spaces such as a back garden, a shared building, or a shared street (see van Eijk 2012; Lofland 2007)	Practical accomm-odation
Public	Interactions based on contact through **shared public space**. These may involve face to face con-tact, eye contact and possibly communication and/or exchange. En-counters may be formal or informal and are often fleeting.	Convivial interactions with strangers and neigh-bours in the street, exam-ples include cooperative motility, people watching etc (see Lofland 2007).	Sharing public space

Table 1: Forms of intercultural contact

Deliberative interactions at a local level are group based, organised, collective interactions which involve dialogue and debate between individuals or represent-atives of local groups in relation to addressing problems and issues within the neighbourhood. They take place within what Amin (2002) describes as the micro politics' of the neighbourhood, for example public meetings, community forums, formal community engagement and consultation processes, representative struc-tures and social media. The dialogue may involve cross evaluation of cultural practices and intercultural dialogue over the nature and causes of perceived neighbourhood problems (see Parekh 2000). Deliberative interactions are under-pinned by representation of group-based interests and this form of contact in-volves a shared interest in local issues.

The core civic culture that underpins the possibility of deliberative interac-tions is the culture of political participation. Political engagement is described by Parekh (2000) as essential to inter-cultural dialogue and therefore to the success of multiculturalism. This form of integration is based on a concept of citizenship that consists not only of rights based in law but also on political participation through informal and formal mechanisms such as political representation, in-volvement in public committees, participation in consultations and forums of

public debate. This involvement may be through intermediate organisations such as trade unions, religious organisations, neighbourhoods and cultural groups (Meer and Modood 2012, Modood and Meer 2012).

The second form of intercultural contact is 'transformative' interactions, defined here as based on a shared interest, leisure activity or learning experiences. They may involve inter-cultural dialogue, however that is not their primary focus, neither do these interactions rely on a 'unitary sense of place' and concern for neighbourhood problems. The focus of these interactions is on actively engaging in a shared task or enterprise with other local residents, which may or may not involve direct face to face communication and discussion but will require a degree of cooperation and the development of skills, towards a common or collective goal. Amin (2002) describes these transformative contexts as 'multiethnic common ventures' and "sites of social inclusion and discursive negotiation" for example community garden projects, community centres, child-care facilities, youth projects (p. 970). Transformative interactions also align to 'growth interactions' defined by a Commission for Racial Equality report as having the potential to broaden identities and values, provide opportunities to learn from others, expand perspectives and stimulate curiosity through the sharing of common ambitions and goals (SHM 2007).

This type of interaction occurs through situations that require "a need to 'get along' as a coping mechanism or to achieve common ambitions and interests" (Clayton 2009, p.494). These include schools, action based clubs and groups facilitating shared interests, political campaigns, youth and community projects (Amin 2002). The social and relational aspect of the activity may be an explicit objective of the project or an unintentional or indirect consequence. Temporalities of transformative interactions may be a short-term, such as a project to establish a garden or community arts event, or medium to long-term for example regular attendance at an adult learning class, youth group or community space. This is a form of intercultural cohesion that involves learning and developing skills through a common activity and has the potential to change attitudes and identities (see also Wessendorf 2014).

The third form of intercultural cohesion occurs in the context of 'neighbouring' between immediate or direct neighbours living in close proximity. Neighbour interactions are defined here as involving face-to-face contact between individuals and families who are immediate neighbours and are known to one another. Contact tends to be informal, focused on a small geographical area and varies in intensity, intimacy and duration. These forms of social interaction are usually based on sharing a common space such as a building, a block within a street of adjoining buildings, or other micro-spaces.

The literature shows that good neighbour relations contribute to a range of positive outcomes in terms of health and wellbeing, social efficacy, child development, crime reduction, security, safety and belonging (Buonfino and Hilder 2010), however, recent studies report a decline in the frequency and intimacy of contacts between neighbours in the UK. Changing patterns of work, increasingly mobility, increased access to transport and commuting, dynamic housing markets and housing tenure, changing household composition and lack of suitable spaces and time are all factors cited as contributing to a decline in neighbour interactions (Buonfino and Hilder 2010, Mayo 2010).

Interactions between neighbours are embedded in the materiality and ordinary spaces of the neighbourhood. One of the critiques of current academic research is that the contextual nature of activities and interactions are frequently overlooked in studies of neighbouring. Stokoe and Wallwork (2003) argue for research to pay greater attention to how spaces are relevant to neighbour relations and how these spaces are made meaningful through notions of 'good' and 'bad' neighbours.

The final form of intercultural contact is public interactions, defined here as involving face to face contact between individuals who are often strangers to each other and who share the same public or street space. Interactions may involve face to face contact, verbal and non verbal communication, and involve the use of body language, awareness or avoidance of others in public space.

Lyn Lofland (2007) provides five principles of social contact in public space. First, cooperative motility - how strangers move through space and cooperate to avoid incident, second, civil inattention – people ignoring each other out of politeness, respect for others and their personal space, third - audience role prominence –people watching in which strangers become an audience to the activities of others, fourth, restrained helpfulness – everyday encounters and exchanges, asking the time, seeking directions, and fifth, civility toward diversity – even handedness and universal treatment, an attitude of politeness and indifference to diversity.

Lofland (2007) and Sennet (2012) argue that civility towards diversity is often deployed in public interactions to avoid social tensions. Civility is also a manifestation of intercultural skills or negotiation and dialogue. For example, Wessendorf (2013) demonstrates the skills of 'corner shop cosmopolitanism' employed by shopkeepers and market traders through the use of different forms of address to infer friendliness and politeness. On the other hand, Valentine (2008) questions the extent to which this emphasis on the civility of everyday encounters is meaningful in relation to overcoming prejudice.