

Workshop on Super-Diversity: A Transatlantic Conversation

CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, April 4 and April 5, 2016

Sponsored by the Advanced Research Collaborative and Program in Sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center and the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity (MPI)

Organizers: Jan Willem Duyvendak (University of Amsterdam), Nancy Foner (Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center), and Philip Kasinitz (CUNY Graduate Center)



During this workshop -- sponsored by the Graduate Center's Advanced Research Collaborative and the Program in Sociology -- scholars from both sides of the Atlantic will look at the promises and pitfalls of "super-diversity," a concept developed by Steven Vertovec that has become especially popular among European scholars of immigration and ethnic diversity.

Following up on Vertovec's call to "critically interrogate, refine and extrapolate" the notion of super-diversity (Meissner and Vertovec 2015:42), the workshop will discuss three dimensions he distinguishes:

- The *descriptive* dimension: "super-diversity" is meant to grasp a new reality, the "diversification of diversity". Among the questions that can be raised are:
 - How new is a (super)diverse world, and (super)diverse cities, taking a long-term historical perspective? Is "super-diversity" a newer experience in Europe as compared to the so-called settler societies (which may help explain why the concept resonates more in Europe than in the US)? What are the political, cultural and social differences between localities with a long experience of incorporating newcomers, and which thus have many "layers" of ethnic diversity, and those where increased diversity has come about relatively suddenly?
 - What are the actual consequences and outcomes of demographic change e.g. that people from 148 countries now live together in a city? Do these impacts differ in particular cities and countries – and why?
 - How does increased diversity affect the incorporation of the children of migrants?
 - Is diversity a help or a hindrance in the economic development of cities and nations?
 - What sorts of new, possibly panethnic, social formations are coming into being in highly diverse cities? Do bases of social differentiation which may cross cut national origin or ethnic group (such as religion, class, generation, locality, consumption patterns, sexuality, life style, etc.) become more important in a "super-diverse" setting? How and why?
 - What does the "super-diversity" of cities or nations mean for the "native" populations? Does the changing nature of the "newcomers" lead of a redefining of "mainstream" or what it means to be "native"?

- The *methodological* dimension: "super-diversity" is meant to overcome the fixation on ethnicity in research on migrants and to include various other social characteristics and differences. Several questions can be discussed here, such as:
 - Can "super-diversity" end up reinforcing attention to ethnicity in research practice by focusing on the diversification of ethnic minorities instead of putting more emphasis on, or even taking into account, the "mainstream" as well (e.g. does using the concept of minority-majority cities, prioritize ethnic background once more as the central category)?
 - Alternatively, does "super-diversity" provide a framework for moving beyond "groupism"?
 - Does an increase of diversity *within* migrant groups (for example, in terms of age and gender composition, place of residence, and income and class position) make them (more) like the long established native population in many ways, and hence represent a decrease in overall diversity? What are the implications for research projects?
 - How does "super-diversity" contribute to the largely European debate on "multiculturalism" and its alleged failures?
- The *practical* or *policy* dimension: how can local services better cater to an allegedly increasingly diverse population? Among the questions that can be asked are:
 - Do migrants with a range of diverse backgrounds cause particular problems for receiving societies and cities --- and more problems than a conglomeration of less diverse migrants?
 - Over time, and over the generations, will certain kinds of diversity decrease in Europe and the U.S. as migrants, and especially their children and grandchildren, become more like the majority population in some ways, such as in the use of language, or as they change the cities and societies where they live through, e.g. creolization processes or "remaking the mainstream"?
 - How do cities whose populations hail from a wide variety of ethnic origins (such as London or New York today) differ from those with a long history of racial or ethnic division, but where two or three groups overwhelmingly dominate (for example, mid-20th century southern U.S. cities) in terms of politics and policies?
 - How do European efforts to accommodate "super-diversity" differ from those in the United States? What do these differences say about the nature of various societies?

During the workshop scholars from various disciplines (including sociology, political science, and social psychology) will discuss these and many other topics related to the notion of "super-diversity."

The workshop is by invitation. Participants are expected to present full papers, with the expectation that they will provide the basis for a coherent publication.

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CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue (between 34th and 35th Streets),
April 4 and April 5, 2016 | Fifth Floor: ARC Seminar Room 5318.05

MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016

- 8:45 Introduction and welcome: [DONALD ROBOTHAM](#) (GC CUNY, Advanced Research Collaborative), [JAN WILLEM DUYVENDAK](#), [NANCY FONER](#), and [PHILIP KASINITZ](#)
- 9:00-9:45 **OPENING ADDRESS**
[STEVEN VERTOVEC](#) (MPI), "Super-diversity as Concept and Approach: Whence it Came, Where it's at, and Where it's Going"
- 9:45-11:15 **SUPER-DIVERSITY AND THE MAINSTREAM**
[MAURICE CRUL](#) (VU University, Amsterdam), "Super-diversity vs. Assimilation"
[RICHARD ALBA](#), [BRENDEN BECK](#), and [DUYGO BASARAN](#) (CUNY Graduate Center), "The American Mainstream Expands ---- Again"
[JAN WILLEM DUYVENDAK](#) (University of Amsterdam and Paris Institute for Advanced Study), "The Missing Mainstream: Why Super-diversity is Not the New Normal"
Discussant: [ANDREAS WIMMER](#) (Columbia University)
- 11:15-11:30 Break
- 11:30-1:00 **CONCEPTUALIZING THE DIVERSE CITY: I**
[NANCY FONER](#) (Hunter and CUNY Graduate Center), "What's New about Super-diversity? The View from New York"
[ALEXANDRE TANDÉ](#) (MPI), "Brussels as a (Super-) Diverse City: Elements for a New Research Agenda"
[PHILIP KASINITZ](#) (CUNY Graduate Center), "Different Diversities: How Highly Diverse Cities are Understood in Europe and North America"
Discussant: [LAAVANYA KATHIRAVELU](#) (Princeton)
- 1:00-2:00 Lunch (Sociology Lounge, 6th Floor)
- 2:00-3:30 **CONCEPTUALIZING THE DIVERSE CITY: II**
[HALLEH GHORASHI](#) (VU University Amsterdam), "Rethinking Diversity Beyond Dichotomies of Self-Other"
[LUISA MARTIN ROJO](#) (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid), "The Transformation of Urban Space in Highly-Diverse Cities: The Linguistic Landscape of Madrid"
[VAN TRAN](#) (Columbia University), "Coming of Age in Multi-Ethnic America: Young Adults' Experiences with Diversity in Five Cities"
Discussant: [MARIEKE SLOOTMAN](#) (University of Amsterdam)
- 3:30-3:45 Break
- 3:45-5:15 **EXPERIENCING DIVERSITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE**
[SUSANNE WESSENDORF](#) (University of Birmingham), "'Pioneer Migrants' and their Social Relations in Super-diverse London"
[SUZANNE HALL](#) (London School of Economics), "Elaborating Migration: Urban (Super)Diversity and Discrimination"
[KAREN PHALET](#) (University of Leuven) and [FENELLA FLEISCHMANN](#) (Utrecht University), "The National Identification of Muslim Minorities in Europe: Immigrant Integration and Religious Group Boundaries in England, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and Belgium"
Discussant: [KAY DEAUX](#) (CUNY Graduate Center and New York University)
- 7:00 Dinner (Han Bat, 53 West 35 Street (between 5th and 6th Avenues))

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016

- 9:00-11:00 **POLITICS, GOVERNANCE, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**
[JOHN MOLLENKOPF](#) (CUNY Graduate Center), "The Gorgeous Mosaic? What Voting Patterns Tell Us about Immigrant Group Differences in New York City"
[FENNEKE WEKKER](#) (University of Amsterdam), "We Have to Teach Them Diversity: Social Interventions and White Supremacy in a European Disadvantaged Neighborhood"
[VIVIAN LOUIE](#) (William T. Grant Foundation) and [MARGARET CHIN](#) (Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center), "The Changing Mission of Asian Community Organizations in New York City: The Challenge and Opportunity of Super-diversity"
Discussant: [MARTIN SCHAIN](#) (New York University)
- 11:00-11:15 Break
- 11:15-12:45 **HOW CONTEXT MATTERS**
[PATRICK SIMON](#) (INED and ARC, CUNY Graduate Center), "What is Super in Diversity? How Racialization Tends to Aggregate Ethnic Diversity in the French Case"
[KAREN SCHÖNWÄLDER](#) (MPI), "(Super-)Diversity: Does It Exist? Awareness and Conceptualisations by Urban Residents and Corporate Actors in German Cities"
[SOFYA APTEKAR](#) (U-Massachusetts, Boston), "Super-diversity as a Methodological Approach: Ironing out Differences between Differences?"
Discussant: [CLAUDIA DIEHL](#) (University of Konstanz and ARC, CUNY Graduate Center)
- 12:45-1:00 Wrap Up and Farewell: [JAN WILLEM DUYVENDAK](#), [NANCY FONER](#), [PHILIP KASINITZ](#)
- 1:00 Lunch (Sociology Lounge, 6th Floor)

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