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The Social Justice and Radical Diversity Approach: Combining Structural Analysis and Transformative Practice

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Drawing on the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach, an existing discrimination-critical approach applied in the field of anti-discrimination theory and education, this paper proposes to combine a structural perspective on discrimination with a phenomenologically inspired understanding of radical diversity. Although often perceived as mutually exclusive philosophical avenues for theorizing discrimination, these approaches are explicated here as distinct, but methodologically compatible. Whereas a structural approach to discrimination is introduced as a relational theory of oppression in its historical and intersectional dimensions, the concept of radical diversity is emphasized in its capacity to transform existing categories of social difference and power structures on a practical level. It is argued that combining both perspectives according to the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach, attests to the specific logic of how discrimination and diversity intertwine in societal reality.

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1. Introduction: Anti-discrimination, Identity Politics, Diversity—a Conflictual Field

The field of discrimination theory and anti-discriminatory practice is a conflictual one. Efforts to confront discrimination critically are often associated with an "identity politics" that has come under scrutiny from at least three different directions: a political Conservatism actively denouncing the critique of discrimination as practices of "cancel culture" and the confinement of free speech; a self-proclaimed democratic Universalism that accuses new social movements of mistaking personal sensitivities for social injustice and deploying inquisitory practices and identitarian categories similar to those of the political Right;[1] and, lastly, critical theorists of emancipation who identify an alliance between progressive social movements and neoliberalism behind claims to anti-discrimination.[2] According to the latter reading, anti-discrimination and diversity merely "lend their charisma" to the harmful "forces of cognitive capitalism," melding within the socio-political arrangement of "progressive neoliberalism."[3]

Such readings of discrimination critique seem to point to an underlying problem: given the different styles and conceptual traditions of critical social theories or philosophies, the question of how to theorize discrimination is often difficult to formulate. As the organizers of the conference "Confronting Discrimination: Genealogical and Phenomenological Perspectives" observe regarding genealogical and phenomenological traditions, at first glance, these approaches seem to take rather contrary routes towards their object of analysis: "while phenomenological analyses run the risk of absolutizing the perspective of affectedness, thereby individualizing discrimination, genealogical analyses tend to reduce experiences of discrimination to their social-historical conditions."[4]

Their observation can be taken even further: philosophical traditions rooted in social movements and a class-based reflection on social justice tend to discuss

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[1] For examples from the US-American, German, and French contexts, see, Mark Lilla, *The Once and Future Liberal: After Identity Politics* (New York: Harper, 2017); Wolfgang Thierse, "Wieviel Identität verträgt die Gesellschaft?," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 22, 2021, 9; Horst Bredekamp, "Fanatiker der Reinheit," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, March 8, 2021, 11; and Caroline Fourest, *Génération Offensée: De la Police de la Culture à la Police de la Pensée* (Paris: Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 2020).

[2] See, most explicitly, Nancy Fraser, "The End of Progressive Neoliberalism," *Dissent Magazine*, January 2, 2017, accessed July 4, 2022, https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/progressive-neoliberalism-reactionary-populism-nancy-fraser.

[3] Fraser, "The End of Progressive Neoliberalism."

[4] Michaela Bstieler, Andreas Oberprantacher, and Sergej Seitz, "Confronting Discrimination: Phenomenological and Genealogical Perspectives," conference editorial, accessed July 4, 2022, https://www.uibk.ac.at/fsp-kultur/tagung-confronting-discrimination/discrimination_agenda_17-10-21.pdf.

questions of discrimination as phenomena of social inequality based on ideas of distributive justice, justice of recognition, and the right to equal participation vis-à-vis social goods. This affirms the ideal that humans flourish on the basis of economic and social equality and recognition. A poststructuralist (or genealogical) tradition, on the other hand, has fostered doubt regarding the very norms and structures that turn us into socially intelligible and recognizable subjects. Within this tradition, an institution- and recognition-based approach to discrimination is met, at best, with ambivalence.

Things become even more complicated when we consider the term "diversity." Whereas diversity management has become an important element—or at least talking point—in current anti-discrimination policy, diversity as a concept seems to be conspicuously absent from both phenomenological approaches to alterity or plurality *and* theories of social justice alike. Diversity has long been suspected of disarticulating historical systems of oppression,[5] or endangering traditional equality politics.[6] It has been described as "'the happy point' of intersectionality,"[7] implying that diversity obscures analysis of how power structures such as racism and sexism work. However, the question remains: Can we only relate to the concept of diversity in this "happy," depoliticized presentation?[8] Or can we perhaps also develop more critical, perhaps even more radical, ways to employ it as a concept?

With regard to those questions, the idea proposed by the organizers of the conference, "to combine the productive potential of *phenomenological* and *genealogical* approaches to current issues of discrimination"[9] set an important impulse for the philosophical debate on discrimination. In what follows, I will explore this idea by drawing on an existing discrimination-critical approach applied in the field of anti-discrimination theory and education: the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach, first developed by Leah Carola Czollek, Gudrun Perko, and Heike Weinbach in 2001,

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[5] For an explication of this criticism, see, Sara Ahmed, *On being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Durham: Duke UP, 2012), 13–16, https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822395324.

[6] See, for example, Angelika Wetterer, "Strategien Rhetorischer Modernisierung: Gender Mainstreaming, Managing Diversity und die Professionalisierung der Gender-Expertinnen," *Zeitschrift für Frauenforschung und Geschlechterstudien* 20 (2002); Alison E. Woodward, "Too late for Gender Mainstreaming? Taking Stock in Brussels," *Journal of European Social Policy* 18, no. 3 (2008), https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928708091061.

[7] Ahmed, *On being Included*, 14.

[8] In fact, Sara Ahmed's *On being Included*, while being critical of the current use of the term diversity in institutional settings, can also be read as an intent to carve out more critical potentials thereof.

[9] Bstieler, Oberprantacher, Seitz, "Confronting Discrimination."

and since expanded and revised by various authors, including myself.[10] As will become clear throughout this paper, central concepts of the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach are inspired, among others, by intellectual traditions that have themselves identified with or drawn on what could roughly be categorized as genealogical and phenomenological sources. What is more, the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach combines a specific understanding of discrimination critique—the critique of structural discrimination in favor of social justice—with a specific understanding of radical diversity when engaging with questions of discrimination.

In this paper I would like to propose that, from the perspective of Social Justice and Radical Diversity, a combination of different theoretical perspectives can indeed be made productive when attempting to confront discrimination. In the case of genealogical and phenomenological perspectives, however, and with regard to methodological questions, this combination is not confined to combining an analysis of socio-historical structures of discrimination (= genealogy) with an analysis of experiences of discrimination (= phenomenology). Rather, I would like to focus my discussion on the questions: *At what point* and *on what conditions* can specific methodological assumptions of both philosophical traditions be combined? I argue that what unites both approaches to the problem of discrimination is a certain non-positivistic and transformative interest that enables us to treat questions of discrimination *not* as a constative discourse about empirical "differences" between individuals or social groups, but as a way to thematize relational social structures and questions of plurality. After introducing the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach, concepts of "structural discrimination" and "radical diversity" will be explicated with regards to their theoretical heritages, analytical potentials and practical implications. Whereas central assumptions of the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach have already been detailed in other publications,[11] this paper focusses on underlying methodological specificities that characterize both aspects of the Social Justice and Radical Diversity approach.

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[10] Relevant publications detailing the approach (formerly called "Social Justice and Diversity") include: Leah Carola Czollek, Gudrun Perko, and Heike Weinbach, *Praxishandbuch Social Justice und Diversity: Theorien – Training – Methoden – Übungen* (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, 2012); Leah Carola Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch Social Justice und Diversity: Theorien – Training – Methoden – Übungen*, revised 2nd edition (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, 2019); Gudrun Perko, *Social Justice und Radical Diversity: Veränderungs- und Handlungsstrategien* (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, 2020); Leah Carola Czollek et al., "Social Justice und Radical Diversity: Antidiskriminierung in der pluralen Gesellschaft," in *Handbuch Diskriminierung*, ed. Albert Scherr, Aladin El-Mafaalani, and Anna Cornelia Reinhardt (Wiesbaden: Springer, forthcoming 2023). For an overview of all conceptual contributions since 2008, see Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 261–262; most recent publications are listed on the Institute Social Justice and Radical Diversity's website (https://institut-social-justice.org/artikel/).

[11] See footnote 10.

2. The Social Justice and Radical Diversity Approach

Social Justice and Radical Diversity (SJRD) provides a theoretical model for understanding discrimination as a social phenomenon, as well as a training program applied in the fields of anti-discrimination and diversity education.[12] The approach was developed in 2001 by Leah Carola Czollek, Gudrun Perko, and Heike Weinbach. Originally modelled after the US-American educational program *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*,[13] SJRD was soon expanded and adapted for a German-speaking context, focusing on a variety of forms of discrimination from an intersectional perspective. The founding of the Institute for Social Justice and Diversity (now Institute for Social Justice and Radical Diversity) in 2005, and the publication of the *Praxishandbuch Social Justice und Diversity* in 2012,[14] established SJRD as a distinct approach to anti-discrimination. In 2011 and 2013, Max Czollek and myself joined the Institute and have since been contributing to the program's conceptual and practical developments. Today, long-term in-service SJRD trainings are offered in cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam (Germany), while the Institute also organizes keynotes, workshops, and consultation for other institutions and organizations. Its theoretical and conceptual foundations are regularly systematized in academic publications.[15]

The SJRD approach aims to foster a critical understanding of how different forms of *structural discrimination* have shaped and continue to shape societal reality. At the same time, SJRD formulates a concrete transformative practice towards realizing a society based on *radical diversity*. Within the legal system, as well as within institutional and organizational spheres, increasing attention is being paid to questions of discrimination, which necessitates that importance of clarifying central concepts and assumptions. When speaking of *structural discrimination*, the SJRD approach emphasizes that discrimination is not about the generic differentiation between individuals, but about historically engrained systems of oppression. Likewise, diversity is neither a descriptive term for "differences between individuals," nor for a colorful enrichment of the workplace ("Vielfalt, die mich bereichert"[16]). Diversity is not a simple affirmation of group identities as the basis for political agency. To the contrary, terms such

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[12] For a description of the in-service training "Social Justice and Diversity Training," see, Fachhochschule Potsdam, "Social Justice und Diversity Training," accessed July 4, 2022, https://www.fh-potsdam.de/studium-lehre/weiterbildung/weiterbildungsangebote/social-justice-und-diversity-training-kurs-13.

[13] Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, eds., *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[14] Czollek, Perko, and Weinbach, *Praxishandbuch*.

[15] For the latest developments, see, Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*; Czollek et al., "Social Justice und Radical Diversity."

[16] Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 17.

as "discrimination-critical diversity" and "radical diversity" were introduced to highlight the focus on the transformation of societal structures as well as categories of social difference in view of a more substantial ideal of plurality.[17]

Both an understanding of structural discrimination and the shift to radical diversity intend to uncouple debates about discrimination from any categorial positivism—i.e., from a discourse aiming to describe, characterize, and manage individuals and social groups. At the same time, an analysis of discrimination and a transformative practice towards radical diversity cannot be reduced to one another. A perspective of radical diversity does not automatically result from the foregoing analysis of structural discrimination. Rather, it must be conceptualized and, more importantly, practiced on its own terms: as a way of actively developing other ways of thinking through diversity, based on new ways of relating, and enabled through specific methods and techniques such as *Mahloquet* and Allyship (*Verbündet-Sein*) (see section 4). Both elements of the SJRD approach will be outlined in the following, focusing on the way an analytical approach to the question of discrimination interlocks with a transformative practice towards radical diversity.

3. Understanding Discrimination: Structural Oppression, Doxa, Genealogy

In academic discrimination research, it has become common to differentiate between distinct forms of discrimination: namely, between direct and indirect discrimination, between statistical and non-statistical discrimination, between quantifiable and subjectively perceived discrimination, as well as, at least in some cases, between intentional discrimination, implicit subjective biases, and institutionally manifest discrimination.[18] Whereas more individual- or psychology-based approaches to discrimination examine how discriminatory acts are intentionally performed by individuals, an analysis of institutional discrimination takes into account "practices of degradation, disadvantage, and marginalization of social groups and associated persons at the level of organizations and related professions."[19] Central to institutional discrimination is the

[17] See, apart from explications in the *Praxishandbuch*, especially Leah Carola Czollek, Gudrun Perko, and Heike Weinbach, "'Radical Diversity' im Zeichen von Social Justice: Philosophische Grundlagen und praktische Umsetzung von Diversity in Institutionen," in *Soziale (Un)Gerechtigkeit: Kritische Perspektiven auf Diversity, Intersektionalität und Antidiskriminierung*, ed. Maria do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011); and Max Czollek and Corinne Kaszner, "Pluralität zweiter Stufe: Zu einem Denken des Radical Diversity," *Renk. Magazin* 3 (2021).

[18] For different versions of those classifications, see, Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of the Ethics of Discrimination* (New York: Routledge, 2017), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315681634; Albert Scherr, Aladin El-Mafaalani, and Gökçen Yüksel, eds., *Handbuch Diskriminierung* (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2017); Andrea Klonschinski, "Einleitung: Was ist Diskriminierung und was genau ist daran moralisch falsch?," *Zeitschrift für Praktische Philosophie* 7, no. 1 (2020).

[19] Mechtild Gomolla, "Direkte und indirekte, institutionelle und strukturelle Diskriminierung," in *Handbuch Diskriminierung*, ed. Albert Scherr, Aladin El-Mafaalani, and Gökçen Yüksel (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-10976-9_9, 134 (translation C.K.).

"assumption that mechanisms of institutional discrimination can operate and be sustained independent of individual prejudices or negative intentions."[20] In most cases, the term "structural discrimination" is either used similarly to institutional discrimination or as a more elaborate version thereof: focusing, in addition to organizational aspects, on more informal manifestations of discrimination, such as norms, social practices, narratives, or representations in media and public debate.

Similarly, the SJRD approach employs the notion of structural discrimination as the "interconnection of discriminatory practices on the individual, cultural, and institutional level."[21] However, the adjective "structural" does not solely signal the need to take into account different spheres or sectors of society where discrimination manifests. Its methodological consequences can be summarized as follows: First, "structural" means that the object of analysis of discrimination is not the individual, but a nexus of power, privilege, and the historical production of social differences. Second, by contributing to what we perceive to be the societal *common sense* or *doxa*, a variety of forms of discrimination affect the very ways we move and are oriented in society—who we perceive as close to us or different from us, what we know and do not know. In other words: our sense of normalcy. Third, it affects the way we analyze the historical genesis of various forms of discrimination in relation to our present analytical categories.

3.1 Mapping Discrimination on Structural Oppression

After World War II, considerations regarding the existence of institutional or structural oppression emerged in the context of claims to social justice raised by social movements since the 1960s.[22] Speaking of institutional or structural aspects of racism or sexism served to explain the persistence of racial or gender-based oppression, as well as everyday violence in many parts of society, in spite of formal advancements towards greater legal equality.

The SJRD conception of structural discrimination is rooted in the traditions of these social movements and, moreover, informed by the work of Iris Marion Young and her concept of "structural oppression." When Young theorized the term structural oppression, the central point of her theoretical innovation was twofold. First, Young argued against reducing questions of social justice to aspects of the allocation of

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[20] Gomolla, "Direkte und indirekte, institutionelle und strukturelle Diskriminierung," 134 (translation C.K.).

[21] Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 26 (translation C.K.).

[22] Iris Marion Young names among social movements having contributed to a thinking of structural oppression "socialists, radical feminists, American Indian activists, Black activists, gay and lesbian activists," Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990), 39. This is not to say, however, that the thematization of structural aspects of discrimination can be traced back to the historical context of the United States alone.

material goods alone. In order to understand the workings of discrimination across different social groups, she argued that it was necessary to also take into account societal spheres and processes that were not usually considered as immediately political, such as decision-making processes, division of labor, and processes in the cultural sphere.[23] Young further argued that, in order to understand the complexity of how oppression is effected, it is not sufficient to conceive of oppression as the "tyranny by a ruling group."[24] Instead, one has to take into account different mechanisms of oppression: exploitation, marginalization, the production of powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.[25] Oppression of social groups can thus neither be understood simply as the unequal distribution of resources, nor can it be theorized as a relation of unequal power between individuals alone.

As deployed in the work of Young, structural oppression can be described as a *relational* phenomenon of social injustice that affects different spheres or levels of society (material distribution, norms, institutional arrangements, etc.) and a variety of mechanisms of violence. Accordingly, Young defines structural inequalities as a "set of reproduced social processes that reinforce one another to enable or constrain individual actions in many ways."[26] In the case of women's oppression, for example, Young speaks of "interlocking social structures of family and economy, as well as cultural norms [that, C.K.] shape choices and thus explain the unequal conditions of women and their children."[27] Hence, oppression is, in its form, more like a "nexus" or a "set," rather than a straight, causal line. In the SJRD approach, we use the term "matrix of discrimination" (*Diskriminierungsmatrix*) to illustrate those processes of mutual consolidation and the stabilization of forms of discrimination not merely through interlocking structures, but also through historical geneses of rendering categories of discrimination more plausible.[28] In its analytical focus on interacting or interlocking structures and the formation of oppressive systems across social spheres and practices, the term *"Diskriminierungsmatrix"* shows similarities to the concept of the "dispositive" as it is used in a Foucauldian tradition.[29] However, given Foucault's development of key

[23] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 3.

[24] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 40.

[25] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 39–65.

[26] Iris Marion Young, "Equality of Whom? Social Groups and Judgments of Justice," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 9, no. 1 (2001), 2, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9760.00115.

[27] Young, "Equality of Whom?," 11.

[28] See Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 34–36.

[29] For an overview, see the German language collection, Michel Foucault, *Dispositive der Macht: Über Sexualität, Wissen und Wahrheit* (Berlin: Merve, 1978).

characteristics of the concept in the context of the history of sexuality, psychiatry, and punitive systems, the question of how to adapt Foucault's reflections on the dispositive to the context of anti-discrimination would require some effort of transposition. Generally speaking, Foucault's insistence on changes in techniques of governing and control from more sovereign or commanding to more regulatory or "normalizing" techniques might be too narrow a focus when trying to understand changes and continuities within and across forms and mechanisms of discrimination.

To speak of relations of oppression in terms of a nexus, set, or matrix, does not mean that oppression becomes an obscure and diffuse conspiratorial entity, as some critics have claimed.[30] On the contrary, it means that the focus of attempts to confront discrimination must be placed on those complex institutionalized frameworks that work as agents to perpetuate discrimination, but can also be transformed to enable a more equal access to social goods and to participation in social processes. Young defines justice in the context of social justice theory as "the institutionalized conditions that make it possible for all to learn and use satisfying skills in socially recognized settings, to participate in decision making, and to express their feelings, experience, and perspective on social life in contexts where others can listen."[31] The SJRD approach combines this focus on enabling justice with Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach[32] in order to identify four different kinds of justice: distributive justice, justice of recognition, the right to be enabled, and the right to realize one's fundamental capabilities (*Befähigungs- und Verwirklichungsgerechtigkeit*).[33]

3.2 Common Sense and Historical Specificity

Schematically speaking, to conceptualize discrimination—defined in discrimination research as the "differential treatment on the basis of membership of a socially salient group"[34]—follows a different logic than what has traditionally been denounced as systems of violence and oppression identified with capitalism, patriarchy, or colonialism. Contemporary critics of current forms of anti-discrimination activism argue accord-

[30] For a recent example, see, Philipp Hübl, "'Struktureller Rassismus:' Ein irreführender Begriff," *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, March 21, 2021, accessed July 4, 2022, https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/struktureller-rassismus-ein-irrefuehrender-begriff-100.html.

[31] Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 91.

[32] Martha Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007), https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1c7zftw; Martha Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities*: *The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2011), 17–45, https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674061200.

[33] Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 24–25.

[34] Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen, "The Philosophy of Discrimination: An Introduction," in *The Routledge Handbook of the Ethics of Discrimination*, ed. Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen (New York: Routledge, 2017), 2.

ingly that whereas social movements of the 1960s fought "actual" patriarchal or class-based inequalities, endeavoring toward a more "complete" universalism, current attempts to denounce discrimination merely perform an "identity check" based on a person's assumed characteristics (ancestry, race etc.).[35] The SJRD approach emphasizes the need to attest to systemic aspects of discrimination; however, this systematic or structural nature is not reserved for differences of class, race, and gender alone. Instead, the focus is placed on a variety of forms of discrimination, such as classism, racism, migratism, antisemitism, anti-Romaism, anti-Sintiism, heterosexism, anti-LGBTQI+ speech and acts, lookism, ageism, and ableism. It is assumed that each form of discrimination either has historically resulted in extreme forms of violence and the attempted eradication of the targeted group, currently does, or has the potential to do so. A hierarchization between forms of discrimination in terms of material vs. merely cultural manifestation is thus avoided.

What makes forms of discrimination *structural*, then, is not necessarily a certain degree of institutionalization, prevalence, or historical embeddedness, but rather a certain double movement of normalization on the one hand, and historical specification on the other hand: for one thing, discrimination provides us with a general, socially differentiated way of being oriented and located in society,[36] with a socially functioning way of "how things work." Discrimination is here closely tied to general processes of differentiation, such as othering, stereotyping, hierarchization, but also a differential availability of knowledge and visibility of perspectives. By providing us with a sense of whose perspectives matter and whose don't, who is superior or inferior, similar or different, near to us or far away, discrimination immediately interferes with our common sense or sense of normalcy. Here, structure alludes to something Pierre Bourdieu described with the term "doxa"; a set of opinions and beliefs the validity of which is unquestionably accepted:

> One of the most important effects of the correspondence between real divisions and practical principles of division, between social structures and mental structures, is

[35] Fourest, *Génération Offensée*, 10. See also Nancy Fraser, who differentiates between "relevant" (material, class-based) categories associated with women's, workers, and migrants' struggles and merely "personal" dimensions of social struggle, such as the use of pronouns (Nancy Fraser, "Der Kampf um Abtreibung ist ein Arbeiterkampf," interview by Anthony Obst, *Berliner Zeitung*, June 25, 2022, accessed July 4, 2022, https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/kultur-vergnuegen/nancy-fraser-die-wokeness-treibt-viele-in-den-rechtspopulismus-li.239425?pid=true). While I generally sympathize with the intent to objectify criteria of discrimination, the demarcation line between structural and arbitrary is not identical with that between economic and cultural or personal.

[36] For this aspect of "being oriented" as part of heteronormative social arrangements, see, Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientation, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke UP, 2006), https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822388074.

> undoubtedly the fact that primary experience of the social world is that of doxa, an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident.[37]

Apart from providing us with this general sense of self-evidence, each form of discrimination is actualized in different historical contexts and for different ideological purposes—setting them apart from each other as distinct forms of discrimination with distinct histories and at the same time establishing them within a specific structure of social differentiation. To provide an example: Even after more than 70 years of (officially recognized) migration to Germany, migrants are either rendered invisible (in the case of so-called *"Aussiedler"* considered to be *"deutsche Volkszugehörige",* for example) or addressed as "(guest-)workers" or cheap laborers, rather than citizens with valuable knowledge about state violence and resistance strategies that could potentially position them as allies for promoting a more just, democratic state. This denial of equal recognition—as citizens with a potential democratic expertise—*could* simply be described as a form of racism. However, we would thereby miss the specific function this denial of recognition has for a society that carefully manages its migration-reality by differentiated patterns of ascription and denigration. In this sense, an analysis of structures of discrimination attempts to answer the questions: Why is a specific diversity category taken as the basis of discrimination; how is it being transformed in the process; and how does it become engrained in state ideologies, institutions, norms, and practices?

3.3 Genealogy and Intersectionality

Another aspect of the term structural is its meaning of "genealogical" in the methodologically narrow sense. In current critical and poststructuralist theory, what differentiates "history" from "genealogy'" is a certain critical impetus ascribed to a genealogical perspective. Genealogy is, first of all, a radical way of interrogating the present by investigating its historical genesis. By realizing the contingent nature of processes and power relations that have constituted the present, current modes of subjectivation can be changed. According to readings of genealogy in a Nietzschean or Foucauldian tradition, a certain transformative and ethical potential rests at the heart of genealogy.[38]

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[37] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1984), 471.

[38] See, for example, Béatrice Han-Pile, "Foucault, Normativity, and Critique as a Practice of the Self," *Continental Philosophical Review* 49 (2016), https://doi.org/10.1007/s11007-015-9360-2; Colin Koopman, *Genealogy as Critique* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2013), ch. 6.

In the SJRD approach, the argument of the historical genesis of forms of discrimination has more specific analytical functions. First, when trying to trace the history and transformations of forms of discrimination, there is never *one* origin or historical starting point of discrimination which we can return to. We cannot assume one specific logic, episteme or way of thinking—be it Greek, monotheistic, platonic, binary, logocentric, or other—nor one specific historical phenomenon—capitalism, colonialism or "the Enlightenment"—as the single origin of discrimination. Rather than tracing forms of discrimination back to an origin, the genealogical method focuses on shared patterns and functional complexities of discrimination.[39] If, for example, we want to understand the functioning of classism in relation to its historical genesis, we do not merely look at the history of the discrimination of a certain class or the history of capitalism as the origin of class oppression, but also at specific mechanisms and practices: the criminalization of specific behaviors, changing assumptions about what counts as valued and unvalued labor, practices of disciplining of individuals, etc. Those mechanisms are not specific to the discrimination of the labor classes, but historically also affected what today we would call sex workers, psychiatrized persons, and others. Applying a genealogical perspective here means that we cannot project our current understanding of a form of discrimination into the past, as if histories of discrimination could in fact be told as histories of those mutually distinct social groups structural discrimination intended to construe. Instead, a genealogical perspective demands a certain conceptual flexibility with regards to its object of analysis, its stability over time, and its relative position to other possible objects; it is therefore also an expressly intersectional perspective on how discrimination functions. Writing genealogies of discrimination means taking into account that forms of discrimination are interlinked on the level of their material referents, as well as in terms of their mechanisms; that histories of oppression are often shared histories.

Meanwhile, the question of ethics is, to a certain extent, detached from the transformative, critical, or ethical effect associated with genealogy. Seen from the perspective of SJRD, history teaches us not so much about a *contingent* past—about the mere fact that our beliefs and categories are historically constituted and therefore could also be otherwise—but about the potential violence of the past, which entails, more often than not, a dimension of what is forever lost and irretrievable. When engaging with histories of discrimination as histories of violence, sites of extreme suffering, powerlessness, and annihilation, ethical implications do not primarily concern finding new ways of subjectivation in the context of an "ethics of the self," but demand the commitment to universal Human Rights and the principle of non-violence.

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[39] See, again, the remarks on the *Diskriminierungsmatrix*, Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 34–36.

3.4 Methodological Implications

A structural analysis of discrimination relies, to a certain extent, on an evidence-based method for understanding how discrimination structures our societal reality. It is based on empirical evidence regarding, among other things, the unequal access to decision-making power for some groups in society; the distribution of income and access to healthcare across classes and residential neighborhoods; the depiction of different life worlds in school books, etc. Such a methodology aims to shed light on a reality where privilege, recognition, and material resources are distributed unequally in correlation to belonging to a certain social group by drawing—however provisionally and intersectionally reflected—on data gained from social statistics. However, this methodological orientation should not be mistaken for a blunt positivism: More often than not, the mere fact of "successful" inclusion, the growing presence, for example, of post-migrant voices in media coverage or a vital *"Willkommenskultur"* for some migrants more than others, cannot be taken as unambiguous signs of progress in the fields of anti-discrimination. Instead, the success story of some serves to blur the fact that unequal access, exploitation, and violence continue to exist in social spheres that are less publicly visible or marketable (e.g., while representation of women is widely discussed for some highly competitive areas of the job market, single mothers are among those most affected by poverty). The SJRD approach attempts to remain sensitive to this positivistic fallacy by maintaining that the right to equal participation cannot be reserved for those who—presumably—can be easily integrated into the existing societal structures. Inclusion—ensuring equal participation in social goods irrespective of personal achievement and based on voluntary decision—does not equal integration—the incorporation of those who conform with narrowly defined integrative patterns provided by the dominant culture and institutions based on mechanisms of reward and punishment. Inclusion involves questioning ideals of homogeneity and the norms of social reproduction underlying most institutional contexts. What is more, inclusion is not equivalent to "fair" and equal representation of "opinions" measured against a presumably neutral social standpoint. Inclusion is not an instrument for equalizing political standpoints, but a way to counter structural discrimination.

Lastly, the analysis of structural discrimination is not a positivism also in another respect. When looking for ways to confront discrimination, it is not possible to reduce the effects of a certain form of discrimination to one image of how this discrimination manifests in the present—for example by focusing on the degree in which a group is "represented," in terms of the presence of discriminated or minority groups in specific social, economic or political areas. Confronting discrimination as predominantly a problem of representation tends to narrow down a nexus of history, institutionalized violence, and power according to a presentist image of injustice as the numerical

distribution of so-called minorities in a given space; a space that in itself is presumed to be intact, and where discrimination and exclusion just accidentally "happen," and can therefore be easily remedied through technocratic arrangements.

From a structural point of view, discrimination—as this nexus of history, power, and violence—cannot easily be remedied. The fact, for example, that women have always been excluded from the philosophical canon, cannot be *remedied* by simply employing more women in philosophical departments, nor even by finally starting to read the forgotten female philosophers (if such textual testimony is available at all). The question of how to reinvent a philosophical tradition where a feminist perspective would not only be the addendum to the canon, but itself a complex, living, and internally contested entity, remains crucial here. Similarly, the fact that philosophy as a discipline was, in Germany, fundamentally restructured under National Socialism has resulted in a process in which entire traditions of philosophy have either been extinguished or expelled from German self-understanding. Can we even imagine an academic philosophy with vivid neo-Kantian socialist faculties? What do we make of those injuries and violations, of the mourning that accompanies them?

A structural understanding of discrimination aims at a better understanding of how different forms of discrimination have shaped social spheres in ways that do not easily and unequivocally manifest in present institutional arrangements. Aiming for equal representation, while being an important tool for enforcing social justice, should not be taken as an end to itself. Questions of representation should entail questions of reimagination; a dimension of also addressing what has never been or what could once have been.

4. Radical Diversity: Plurality, Alterity, Concrete Utopia as Transformative Practice

One major challenge when working in the field of anti-discrimination is constructing the conceptual bridge that is necessary when moving from the analysis of structural discrimination to the question of how we might conceive a counterpart—we might also say: the political answer to—discrimination. This is where the term diversity comes into play. If we define discrimination as the unjust oppression and exclusion of certain social groups from social goods, then the lack of diversity would logically refer to the subsistent absence or mis-representation of those groups in certain spheres of society. To actively promote diversity, for example in businesses or organizations, would thus mean fostering the representation of social groups in favor of a more diverse workforce. In fact, this is how the term diversity is often used in the context of human resources and diversity management. Taken this way, the central question becomes: Is there a way to conceive of diversity beyond simply being the inverse of discrimination—the summation of different social groups or so-called "identities"?

4.1 Radical Diversity as a Conceptual Framework

In the SJRD approach, diversity is not a descriptive term for the composition of a societal whole in terms of different categories of identity. Analogous to the analytical tool of structural discrimination in its function to describe relational entities and processes, the term diversity does not simply determine differences between persons or individuals. Rather, the term marks a different understanding of plurality: plurality as a fundamental characteristic of democratic societies. One can find traces of this affirmative understanding of plurality in Theodor W. Adorno's dictum of an emancipated society in which "people could be different without fear," in Hannah Arendt's use of plurality as a foundation of acting politically, but also in theories of democracy where plurality serves as a central category of democratic processes.[40] The fact that diversity is here understood with reference to this qualitative concept of plurality means that it does not simply describe (quantifiable, visible) relations between individuals that differ from each other, but rather the condition of otherness that motivates forms of relating. To this end, the term *radical diversity* is introduced, defined as "a critical practice concerned with transforming homogenous public-political spaces, institutions, cultural practices, and discourses in favor of a mainstream of radical diversity, plurality, and heterogeneity in their complexity."[41] To speak of diversity in the sense of radical diversity implies a certain caution with regards to present categories and frames of articulating what in German is called "Vielfalt" (diversity in terms of the variation of characteristics). Oftentimes, "Vielfalt" is celebrated as long as this does not conflict with socially accepted conventions of being "a good Other." The limits to this form of social recognition can be seen and felt as soon as women or minority groups start putting into question the very frameworks that enable socially livable forms of being a minority, forms that include, for example, not attracting attention, voicing criticism instead of entitlement, etc.[42] The concept of radical diversity points to the necessity of questioning the very mechanisms of how otherness is conceptualized in relation to a norm.

To think in terms of radical diversity would mean to understand the problem of diversity as something that is not a given, but that comes up as a problem through the process of dialogical engagement (see the next section for an explication of the dialogical). The challenge, then, is to understand the concrete diversity of people present in a space as something other than according to the social categories they represent, yet,

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[40] Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), 103; Ernst Fraenkel, *Deutschland und die westlichen Demokratien* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1964). For the use of Arendt's work in the SJRD approach, see, Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 202–206.

[41] Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 43 (translation C.K.).

[42] For examples of these regulatory frames, see, Czollek and Kaszner, "Pluralität zweiter Stufe."

without eliminating the problem of existing social categories as something we are subjected to potentially without our agreement. Which is to say: the fact that I have a certain history, that I speak a certain language, etc., *can* make a difference. This difference, however, is nothing we can grasp or fix beforehand, but it is something that emerges in very concrete situations and requires concrete narratives.

4.2 Radical Diversity as Dialogical Practice

To conceptualize radical diversity, we draw on—partly phenomenological—traditions of alterity and the dialogical, as we find them, among others, in the works of Martin Buber and Emmanuel Lévinas. Phenomenology is thus being mobilized not so much in its descriptive capacities, but at those points where it is methodologically akin to questions of the dialogical and to plurality. The central inspiration we take from this phenomenological tradition—gained, to be sure, via a specific reading thereof—is that the relation to the other is of vital priority not only with regards to the formation of the self, but also with regards to ethics and notions of responsibility. Between Buber and Lévinas, alterity is intimately tied to perceiving radical otherness in the moment of dialogue. As Buber states,

> Genuine conversation, and therefore every actual fulfillment of relations between human beings, means acceptance of otherness. When two human beings inform one another of their basically different views about an object, each aiming to convince the other of the rightness of their own way of looking at the matter, everything depends, as far as human life is concerned, on whether each thinks of the other as the one he [she, they, C.K.] is, whether each, that is, with all their desire to influence the other, nevertheless unreservedly accepts and confirms him [her, them, C.K.] in his [her, their, C.K.] being this human being [*Dieser-Mensch-sein*] and in his [her, their, C.K.] being made in this particular way [*So-beschaffen-sein*].[43]

As Lévinas remarks, the "valuation of the dia-logual relation and its phenomenological irreducibility, its fitness to constitute a meaningful order that is autonomous and as legitimate as the traditional and privileged *subject-object* correlation"[44] is the central contribution of Buber's philosophy.

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[43] Martin Buber, *The Martin Buber Reader: Essential Writings*, ed. Asher D. Biemann (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 211.

[44] Emmanuel Lévinas, *Outside the Subject*, trans. Michael B. Smith (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), 41, cited from Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 218.

In the context of the SJRD training, those assumptions are applied in a specific way, namely on the level of a concrete dialogical practice, with the method of *Mahloquet* and via a number of strategies or techniques destined to offer a meaningful perspective of plurality; strategies such as "positionality in non-positionality," the "pluralization of strategies against discrimination," "de-integration," and the concept of "ally-ship" (*Verbündet-Sein*) as a specific form of solidarity.[45] Here, I will focus on just two examples of those strategies in order to convey the general idea of how philosophies of alterity and the dialogical are applied.

The method of *Mahloquet* is a method taken from the Jewish and Talmudic tradition of the interpretation of texts. In the SJRD training, it is employed as a way to create a multiplicity of perspectives on a given topic. Dialogue is here taken literally: it is about trying to understand the other as a speaking and acting subject in their singularity rather than subsuming them into the framework of one's own expectations and desires. Also, it is about enduring the fact that in the moment of engaging in dialogue, we might see and speak *as* a disabled person / atheist / Sinti etc., *and* are exposed to a topic, text or problem in an always singular way. It is about exploring those spaces of ambivalence. On a practical level, these premises are realized via techniques that shift attention away from the individual person as representative for a specific perspective or position towards a shared topic. On the basis of a given text, for example, the assignment for the group may be to develop as many different readings and perspectives on the respective passage as possible. The aim is then not to try to balance or "smooth over" differences in interpretation or even controversial standpoints on a given statement or topic, but to endure the situation that one might not be able to understand what the other person is trying to say or that an agreement simply cannot be reached. The explicit takeaway, then—and this is central—is *not* that the persons involved need to break off contact or need to stop working with each other. In some cases, participants are actively encouraged by the trainers to develop a new, counterintuitive or unexpected reading as soon as the group seems to have reached an interpretive consensus. Thereby, a central idea of *Mahloquet* is put into practice: the idea that justice should never be mistaken for the consensus reached by a given, empirical group. Thus, in addition to its technical application, *Mahloquet* also demonstrates ethical implications. The ethical appeal is to strengthen personal responsibility *against the background* and *on condition of* this lack of a consensual safeguard. In the moment of acting (politically), it is not so much about whom one represents in the most authentic way, but about taking responsibility for one's own actions in the realization of social justice as a praxis.

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[45] For detailed explanations, see, Czollek et al., *Praxishandbuch*, 37–42; Max Czollek, *Desintegriert Euch!* (München: Hanser, 2018); and Perko, *Social Justice und Radical Diversity*.

Another means for realizing the goals of SJDT is via the concept of the ally. The concept of the ally, *Verbündet-Sein,* is meant as a form of political friendship in which the interests of the other are inextricably linked with one's own interests for a transformative practice towards social justice.[46] Being an ally describes a form of acting in concert without an identity-based connection between the people giving and receiving support. Acting as an ally is therefore not conditional upon the construction of a "we"; it is possible to act together without sharing attributes with individuals or groups. The concept of the ally is directed at every person at the point where they dispose of resources resulting from social privilege, and where privilege is understood as something situational rather than an essentializing characteristic. As a woman and migrant, for example, I might experience exclusion and discrimination on many institutional levels, but I might nevertheless dispose of resources resulting, for example, from my class position. The concept of the ally aims at a form of intersectional solidarity precisely at those points where resources can be redistributed across identity-based social positions. Being an ally is different from paternalism because, as an ally, one does not speak *for* the other person, but makes resources available to the disadvantaged.

4.3 A Concretistic Reading of Alterity

From the perspective of SJRD, radical diversity is not confined to certain spaces, nor to certain types of experience. The SJRD approach abstains from any intent to gain analytical control over where and how alterity and dialogue can happen. To enter spaces under the assumption of alterity, to actively strive for relations of *Verbündet-Sein* is more like an attitude (*Haltung*) that must be practiced in order to be realized. In this case, the common tendency in phenomenology to express alterity through notions like "the event," disruptive experiences, malfunctionings of the normal, or some radical form of impossibility is avoided. In the SJRD approach, what makes us aware of alterity can be some form of *"Sinnereignis"*; it can equally be consciously practiced through techniques that aim at learning to perceive the other in a less assimilating or reductionist manner.

Change is envisioned here in the form of a "concrete utopia."[47] On the one hand, it is about concrete and practical transformations that can be effected in one's immediate

[46] Gudrun Perko and Leah Carola Czollek, "Das Konzept des Verbündet-Seins im Social Justice als spezifische Form der Solidarität," in *Solidarität in der Migrationsgesellschaft: Befragung einer normativen Gruppe*, eds. Anne Broden and Paul Mecheril (Bielefeld: IDA, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1515/transcript.9783839426869.153.

[47] Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 3 vols., trans. Stephen Plaice, Paul Knight and Neville Plaice (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995).

surroundings and can contribute to a less discriminatory societal reality. On the other hand, those practices are already oriented towards a situation where full participation in social goods would be realized for all and on the basis of a degree of inclusion where available modes of expressing diversity *would already have changed*. Therefore, radical diversity is at once concrete *and* transformative in that one's actions are determined not by the given distribution of visibility and identity, but by that which current social conditions do not yet allow for. In its attempt to assert oneself against even the most implicit norms and expectations to conform to given protocols of a "minority perspective," this practice of radical diversity is equally inspired by traditions of autonomous or radical feminism.[48] By encouraging dispute (*Streitgespräch*) as a technique of making an argument heard, the method of *Mahloquet* has an equally counter-normalizing impetus. And it is here, where one might begin to wonder whether combining genealogy and phenomenology could be the starting point for a more thorough reflection on the different methodologies—or praxeologies—that have always already informed our thinking about discrimination; as methodologies in their own right.

5. Conclusion: Attesting to the Practical Logic of Discrimination

In conclusion, I want to return to the problem that motivated this paper in the context of this Special Issue: combining genealogical and phenomenological perspectives within the framework of anti-discrimination. On a purely conceptual level, it is true that the focus on structures and conditions of discrimination and the focus on individual experience seem contradictory. Likewise, combining notions of subjects of oppression with an ideal of diversity on a theoretical level may seem a rather difficult connection to make. The aim of this paper was to show that combining different philosophical traditions of thinking about aspects such as oppression, social inequality or "difference" is indeed highly productive, albeit, on the condition that we reflect on their respective methodological specificities. We could describe this combination in terms of confronting discrimination from two different *sides* or *angles*. A critique of discrimination must comprise both. A precise analysis of those mechanisms that interact with the result of producing a lesser degree of participation in social goods for some must be brought into conversation with a perspective of radical diversity that intends to rethink diversity in relation to a concrete utopian concept of plurality—where the frameworks of what counts as "diverse" or "different" have already changed on the basis of an achieved state of social justice and equal participation.

[48] At least ideally, and projected to a time and place, when radical feminism did not yet have to position itself primarily in opposition to matters of trans* activism.

Both perspectives concur methodologically in their intention not to treat questions of discrimination as a constative discourse about differences between individuals or social groups.

By addressing both the question of discrimination and the question of diversity, the SJRD approach tries to attest to the specific practical logic underlying the way we move within a societal reality shaped by discrimination. The SJRD approach allows us to theorize both how discrimination works and to which extent it in fact *does not work*. While society can be analyzed in terms of social categories that structure societal spheres according to a differential system of unequal distribution, power, and privilege, this way of understanding societal reality is immediately transgressed (and in a way contradicted) by the very fact that, as acting or relating beings, we also at the same time undermine those very logics and structures of perceiving the social as a summation of distinct "identity groups." When conceiving of this fact as a logic of practice, it is assumed that on a practical level, those two aspects already coexist without contradicting one another. Hence, what is demanded from a theory of discrimination would be precisely not to turn this coexistence into a contradiction or aporia, but to make an effort to theorize both the ways that given structural arrangements fundamentally affect possibilities to fully participate in social goods *and* the points where those systems fail when actually claiming to determine ways of relating and engaging politically. By offering concrete ways of probing alternative forms of dialogical engagement and solidarity based on, among others, *Mahloquet* and *Verbündet-Sein*, the SJRD approach encourages this intent to find avenues towards other ways of relating in view of achieving social justice. Overall, embedding the reflection on discrimination in this double movement of sharpening the tools for analyzing structural discrimination, while at the same time transgressing its very foundations might contribute to an approximation between philosophical debate and anti-discrimination theory and education that is long overdue.

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