The three strands of intercultural policies: a comprehensive view

A critical review of Bouchard and Cantle recent books on interculturalism

Ricard Zapata Barrero

ricard.zapata@upf.edu

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Abstract

Within the emerging policy debate on interculturalism we critically review two recent books in 2012: Bouchard's *L'interculturalisme: un point de vue quebecois*, and Cantle's *Interculturalism: The New Era of Cohesion and Diversity*. In my view, both contribute very directly to open a foundational debate on interculturalism. In addressing the point of convergence and the dividing lines of these two contributions, I will claim that in spite of having one core concept of interculturalism, there are, however, at least two basic conceptions that have to be interpreted in complementary ways: Bouchard's essay represents the *contractual strand*, Cantle's book the *cohesion strand.* At the end I would also suggest that these two strands do not manage to express explicitly that diversity can also be seen as a resource of innovation and creativity, and so can drive individual and social development. This view is based on the diversity advantage literature already informing most of the diversity debate in Europe and elsewhere. This is what I will call the *constructivist strand*. My ultimate purpose is to defend a *comprehensive view*, grounded on the argument that no one can have the sole authority to define intercultural policy, since the three strands can be applied at different moments, according to different purposes and policy needs. The challenge now is that policy managers be able to achieve a balance between these three policy drivers.

Author's biographical note

Ricard Zapata Barrero Accredited Full Professor. He works on applied political theory and qualitative methods at the, Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona-Spain). His main lines of research deal with contemporary issues of liberal democracy in contexts of diversity, especially the relationship between democracy, citizenship and immigration. He is Director of GRITIM-UPF (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Immigration) and the Master Programme on immigration management at UPF. He is currently working on various lines of research related to Governance and Diversity: the link between two dynamics: the immigration and stateless nations, policy and multilevel governance. Following a local approach ("The Local turn") he addresses different aspects of intercultural policies, the link between cultural policy and diversity. He is a member of several European projects, among others ACCEPT-pluralism, funded under the EU 7[th]framework program, and Interacts and DivPol, funded by the European Integration Fund. He currently directs a project Diversity: *Municipalities and immigration: interculturality and the index of Governability* (2012-14), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Innovation and Science. He founded the Intercultural Cities Networking Spain, as expert of the intercultural cities program of the Council of Europe. He is also member of several government advisory boards, and regular contributor to media and policy debates.

See for further information on his projects and publications: http://dcpis.upf.edu/~ricard-zapata/

Some preliminaries: the academic and diversity policy context[1]

This article originated from the ascertainment that there are two dynamics in current European policy debates that need to be connected and theorized. Firstly, there is a common trend in Europe to go from a state- to a locally-centred approach in diversity policies, as cities are increasingly recognized not only as implementers of policies, but also as new players. Secondly, within this context, an increasing number of cities are shifting to interculturalism as a new policy focus, given the crisis of state multiculturalism. Intercultural cities are then becoming a new model for the expression of a commitment to diversity, and are basically being considered the most pragmatic policy answer to the city's concrete concerns and plans.[2]

Interculturalism as a new way for cities to deal with diversity dynamics is thus becoming an emerging public policy approach with strong convincing arguments in this second decade of the twenty-first century. It is at the centre of debates on diversity, and expresses the will to influence some governments to make them reconsider their policies and to introduce this new paradigm. However, at the moment, this is occurring

[2] The Intercultural Cities Programme, a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, is maybe the most direct institutional structure concentrating these two dynamics in Europe. As it states its founding documents, "One of the defining factors that will determine, over coming years, which cities flourish and which decline will be the extent to which they allow their diversity to be their asset or their handicap. Whilst national and supra-national bodies will continue to wield an influence it will increasingly be the choices that cities themselves make which will seal their future" (Council of Europe 2008, 22).

more at a discursive or rhetorical level, rather than developing a theoretical framework or an empirical approach. When we read about different cities' programmes, we also note that there are too many differences. This suggests that many city councils behave in an intuitive manner, with good intentions, but without any clear theoretical framework. Interculturalism is basically viewed as a proximate set of policies sharing one basic idea: that the interaction among people from different backgrounds is important.[3] Roughly put, the aim of intercultural policies (interculturalism) is to promote dialogue and exchange between people of different cultures using what we will call the "technique of positive interaction". Its concerns are to intervene politically and to propose a way to manage the dynamics of diversity within current Western societies, primarily at the local level.

Despite the many conferences and policy meetings devoted to this topic, there are still little internal disputes among those who share this new policy approach. Currently, the strategy based on the promotion of interaction is the one most widely recognized by international institutions, especially European ones.[4] Coming mostly

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[3] This is a fact that even the liberal multicultural scholar Kymlicka recognises. For instance, he says in one of his seminal works on intercultural citizens: "We have multicultural states populated by citizens who have only minimal levels of intercultural interaction or knowledge" (2003, 155). "We should encourage individuals to have the ability and desire to seek out interactions with the members of other groups, to have curiosity about the larger world, and to learn about the habits and beliefs of other peoples" (2003, 158).

[4] For instance, in 2008 The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) was established, the backdrop for the recognition of cultural diversity and the intercultural approach within the European Union agenda (http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu). In line with this intercultural approach, the Council of Europe and the European Commission endorsed that successful cities and societies of the future would be indeed *intercultural* – a visible approach in the joint action called the Intercultural Cities Programme (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Default_en.asp). In 2009, the Eurofund likewise conducted a wide-ranging study examining intercultural policies and practices, the "European network of cities for local integration policies for migrants (CLIP)" (See BORKERT *et al.* 2007, LÜKEN-KLASSEN and HECKMANN (2010), and the CLIP website: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/ populationandsociety/clip.htm). More recently, focusing specifically on intercultural policies, the European Ministerial Conference on Integration (Zaragoza, 15-16 April2010), held under the Spanish Presidency, and underlined once again the central role of local authorities when facing the challenges of applying intercultural and integration programmes. Specifically, the final declaration of the conference concluded: "Considering that cities and their districts are privileged areas for fostering intercultural dialogue and for promoting cultural diversity and social cohesion, it is important for local governments to develop and obtain capacities to better manage diversity and to

from urban studies, it has also been the object of reaction by some multiculturalist academics, such as Nasar and Modood (2011), who argue that there are many more similarities than differences between the two paradigms. Moreover, they charge that interculturalism may hold some erroneous prejudgment against multiculturalism, such as its group-based and fixed view of culture. Their conceptualization of political interculturalism, or the way in which interculturalism is appropriated and positively contrasted with multiculturalism, is one of the latest efforts to see both paradigms in a complementary way. At any rate, the debate in Europe and elsewhere is now wide open.[5]

To ground this article, I will try to frame the discussion within a broader debate, as to whether or not interculturalism is just a newcomer policy approach within the diversity debate, and if it lacks the establishment of a paradigm (involving new behaviours, reference frameworks, institutional routines, ways of living together, etc.). That is, the main question I will try to answer is: Are we entering into a new historical period, establishing this "intercultural age" as a new paradigm for our democratically diverse societies, or is interculturalism just a new phase of society's historical process of diversity?

It is within this political and academic context that two books, published simultaneously in 2012, make a welcome contribution and help us to argue that interculturalism is not simply a new rhetoric or a fashionable policy, but is indeed a new paradigm: Bouchard's *L'interculturalisme: un point de vue quebecois*,[6] and Cantle's *Interculturalism: The New Era of Cohesion and Diversity.* In my view, both contribute very directly to taking a step forward in the emerging debate, since they open a wide path for a promising internal debate among "we" interculturalists. It is time, then, to leave aside the first phase, where debates have concentrated on justifying and defining

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combat racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination" (p. 7). European Ministerial Conference on integration (Zaragoza, April 15-16, 2010). http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/UDRW/images/items/docl_13055_519941744.pdf

[5] See in general the whole bibliography, and also, the seminal works of GUNADARA and JACOBS, eds. (2000), WOOD (2004), BLOOMFIELD and BIANCHINI (2004), SANDERCOCK (2004); SZE and POWELL, eds. (2004), BRECKNOCK (2006), KHAN (2006), BARN (2010- 2011), RENÉ and GUIDIKOVA, eds. (2010), CLARIJS, GUIDIKOVA and MALMBERG (2011), EMERSON, ed. (2011), FARRAR *et al.*. (2012), TAYLOR (2012)

[6] This book is in French, but there is a previous English version of some parts that I will also use, published in *McGill Law Journal,* BOUCHARD (2011)

interculturalism's place within (and distance from) the diversity debate among the other traditional proposals, such as assimilation and multiculturalism. It is time to enter into a *foundational debate on interculturalism*.

We have before us two books that share the policy framework of defending interculturalism as a third way, and that understand it as a process of building a common public sphere in a "living together context", given the increasing diversity in our contemporary societies. They also have in common the lack of convincing public policies equipped to deal with showing respect for rights and national tradition (according to Bouchard's interpretative framework), or with social equality and community cohesion (as in Cantle's interpretative framework). From this starting point, they share certain basic premises, but also diverge at some important foundational points.

Taking a conceptual analysis perspective, I want to claim that in spite of having one core concept of interculturalism, there are, however, at least two basic conceptions that, as I will argue, need not be interpreted as being at odds, but rather as complementary angles of the same intercultural concern. Bouchard's essay represents the *contractual strand*, Cantle's book the *cohesion strand*. I will thus follow two steps in my argument. The first is to consider that these two conceptions share a rights-based approach toward individuals and a concern for ensuring a common public sphere and culture. I will attempt to contrast this with a capability-based approach, which is directly concerned with individual and social development in applying this "technique of positive interaction" in diverse societies. I will call this conception the *constructivist strand*. This view will be my own reading of the diversity advantage literature already existing (I will take basically the seminal work of Ph. Wood and Ch. Landry, 2008). The second step of my argumentation will attempt to assert the claim that these three strands (the contractual, the cohesion and the constructivist strands) have to be considered as three angles of the same intercultural triangle. As such, no one can have the sole authority to define intercultural policy. At the end, I will defend the assertion that the three have to be viewed in a systemic manner when applied at the local level, which primarily means having a *comprehensive view of intercultural* policies and considering interculturalism as essentially a policy of proximity.

Let me now begin by placing these two books within the diversity debate, by asking first what they share and how these common traits can be considered basic

features grounding the intercultural approach; next, I will address the points of divergence for these two understandings of intercultural policy.

What is the common core of the intercultural approach? Three shared premises

Taking first the *contractual* and the *cohesion strands*, my initial concern is to identify what they share. There are at least three basic shared premises.

The *first premise* is undoubtedly the liberal critique of multiculturalism. Its point of departure is the diagnosis that multicultural policies in past decades have missed an important point: interaction between people from different cultures and national backgrounds. Both share liberal criticism of multiculturalism (by focusing on individuals instead of groups), a concern for respecting personal rights, and democratic worries of maintaining stability and cohesion in diverse societies. The two essential differences between interculturalism and multiculturalism are that the group-based perspective of multiculturalism must be replaced by an individual-based one, where agents deserving policies are individuals rather than groups; and that culture, as an expression of personal identity, must always been seen in dynamic and open terms, so that people can enter and exit freely. In both cases, interculturalism presents itself as a framework that tries to challenge the way multiculturalism has always tended to categorise people thorough culture and nationality, which predetermine certain behaviours and beliefs. In this way, interculturalists will dispute the multicultural assumption that, for instance, to be of Moroccan origin entails being Muslim and following Islamic beliefs. This way to "condemn" people to belong to a certain national and cultural path is what interculturalism tries to avoid by criticising precisely this group-based approach. We must let people decide their culture and their religion, independent of the national circumstances into which they were born.

The second premise is related to the empirical evidence that legitimises the intercultural policy approach, as a third way between multiculturalism and assimilation (ZAPATA-BARRERO, 2011). This premise rests on empirical hypotheses focusing on the potential impacts of the dynamics of diversity without policy intervention. These hypotheses are basically two: 1) The *social hypothesis* says that diversity tends to provoke segregation and exclusion. Interculturalism, as a strategic policy of intervention, seeks to restore social cohesion, trust, and a feeling of belonging. 2) The *political hypothesis* argues that diversity tends to limit the traditional expression of

already-existing national identities and threatens the traditional values that ensure a common sense of loyalty, stability between citizens, and basic structures of society. In this case, the technique of positive interaction seeks to preserve national traditional values, and if any change is justified because of the dynamics of diversity, it seeks to keep control of this change, without affecting the loyalty of citizens or the rights of immigrants. In both cases, intercultural policies rely on the view that multicultural policies have promoted the insulation of different ethnic individuals inside their own ethnic groups.

As we have already introduced, conceptually, 'interculturalism' means 'positive interaction'. As a policy strategy, it also means applying the 'technique of positive interaction'. The core meaning is etymologically related – namely, it means "to act together" and "to live together" with a common purpose/project. This collaborative action can only be accomplished if people feel free to act, as human beings, without being categorised in terms of diversity by whatever administration or policy that encapsulates them. I would first say that this policy fundamentally proposes a change of focus: we move the policy lens from a centred and static fixed point to a much more mobile and dynamic process, one that results from interaction and interpersonal contact.

Until now I have argued that both books share a liberal critique of multiculturalism and develop their views with a social or a political hypothesis. We can now add a *third premise*: both are rightly presented as the outcome of policy expertise, and thus fall within the framework of a research/policy nexus. Both strands are, then, policy answers, given the concrete tensions surrounding the policy agenda of diversity in their own countries, and given their different backgrounds (Bouchard is a historian and Cantle an environmentalist) that help them to shape their diagnosis. This is a significant point, since it highlights something important: interculturalism is a proximate policy, and it is seen as the most pragmatic way to deal with practical concerns. Interculturalism is in some way the outcome of a theorization of current policy concerns on how to deal with the negative outcomes of diversity dynamics. Thus, it is always performance-oriented, with the aim of inverting the negative impact of diversity, while respecting democratic procedures and individual rights.

First, both scholars have participated closely with their respective governments to improve existing conflicts. They have both built their views on the attempt to answer practical concerns and direct policy worries. This problem-solving policy approach is also at the basis of their link between intercultural policy and the purpose it seeks to

fulfil. This is important, since both books can easily be seen as personal efforts to theorize their own experiences in the policy realm. Bouchard himself recognizes that his book tries to summarize his own position after the much-debated Bouchard-Taylor Commission. Cantle, meanwhile, has been a key player in policy orientations surrounding the British government's concern for local social disturbances in northern towns in August 2001. These events directly linked social conflicts with the failure of British multicultural policy. His book *Community Cohesion* (CANTLE, 2008) – based on a first approach presented in a previous report - the so-called "Cantle Report" (CANTLE, 2001) – proposes to reduce tension in local communities by promoting cross-cultural contact and by developing support for diversity and promoting unity. This work has had a direct influence in changing state behaviour and policy focus, mainly at the city level.

Nonetheless, beyond these three shared premises, there are different dividing lines that lead me to argue that we are indeed in front of two different strands: the contractual and the cohesion strands, represented by Bouchard and Cantle, respectively.

Two different starting premises, two anthropologies, different epistemologies, contexts and worries

Before properly moving to the seminal questions illustrating the dividing lines, let me very briefly introduce each book. Needless to say, both strands give us convincing arguments. As such I am not myself taking a position in favour of one over the other. Indeed, as I will argue, it would be a mistake to consider the two strands as "one versus the other". They illustrate concerns that are indeed different, but complementary, related to the consequences of diversity dynamics when they are left alone, without political intervention. They can both be interpreted, then, as two ways of justifying political intervention in diverse societies.

My comprehensive reading reveals that these two books, taken together, illustrate two different starting premises of interculturalism. Bouchard begins his reflections by considering the national Quebecois culture and the historical time of uncertainty in terms of identity in which it lives, due to the arrival of immigrants. Here, the premise – which I share – is that we cannot assume that diversity comes to be considered a social fact and a politically relevant approach in a nascent culture. Thus, the traditional culture cannot be considered as it was within the new diversity context.

The perspective shifts from one of nationalism to one of immigrant-related diversity. Cantle's point of view, on the contrary, has a different origin. He begins by reflecting on diversity, interpreted as a consequence of the globalization process, and from there he interprets the diversity dynamics as an irreversible fact in our society. These starting premises drive almost all the arguments put forth by the authors, and give us some clues to understanding their different interpretative frameworks, while they share what is conceptually basic to interculturalism, namely "a technique of positive interaction".

Behind both starting premises there are different anthropologies. In both cases, however, there is a common ground of conceiving the person as *producer and reproducer of culture and identity*. *Cohesion strand* analyzes persons for their common humanity, and then assesses what people have in common, beyond their differences in culture, religion, language, or other markers of identity. In this sense, there is from the outset a concern to promote a bonding strategy – that is, to promote relations between what is common among people, even when they are from different backgrounds.

Contractual strand views persons as holders of a national identity from birth, by adscription rather than acquisition, a fact that determines certain cultural behaviours and attitudes towards others. It thus sees persons qua nationals (belonging to a national culture, citizens of a state or immigrants). The *contractual* perspective shapes its arguments by taking into account the citizen population only, identified as the population belonging to the political and cultural community. The *cohesion* perspective breaks the distinction between migrant and citizen, given that its territorial frame of reference is not in the context of the state, but rather of the world. In this case, *cohesion strand* rejects any debate concerned with justifying the treatment a person may receive. Therefore, it refuses any moral argument that justifies up-to-the-last-moment contractual patriotism (ZAPATA-BARRERO, 2010: 338).

These two anthropologies shape the bases of two discourses, one that takes the person qua human being into account, independent of his or her nationality, and another that specifically takes person qua nationals (belonging to a national culture) into account. Epistemologically, we are referring to the difference between nation-state particularism and cosmopolitan universalism. These two ways of building knowledge on diversity are straightforward, since they would fuel two ways of founding different interpretative frameworks, as we will see in the next section.

Incidentally, both positions illustrate that diversity policies are always context-related and need to be accommodated within a contextual political and social agenda.

Thus, the contractual view of Bouchard is dependent upon the Québécois context. Indeed, as the author signals as much in the subtitle, he is defending a "Québécois point of view". This primarily means that the view of diversity dynamics is understood from a stateless national context – where, as we know, diversity poses different questions and, even if it shares similar questions regarding the state, it also offers different answers (ZAPATA-BARRERO, 2009). From this position, the impact of diversity is initially viewed as a new pressure to maintain national tradition. Therefore, the national survival of Québec is much more important than in other countries that already have states supporting their own national identities. From this context, interculturalism is viewed as the most appropriate policy tool to manage the interaction between diversity and the already-existing national tradition, which is not seen in an essentialist view, but also as the outcome of diverse past interactions. Here maybe the words of Bouchard at some points in his narrative are clear enough: "Interculturalism is the better option to ensure Québec's survival" (BOUCHARD, 2012: 229). So, in the context of Québec, feelings of national identity insecurity are also fuelled by the growing presence of immigrants and cultural minorities, largely concentrated in the area surrounding Montreal.[7] As Bouchard highlights in a previous work, this feeling is justified since it is an expression of the fragility of Francophone Québec in America, a condition accentuated by globalization and by uncertainty over *francization* (BOUCHARD, 2012: 34).

The contextual framework of Cantle is quite different. The British author builds his arguments without any national concern, since England upholds state mechanisms already in place to deal with national protection. This is not to say that there is not a Britishness debate, but it is not considered by Cantle.[8] The basic worries are, rather, social conflicts and segregation due chiefly to the lack of communication and contact among different expressions of diversity (including the national citizenship one). The British state's understanding of diversity as social conflict, and the need to go beyond the multicultural paradigm are the main driving forces of Cantle. So here the key trouble is how to ensure "community cohesion" among different expressions of diversity. He builds his arguments against a diagnosis of what he calls "State multiculturalism", interpreted in terms of outcomes, namely that "the state itself had encouraged minority communities to remain separate" (CANTLE, 2012: 69).

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[8] On the Britishness debate, see for instance, MODOOD (2010).

This preliminary contextual introduction will certainly give us some clues to understanding the different interpretative frameworks represented by the *contractual* and the *cohesion* strands.

Two interpretative frameworks

Let me begin by stressing the fact that both have different backgrounds, which in part help us to understand their different interpretative angles. Bouchard is well known as a Quebecois historian and a specialist on the founders of the Quebecois nation. His reading understands diversity as an external dynamic within the current path of history of Quebecois nation building. His line of reasoning is, then, based on Quebecois culture and nationhood, and the interpretative framework of all his arguments is the well-known *majority/minority nexus*. Aware that this framework could invite the reader to have a dualistic view, in terms of (irreconcilable) tensions, he constantly insists once and again that this framework must not to be interpreted in conflictive terms, but rather as a balanced dynamic of contact. The presence of minorities means that all forms of expressions of differences become defined in relation to the Quebecois culture or founder majority. Bouchard says categorically that the majority/minority framework in Quebec seems unavoidable and non-negotiable as a category for analysis (BOUCHARD, 2012: 162-167). Indeed, this majority/minority interpretative framework is not original, but rather illustrates the guiding thread driving most Quebecois scholars of diversity, who understand this nexus of power relation terms.[9] This interpretative framework drives all his arguments. We can read seminal sentences such as: "If it is necessary to pay attention to the feeling of insecurity of minorities, it would be a mistake to disregard this same emotion that is also expressed within the majority, firstly because this concern can also be legitimate and secondly because a threaten majority is never an ideal partner for minorities"[10] (BOUCHARD, 2012: 28); or this statement

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[9] The debate on interculturalism already has a long discussion in Québec, and has framed its distance from multicultural Canada. See, among others, JUTEAU (2002), GAGNON and IACOVINO (2003), ROCHER, LABALLE, FIELD and ICART (2007), MC ANDREW (2007), GAGNON (2009), SALÉE (2010).

[10] «S'il est nécessaire de porter attention au sentiment d'insécurité des minorités, ce serait une erreur de négliger ce même sentiment qui se manifeste également au sein de la majorité, d'une part parce que cette inquiétude, elle aussi, peut être légitime, et d'autre part parce qu'une majorité inquiète n'est jamais une partenaire idéale pour des minorités » (Translation done by the author).

written in a previous work: "For the majority culture the debate stems largely from an insecurity over the future of the identity and heritage from which it draws its strength. Inevitably, emotionalism and symbolism occupy a large part of the debate" (CANTLE, 2011: 437).

Even if Cantle does not introduce the Britishness debate, as we have already said, he does speak about identity. Indeed, identity drives his narrative from the beginning. Cantle understands this new historical phase as having a direct impact on the homogeneous identity paradigm, which is understood in Britain, as we know, in racial terms. This means that diversity dynamics are already breaking down this identification between "race = nationality = identity" as a basic factor determining behaviours and beliefs. It is here that he introduces the *super-diversity* category, to highlight precisely the fact that we are now in a context where people can have several cultural and national identities at the same time. He even labels the racial view as a simplistic categorization (CANTLE, 2012: 32), arising from the old traditional paradigm of majority/minority interpretative framework, and he thus explicitly criticizes Bouchard's perspective. Therefore, the nation/state nexus, and the place of national identity within it, must adapt to a world in motion. Perhaps here we can say that the category of super-diversity is quite misleading, given that, as we know, Vertovec (2007) has already introduced it as frame of reference to discuss diversity challenges, and it is already a matter of debate and application.[11] This, in my view, unfortunate notion is, however, easy to understand by taking into account Cantle's empirical reference: the fact that people increasingly identify not with one simple identity, but with many (complex) identities (CANTLE, 2012: 40). The reference point of Cantle might be better grasped as "complex identities" or "multiple identities". But this is perhaps a lexical discussion that goes beyond my current purposes. Global diversity dynamics are also understood as the basic factor of structural change in our societies, and as the root dynamic forcing the political realm to redefine current terms, such as cohesion and identity. The constant argument of Cantle is that there is a need to reform conceptually the simple and fixed concept of identity in favour of a more complex and open view: "How we see ourselves and others does depend to some extent on whether we hold ideas in common" (CANTLE, 2012: 47).

In spite of insisting that diversity dynamics force us to rethink most of our policy categories, this process remains rhetorical, since he does not enter into a deep discussion

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[11] See his edited volume, VERTOVEC and WESSENDORF (eds., 2010).

on the categories affected by diversity dynamics, such as what equality might mean in a diverse society. In any case, analytically, the claim that we need to re-categorize certain old notions is an argument for historically situating interculturalism, since Cantle defends some sort of new historical period, placing this "intercultural age" (my own terms) as a new phase succeeding the "multicultural experience" (CANTLE, 2012: 88). This reading, which assumes historical progress, is quite disputable, but cannot be avoided given Cantle's *cohesion* view, where national identity loss serves the primary function of founding a common social identity in our newly diverse societies.

Let me go a step forward into two basic concepts – diversity and interculturalism – and we will see how the two terms have different meanings.

Intersecting common concepts: diversity and interculturalism in perspective

The reading of these two books is a good opportunity to discuss arguments, perceptions, assumptions and premises, and to better map the current internal intercultural debate. Both illustrate different approaches toward two basic categories: diversity and interculturalism. Indeed, these two understandings are at the basis of the two strands of interculturalism: the *contractual* and the *cohesion*.

However, let me first say that in both books we see how the concept of diversity is not set in stone, and it is not politically neutral. I have already written about what I call "some magical phenomenon", in which those who define diversity never include themselves inside the category (ZAPATA-BARRERO, 2013: 4). That is, those who claim to hold a monopoly on the definition of diversity never incorporate their own differential features within the semantics of diversity. There is, then, some sort of epistemological barrier, in that it is difficult *to occupy* and *to define* diversity at the same time. This barrier is present in both books, as I will argue. They express the challenge that we need to break this epistemological barrier of the diversity concept. Blommaert and Verschueren assume this epistemological propriety of the diversity concept, for instance, when they say that "the discourse on diversity is an instrument for the reproduction of social problems, forms of inequality and majority power" (BLOMMAERT and VERSCHUEREN, 1998: 4). They also argue that the problem of diversity is ideologically constructed, since it seems that the definition is dominated and controlled by the majority, and that even a tendency to "abnormalize the other"

(BLOMMAERT and VERSCHUEREN, 1998: 19-20) can be observed. Taking this epistemological perspective let me analyse both strands.

"Diversity" for Bouchard is clearly understood as "the other minorities", standing before a "national homogeneous us", who have the capacity and authority to define diversity. It seems to me that for Bouchard, diversity becomes some sort of "academic euphemism", behind which he designates the politically incorrect term "others". Consequently, this also follows his understanding of interculturalism as an integration policy, which is maybe the most disputable argument.[12] What we lack in Bouchard's essays is a clear position in favour of a positive view of diversity, one that endorses in some way the diversity advantage perspective. Such a perspective, which shapes most intercultural programs, treats *diversity* – as an object of public policy – to be a resource and as a public good.[13] Bouchard confirms the view of diversity as a new social paradigm, but also sees it as a restriction whose deployment needs to be controlled.

Cantle, on the contrary, has a broader vision of diversity. He does not see it within the interpretative framework of majority/minority nexus, which he considers an out mode paradigm. Instead of viewing interculturalism as an integration policy, he sees it as an all-encompassing category, where the national identity citizens are also included. Interculturalism is a way to accommodate diversity, centred basically on promoting interpersonal contact and communication, as a means to insure a common public sphere and community cohesion. It is significant that there is a relationship between interculturalism and social conflict in the way this "technique of positive interaction" works as a public policy preventing social conflicts. Following Cantle's logic of thought, the lack of interculturalism is what is at the core of conflicts in diverse societies. Moreover, conflict for Cantle does not only mean social disturbances, but is a broader notion encompassing racism, poverty and social exclusion (CANTLE, 2012: 102).

Cantle seems to understand interculturalism not as a policy strategy for the reconciliation of potential national interest conflicts, which would keep the vertical relationship intact, and which would thus keep control of the dynamics of change in

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[12] "I would like to use this essay primarily to present my vision of interculturalism as a model for integration" (BOUCHARD, 2011: 437).

[13] On the concept/policy nexus on diversity in public and private organizations, see ZAPATA-BARRERO and VAN EWIJK (eds., 2011).

hands of the majority, as Bouchard's *contractual* view defends. Cantle instead treats it as a policy mechanism designed to avoid social exclusion and segregation, and to secure a common sense of belonging and cohesion. It is also true that Cantle has a particular view of identity in a diversity context. Being British, the simple idea of identity is the fixed one related to race. His arguments, then, follow that "identity = race" is fixed and belongs to the old paradigm that needs to be overcome, as we have argued before. For Cantle "interculturalism goes beyond the paradigm of race diversity. It is much more about the creation of a culture of openness, a dynamic process of social change due to diversity" (CANTLE, 2012: 142-143).

Taking Cantle's conception of "diversity paradox", there is a certain social hypothesis that assumes that the dynamics of diversity, without any intercultural policy intervention, tend to provoke separation and segregation, and to reproduce the inequalities of power and social class. For Cantle the "diversity paradox" means "the more diverse societies are, the more people support separation in identity" (CANTLE, 2012:87). Interculturalism therefore requires a change in the way in which societies are conceived, and it instrumentalizes identity through policy and practice (CANTLE, 2012: 88). Indeed, it is not only conflicts that frame this notion of interculturalism, but segregation in its multidimensional meaning. We do not have time to enter into this discussion, but Cantle's deep treatment of the three domains of segregation -spatial, social and cultural, of values and norms- (CANTLE, 2012: 112-149) demonstrates the importance he attaches to the social hypothesis assumption.

It follows that one of the premises of the *cohesion* strands is that it endorses the empirically demonstrated contact theory (CANTLE, 2012: 145). Roughly formulated, this well-known theory states that one of the basic problems of a diverse society is the lack of contact between different people, and that such contact, when done in a public sphere (using a neighbourhood as spatial reference), tends to produce friendship instead of enmity. This theory is exposited in what can be considered the most important chapter of Cantle's essay (CANTLE, 2012: 141-175). Interculturalism means sharing a context in order to promote interpersonal contact (CANTLE, 2012: 152).

Both authors agree on the backlash of multiculturalism literature (VERTOVEC and WESSELDORF, 2010) which has been charged with causing self-segregation (CANTLE, 2012: 59) and with engendering more inequality and separation among cultures (CANTLE, 2012: 63). Comparing Canadian and British multiculturalism, Cantle criticizes the British model for reproducing fixed groups and for promoting a

static approach of multiculturalism (CANTLE, 2012: 65). The Canadian multicultural vision is indeed progressive and emphasizes "cross-cultural understanding", "common attitudes", a "sense of belonging" and being "open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures"(CANTLE, 2012: 64). "The British approach has developed largely in response to events rather than as a positive vision" (CANTLE, 2012: 65). For Cantle the paradigm of multiculturalism has been, then, even as a progressive conception largely confined to a limited debate about the accommodation between majority and minority communities within states, reinforcing Black/White perspective of race (CANTLE, 2012: 69).

It is also fair to recognize that both share the core concept "interculturalism = positive interaction = reciprocal contact", but may have different notions of what 'interaction' assumes and means in social and functional terms. For the *contractual view* endorsed by Bouchard, this interaction is basically conceived in *vertical terms*, between a founding majority culture and a diverse culture of minority newcomers (BOUCHARD, 2012: 60). In this view, interaction is viewed in a one-dimensional manner, having a homogeneous view of both parts of the interaction (national citizens vs. diverse immigrants). In contrast, for the *cohesion view* represented by Cantle, this interaction is basically understood in horizontal terms. It is always multidimensional and complex, without any pre-categorization of the population, and it thus breaks away from the interpretative framework that differentiates the population in dualistic terms between an "us-majority-national-citizen" and a "minority-other-diverse-immigrant" (CANTLE, 2012: 103).

Bouchard, despite differentiating between the dualist paradigm and the intercultural paradigm, and repeating insistently that he refuses to be labelled under the dualist cliché; it seems to me he does not manage to go beyond this interpretative framework. What he ignores is that by defending the majority/minority interpretative framework, he is unavoidably dualistic and recalls to the reader the "us/other relationship". Even if he tries to break this dualist first reading, by reinforcing the idea that interculturalism is for him a way to articulate the dualism in an equilibrate manner, the recognition of dualism is still his starting premise. Interculturalism seen as a mechanism to moderate the majority/minority tension is a suggestive argument, since it tends to defend the nexus "interculturalism = equilibrium process between majority/minority" (BOUCHARD, 2012: 53 and 232, among other pages) reminiscent in some ways of the reflective equilibrium defended some decades ago by Rawls as the

best mechanism to reach a just society (RAWLS, 1971). But this, again, entails something that can be disputed. He supposes that diversity is initially viewed as a "conflict of interest", and then he assumes that the equilibrium he heralds and wants to reach through interculturalism is a way to deal with this conflict. In my view, this way of interpreting diversity is quite problematic, since this sort of *modus vivendi* interpretation does not leave him enough semantic room to assess diversity as an unavoidable phase in our history. The need to create a common culture to attenuate dualism (BOUCHARD, 2012: 58) becomes, then, the main purpose of intercultural policy strategy. Ultimately, for Bouchard, interculturalism is some sort of mediating mechanism in a real dualist social context (which is already divided into Anglophones and Francophones, in Québec). He seems to want to promote, even if he does not pronounce this term, some sort of "reconciliation" between a majority Quebecois and a diverse minority.[14] As a guiding thread in his line of thought, Bouchard insists that "interculturalism commits majority / minority in a dynamic of opening and rapprochement rather than in a dynamic of retrenchment and tensions"[15] (BOUCHARD, 2012: 64). Here the key question is how to attenuate the dualism respecting the rights of persons (BOUCHARD, 2012: 75): interculturalism is always understood as a way to arbitrate conflicts and divisions, as a way to promote a living together in a divided society (BOUCHARD, 2012; 89). Definitively, interculturalism is understood as a tool for preventing social conflicts (Cantle) and national divisions (Bouchard).

We enter here into a necessary foundational debate on why interaction is better than non-interaction. That is, if interculturalism is basically policy intervention into the social dynamics of diversity, the question is how to justify the notion that the promotion of positive interaction is better than a *laissez faire* situation, in which the diversity process spreads throughout society, with its only restriction the basic structure of society. Let me then address the different functions covered by these two strands of interculturalism.

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[14] Even if this term has a quite concrete meaning for Quebecois, illustrating a way to restore past conflicts between Quebec national founders and indigenous autochthones, the term "reconciliation" has been used in some reports within this context of immigration-related diversity. See, for instance, the same Bouchard-Taylor report (2008), whose subtitle states: *Fonder l'avenir. Le temps de la reconciliation* (*Building the Future. A Time for Reconciliation*)

[15] « L'interculturalisme engage majorité/minorité dans une dynamique d'ouverture et rapprochement plutôt que retranchement et tensions»

Why does interaction matter? : The technique of interaction covering different functions in a diverse society

What these two strands share is a common seminal foundational question: *Why does interaction matter?* Why is it worth promoting positive interaction in a diverse society? Both share the idea that interculturalism is justified because it is a way to avoid negative outcomes due to diversity dynamics. For both, this policy strategy has a rather therapeutic function, in the sense that it seeks to restore a previous situation of diversity, such as stability and cohesion. This will be the main difference with the constructivist view I will defend later, as a third angle of interculturalism, in the sense that it has a pro-active function of promoting creativity and innovation, without any socially restorative or therapeutic purposes.

As I have already insisted, I see both interpretative frameworks not as being at odds or irreconcilable, but as covering different social functions, and as seeking different purposes in the intercultural engagement. One of the dividing lines between *contractual* and *cohesion* interculturalisms is the identity category. Generally speaking, *contractual interculturalism* tends to have a fixed conception, one that is national and traditional. But this does not mean that Bouchard is against any change of traditional identity, but he contends rather that this change cannot suppose a loss of power and authority to manage the dynamics of tradition in the majority/minority nexus. There are, then, two constant concerns in the *contractual* intercultural view– the *national survival of the national identity (Quebec)* and *respect for the rights of minorities.* The basic pillar of Bouchard's contractual view of interculturalism as equilibrium rests on this point. As a Catalan, I can understand how language can be a determining factor of national identity, especially when it does not have all the state protections to insure its deployment through time. At the same time, I also understand those who think we will never get out of this dead-end history if we do not stop clinging to elements of collective identity.

For Cantle's *cohesion* view of interculturalism, epistemologically we cannot deal with diversity management oriented by a fixed idea of identity. Identity changes through interaction, and what is more important is not the fact (or the fear, according to the *contractual* view) of change, but what interaction allows: a common public sphere. In effect, one of the prerequisites of interaction is to share a common interest or a

common view of a shared problem. Without this minimal unity within diversity, there cannot be communication and identity change. So, between these two plans, *contractual interculturalism* tends to focus on variation and change, while *cohesion interculturalism* emphasizes the common humanity of people amidst their differences. Contrary to Bouchard's view, the cohesion view of Cantle asserts that to focus on common interests instead of conflicting ones is what must drive the meaning of interculturalism. Without this minimal premise, cohesion is simply difficult to reach, and conflicts may arise, since they are always an expression of irreconcilable differences, of an epistemological irreducibility of viewpoints. Here again, I think that there is still an understanding of interculturalism as an anti-exclusion policy, and so its narrow link with social conflicts is its main weakness. Since interculturalism seems to be conflict-oriented, it is a social problem-solving policy. There is not a pro-active element of interculturalism, but it is a way to restore what the dynamics of diversity seems to alter: social cohesion. Cantle understands interculturalism at the defensive, as a reaction against social exclusion – or, on a positive side, as a main tool for restoring social cohesion. In my view, he does not sufficiently emphasize the social class reading of this conflict, since most conflicts are not due to diversity alone, but to social class mechanisms reproduced by diversity. As we will see later, the *constructivist view* will always see interculturalism not as a "reaction against" whatever negative outcome of the diversity dynamics, but as a pro-active movement seeking to produce something new, something that never existed before the instance of interaction. It is at this point that 'diversity' is seen not as a restraint, but as a resource. It is perhaps also at this level of analysis, highlighting why interaction matters, that the first two strands coincide as being reactive.

Following a complementary logic, I will now argue that these two strands have some gaps, both at the level of the key normative question they pose to diversity dynamics, and at the level of the different answers they offer using the same intercultural concept. It is, in part, these gaps that the constructivist view will try to fill, taking the diversity advantage approach as its starting point.

Contractual and cohesion interculturalisms and beyond: a constructivist view of interculturalism
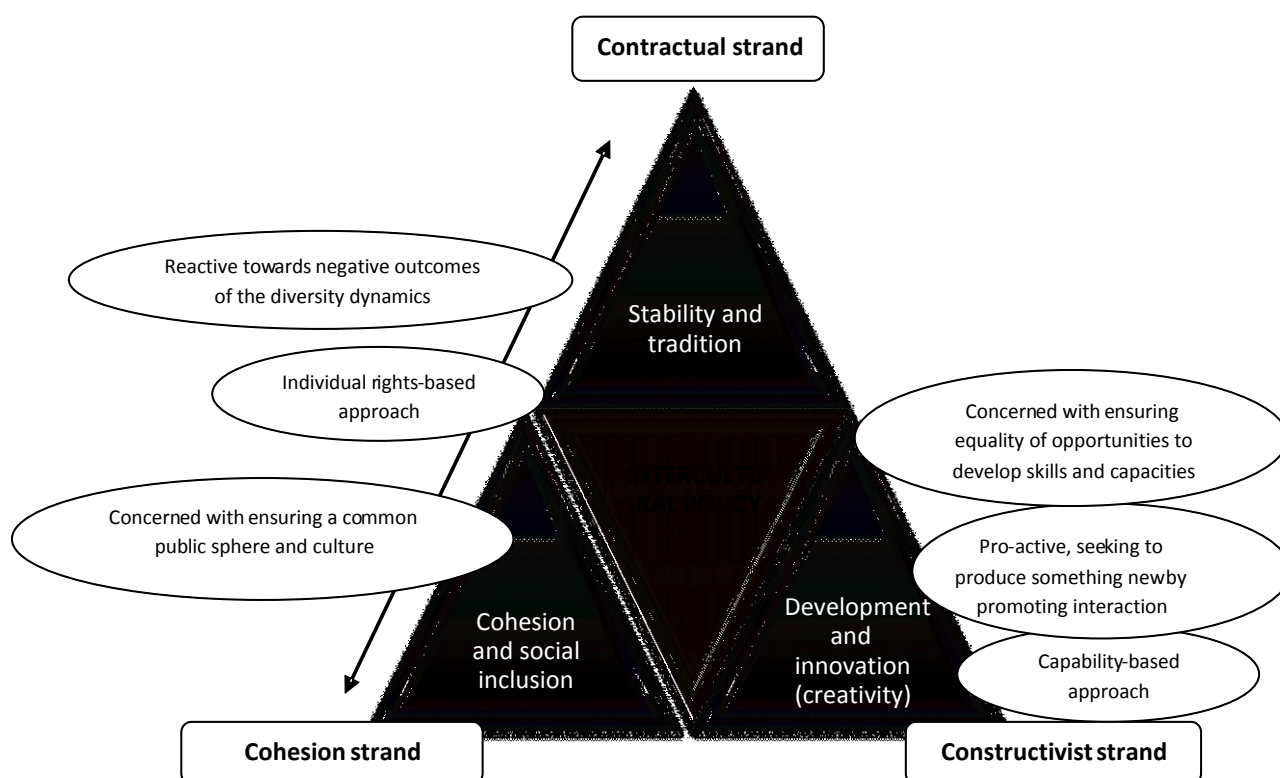
We assume that managing diverse societies often forces us to reconcile several logics of political action that are at the root of public dilemmas. The identities expressed

by existing groups are often encompassed under the umbrella of "tradition" (in the *contractual* view). The new members of a society, arriving by way of immigration, sometimes challenge the actions and routine patterns of public conduct of tradition; they can be, therefore, perceived as potential threats to tradition (especially in contexts where national tradition does not have state mechanisms of protection, and when this national majority is itself a minority within a broader state that holds different traditions). These new members can also be new factors of poverty and exclusion, and so diversity itself becomes an explanatory factor in social inequality and separation, affecting cohesion and the sense of belonging (the *cohesion* view). Nonetheless, we can also see this new population as an opportunity for innovation and creativity. Diversity is not simply a potential threat to national tradition or a potential factor in poverty, social exclusion and segregation; rather, it is an asset and a public good that needs to be managed positively. As such, diversity becomes an opportunity for individual and social development. It is this view that I would like to defend now as a complementary angle to the *contractual* and the *cohesion* strands. I will call this "third angle" of intercultural policy the *constructivist strand*. Let me locate it on the conceptual map of interculturalism I have already drawn.

What all these strands assume is that interculturalism as a policy is a technique of positive interaction that tries to intervene in the social dynamics of diversity. This interventionist view of interculturalism is partially correct, but it assumes that diversity by itself always tends to produce negative outcomes (national fragmentation, social exclusion, distrust). As a policy intervention, interculturalism can either try to influence the dynamic of diversity when it becomes too visible in occupying public spaces of tradition, or when it becomes visible because it can be interpreted as being at the root of social conflicts and exclusion. As such, this technique seeks to promote open spaces of interpersonal relations, to generate socialization effects in the short term, and – in the medium and long term – to generate a common public culture, with stability, cohesion, and a developing sense of loyalty and belonging.

What these two strands do not manage to express explicitly is that diversity can also be seen as a resource of innovation and creativity, and so can drive individual and social development. This view is not new, but belongs to the *diversity advantage* literature already informing most of the diversity debate in Europe and elsewhere. This

view of diversity emerges primarily from urban and management studies.[16] Namely, it holds that *diversity,* as an object of public policy, should be considered a resource and a public good. This is also fundamentally the view promoted by the joint programme between the Council of Europe and the European Commission called *Intercultural Cities*. Incorporating this third angle of interculturalism, we can say graphically that Stability (tradition, rights), Cohesion (social conflict, trust) and Development (capabilities, innovation and creativity) become an interpretive framework within which we can inform intercultural policies. In this debate on the foundation of interculturalism, we have, then, three angles within the same intercultural triangle, which have as a conceptual core this technique of positive interaction (see Graph 1).

Graph 1 A comprehensive view of interculturalism: Three policy drivers

Let's look at each of these angles.

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[16] See, among others, BLOMMAERT and VERSCHUEREN (1998), ZACHARY (2003), SZE and POWELL, eds. (2004), WOOD (2004), FESTENSTEIN (2005), HUSSAIN *et al.* (2006), PAGE (2007), WOOD and LANDRY (2008).

a) *Tradition/stability/diversity nexus:* the contractual view understands interculturalism as a tool for managing the national tradition/dynamics of diversity nexus. It sees intercultural policies as a function to restore stability in a diverse society. The basic category of tradition is here its main driving policy. By tradition, we mean what Weber conceptualized with the suggestive expression, "what has always existed", "what is here forever" (WEBER, 1964: 29).[17] It also requires no rational justification, since it is better transmitted through emotions (in our case, national emotions). It designates a set of established values and beliefs transmitted from generation to generation,[18] which is jeopardized by immigration-related diversity. The word 'tradition' derives from the Latin *tradere,* which means to transfer or to deliver. Tradition is a defence of the sacred chain of the self and his or her history. It has, then, a vital function in the political body, as the sacred purpose of maintaining social stability. In politics, tradition is also a framework for the unity of a community of citizens and it is a tool for promoting a sense of loyalty. Tradition, thus, has an obvious social and political function, which plays an important role in the feedback loop of tradition, ensuring its preservation. It is imperative to consolidate territorial routines and institutions, behavior patterns and social action logics. Tradition expresses itself through collective routines and socially acceptable behavior.

When this tradition becomes ideology, it can ground a conservative political discourse (which is obviously not necessarily linked to the conservative right wing), in the literal sense of seeking to preserve tradition against processes of change due to new dynamics of diversity (ZAPATA-BARRERO, 2009). When tradition becomes social action, it defines the minimum unity necessary for structuring a stable society. In this sense, I think we can rightly say that the *contractual* view is much more concerned with stability than with cohesion. What this strands fears is that leaving diversity alone can be an element of cultural division and instability in society.

b) *Social inclusion/cohesion/diversity nexus:* the cohesion strand understands interculturalism as a tool for managing the social inclusion/dynamics of diversity nexus.

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[17] A legitimate a form of domination based on tradition always has a sacred character (WEBER, 1964: 180). It is the belief in the sanctity of the regulations and the powers that have always existed (*ibid.*, 708), as "recognition of a status as 'valid forever'" (*ibid.*, 709).

[18] We follow the main definition of the seminal study of FRIEDRICH (1972: 18).

It sees intercultural policies as a way to restore cohesion in a diverse society. Speaking about "social cohesion", or as Cantle categorizes it as "community cohesion", the basic idea is to perceive intercultural strategy not as a policy tool to equilibrate the tradition/diversity nexus − as is the case for the *contractual* approach. The idea is, rather, to interpret intercultural strategy as a technique to promote interpersonal contact or − as Cantle (CANTLE, 2012: 102) also insists − as a policy mechanism to generate trust and mutual understanding, and to break down prejudices, stereotypes, and the misconceptions of others. We can say it is a technique of bridging and bonding differences and social capital (PUTNAM, 2007). That is, it promotes relations between people who share certain characteristics (bonds), as well as relations between individuals from different backgrounds, such as promoting interaction between people across different religions, languages, etc. (GRUESCU and MENNE, 2010: 10).It is a way, then, to avoid the confinement and segregation of people, which, as a last resort, become explanatory variables of social exclusion and inequalities. Social cohesion is also the horizon in the sense of encouraging interaction to overcome social and cultural barriers among people, especially in neighbourhoods and cities (CANTLE, 2012: 103). Cantle also makes a link between programmes of interaction and of belonging that cannot be dismissed, in the sense that to ensure the permanence of cohesion, there is a need to promote a minimal sense of belonging.

The *cohesion* approach leaves aside power relations among nationalities and minorities. Therefore, in contrast to the *contractual* approach, it promotes better face-to-face relations, step by step, in a proximity context. This is why the best place to apply it is perhaps at the local rather than the state level. Cantle explicitly speaks about local identity and belonging campaigns to garner a sense of solidarity. We might say that whereas feelings of common values were the cement of past periods, Cantle highlights, quoting Kymlicka (KYMLICKA, 2003: 195) that it is now necessary to focus on a common space of interaction and a common citizenship. The tension between "too diverse" (GOODHART, 2004) and cohesive, through social capital and solidarity, is then what interculturalism tends to bridge from the perspective of the cohesion view.

Considering now these two approaches –one centered on preservation of tradition, and the one centered on social cohesion– both coincide, however, as good liberals, in their prioritization of the individual rights of people, in contrast to the group rights, which both see as the major constraint inherited by the multicultural focus. However, there may be another approach dismissed by both strands. This approach need

not be considered at odds with the two previous ones, but just as another complementary angle of the intercultural strategy. The whole conclusive argument I will try to put forward at the end is that intercultural policies must be viewed in a comprehensive view, as a multidimensional technique of interaction that upholds stability (the tradition-contractual view), cohesion (the social inclusion-cohesion view) and development (the innovation-constructivist view) as its main policy drivers.

c) Innovation/development/diversity nexus: the constructivist view understands interculturalism as a tool for managing the innovation/dynamics of diversity nexus. It sees intercultural policies as a tool for promoting development in a diverse society. It is, then, basically a pro-active policy, in the sense that it is not a policy thought to react against whatever negative outcome of diversity (as a therapeutic policy), but is instead concentrated on producing an innovative outcome from the interaction. It is, then, creativity-based. This view takes the diversity advantage literature as a basis, and from there highlights another dimension: the fact that through interaction something new is potentially generated, and it can drive to individual and social development. This idea of development is, then, important to make visible. My basic criticism here is that Bouchard and Cantle missed precisely this added value of diversity. Expressing itself in the form of innovation and creativity, this constructivist approach has also a different view of diversity. Diversity is basically considered an asset and an opportunity to promote individual and social development. From this point of view, interculturalism can be, then, considered a strategy that promotes a context of mutual development. It follows a bonding/bridging strategy, in the sense that it tries to promote interaction between people with common interests but with different backgrounds. In this sense, it can campaign for the cohesion and sense of belonging. But this *constructivist strand* takes, as I see it, a step forward, in the sense that it promotes the *capabilities of people*. This *capability approach* of diversity obviously has a direct impact on some categories of the other two interpretative frameworks. First of all, it sees persons not only as nationals (as in the *contractual* view), or simply as common human beings (as in the *cohesion* view), but as capable agents. Following Faist's (2009) suggestive analysis of the diversity category, this involves people not only being considered in terms of their rights, but in terms of what they can do and are able to achieve. We take, then, into consideration individual skills (what an individual knows how to do) and competences (what an individual is capable of doing). In fact, this view deserves a special new

section, since, as I will argue, it has the feature of giving answers to a question that has not even been posed by the contractual and cohesion strands, and which seems to me common sense. It is not a question focused on the function of interculturalism, such as why positive interaction matters, but rather concerns the incentives of people to interact. Namely, how are people motivated to interact?

Constructivist issues: How are people motivated to interact? What are the basic preconditions for interaction?

One of the basic distinctive features of the *constructivist strand* is that it makes visible an assumption of the contractual and cohesion views: the question of motivation. That is, it gives answers to the assumed idea that people will be motivated to interact. This assumption cannot be taken for granted. The constructivist view seeks then, to encourage a link between persons of different backgrounds, who have common capabilities (skills and competences), and then sees that both agents can better develop their own capabilities and can even provoke a creative outcome because of the interaction. It is this innovative outcome and this creative atmosphere that motivate people to interact. At the basis there is a common interest in developing one's own capabilities.

How can we offer incentives and motivate people to interact? Even Cantle, with his *cohesion strand,* focuses on the common humanity of people, assumes that persons will interact when they are asked to do so only because they share determinate concerns. In my view, at this point Cantle misses the opportunity to theorize at least minimally the people's impetus to interact. The constructivist view seeks to engender the interests of people to interact by motivating them to meet because they will have the opportunity to develop their capacities. It is, then, clearly in their bestow interest to develop their capabilities first, and to see that potentially thorough interactions both parties will not only benefit, but will even create something new. It is here that the category of innovation – which is, in my view, absent in both previous approaches – can play a prominent driving role.

This argument to consider people not as agents of rights, but rather as agents of development is also, from the *constructivist* view I seek to shape, related to a new category of equality. Equality here is not understood in material and instrumental terms ("if I have two and you have three, then we are unequal"), but rather in terms of

capabilities. I owe this conception from Sen's seminal approach of equality (SEN, 1992). Here we focus not on a view of the universal person or of the person as holder of national identity we focus instead on personal capabilities. The definition of capability is directly linked to the equality of opportunities. This approach is built as a reaction against the utilitarian perspective that defines equality in terms of material possessions, and applies to primary goods and resources that people need to perform their particular worldviews.

The capability approach tells us that the important matter is to encourage the creation of conditions for people to have real opportunities to judge the kind of life they would like to have and the type of person they would like to be. In this sense, enhancing autonomy of the individual to choose the life they want in terms of their capabilities can rightly be considered as a new driver of intercultural policy. But what does "capability" mean? It is defined as anything that a person can do or be. If a person has the ability to read and cannot perform this action, then there is a problem of inequality, while others with similar skills can develop this ability and exercise it (i.e. they can read). Applied to everyday life, we can say that to put into contact people who want to develop cooking skills, cultural skills or language learning capacities is what this constructivist view of interculturalism is about. The interaction technique can only be successful, in my view, if it seeks to create a context of motivation to interact. Moreover, my argument is that this context can only be fruitful if people see that they can benefit from interaction. This added value of interaction is what the other two strands fail to address. It is this added feature that motivates people because they will see that, through interaction, they will develop their capacities and skills, and will even develop their creativity.

From this perspective, interaction is a technique that can help to develop capabilities through joint actions among people coming from different cultural backgrounds, and from different dynamics of diversity. We are speaking of personal opportunities to develop physical abilities, to nurture skills related to art, entertainment, or linguistics, to explore cultural or religious concerns and capabilities, and so on. These are basic, yet vital skills, closely related to the way in which people project their personal life plans in a diverse society. We assume here a new hypothesis, complementary to the social and political ones put forward at the beginning. It is the *capability hypothesis* that citizens' and immigrants' capabilities are not fully developed in a diverse society. Left alone, diversity tends to close off the opportunities of diverse

people from developing their capacities. Interculturalism, as a technique of positive interaction, seeks then to give people the capabilities to develop what they can do.

In this sense, we differentiate this *constructivist strand* of interculturalism from the *cohesion* one, centred primarily in avoiding exclusion and segregation, and promoting community cohesion and a sense of belonging. The *constructivist* conception of interculturalism focuses on motivating the will of the person to interact, and does not seek to force someone to act in a manner that violates his/her will. From this *constructivist* view, intercultural policies cannot force people to interact if they do not see sufficient reasons to do so. What this interaction technique establishes is an institutional framework, an urban scenario and a social space that motivate people to interact, even if, in the end, they do not. Establishing this motivational system is essential because it also prevents people from creating their own spaces of action and provoking segregation and separation. For this reason, this interaction technique is crucial for allowing people to develop their capabilities and to construct their own ways of life and particular worldviews.

This *constructivist* conception of interculturalism holds innovation as a basic category, as different to tradition and social cohesion. We take this category in the most literal sense as involving creativity, transformation, change, alteration, modification, renovation, modernization, and even performance and improvement. As different to tradition, it is – to modify the previous weberian expression – promoting "what never existed," but what can be generated through interaction processes. In contrast to cohesion, it tries to motivate people to interact because they will see that this relationship would benefit them directly and would help them develop certain of their capabilities. This is what the different dynamics of diversity produce through interaction: something new for all agents of the interaction. Moreover, like any new component in society, it transforms the context for all involved, accommodates diversity, creates new spaces for action, and alters the existing logic of action. What matters regarding innovation is therefore primarily the transformative effect it produces, which is absent in both *contractual* and *cohesion strands*.

I would even go so far as to state that diversity has here a subversive component, in any context where it occurs, because it challenges existing social conventions. It necessitates a structural change to modify behavioural patterns, to transform public space, and to change institutional routines to be transformed back into tradition.

This raises issues such as whether to give each culture continuity and reproduction within the own public social space; or whether we must promote interaction among them as the basis of creativity and innovation, which evolve through all cultural types, and which are continually developed and redefined. It is assumed, therefore, that all expressions of diversity have something to learn (or to contribute, depending on where we build the argument) from other expressions of diversity. Diversity expresses its own specific social meaning only through every day practices of social interaction.[19]

Although as a result it promotes social inclusion and prevents cultural and socioeconomic segregation, following the *cohesion* lines of Cantle, it is a mistake to concentrate only on this goal, not because it is not important, but because it is not enough to motivate people to interact. The ultimate goal is not social inclusion, but rather to promote creativity and innovation, along with personal and collective development. However, as I have argued, the constructivist view is just a third angle of intercultural policies, since it insists on different concerns regarding diversity dynamics. What is most important is that these strands are only complementary angles that can be used to categorize existing local practices dealing with diversity management. Indeed, it is this comprehensive view that I will defend as the last step of my argumentation.

Interculturalism: a comprehensive view

In this concluding section I will defend that a comprehensive view is the main basis of the foundations of intercultural policies. This conception holds that interculturalism is a way to manage the *contractual, cohesion and constructive strands*. To understand this *comprehensive view* appropriately, we have to keep in mind that interculturalism is basically a *proximity policy* and is always performance oriented. There is perhaps one specific feature of interculturalism that needs to be underlined. The fact that it is seen as a tool, as an answer to various concerns, proves its flexibility, which, I would also argue, is at the basis of this comprehensive view. My last argument of this conceptual map is, then, that these three angles belong to the same intercultural

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[19] "All cultures have something to learn from and contribute to others. Cultures grow through the everyday practices of social interaction" (SANDERCOCK, 2009: 220). See also BRECKNOCK (2006: 38).

triangle. I propose widening the intercultural lens to see all three strands at the same time, as interconnected. It is this interlink that the comprehensive strand seeks to draw. Indeed, my strong argument is that intercultural policy is never the contractual, nor the cohesion, nor the constructivist strand

by itself alone but the three practices altogether, applied at different moments in the city, according to different purposes and needs.

This interaction between tradition, cohesion and innovation is thus the framework within which we can ground intercultural policies. *Contractual*, *cohesion* and *constructivist* strands of the interaction technique become a new paradigm that can promote communication. They involve policies, behaviors, cultural practices, institutional routines and management programmes that help create bridges between "what has always existed", "what generates social conflicts" (in broader terms), and "what it is new". It is ultimately to apply this equilibrium logic so rightly defended by Bouchard, and this anti-exclusion logic orientating Cantle's *cohesionism*, but with the added value of innovation, creativity, and human and social development. Without this added value, interculturalism can become, in the last resort, just a phase in the historical trajectory of diversity in society, but it will not reach the level of being a new historical paradigm for our democratic societies. The real challenge of interculturalism is not to decide which of these three strands is right or wrong, but to balance them in a comprehensive interpretive framework, one which considers that the technique of positive interaction, presupposed by intercultural policy strategy, must create a context where tradition, social inclusion and innovation drive local governments' intercultural policies. The challenge now is that our policy managers, acting chiefly at the local level, should be able to have a comprehensive view, and to achieve a balance between these three driving forces in a context of global implementation.

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