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## **Gender and Diversity in the European Public Spheres.**

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### **Introduction**

The paper aims to contribute to debates about theoretical approaches and models to study gender and diversity in the public sphere in general and in particular The European Public Sphere (EPS). It also reflects on methodological frames and research strategies adopted to study the EPS with examples from my participation in two EU-projects, the VEIL- project (see: <http://www.veil-project.eu/>) and the EUROSHERE-project (see: <http://eurosphere.uib.no/> ).

The first part presents two influential models to rethink the Habermasian concept of the public sphere proposed by Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young, and discusses the similarities and differences between the two models. Then it revisits the debate about the cultural diversity and gender equality and discusses Will Kymlicka, Susan Moller Okin and Anne Phillip's contributions. The second part presents the feminist debate about approaches and models aimed specifically at including gender and diversity in the EPS, for example through the concepts of citizenship and intersectionality. It ends by looking at tensions in research strategies, which aims to include gender and minority concerns, issues and perspectives in relation to the EPS. The conclusion discusses the theoretical, normative and political challenges to include gender and diversity in the EPS through a multilayered, transnational citizenship model.

### **Part I: Rethinking the public sphere from the perspective of gender and diversity**

It is contested what is a public sphere, its role in society and what research strategies would be appropriate for empirical research, and feminist scholars have proposed different approaches and strategies to include the perspective of gender and diversity in the public sphere. There is an intense debate about the definition of the public sphere, for example whether it is still useful as a critical

concept. Since it has proved difficult to abandon the concept altogether a number of scholars have proposed ways to rethink the classical Habermasian model originally formulated in 1962 in the book *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (Fraser 1990; 2007) and have developed criteria for analyzing cross-national empirical differences. From a normative perspective the questions are, who should participate and on what occasions? What should be the form and content of their contributions to the public discourse? How should the actors communicate with one another? What are the desired outcomes of the process (Fereee 2002)?

From a historical and comparative perspective the public sphere is a social sphere next to the institutions of markets, states and families, and the economy, the political and the private/intimate are different spheres of human activity. From a comparative perspective it is useful to differentiate between different spaces that are connected to different places and localities. From a gender perspective the *public/private* divide has been one of the key problems, because the *private family* with its cultural practices, norms and values, about marriage and divorce has been regarded as an important 'political' arena for reproducing gender roles (Fraser 1990). *Civil society* has been another crucial arena for empowerment of women's political agency (Young 1990).

The following section briefly reviews the main criticisms of the Habermasian model of the public sphere, and the key points in the rethinking the concept of the 'political' and the public-private divide from a feminist perspective. The criticism of the public sphere model by the American philosopher Nancy Fraser's and the democratic theorists Iris M. Young (1990, 2000) and their models have many similarities: They have a social constructionist approach to the public sphere in the sense that they 'emphasises the contingently nature of every aspect of the political process' (Feree et al 2002; 307). Both are critical of the model of the separateness and idealization of the public sphere. They are inspired by Michel Foucault in their perceptions of the power of discourse and criticise the universalist ideal of the public sphere that hides particularism and oppresses diversity and difference. In terms of process they have introduced alternative models of the public sphere based upon principles of *heterogeneity and diversity* that recognize and empower women and marginalised social groups. In terms of actors they emphasise the key role of civil society in developing a democratic public sphere as well as the interactions between the public and private arena of the family (Fraser 1990). There are, however, also a number of differences.

Fraser have proposed an alternative model for a new post-bourgeois conception aims is to expand democracy and decentre politics from parliament to the civil society with the purpose

of including the concerns and issues of women and marginalised social groups in democracy. The model has four elements: 1) an emphasis on social inequality, 2) expansion of the notion of the public from a single public sphere to a multiplicity of publics, 3) inclusion of 'private' interests and issues and 4) a differentiation between strong and weak publics (Fraser 1990; 77). She has later proposed a comprehensive model for social justice based upon three normative principles: *Redistribution, recognition and democratic parity* (2003). It is a promising model based upon universal principles that link social equality, cultural diversity and participatory democracy. This is a universal frame rooted in political theory, and it is limited in the sense that it does not address the particularities of places and spaces.

Fraser has recently addressed the new challenges in a post-Westphalian world to notions of normative legitimacy and political efficacy (2007). She asks what sort of changes would be required to imagine a genuine critical and democratizing role for the transnational public spheres under current conditions. The article discusses especially the changes in the *inclusiveness condition* of who participates and the *parity condition* of how the actors engage with one another (20). She finds that if inclusiveness is interpreted as 'the all-affected principle' it is potentially a critique of political citizenship connected to the nation state as the condition for inclusion and legitimacy and an argument for *transnational public spheres*. Fraser's important point that a public sphere theory that wants to serve as a critical theory in a post-Westphalian world must rise to the double challenge: to create new, transnational public powers and to make them accountable to new, transnational public spheres (23). This point needs to be developed further through historically sensitive contextual analysis (Beck 2002).

Iris Marion Young's normative model of the public sphere is a democratic model that aims to give voice and influence to diverse sectors of the public sphere, especially women and marginalized social groups or. She introduced 'the politics of difference', a model which focuses on the empowerment of social and political actors based upon inclusion 'from below' (Young 1990). Young's model thus contrasts with Anne Phillips' model, 'the politics of presence', based upon inclusion 'from above' (Phillips 1995), for example through the adoption of quotas for women and marginalized social groups to national assemblies. They represent two different models to include diversity of political groups, arenas and forms of participation in democracy in order to create a real pluralism in politics, both premised on the belief that women and marginalised social groups would contribute to invigorate political life, because their experiences and perspectives would bring new issues onto the public agenda.

Young's communicative theory of democracy (1990) is a comprehensive approach based upon difference and diversity aimed to include marginalised social groups in democracy through mobilization and organization in civil society. Democratic communication is central to this model, and she proposes that communication should be expanded in two ways:

- 1) Diversity in social perspectives, culture or particularistic adhesions must be seen as resources for the democratic debate rather than a sign of division that needs to be overcome.
- 2) Democratic communication must be expanded to include not only rational arguments but many different forms of communication like greetings, rhetoric and stories (Young 1996: 120).

The model presents a strong critique of universal models of democracy from a social constructivist perspective, because they are based upon a hypothesis about common interests and common group identities, which has become increasingly problematic. Universal theories are criticized for being exclusive and normative, because they do not include diversity between women and within social groups and do not challenge existing race- and class privileges. They therefore tend to neglect the new differentiations based upon race/ethnicity, sexuality and generation, new political projects and new overlapping identities.

Young has introduced a strong normative vision about a pluralist and differentiated democracy based upon a *heterogeneous public*. Her theory of inclusive democracy links democratic principles of inclusion of diversity with a sociological approach to power as both structural relations and 'empowerment' of marginalised social groups (Young 1990, 2000). Like Fraser Young's approach emphasises the primary role of civil society from a perspective of discursive and communicative democracy.

Young's approach stresses that 'communication action' is the basis of the public sphere and the focus is on the interaction of actors as 'agents of change and agency of change'. Political communication is understood relatively broadly as – 'touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, talking, writing, gesturing and reading', although speaking, writing, listening, and reading are the most common ways to communicate. One of the key points in Young's rethinking of the model of the public sphere is that communication restricted by unequal power relations and communication and dialogue is limited by the dominant discourses. The study of power relations thus becomes a crucial research dimension, especially the discourses, rule and social norms in the dominant cultural and political institutions within which the public sphere is articulated.

**To sum up:** Fraser is concerned with inclusion of private interests and concerns through policies of redistribution and recognition and with restructuring of public policies, more recently with the challenge to make the new, transnational public powers accountable to new, transnational public spheres. Young political sociological approach is more concerned with power relations and has proposed concrete strategies to empower women and marginalised social groups as social and political actors. In spite of the different models, both approaches seem to be premised on a problematic assumption about the common interests of women and marginalised social groups and on a problematic dualism between civil society actors and political institutions. Both approaches tend to idealize civil society associations and they avoid questions about the various forms of interactions of the public sphere and civil society, which needs to be explored from a historical and comparative perspective. For example about the distinction between civil society formations that contribute to democratization and those who do not, the ability of civil society associations to create democratic and solidaristic citizens, and about the abilities of citizens to develop heterogeneous publics based upon solidarity with people outside our own group/country.

### **Citizenship, cultural diversity and gender equality – competing models**

In this section I revisit different approaches to include diversity in models of democracy/democratic citizenship. Although there is presently a political retreat from multiculturalism, there is a growing academic interest in issues of diversity and in relations between cultural diversity and gender equality. One example is the debate in political theory about ‘minorities within minorities’ (Eisenberg and Spinner-Halev 2005, Phillips 2007) that raise questions about power and representation of women and vulnerable persons within minorities. This is a serious concern that has contributed to make the models of democracy, public sphere and democratic communication more sensitive not only to the power relation between the majority and minorities and to the representation of minorities, but to give voice and influence to minorities within minorities.

One of the most comprehensive models addressing diversity of religious, cultural and national groups is through the multicultural paradigm, for example Will Kymlicka’s influential theory of Multicultural Citizenship (1995). Kymlicka is a Canadian political theorist whose theoretical approach transcends liberalism, because it is premised on a combination of individual rights and the communitarian approach emphasis on the protection collective rights. The concept of multicultural citizenship (1995) presents a defence of *ethno-cultural group rights* for indigenous peoples, like Aboriginals and American-Indians, and the *poly-ethnic rights* of new immigrant groups. The later notion of diverse citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman eds. 2000) expands this

approach and presents a more comprehensive frame of different kinds of minority groups and different forms of minority rights.

Kymlicka's approach does not address gender differences, but he has later emphasised that his strategy is premised upon a distinction between external protections of minority groups and internal restrictions of individual rights within minority groups. This means that the state should protect the collective right of minorities against the majority through external restrictions on the majority, for example through representation rights and language rights, but the state should not defend collective rights that impose 'internal' restrictions of individual rights/autonomy within the group (1999; 31-34).

The multicultural paradigm was criticised by the American feminist scholar Susan Moller Okin in an article with the provocative title: "Is multiculturalism bad for women?" (1999). Here she claims that there is a contradiction between multiculturalism, defined as protection of the cultural rights of minorities, and women's rights provoked an intense debate in the US (see Cohen, 1999), which later spread to Europe. She emphasised that minority groups often have patriarchal religion and family structures, and on this basis she argued that minority rights should not be defended as a strategy to achieve gender equality and improve women's rights. The claim was that group rights, exemplified with forced marriages and polygamy, are potentially and in many cases also in practice anti-feminist and harmful for women. First, group rights strengthen men's patriarchal control over women in minority cultures, and second it is the most powerful men who formulate the interests, values and practices of the group.

Many migration and feminist scholars interpreted Okin's article as an attack on the multicultural paradigm and group rights from a liberal feminist perspective. She was heavily criticised by scholars arguing that her approach was premised upon an essentialist perception of 'culture' that forced minority women to choose between 'my rights and my culture' (XXX). Okin's approach was read by many as a liberal defence of universal gender equality against cultural diversity. She has later qualified and contextualised her position explaining that she is not against collective rights per se. She has emphasised that one of her main points was that women should have a voice in negotiations between the majority and minority cultures about groups rights (2005; 88-89). In his response to Okin, Kymlicka argued that feminism and multiculturalism are potential allies in a struggle for a more inclusive concept of justice based upon a combination of individual and collective rights that takes account of both gender-based and ethnic diversity

The debate was followed by a growing concern in political and gender theory framed as "the paradox of multicultural vulnerability", i.e. that vulnerable social groups' needs and interests can be undermined by group rights (Shachar 2000; 200). It is therefore important to ensure that women and other vulnerable groups have a voice and influence in both minority cultures and in society (see for example Eisenberg et. al. 2005; Modood et. al.2006). Feminist scholarship has generally agreed that women in minority cultures need to be respected both as culturally different from the national majority and to be treated as equals by both the majority and minority cultures.

One issue in the political theory debate is about the hierarchy of principles. Anne Phillips (2005) has stressed that there is often a hierarchy of universal human rights principles in social and political theory. Liberal pluralism emphasises the diversity of ideas and have usually been less interested in the diversity of social groups, whereas liberal feminism have been interested in gender equality and has only recently addressed cultural and religious diversity between social groups. Migration theorists have given priority to universal principles of ethnic/racial equality above gender equality, whereas gender equality takes often becomes a non-negotiable principle in feminist theory (119).

Anne Phillips has in her most recent book (2008) introduced an alternative diversity and gender model premised on a new notion of 'multiculturalism without culture'. She finds that egalitarians should be committed to both sex equality and at least some version of multiculturalism. According to Phillips the conflicts between sex equality and the values of a particular cultural tradition are not deep value conflicts but rather political conflicts between two equality claims – one is religious, ethno-national, cultural equality and the other is gender equality. Her main point is that conflicts between competing equality principles are contextual and need to be negotiated between social and political actors. She proposes a new multicultural model without culture and without groups, because she finds that rights are primarily attached to individuals. She argues that the main issue is discrimination and that *'the multicultural question is– whether existing legislation is biased towards the cultural identities or religious beliefs of particular groups? Laws and rules that enjoy majority support may reflect a cultural bias'* (2008;166)

The stated aims of the book is to restore a form of multiculturalism that can create greater social equality across groups but at the same time places the individual at the core, upholding central feminist goals and visions. In this approach 'groups' and 'culture' are not fixed entities but understood in a fluid way and the rights that matter in developing a case for multiculturalism are those of individuals not groups. The book discusses three different political

responses to the subjugation of women within cultural and/or religiously defined groups: a) Regulation, b) exit and c) dialogue. Dialogue is seen as a preferable approach to multicultural dilemmas – where people from different cultural backgrounds explain to each other why they favour particular law and practices, and develop the skills of negotiation and compromise that enable us to live together.

The ‘contextual turn’ in political theory, which makes it more sensitive to the contextual nature of rights and value conflicts is promising and I find the basic arguments in Phillips understanding of multiculturalism and feminism as competing equality claims productive. Conflicts between gender equality and recognition of cultural diversity, for example around marriage and divorce rules, can be studied as political contextual dilemmas and resolved through negotiations. The debate about gender and cultural diversity has raised important questions about the relation between individual and collective rights, about the hierarchy of principles and strategies to solve conflicts between them. One of the problematic questions to Phillips approach to multiculturalism is whether a contextualised political and gender theory can rely solely on individual rights and discard collective rights and the notion of groups?

Rainer Bauböck (2008) has recently introduced a new diversity model within a framework of rights, which focuses on public policies rather than on political ideas. The model is framed as a liberal defence of multiculturalism and cultural diversity, and it is based on a distinction between multiculturalism as a set of political ideas on the one hand and public policies that address social facts on the other hand. It is a constructivist approach, which emphasises that the facts of cultural diversity are themselves socially constructed rather than naturally given. Bauböck differentiates between psychological, sociological and normative culturalism and discusses how normative political theory has responded to the challenge from diversity by navigating between culturalism and statism. It is a contextualised liberal defence of multiculturalism, which is not primarily normative but a political justification for institutional arrangements (15). One of his main points is that cultural diversity should not be regarded as normative ideals or political goals but should be seen *‘as a background condition to which a differentiated system of citizenship rights responds and ... as the outcome of collective actions and societal processes that are enabled by a framework of such rights’* (19-28). The model of rights in the context of diversity is premised on three basic values 1) cultural liberties, 2) equality and 3) self-government right. He emphasises that these rights can be stated in both individualist and universal terms and that group-differentiated and collective rights can be justified by both moral individualism and universalism.

Bauböck has proposed a multiculturalist and egalitarian model within the framework of rights, which is both institutional, contextual and transnational in the sense that it argues for group-differentiated rights for groups whose members are simultaneous stake-holders in several political communities (Bauböck 2008;29). The model focuses primarily on accommodation of cultural diversity of minorities but claims for equality, which include exemptions, protection against discrimination, public support of recognition and special political representation, can in principle be extended to other kinds of inequalities. It is important to unpack diversity and study different kinds of inequalities according not only to culture and religion but also to nationality. Bauböck's model does not address inequalities according to gender and sexuality and his approach needs to be developed further in order to study how ethno-national and ethno-cultural inequalities intersect with inequalities according to gender and sexuality.

*To sum up:* I conclude first that differences often have different structural roots and political dynamics and those structural inequalities cannot be addressed solely within an individual rights frame. To the extent that inequalities have different logics different inequalities need to be addressed by different theoretical frames. Political theory has recently addressed diversity but has not adequately addressed structural and political gender inequalities. The proposal to solve the dilemmas between cultural diversity and gender equality by political negotiations and legal rights frames is a positive step but we also need to address inequalities on a structural level. It is therefore important to develop political and gender theories able to link studies of gender inequality with studies of inequalities according to ethno-cultural, national and religious diversities. The 'contextual turn' in political theory is promising, but historical and comparative cross- national research strategies for studying intersections between gender, ethnicity and religion must also address the challenges from trans-nationalism (Lister et al. 2007; Siim & Squires 2007).

## **Part II: Diversity and the European Public Sphere (EPS)**

In this part I look at theories, models and strategies to include gender and diversity in the European public sphere (EPS). One approach to overcome the European citizenship paradox is the deliberative model, which focuses on procedures of deliberative negotiations that include women and minority groups (Liebert 2007). Another is the 'diversity' model, which focuses on the contradictory aspects of globalization and Europeanization for gender equality (Squires 2007). The intersectionality approach can be seen as a variation of the diversity approach focusing on how gender intersects with other inequalities for example according to culture, religion, nationality and

sexuality (Verloo 2006, 2007 and Yuval-Davis 2006, 2007). The final section discusses some of the tensions in the different research strategies aimed at including both gender and diversity in European research projects.

### *Gendering the European Public Sphere*

The development of trans-national institutions through the EU, including the recent EU enlargement, has increased migration and has provided new social and political conditions for giving voice and influence to diverse and marginalised social groups. The development towards transnational institutions has made it easier for some ethno-national groups and more difficult for other groups to be included in society. Gender research has begun to explore this contradictory logic of Europeanization. For example that gender equality can on the one hand be threatened by diversity but at same time globalization and Europeanization also represent new possibilities for gender equality, which has become part of a new transnational diversity agenda (Squires 2007).

The growing emphasis on diversity and gender equality in the European Public Sphere (EPS) raises two set of questions: One is how to include a gender perspective into existing diversity models in the EPS? Another is how gender theory and research can contribute to develop the diversity models further, for example through the intersectionality approach?

The different models of the EPS represent different approaches to Europeanisation and transnationalism in terms of the key question: Who should participate and on what occasions? What should be the form and content of their contributions to the public discourse? How should the actors communicate with one another? What are the desired outcomes of the process? On the analytical level it is possible to identify two different approaches to gender the EPS that often overlaps: One approach is through gender models emphasising women's social rights by restructuring *public institutions and public policies* 'from above', for example by mainstreaming of public policies. It is premised on rethinking the family and the public-private divide with the aim to transform gender issues and interests to public concerns (Verloee 2007). The other is through gender models emphasising the democratic process and voice by *empowering women as social and political actors* and stimulating their political presence and influence in the public sphere 'from below'.

Ulrike Liebert (2007) has presented a comprehensive framework for gendering the European public sphere by restructuring democratic citizenship, and her model is an attempt to combine a social rights approach to public policies with a deliberative democratic approach. This

approach sheds light on the basic “European citizenship paradox” – to create equality between different European nationalities. This paradox emerges as a result of the tensions between EU citizenships norms – for example of equality and non-discrimination – and member-state practices in the context of regional disparities and social inequalities that market integration arguably deepens.

In a recent article Liebert (2007) notes that most of the literature on European citizenship has remained “ungendered” and is un-sensitive to issues of equality and gender relations. Here she analyses the modern ‘gender paradox’ defined as the necessity to reconcile universal ideals of equality and the postmodern emphasis on diversity. The objective is to develop European citizenship to accommodate the gender paradox in the context of (multi)cultural diversity (14). She proposes to use a gender differentiated equality of rights as a strategy for assessing four transnational European citizenship conceptions: 1) the liberal market citizenship, 2) the republican citizenship, 3) the cosmopolitan citizenship and 4) the deliberative citizenship (15-19).

Assessing the alternative citizenship models through the lens of gender equality Liebert argues that a purely liberal, republican or cosmopolitan citizenship model all appear to fail to resolve this paradox. The problem with the liberal market model is the emphasis on economic efficiency. and the ignorance of social, and gender based differences and migrating individuals with care responsibilities would contribute to erode social welfare rights. The problem with the republican model is the emphasis on creating a supranational European identity and a homogeneous community, which eclipses gender differences and cultural diversity. According to Liebert it is a problem with cosmopolitanism that it was not built ‘from below’ by citizens and not on a European consensus supporting the EU. The conclusion is that only a deliberative European citizenship that include procedures based upon recognition of different collective identities would be able to overcome the European citizenship and gender paradox, because it focuses on ‘governance not on government’ (Dryzik 2000). *“From a feminist perspective, a deliberative European citizenship conception promises women and feminist movements an equal voice and, thus to do better than others in reconciling claims for individual equality and the needs for the protection of gender based difference”* (Liebert 2007; 19).

Liebert argues that the deliberative model transcends the other models in three respects: 1) It counteracts the exclusionary bias of the liberal market by expanding civil society deliberation and participation in EU governance, 2) it avoids the harmonizing and homogenizing assumptions of the republican model, 3) it leaves it to deliberating social constituencies to negotiate

conflicting norms depending on places and spaces. Liebert's approach to European integration and EU citizenship is a relatively optimistic emphasising that the EU has provided a silent revolution of gender and minority rights. Her deliberative model aims to stimulate citizens' engagement in transnational debates about European issues through procedures of deliberation, stakeholder representation and participation for ongoing processes of negotiation (436). The main focus of this transnational citizenship model is on women's empowerment as social and political actors, and the model is premised on deliberative negotiations as a strategy as the best means to solve the conflicts between gender equality and cultural diversity minority groups. This resembles Young's deliberative model although it is premised upon the transnational EU institutions and on EU equality policies.

Judith Squires (2007) critical analysis of political strategies to institutionalize gender equality globally and in the EU resents a somewhat different approach to the EPS. Her recent book gives an overview of the global gender equality breakthrough by national governments, international organizations like the UN and by transnational structures like the EU. The main claim is the existence of a new global gender equality agenda, which is spread by three key strategies; *gender quotas, women's policy agencies and gender mainstreaming* which focus on presence, voice or process respectively. The book gives an excellent illustration of the contradictory logic of globalization and Europeanization: On the one hand, feminist concerns have contributed to the transformation of institutional norms and practices, but at the same time basic concerns about social rights and democratic justice have been supplanted by arguments and ideologies of "women's social utility" (3). Squires is worried that the earlier feminist emphasis on 'voice' is gradually disappearing and instead 'presence' and 'process' come to function as indicators of parity participation.

One important finding is that the political emphasis on gender inequality is gradually being extended to multiple inequalities. Squires argues convincingly that there is a European 'turn to diversity', which includes a growing concern to devise institutions and laws to address multiple inequalities (Squires 2007; 160). This is illustrated by recent developments in the EU, which is one of the main institutions for mainstreaming multiple inequalities. Article 13 recognizes six strands as requiring measures to combat discrimination: *sex, racial and ethnic origin, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation*. These equality strands forms the basis for *a new political diversity agenda*. The implications are first that nation states should address not only multiple forms of discrimination

but also consider the interaction between strands, and secondly that policies to combat multiple intersecting forms of discrimination are emerging as central political priority across EU member states.

This is a contradictory political development. Many feminists are sceptical about the shift from an exclusive focus on gender to a growing concern for diversity and multiple inequalities, and they are critical towards the new emphasis on cultural and religious demands that often contrasts with gender equality. Squires agrees that the diversity agenda needs to be developed further because it has largely taken the form of an antidiscrimination approach and has not yet addressed issues of outcome. According to Squires one of the new challenges is to develop an integrated approach to diversity mainstreaming (163-178), for example in the EU. Within the EU mainstreaming is now being used to address race inequality and disability, and it is a problem that there is not yet developed mainstreaming processes that address multiple inequalities.

Squires proposes a *participative-democratic model of gender mainstreaming* as an alternative to mainstreaming processes based upon identity-politics: *“for without inclusive deliberation as to what gender equality entails – and therefore what form gender equality policies should take – the pursuit of gender equality can itself become an exclusionary process, undertaken for considerations of utility rather than justice.”* (Squires 2007; 177-78). This deliberative approach to gender mainstreaming is productive, because it does not view the diversity agenda as a threat to gender equality, but recognizes that it can be interpreted as a strategy to empower women who have not been part of the dominant gender equality discourses, for example immigrant, minority women. One of the positive implications of the European ‘turn to diversity’ is to contribute to make the notion of intersectionality a central theoretical frame for feminist theory and research (Squires 2007; 161-63; Verloo 2006).

### *Intersectionality approaches, models and research strategies*

Intersectionality is a multifaceted concept with many meanings, which has recently been used to analyse differences within the EU diversity and mainstreaming agenda (Squires 2007; Verloo 2006). One of the objectives of this theoretical approach is to conceptualize multiple forms of diversity, including differences among women, focusing on intersections between gender and other kinds of inequalities (see EJWS, 2006). The concept was originally developed by black feminist scholars in the US and the UK as a way to articulate intersections between gender and race/ethnicity, between capitalism, racism and patriarchy, between multiple identities and group

politics (Crenshaw 1989). Kimberle Crenshaw's original intersectional approach focused mainly on structural and political intersectionality, but during the 1990s intersectionality was adopted by poststructuralist approaches focusing on discourses and identities.

Today the intersectional approach is widely accepted in feminist thinking, and there is a plurality of intersectional approaches across disciplines and countries. Intersectionality has become an influential concept and even scholars that do not explicitly use the concept often use it in practice. According to Ann Phoenix an intersectional approach is important to understand social relationships, because it establishes "that social existence is never singular, but rather that everybody belongs simultaneously to multiple categories that are historically and geographically located over time" (Phoenix 2006; 28). It is a travelling concept, which has acquired various meanings in different contexts, and it is associated with different methodologies and epistemologies. It has therefore inspired new theoretical and methodological debates.

One debate is the tensions between the 'systemic' and 'constructivist' approaches that tend to address either structural inequalities or individual discourses and identities and the means to overcome this dualism (Prins 2006). Intersectionality recognizes the importance of multiple oppressions and multiple overlapping identities and there is important to distinguish between intersectional analysis on the systemic level, where the focus is on intersections of social structures, and analyses on the micro-level, where the focus is on intersections of individual identities. It is a challenge to develop research strategies able to address the dynamic interrelations between structures, institutions and subjectivity, between the local, national and the global arenas. .

Another debate is about the tensions between the additive and constitutive approach. Whether intersectionality should be interpreted as additive or a constitutive process framed either by identity or transversal politics (Squires 2007; 161-63). A focus on identity politics generates an additive model of intersectionality in which the axis of discrimination and inequality tends to be analytically distinct, whereas a more dialogical approach to diversity advocates strategic alliances based upon transversal politics (Yuval-Davis, 2006; 2007). The analytical strength of the additive approach is the acknowledgment of the distinctive nature and different logics of each inequality strand but it is a static model that tends to freeze identities in empirical analysis. The strength of the transversal approach is the emphasis on the horizontal and vertical communication and the formation of new collective identities. It is a dynamic model aimed to create strategic alliances between social and political actors. There are tensions between the two approaches to intersectionality: On the one hand, it is useful to keep the different inequality strands analytically

distinct for structural and political analyses, but at the same time it seems productive to employ a transversal approach in contextual analyses of how structures, institutions and actors interact.

A third debate is about multiple inequalities, intersectionality and the European Union. The EU approach to equality represents a contested case, because it has moved from focusing on gender equality policies to addressing multiple inequalities (Squires 2007, Verloo 2006). Mieke Verloo has summed up the criticism of the EU move from a predominant focus on gender equality, towards policies that address multiple inequalities in three basic concerns: The assumed similarities of inequalities, the need for structural approaches and the political competition between inequalities (Verloo 2006; 214). The main criticism is that *'one size fits all' approach to multiple discrimination 'is based upon an incorrect assumption of sameness or equivalence of social categories connected to inequalities and of mechanisms and processes that constitute them'* (223). Verloo's alternative strategy to diversity mainstreaming or (in) equality mainstreaming to address differentiated inequalities is a promising starting point for developing more complex methods and tools. This strategy could be developed further by adopting a *participative-democratic model of gender mainstreaming* (Squires, 2007) that discusses not only what mainstreaming should be as a process but also who are or should be the actors in the process, and who has the power to define what mainstreaming is or should be.

One of the main challenges to the intersectionality approach is to address diversity at the transnational level. Nira Yuval-Davis' approach to gender and nationality, citizenship and 'politics of belonging' is one example, which has explicitly conceptualized intersectionality from the trans-national perspective (2006; 2007). She finds that human beings are members of multiple social and political communities and argues that social differences expresses different axis of power and should be analysed on different analytical levels, institutional- and organisational, structural and individual levels of identities and experiences.

*To sum up:* I find first that it is a productive research strategy to develop sensitive historical and cross-cultural frameworks further. Secondly, it is important to develop frames able to overcome existing dualisms in the dominant theoretical frames between culture and structure, between 'systemic' and 'constructivist' approaches, between local and global approaches. I further argue that cross national studies need to develop research strategies able to link historical sensitive empirical studies with transnational political, economic and cultural processes in order to avoid reproducing existing national boundaries. For example comprehensive research strategies that focus

both on peoples multiple belongings, structural positions and institutional conditions, linking local, national and transnational arenas.

*Research strategies to include gender concerns and women's voices in the EPS*

In this section I briefly discuss some of the tensions in attempts to include gender and diversity in the EPS in different research strategies. I have tentatively identified three approaches that focus on different analytical dimensions: The participatory and deliberative democratic frames that aim to empower women and marginalised social groups giving them voice by focusing on *social and political actors* within and outside political institutions. The post-structural frames that aim to gender research designs and include gender issues and interests by focusing on '*gender sensitivity*' through critical frame analysis of various documents (Verloo 2007). The structural-institutional frames that aim to include gender interests and concerns by focusing on *public policies* and on restructuring institutions for example through mainstreaming (Squires 2007).

From the perspective of the EPS these different strategies and designs raise the following questions: 1) who are the actors? What are the participation, voice and power of diverse groups? What individual and groups are included in the study, and who represents women, for example in political parties or social movements. 2) Gendering as a process. How are things gendered, what is masculinised and feminized. What kind of gender equality is being pursued in the different documents and on the different arena? 3) How gender is linked to other kinds of differences, for example the interaction of gender with inequalities according to ethno-national, ethno-cultural and religious differences?

The main emphasis in comparative European gender research projects has been on critical frame analysis and there are tensions between research strategies and designs focusing primarily on gendering as a process through discourse analysis and strategies and designs focusing primarily on the voices and claims of women and marginalised social and political groups through analysis of civil society associations and networks, or strategies and designs focusing primarily on political elites and experts, although in practice the strategies often overlap. These tensions can be overcome by developing more comprehensive research strategies that combine critical frame analysis of discourses, institutions and policies with claim analysis of different groups of citizens. The challenge is to include diverse groups from the political elites, policy experts as well as civil society actors both within and outside political institutions.

I currently participate in two large European research project which have adopted different research strategies, the VEIL-project<sup>1</sup> and the Eurospere-project<sup>2</sup>: In the VEIL project the methodological approach has been on frame analysis of debates of Muslim women's headscarves on eight different sites, whereas the Eurosphere-project studying diversity and the European public sphere focuses on social and political actors on four sites, political parties, social movements, think tanks and the media.

The VEIL- project can illuminate some of the challenges that European research strategies face in studying the interconnections between gender, religion and ethnicity/race analysed through comparative cross-cultural, multi-local and transnational analyses. The project analyses debates and regulations of Muslim headscarves in Europe and illustrates that there is often a complicated dynamic between debates at the one hand and different kinds of regulations at the other hand. This dynamic between discourses, policies and regulations varies in different migration, citizenship and gender regimes. The project also illustrates the complex structural and political interactions between gender and cultural and religious diversity in different national contexts. Finally it points towards increasing tensions between the transnational European level and national regulations and debate. The comparative approach combines national frame analysis illuminating the main frames on different sites with cross-national, institutional analysis. This approach has contributed to illuminate the various logics of welfare, equality and immigration policies through nation state studies. The comparative approach is further linked to the transnational level through transversal studies of the role of EU institutions, discourses and policies (Berghahn 2008).

From a methodological perspective the strength of the VEIL-project is the frame analysis of documents, which is linked to sensitive historical and institutional analysis of migration, gender regimes. The limitation is that it does not address the interactions between debates and regulations and different social and political actors. This is outside the scope of the frame analysis approach. Results from the Veil-project illustrates that all European countries have witnessed increased immigration and have adopted diverse strategies to accommodate religious and cultural diversity by negotiating concerns for gender equality with principles of diversity. It also illustrates

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<sup>1</sup> The VEIL-project "Values, Equality and Differences in liberal democracies. Debates about Muslim women's headscarf in Europe" is a 6. Framework project that analyse debates about and regulations of Muslim women's headscarves in eight European countries (2006-2009). See the project homepage: <http://www.veil-project.eu/>

<sup>2</sup> The Eurosphere project "Diversity and the European Public Sphere. Towards a Citizens' Europe? Is a 6. Framework project that involves researchers 16 countries (2007-2012). I am responsible for the horizontal gender dimension in the project together with Ayse Gul Altinay, Sabanci University, Istanbul. See the project homepage: <http://eurosphere.uib.no/>

that in all eight countries migrant women and their organizations have generally been absent from these negotiations. Finally results indicate that debates in one country, for example France, inspire debates in other European countries and that arguments travel from one country to the other.

The Norwegian case, which is not an official part of the EU project, represents an exceptional case, because here migrant women's organizations, the MIRA-centre, did have a voice in the debate. This case thus points towards new strategies for negotiating principles of gender equality with accommodation of religious minorities (Siim and Skjeie 2008). This could contribute to develop democratic integration policies based upon recognition of cultural diversity, which aims to include all groups in negotiations about two set of principles: gender equality and religious and ethnic equality or non-discrimination. From a participatory democratic perspective this is a promising strategy, because it is premised on a multidimensional approach to equality that interprets relations between gender, ethnicity/race, religion and nationality as multiple intersecting forms of discrimination, not as contradictory and competing equality claims. As already noted the new EU diversity agenda requires measures to combat discrimination according to *sex, racial and ethnic origin, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation*. EU member states must in the future find strategies to address multiple forms of discrimination and also consider the interaction between strands and policies to combat multiple intersecting forms of discrimination.

*To sum up:* I have argued that the selected research strategies for studying gender and diversity in the EPS should be sensitive to the underlying theoretical approaches, the normative premises as well as to the problems, issues and arenas to be studied. There is often a problematic gap between theoretical frames about the European Public Sphere at the one hand and empirical studies about the EPS at the other hand. One of the key challenges is to overcome this gap between theory and research and develop more comprehensive research strategies and designs able to connect micro, meso and macro levels. For example through an 'actor-institution-structure' model that includes discourse analysis, institutional frames and claims from diverse social and political actors. Or through models that connect 'frames and claims' linking studies of discourses and institutions on the one hand with studies of people's everyday life as social and political actors on the other hand. Ruth Lister (2003; 3) refers to 'lived citizenship', which defines the meanings that citizenship actually has in peoples lives and the ways in which people's social and cultural backgrounds and material circumstances affect their lives as citizens (quoted from Hall and Williamson, 1999; 2).

### **Conclusion: The theoretical, normative and political challenge from transnationalism**

Globalisation and Europeanisation has put the relation between the global, national and local on the research agenda and has challenged the dominant theories connected to the nation state. In a post-Westphalian world and in studies of the European Public Sphere it seems necessary to overcome what Ulrich Beck (2002) has called 'methodological nationalism' that refers to 'the explicit and implicit assumption that the nation-state being the power-container of social processes and the national the key order for studying major social, economic and political processes'. Beck proposes that researchers should organize a 'historically sensitive empiricism' to study the ambivalent consequences of globalization in cross-cultural and multi-local research networks. This is a productive research strategy, although it is often difficult to follow this strategy in practical research. One of the main problems is that existing theories, normative models and research strategies and designs are often connected to the nation state, including theories of democracy, migration and gender regimes.

There is a 'turn to diversity' and one of the main challenges is to develop theories, policies and strategies capable of bridging analysis and claims for gender equality with diversity and intersectionality approaches. There is also a 'contextual turn' in political theory and from a comparative perspective universal discourse about gender equality, women's and human rights should be interpreted in the light of cultural diversity and with sensitivity to particular contexts, including the diversity of spaces, places and social groups. There is also a 'transnational turn' and from a normative democratic perspective research should combine structural analysis and political strategies that involve democratic negotiations and dialogues at the national and transnational levels.

According to the American philosopher Nancy Fraser claims for recognition based upon respect and valuation of group difference, and claims for redistribution based on a fairer and a more equal division of resources are both principles that belong to different frames of justice that are analytically distinct. The growing emphasis on claims for recognition and recognition struggles has been interpreted as a paradigmatic shift away from claims for redistribution. In practice there is often a dynamic interplay between the different dimensions and research has illuminated the many ways struggles for recognition and redistribution are often intertwined. Fraser's social justice frame is a universal frame that links cultural recognition with economic redistribution, including the principle of equal representation as a third political dimension of justice and she has only recently addressed the changes from trans-nationalism.

From the perspective of the EPS it is a major challenge to address the transnational issues. The local-global dilemma has created internal globalization and migration represents new social and political conditions for citizenship research in terms of rights, participation and belongings. Comparative research therefore needs to analyse how different citizenship and gender regimes intersects with multiculturalism and the recognition of cultural difference. No countries have successfully linked gender equality, recognition of cultural and religious differences and democratic participation of migrant minorities. The Nordic countries used to be regarded as models for gender equality, but none of them live up to Helga Maria Hernes' vision of 'women-friendly societies' "where injustice on the basis of gender would be largely eliminated without an increase in other forms of inequality, such as among groups of women".

The theoretical approaches presented in this paper can be divided in two: One group has proposed general models of the public sphere aimed to overcome the tensions in gender justice between equality and diversity and include citizens in negotiations about social justice, The other groups has introduced particular models aimed at rethinking multilevel, transnational approaches in relation to the EPS. Ulrike Liebert's citizenship model addresses both these issues but fails to rethink the deliberative democratic model of citizenship from the transnational EU perspective. Nancy Fraser recent article about the new challenges to the public sphere in a post-Westphalian world addresses the new transnational conditions without developing the implications for the EPS further.

The final question is what a democratic and gendered vision of transnational and multilayered citizenship model of the EPS would look like. Feminist scholars have proposed different normative visions of transnational citizenship focusing both on citizens' transnational social and political praxis and on restructuring transnational public policies: Nira Yuval Davis (2006) has suggested that the participatory politics of citizenship and trans-versal politics based upon dialogues between different groups of women about political values are key elements in developing a multilayered citizenship. Wendy Sarvasy and Patricia Longo (2006) have emphasized that incorporation of migrant domestic workers requires a multilayered notion of citizenship that reaches from the household to the global and includes paid care giving as citizenship. These approaches both point to a multilayered framework of citizenship, which is democratic, feminist and able to include the trans-national level in the politics. One of the future challenges is to develop this concept further in theory as well as in practice.

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