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Identity and Diversity: Unity in Diversity as a European Vision

In the course of globalization and internationalization, people of different cultures are characteristic for modern European societies. Only meeting with the cultural “other” raises awareness for the own cultural identity, for cultural similarities and differences. Accepting other cultures presumes openness for cultural dialogue on the one hand. On the other hand it implies limits of tolerance towards values and norms of foreign cultures that can be in extreme contradiction with existing values and norms of the receiving country. Due to the multicultural composition of European cities, with migrants now living there in the third and even fourth generation, the very concept of “other” has to be questioned.

Where European cultural dialogue is constrained it is necessary to question the legal framework of living together. The receiving country can make specific integration offers, such as language courses. Cultural dialogue is only possible if the host society is open regarding other cultures and if migrants are willing to accept the major underlying democratic conditions in the receiving country. Integration in following generations is dependent on many factors, particularly on inclusive practices, levels of education and attitudes of the first generation towards their new home.

Regarding the development of European societies this seminar focuses on:

- Theories of identity and diversity
- Concepts of integration in European societies
- Cultural pluralism and multiculturalism in Europe

The seminar aims to challenge the sociopolitical discourse regarding identity and diversity in Europe.

Literature:

- Höllinger, Franz / Hadler, Markus (Hg.) (2012): Crossing Borders, Shifting Boundaries. National and Transnational Identities in Europe and Beyond. Campus
- Barrett, Martyn (2013): Interculturalism and Multiculturalism: Similarities and Differences. Council of Europe Publishing
- Kusenbach, Margarethe / Paulsen, Krista E. (eds.) (2013): Home. International Perspectives on Culture, Identity and Belonging. PL Academic Research
- Schoeffthaler, Traugott (2007): Adventures in Diversity. New Avenues for Dialogue between Cultures. German Commission for UNESCO

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