

**From:**

BARBARA THÉRIAULT

## **The Cop and the Sociologist**

Investigating Diversity in German Police Forces

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Drawing on the sociology of Max Weber, Barbara Thériault investigates today's relations toward difference within German police forces. Accompanying and interviewing police officers whose job it is to contribute to the acknowledgement of difference, the sociologist outlines three ideal types of actors – an empathetic, a principled, and an opportunist one – and the motives underlying their actions. A fourth type, the specialist, is conspicuously absent. Why is that so? Solving this enigma helps depicting the relations to difference within police forces: it points to a specific »spirit« of diversity and a singular way to apprehend the individual in Germany.

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## Preface

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This study is about diversity in the German police forces. Researching and teaching in the context of German studies and classical sociology, police forces were not an obvious object of inquiry at first; yet, they proved to be an exciting and challenging one. For sociology and its practitioners, police forces present two aspects, the kind of investigative business we are in and the often tense value relation we entertain toward it. In a form of a dialogue with Max Weber, who in this way became an actor in the investigation, the research underlying this book was accompanied by an interrogation of the object and method of sociological investigation, its specificity and its limits and, in turn, the limits of the endeavor undertaken here and of sociological writings as a genre.

Working on the study, I spoke with police officers and my social science colleagues, reacting to the interest shown by some and the irritation expressed by others. My colleagues in Montreal noticed and sometimes raised their eyebrows at the “conservative” character of the object of my research. In a previous project, I focused my attention on the churches. The police officers at the center of this study are not unlike the “conservative revolutionaries” within Germany’s churches after political change in the 1990s. With the passage of time, it occurred to me that I was always fascinated by a particular type of actor: people who could be referred to as progressive within “semi-totalizing” organizations. As such, much of the people I write about in this book could be described, in the words used by Wolfgang Engler when discussing intellectuals in the former GDR, as “heretic reformers” (1995: 148), that is people both loyal to and critical of the organization they belong to. Beyond the empirical question—How can the relationship toward cultural and ethnic difference in today’s Germany be characterized and explained within an organization characterized by

strong socialization and homogenizing principles?—, this type of actor points to the existential side of the same question: How is an individual to live in such an organization? Not surprisingly, the attitudes of the people I met while working on these projects were often marked by ambivalence: they sometimes promoted change and at other times resisted the changes they had themselves sometimes helped to bring about.

The first project was carried out at the Max Weber Center for Advanced Social and Cultural Studies at the University of Erfurt; the second one originated in the Weber group at the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies and at the Department of Sociology of the University of Montreal as well as at the Section in Comparative Social and Cultural Anthropology at the European Viadrina University in Frankfurt (Oder). The writings of Max Weber constituted a starting point to the present project: while the book does not claim to offer a thoroughly new reading of his sociology, it brings it to fruition for the purpose of an empirical study, appropriating what is more a method and a “spirit” than a general theory. This meant thinking, working, and writing with and through ideal types, and sometimes subverting them. If references to Weber might appear to some as old-fashioned, they stand in close vicinity to what have recently been referred to in France as the sociologies of the individual (Martuccelli and de Singly 2009; Martuccelli 2010).

Working within such a frame brings specific theories and methods, but also an intellectual and existential sensibility for the individual, one also shared by novelists. Along the maturation process of this study, I have benefited from reading novelists such as Milan Kundera and Thomas Mann. They allowed me to better understand Weber’s sociology and what they share: the study of motives and their conflicts, the question of sincerity as well as the chasm between intention and consequences and the often paradoxical effect of action.

As the photo below alludes to, both the construction of the types and the analysis move from the real individuals to the sociological types and back. Focusing on these two dimensions involved hanging on to description and theorization. The results are four portraits that are meant to represent and account for as many possible answers to the empirical question I raise on the relations toward cultural and ethnic difference in today’s Germany. Throughout the chapters, the portraits refer to one another, completing and throwing light on each other. Toward the end, I integrate and interpret them

by looking back on the police forces as organizations and pointing to a particular “spirit of diversity.”

While writing the book, I gave up the idea of inserting a conventional review of the literature and a heavy discussion of theories at the beginning of the book. Apart from chapter one on Weberian sociology, which may appear too light for some and too bulky for others, both reviews as well as discussions on theories, methods, and themes are built into the chapters; often, they feed on concrete situations, characters, and problems encountered during the course of the research. This way of writing, which departed from sociology as I had practiced it so far, contributed, I hope, to a smooth approach to sociological language; it also proved to be somewhat of an existential necessity.

I would like to express my gratitude to the men and women behind Inspectors Bobkowski, Piontek, Schwarz, Winter, and Schmitt as well as to Ms. Berger and their colleagues for their time and generosity in sharing their experiences with me. My colleagues at the European Viadrina University in Frankfurt (Oder) who, while I spent a year on a Humboldt fellowship in 2006-2007 and beyond, were a great source of inspiration in preparing and writing this study. I especially want to thank Werner Schiffauer, Frank Peter, Alexandra Schwell, and Schirin Amir-Moazami for their insights. The Weber group—and its offshoots—at the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies at the University of Montreal, which aimed at revisiting classical writers of sociology for empirical purposes was a stimulating place to be. My colleagues at the Department of Sociology of the same institution: Valérie Amiraux, Sirma Bilge, Danielle Juteau and the late Gilles Houle as well as Ferdinand Sutterlüty who spent some time among us in 2011 are thanked. I am grateful to Thomas Beschorner for making me talk about one particular group for whom diversity is both a profession and a vocation, those I refer to as the specialists; this was an important step toward better distinguishing the ideal types I was constructing. My thanks also go to Anna Georgiev and Marcel Thériault for their more than technical support. I feel lucky to have met Johannes Weiß, for he was a great source of inspiration, first as an author and then as a friend. I am perhaps most indebted to my first readers, Rosalie Dion, Thomas Schmidt-Lux, and Kevin Hébert for commenting on the chapters at their various stages.

This book and some articles, which preceded it, were made possible thanks to grants by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the German Humboldt Foundation. I would like to thank *German Politics and Society* for permission to reproduce material from which they hold copyright: “Inquiring into Diversity. The Case of Berlin Police Inspector Bobkowski” (2009, 27[4]: 72-91) presented some of the material from chapter three (“Inspector Bobkowski, or Liberalism [The Principled Type]”). The preliminary ideas underlying chapter one (“Apprehending the Individual”) were published in *Sociologie et sociétés* in 2009 under the title “Max Weber, le sociologue, et le policier: appréhender l’individu” (42[1]: 55-70).

Montreal, 6 March 2013

*Figure 1: The Individual and the Ideal Types*



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## Diversity. A Word Without Qualities

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In one of his books sociologist Jean-Claude Kaufmann (2008 [1996]: 35-37) evokes the vagaries of a research project. Reflecting on his own experience as a researcher, he notes that a particular questioning is at times at the origin of a project while at others, it is a field of research that imposes itself, with the research question only emerging later. The research underlying this book began with the interrogation: How can the relation to (cultural and ethnic) difference in today's Germany be characterized and explained? For in this respect, Germany is not any country: in comparison to its Western European neighbors, it has often been described as hostile to difference. In their study of schools in four different national settings in the mid 1990s, Schiffauer and his colleagues (2004 [2002]) show that each case embodies a distinct variant of how ethnic and cultural difference is framed: Britain and the Netherlands are self-declared multicultural nation-states while France is the promoter of individual equality; Germany, however, lacks such positive assignments. The German situation as depicted, though, is marked neither by the absence of difference nor by the lack of people who contribute to its acknowledgement and who are sometimes dedicated to its promotion. This aspect of the German situation was of particular concern to me and called for more development; however, I had, at first, no particular fieldwork in mind.

Time passed. One day I was pondering over the treatment of difference in Germany while riding Montreal's subway, and I could not help noticing a poster. Entitled "The police are after you. University graduates! Yes you, Jamel, Maria, Kim, Maimouna. Your skills are wanted by the SPVM [Montreal's Police Department]." The poster invited members of visible minorities holding university degrees to join the police. Could police forces make up a privileged object of inquiry for the relation toward difference?

After all, police forces have, on the one hand, time and time again been condemned for their brutality toward minorities (Amnesty International 2004). On the other hand, they have also attempted to improve their relations with these communities and establish ethnically-based recruitment policies (Brodeur 2003; Holdaway 1991). Just like the school, which was the object of previous investigations, the police forces are a state institution. This seemed important as the recent debates touching upon issues of difference in Germany had emerged *within* state institutions (Tietze 2001: 182-183). Unlike the headscarf affair in France and other European countries, teachers—not pupils—have been at the center stage of debates in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

I set out to explore the police situation in Germany. To my surprise, I discovered that the Conference of Ministers and Senators of the Interior had granted permission in 1993 for recruiting candidates of “foreign origin” (*ausländischer Herkunft*) to join police departments. The ministers had used a derogatory clause in the civil service law (*Beamtengesetz*) to grant foreigners living in Germany access to the police profession; “when the hiring of a civil servant,” the exception rule stipulates, “constitutes an urgent professional necessity.” This recommendation is founded in a special clause for academic staff, which detracts from the principle according to which only Germans, as defined in Article 116 of the Basic Law, can be made civil servants. While confirming the rule of homogeneity and the principle of equality, the conceded exception represented an important change in a long tradition linking citizenship with the civil service (*Beamtentum*): German citizenship was no longer considered a prerequisite to become a police officer nor a synonym to civil service.

Sounding out this permission first took me to Hamburg to meet Inspector Piontek, a police inspector who was in charge of recruitment of candidates of foreign origins (*ausländische Herkunft*). As it turned out, what had started as the granting of a permission, an exception rule to the civil service law to hire nonnationals, had cautiously turned into the promotion of candidates from post-migration backgrounds. At the beginning, applicants of “foreign origin” (*ausländischer Herkunft*) were sought; later, recruitment

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1 The “Ludin case,” a German teacher of Afghan descent who fought the federal state of Baden-Württemberg to wear a hijab in class, is a telling and much debated example (Mahlmann 2003).

efforts focused on candidates from post-migration backgrounds (*mit Migrationshintergrund*). The latter category is much more encompassing as it also includes repatriates and children of immigrants who were born in Germany and who may or may not be—German citizens. After my first visits in Hamburg, my curiosity was definitely aroused and I took to exploring other cases where similar initiatives had been called into being. Apart from similar recruitment initiatives, teaching, in-house training, counseling, and the commemoration of the past provided examples to examine the relation toward difference. Because police matters in Germany fall under the legislative power of the individual federal states, this took me to different police departments across the country. Surprise, frustration, enigmas, and discoveries ensued, until I realized that I had found my fieldwork.

## 1. FROM OFFICERS FROM POST-MIGRATION BACKGROUNDS TO CARRIERS OF DIVERSITY

I soon learned that one aspect, the initiatives to recruit officers from post-migration backgrounds, had raised much interest since their inception. Not only police research and newspaper articles, but also crime movies (Ertener 2007), novels (Arjouni 1987; Zaimoglu 2003) and stand-up comedy routines have dealt with them.<sup>2</sup> The interest they raised and the attention they received may be related to a certain feeling of incongruity they provoked at the time: considering the reputation and history of the police forces toward minorities, these new recruitment efforts and the sight of uniformed officers from visible minorities created a dissonance. The titles of magazine articles reporting on the initiatives to recruit candidates from post-migration backgrounds or publicizing them—just as the aforementioned publicity of the Montreal Police Department—often played on the oddness that may emerge from the juxtaposition of words like citizenship, civil service, uniform, crime and the images often associated with them (see the poster of a public awareness campaign below). Typically, the articles and advertise-

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2 I refer to Murat Topal, a stand-up comedian and former Berlin police officer of mixed Turkish and German origins. See his CDs *Polizeiruf Topal*, *Getürkte Fälle*. *Ein Cop packt aus* and *Tschüssi Copski! Ein Cop packt ein* as well as his books (2008, 2010).

ments surrounding those initiatives relied on various wordplays derived from police language, to stress how an outsider has become an insider: “the police are looking for you,” “taken down to the station,” “Under physical surveillance,” “the police are hunting down at full speed young people from post-migration backgrounds” (*Die Polizei fahndet auf Hochtouren nach Nachwuchs mit Migrationshintergrund*).<sup>3</sup>

Attempting to subvert prevailing representations of the police forces: this poster of the *Nationaler Integrationsplan*, a federal campaign to promote dialogue and integration, could be seen all over Germany in the Fall of 2007.

Figure 2: “Security is not an issue of origin”



Poster reproduced with the permission of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

3 The phrases are taken from police advertisement campaigns in Montreal and in Lower-Saxony.

Commenting on journalism, sociologist Erving Goffman advises his students to draw on the example set by its practitioners. Journalists, the sociologist notes, turn to good account “exceptions to expected consistency among setting, appearance and manner.” These exceptions, he adds, “provide the piquancy and glamour of many careers and the salable appeal of many magazine articles” (Goffman 1969 [1959]: 22). Reviewing the several studies dealing with recruitment initiatives that have been published in recent years, it would seem that police researchers have taken up Goffman’s advice. Usually focusing on the experience of police officers from post-migration backgrounds (Franzke 1999; Blom 2005; Hunold 2008; Gauthier 2011), those studies accentuate, in the words of Patricia Hill Collins (1999 [1991]), their status as “outsiders within.” They deal more specifically with the pressures the officers are submitted to—especially in regard to the lurking threat of double loyalty toward an ethnic group and the police forces—and, often, with what is seen as the token character of their recruitment. The researchers go on either to point out that the recruitments have not met, on the quantitative level, the goals set by police officials and politicians (Behr 2006: 124; Hunold *et al.* 2010) or to question, on a more practical level, whether the presence of officers from post-migration backgrounds actually brings a new quality to policing and police culture (Bornewasser 2009).<sup>4</sup>

The striking character of the initiatives to recruit officers from post-migration backgrounds and the “outsider within” status of the officers also caught my attention. However, the effect of exception and the playing on words lost their appeal to me before the fieldwork was completed and long before any results had been published. With the passage of time—

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4 Politicians in several states have talked about a 10 percent goal. A 20 percent goal was even set in Hamburg, see “Ausbildungs-Aktion: Multikulti im Staatsdienst,” *Hamburger Abendblatt*, 7 November 2006. Although there are no official statistics available for all federal states, about one percent of police officers are reported to be nonnationals. There are a higher percentage of police officers from post-migration backgrounds, although their overall numbers remain small. Hunold (2010: 138) counts less than two percent in 2009; however, police internal documents used for this study indicate that some 8 to 10 percent of police trainees recruited in 2009 in several federal states were from post-migration backgrounds.

unavoidable in the context of a long-term research project—the effect of evoked associations had gradually waned, threatening to turn into clichés.<sup>5</sup> The recruited officers from post-migration backgrounds also reacted, as we will see later in this book, to the attempts to portray them as outsiders within or as “strange species” (*Exoten*): they sometimes resisted being treated as different, criticizing the advertisement campaigns and the language use, and often turned them into derision.

Whereas the piquancy of seeing a member of a visible minority donning a uniform gradually faded away, some other aspects of the police forces emerged, which proved challenging and particularly worth looking into: the resistance to change within the forces, the confrontation with another investigating profession, that is sociology, and the rather tense value relation between police officers and sociologists to which the title of the book alludes to. Most importantly, it quickly appeared that the police officers from German backgrounds who have called the aforementioned recruitment initiatives—and other initiatives which I was to discover—into being, who have put them into practice and shaped them, turned out to be most instructive on the relation toward difference in the police; even more so than the officers from post-migration backgrounds who first struck attention. As the result of their work, these officers have contributed—wittingly or not—to the recognition of difference within police forces at the practical level; they have conferred it with a particular spirit. I refer to these people as “carriers of diversity.” The more I understood about them, the more details caught my eyes, which were calling for explanations—the religious character of some events they organized, their dilettantism, the recurrent allusions to the Weimar Republic not to mention the insistence on linguistic competencies. These officers are at the center of the present study.

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5 Something similar also happened with allusions to sociological language. Authors and commentators frequently draw upon Georg Simmel’s definition of the stranger. Articles, which originality tends to decrease as their number increases, are for example entitled “*Polizei und Fremde. Ergebnisse des Forschungsprojektes der Polizei-Führungsakademie*,” “*Die Polizei und das Fremde*,” “*Ein ‘Exot’ im Dienst des Gesetzes*.” I cannot but remember the three speakers who were invited to pronounce a welcome address to the participants at a police conference in 2007. All alluded to Simmel’s stranger, the situation becoming each time increasingly awkward.

## 1.1 Defining Diversity

Diversity is a “travelling concept” (Lehmkuhl and McFalls 2012: 4). Whereas the word has been characterized by different conceptions, it is *today* often charged with one particular meaning. At the time I was just starting this project, fellow sociologists in Germany insisted I should look into the management literature on diversity and regard it as something essential. Just pronouncing the word diversity (*Vielfalt*) when making a phone call to a police department, I was inevitably directed toward police management and people responsible for seminars on gender mainstreaming or personal policies. Later, the German colleague who had invited me to give a talk based on the material of this study in her class kept talking about my work on “diversity management” in the police. Politely I remarked that I wished not to limit myself to the management-inflected meaning of diversity and adopt a broader perspective, but it made no difference. The fact is that in its current usage in the literature and in German police forces, diversity is an imported concept—incidentally used in English or in new German as *Diversität*, but not in its literal translation as *Vielfalt*. It is generally associated with efforts on the management level to make greater use of personal competences, as “the ‘positive’ effects of cultural plurality and competence for private companies and public service delivery” (Faist 2009: 177). If I am well aware and concerned with this inflected meaning, I do not limit myself to it.<sup>6</sup> Diversity, as I understand it in this book, corresponds to *a relation to difference at a particular time*.

What is today referred to as diversity is rooted in different initiatives characterized by different and changing incentives. Let us take the example of special employment measures. Before becoming the object of scholarly and media attention, these measures were responses to tragic events. Indeed, tense relations between police officers and marginalized groups and, ultimately, police scandals have often triggered ethnically-based recruitment measures.<sup>7</sup> In Germany, both the 1993 exception rule of the Conference of

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6 When I use diversity in quotation marks in the following chapters I refer to this widely used meaning in the police forces and social sciences; when I put it in italics it indicates the actors’ use of the English word.

7 As a result of brutal incidents involving police officers in England, the USA, Canada and Ireland, ethnically-based recruiting policies and educational pro-

Ministers and Senators of the Interior and initiatives in Berlin in the 1980s were grounded in pragmatic police concerns, such as infiltrating criminal groups and milieus. However, in the midst of flashes of xenophobic violence at the beginning of the 1990s, following criticism from Amnesty International and police scandals (Behr 2006: 33-35), concern was also expressed toward racism in the police force; a report on racism in the police forces was commissioned and submitted in 1995 (Bornewasser *et al.* 1996; see also Bornewasser 2009: 16). After 2001, security issues came back to the fore while the intercultural opening of the civil service was officially announced both at the state and federal states levels. What is today designated under the label of diversity actually ranges—according to the stakes, the actors involved, and the contexts—from security issues, antiracism and, more recently, management and issues of organizational efficiency to the promotion of difference within the police forces and the incorporation of minorities into the workforce.<sup>8</sup> The timing is important: issues are framed in a particular context, which provide them with a vocabulary.

The question of differences at the core of the present book and its implications are obviously nothing new; however, they appear to us today as something “culturally significant.” Like issues related to social classes in the 1960s, ethnic and cultural differences have been placed high on the social science agenda and are bestowed with political urgency. This urgency should be understood as a direct consequence of the new status acquired by some differences in our eye—the eye of both the actors and the researchers (*qua* researchers and citizens)—as our connection and relation to the object undergoes significant modifications.

What then is this relation to difference within German police forces today? And how does it influence practices? To answer this question is the very aim of this study; as such, it cannot be defined from the start. For the time being, diversity within German police forces today must remain a word without qualities; the definition will take shape in the process of researching and will gain consistency as I tell the story. “It lies in the nature of the study,” Weber writes at the beginning of his *Protestant Ethic*, “that no conceptual definition can be given at the beginning” (2007 [1904/1905]:

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grams were called for (see notably the prominent and much talked Macpherson report on the London Metropolitan police [1999]).

8 For similar findings on the French army, see Bertossi (2013).

13). Diversity in Germany today is not unlike the spirit of capitalism in Weber's *Protestant Ethic*: it is a "historical individual," or "a complex of elements associated in historical reality which we unite into a conceptual whole from the standpoint of their cultural significance" (Weber 2007 [1904/1905]: 12). As in Weber's essay, the aim of the research underlying this book was not "to grasp historical reality in abstract general formulae, but in a concrete genetic sets of relation, which are inevitably of a specifically unique and individual character" (2007 [1904/1905]: 14). This specifically unique and individual character of diversity in the German police forces today or, in other words, its qualities will appear to the fullest toward the end of the study.

Inquiring into diversity within the police implies taking into account official discourses and what the actors have to say about them, but also observing those who (have to) deal with difference in their daily work. As such, the construction of the "field of diversity" in Germany will not always correspond to the actors' definitions; for it reveals itself through the gaze of the sociologist who has the time to mull over these questions and is attentive to everyday interactions. Faced with the various meanings conferred on diversity, this study attempts to make sense of what we have before our eyes and to describe and explain a phenomenon that has gained urgency today. To draw once again on Weber, this means being attentive to the actors who have to do with difference, the motives underlying their action, and their culturally embedded significance (Weber 1978a [1921]: 8) while working with ideal types.

Just as the construction of the field of diversity in Germany will not always correspond to the actors' definitions, it will not match to existing definitions in the academic literature. This has to do with the theoretical and contextual standpoints from which one can frame and conduct such a study.<sup>9</sup> The standpoint from which I investigate diversity in German police forces is admittedly not the only one from which it can be analyzed. What applies to the essay previously mentioned does so equally here: "Other standpoints would, for this [the spirit of capitalism] as for every historical phenomenon, yield other characteristics as essential ones" (Weber 2007

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9 In the academic literature on the police, diversity is generally linked to gender, migration background, and sexual orientation (van Ewijk 2012; Dudek 2009; Dudek and Raczynsky 2002).

[1904/1905]: 14). Weber adds: “The result is that it is by no means necessary to understand by the spirit of capitalism only what it will come to mean to *us* for the purpose of our analysis” (2007 [1904/1905]: 14). The passage responds to potential criticism as to the arbitrary character of ideal types (see Gerhardt 1986) and, before all, attests to the importance of the particular points of view from which the analysis is conducted. Studies related to the case at hand put the police forces in a different light. For example, in Jérémie Gauthier’s comparison between police forces in Paris and Berlin he carried out at the time I was researching this book, the German case appears accommodating to police officers from post-migration backgrounds (2012: 270, 2011: 467). This result echoes comments I received when presenting the current study in Poland, but would find little resonance within the German context alone or glancing at the Canadian case.

In the process of migrating from a political, medial, and internal police problem to a sociological one, the object of inquiry allowing the grasping of the relation toward difference gained contours. Yet I still had to construct the field and undertake the research. With the methods employed, and the interpretive approach underlying the study in mind, in the following section, I describe this process, what Glaser and Strauss refer to as theoretical sampling: “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (2008 [1967]: 45).

## **2. CONSTRUCTING THE FIELD**

### **2.1 Entering and Narrowing the Field: Material, Methods, and Approach**

How did I proceed concretely? I started with the most obvious. The first step was to become familiar with the literature documenting police initiatives launched in the 1990s (for an overview of the first initiatives, see Leiprecht 2002 and, for later ones, see Hunold *et al.* 2010), reading the newspaper and magazine articles that have been published in their wake and meeting with experts. Before going to Germany, I did preliminary

fieldwork in Montreal, one of Canada's metropolises. I conducted six interviews with people in charge of recruitment, equal opportunity programs, and community policing, went on night shift patrols with officers in one neighborhood known for the large presence of ethnic minorities, attended seminars aiming at teaching sensitivity toward cultural diversity to police officials and information sessions for candidates from visible minorities, and talked to fellow social scientists in the field of the police and ethnic minorities. Although brief, this experience was instrumental in preparing my research; it trained my eye to issues and concerns, which were to come up—or not—in the German fieldwork. This little expedition made me realize that the “bearers of difference” were not, in Germany, those who had for the most part contributed to the acknowledgement of difference within the forces (Lavoie 2006).

Once in Germany I started interviewing people whose official mandate—according to the literature available—had to do with the treatment of difference within the police forces in the 1990s.<sup>10</sup> This first led me to people in charge of initiatives to recruit and counsel police officers from post-migration backgrounds, an area which has attracted most scholarly attention (see Franzke 1999; Blom 2005; Behr 2006; Hunold 2008). At the same time, I also interviewed experts and took part in police conferences. Talking to them, it also seemed obvious to explore areas where differences were being formally addressed such as seminars for police officers dealing with intercultural education, equal treatment, and gender mainstreaming.<sup>11</sup> For this reason, I participated in such seminars—stretching from one-day to one-week—in Hamburg and Berlin over the course of 2006 and 2007.

Next to recruitment and in-house training, that is the field of activities mentioned in the reviewed literature, I decided to expand the frame of my research. I contacted and met people who, I gathered from other readings and former research experience in Germany, might have contributed

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10 For works on the treatment of difference outside the police forces and the interactions with citizens, see Schweer (2008), Sterzenbach (forthcoming), and Gauthier's (2012, 2011) work with a Berlin police unit specialized in the control of illegal immigration and prevention in neighborhoods with large immigrant populations.

11 Gender mainstreaming aims to evaluate the effects of policies or programs on women and men.

through their work to the framing of difference and its pragmatic recognition. Other fields of activities were thus included: counseling, teaching, and the commemoration of the past. In particular, political education (*politische Bildung*) was drawn upon as an area where efforts to broaden the ideological spectrum of the police had been made in the past. Investigating the history of the Berlin police forces, Liang (1970: 72) had pointed to attempts to broadening the social basis of the police forces through personal policies, such as the (failed) recruitment of trade unionists and efforts to change the police through political education. These areas helped me construct and understand the multiple aspects the object of inquiry may take on in the German context while being attentive to the past. From my previous work on churches in Germany and the related literature (Thériault 2004), I also knew that the police chaplains, as specialists of ethical issues, might play an important role in dealing with issues related to difference. Extending my reading to police forces in other countries, it soon seemed obvious enough that trade union representatives might also be concerned with such issues (Holdaway and O'Neill 2004; Hunold *et al.* 2010: 127 ff.). My field grew larger yet again as I realized, in the course of researching and taking part in conferences, that human rights specialists might also have played a role in dealing with difference (Schicht 2007).

Having identified the people who had been officially mandated or might have, according to the evidence I gathered, contributed to the acknowledgement of difference, I contacted them for an initial formal interview, which was, when allowed, taped. I asked the first informants about initiatives that were going on in their police department and their federal states and the context of their inception. When broaching recruitment, I inquired about those who were deemed to be the ideal candidates (“Who would be, in your opinion, a good candidate?”) and problems encountered. I was also interested to find out about their person, their work, their background and how they had come to occupy their function. While asking my questions, I usually had photos and brochures in front of me (the above mentioned Montreal police advertisement, a photo of policewomen wearing a hijab in the color of the London Metropolitan Police, a brochure of an association of black law enforcers in Canada), which did not fail to spark comments. Through a snowball principle, the first interviews led me to other people and to loose networks between police departments in different federal states or between police forces and partners such as NGOs. Not all the people I

met at this stage had left an imprint in the police forces. Trade union representatives, for example, were present at conferences and police meetings; however, I did not come across any concrete initiatives (see also Lautmann 2010). Not all field of activities identified turned out to be actual channels, or vectors (*Weichenstellungen*), for the recognition of difference within the forces.<sup>12</sup>

The interviews and observation that were to follow this first stage narrowed the field and delineated it with more precision: they targeted people as well as fields of activities that promised to instruct me on the relation to difference in the police forces. Who were the people I met in this second phase and where did they work? Most of them were police officers. However, they were neither “street cops” nor “high management cops” (Reuss-Ianni 1983); instead, they were middle management, members of the elevated service, often police inspectors or chief police inspectors (*Polizeikommissar* [PK] or *Polizeihauptkommissar* [PHK]). Because police officers generally change their position within the organization in five-year turns, my informants had occupied other positions before I met them and often changed it at a later stage of their career. They were not trained in public relations or used to answering questions and they were not necessarily the people met at police conferences touching upon issues of difference. Officers holding high mandates and representative functions typically attended—sometimes accompanied by practitioners—these conferences. Police officials usually exhibited enthusiasm toward projects and initiatives that aimed at the opening of the forces. Meeting informants took me to police departments, academies, a museum, meetings organized by NGOS in Hamburg and Berlin as well as to four other federal states. Next to the city-states, two other federal states are important to this study, but—because they involve more difficult and personal cases—are not named so as not to identify my informants.

I chose to meet those I came to identify as carriers of diversity several times for discussion. In the course of researching this book, I adapted and improved my questions, added new ones (such as, for instance, “Who should, or would, be likely to replace you once you move on to another po-

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12 *Weichenstellungen*, or the switches that change the direction of railroad tracks, is an expression used metaphorically by Weber to refer to, and assess, possible loci of change (Weber 1978b [1921]: 1209; Weber 1972 [1921]: 252).

sition within the forces or when you retire?), and became more attentive to the dilemmas pertaining to my informants' work. Next to formal conversations, I also accompanied them in their daily work and took field notes: participating in the activities they organized, meeting them at police conferences, seminars, in-house trainings, and meetings, observing them teaching and in interaction with colleagues, or in a car or train on their way to work or on special occasions. This was instrumental to carry out informal conversations and observe their colleagues' reactions to them. I conducted most of the interviews and participant observation while on leave in 2006-2007 and in the second half of 2009; with shorter visits in between and again in the first half of 2010. Overall, I conducted 64 interviews as well as several informal conversations.

Meeting my informants in different settings (mostly at work, but also at conferences, ceremonies, seminars, visits to mosques, information session for people of Turkish background, meetings of the historical society, parties) and, most of all, on several occasions, turned out to be pivotal for the present study. I could witness their successes and failures as well as the effects they had on them. Some of my first impressions were contradicted in subsequent meetings, whereas a simple intuition sometimes turned out to be an important lead. This methodological strategy was worthwhile for interpretive sociology: it enabled me to uncover—and later reconstruct—the importance of motives underlying the work of my informants and how they change over time as a response to the consequences of their work and the reaction it provoked within the forces. Furthermore, I could witness the resistance the officers met, the tensions emerging between their work and an organization with homogenizing principles, the ambivalences pertaining to them. This strategy also facilitated me having access to internal police documents and archives material (internal studies, press cuttings, reports, letters), secured my participation in seminars and police events, which might have been difficult to attain access. After some time, the fieldwork became autonomous: I got invited and, being mobile, I could attend events.

## **2.2 Leaving the Field: Ideal Types**

Researching this book was a process. Observing, taking notes and memos, I refined my questions and shaped my object in accordance with the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss 2008 [1967]: 101-115) while

watching reflexivity at work for my informants and myself (see Martucelli and de Singly 2009: 97). Generating, around the actors' motives, ideal types of carriers of diversity was also an ongoing process between collection and analysis of data, between theorization and observation.

While still in the field, I could roughly delineate three ideal types. In accordance with the criteria of theoretical saturation, I left it when no new data involved the creation of an additional ideal type (Glaser and Strauss 2008 [1967]: 61, 111). Although being attentive, it is possible that I missed some initiatives and that new people entered the field as I was leaving it.<sup>13</sup> However, I have no ground to think that these newcomers would alter the ideal types. Admittedly, some ideal types might become more important, others less. They would nonetheless remain valid for mapping out possible positions one could reasonably expect to find when tracking the relation to difference within German police forces. Comparing the ideal types to observations in the field indicates paths that were actually taken. More than classifying or describing, the aim of the present study is to interpret and understand (*verstehen*) through ideal types—as opposed to merely know (*wissen*) facts properly speaking (Disselkamp 2012: 155).

Gradually leaving the field, I spent more time in my office and went on to refine my three core ideal types. As I move along in this book, I describe how I constructed the ideal types. I will come back to more formal aspects of ideal types in chapter two. For the moment, let it be said that the types at the center of the chapters are contrasting ones (Gerhardt 1986: 61). Combining different cases—present and past—, they are constructed in dialogue with another. In their foreground, are the specific motives of the people I came in contact with. My reflection always starts with and feeds on concrete situations and individuals. This choice, or strategy, helps me to construct ideal types—abstractions of the actual or possible paths or relations toward difference—and ground them in a particular cultural context. Be-

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13 Due to some technical problems, one federal state was left out where I had conducted some interviews. When Criminal Police Inspector Schmitt, the woman at the center of one of the chapters, showed me a picture portraying the invited guests at a conference she had organized with recruitment officers in the 1990s (chapter four, see section 1.2), I realized that—beyond the time of my fieldwork—I had met the members of the first generation of carriers of diversity, those of the 1990s.

sides the situations depicted through vignettes, I introduce throughout the chapters, four (and a half) portraits are at the core of the chapters constituting the second part of this book. I bring the characters of the portraits in dialogue with the ideal types; indeed, once clearly delineated the types are mirrored back on the actors. This exercise brings individual dilemmas to the fore and, in turn, another dimension to the analysis, a more existential one. Through the portraits, I intend to help the reader easily grasp the ideal types.

Because the choices I made while constructing the field had an impact on the architecture of the book and the relation between the cops and the sociologist, I touch upon these aspects in the final sections of this introduction.

### **3. DIVISION OF THE BOOK**

The present book is divided into three parts. The first part is dedicated to the sociology of Max Weber, motivational understanding, and the possibilities it offers for empirical studies. This first part provides a frame for the second, and most substantive, one. Outlining through several portraits the motives of the people interviewed and observed, in the second part I construct three ideal types, or sociological portraits (Nisbet 1976: 72): the empathetic, the type devoted to a principle, and the opportunist. The third part goes beyond the analysis of the individual portraits: it assembles the ideal types together to create a group portrait.

After proposing a reflection in chapter one on how to apprehend the individual in Weberian sociology and laying down the tools for examining the police forces, the chapters of the second part are each dedicated to one ideal type, and one possible way to deal with difference. As the photo inserted at the end of the preface conveys, each chapter combines two levels of analysis: they focus at times on the abstract models (the mannequins, or the ideal types), at times on the flesh-and-blood individuals behind them (the real police officers). While lending the study its structure, each portrait is also linked to a central theme that grounds the outlined motives in a cultural and historical context: a Christian heritage, a particular shade of liberalism, a Kantian resistance to opportunism, and the spirit of the social movements of the 1960s onward. These themes stand in tension, or share

affinities, with the ethos of the police officers and the image they cultivate—the “we-ideal” of the forces (Elias 1998 [1989])—as well as with the values of the observer. As such, the ideal types draw attention to value understanding, not least to the values of the sociologist.

Vignettes, interwoven in the chapters, act as miniatures devoted to particular situations and people (a “pastoral”-like meeting between a recruitment officer and his recruits in Hamburg, a meeting where the recruits and officers from post-migration backgrounds poke fun at the attention given to them, efforts in Berlin to commemorate a Weimar high police official of Jewish descent and the naming of a square, a trip to the Netherlands, a much repeated anecdote, an altercation at a conference gathering between a social scientist and high police officials and police researchers). The portrayed situations represent moments when the alchemy of theory and empirical material constitutive of the ideal types, the creative tools of Weberian sociology, set in. They provide the analysis with interpretative keys while giving a voice to those who are otherwise not at the center of the inquiry, the recruits and officers from post-migration backgrounds in particular.

Chapters two and three are dedicated to two inspectors—Dietmar Piontek and Klaus Bobkowski—and their colleagues. Both men are close—though not identical—to the types constructed, the empathetic and the principled ones respectively. In the subsequent chapter, I then go on to construct a third type, the opportunist. The motive underpinning this type was met to various degrees in most people encountered while researching this book. The reaction opportunism created is epitomized in the portrait of a police researcher. To the cases outlined, one is added, that of a group of specialists for whom diversity is a profession and a vocation. Though I expected to find representatives of this group of specialists in the German police forces, they were largely absent during the fieldwork. Why did diversity as a principle remain a mere “logical possibility” (Weber 1949 [1904]: 93)? This question constitutes an enigma that turns out to throw light on all ideal types and on the complex relation between actors, ideas, and interests within the police forces. Far from being useless, this missing group of specialists (and one version of the principled type) serves as a counterpoint, enabling me not only to contrast the other types, but also to point to, beyond all differences, the similarities and specificity of those who contrib-

uted in one way or another to the recognition of difference within the German police today.

Whereas the ideal types in part two are treated on equal grounds, I attempt to put them together into a single and three-dimensional picture in the third and last part of the book. Being attentive to the types that were most present in reality, I put them in perspective: some types thus appear on the foreground and others more on the background. Instead of ending the study with different possible positions when tracking the relation to difference within German police forces, this exercise enables me to see what they have in common. In so doing, I can identify and account for the particular imprint of the relation to difference—the specific spirit of diversity—within the police today. While assembling the ideal types, two details catch my eye: the striking similarities of the actors on the foreground and the outdated character of the picture that was emerging. In chapter six, I come back to the first detail, the social characteristics and ideas pertaining to the carriers of diversity. This leads me to a discussion of the activity of representation (*Stellvertretung*) and normative issues inherent to talking and acting on behalf of others. In the seventh and concluding chapter, I reflect on the second detail, the seemingly outdated character of the picture, and the types of connections that tie the actors to the past.

The chapters entailed in this book follow a certain chronological order. I tell the story as I go along, first making my way in the police forces and then shedding light on the history of the initiatives. This enables me to account for change, in the vocabulary used, but also in the types of measures put forward, their acceptance, or resistance to them. The chronology of the initiatives also points to how the motives of the actors involved have changed. Although the chapters do not systematically focus on specific federal states, there are some overlapping between particular ideal types, some initiatives, and federal states. As is often the case, the people who first got involved in the initiatives often laid down tracks for subsequent developments and patterns for the treatment of difference. For this reason, they are subjects of particular attention.

## 4. THE SOCIOLOGIST AND THE COP

It is often said that it is difficult to investigate the police (Manning 1974; Waddington 1999; Monjardet 2005; Hunold 2008: 16); that suspicion, an often identified trait of cop culture, is a barrier to sociological work on the police. Whereas getting information from the police in Montreal proved difficult, the treatment of difference being judged as a sensitive topic and a matter of organizational priority, contacts with the police officers in different police departments in Germany were unexpectedly easy. Although I could not have access to particular areas and could certainly not reveal all aspects of their work, the contact with officers proved easy because—and this seems to be a decisive factor—the people I met occupied rather marginal positions within the police forces. They were sometimes flattered by the attention given to their work by someone who came from far away for their sake—and would also conveniently go away. Most informants agreed to have our conversations taped; and of course, I changed their names.<sup>14</sup>

Working on the police turned out to be more difficult than I had first expected among the colleagues I share affinities with. At an early stage of the research, the young social scientists who helped me transcribe the taped interviews, reacted to what was being said, pointing to values and their conflict as well as to different relations to difference and, hence, conceptions of diversity. My colleagues often commented I should work on police victims, not cops. The sociologists' value relation to the police and, ultimately, its legitimacy, as a research object is a central issue of the next chapter. Inspired by certain annoyances and dilemmas encountered during fieldwork, the reflection takes the shape of a three-party fictional dialogue with Max Weber, my fellow sociologists, and police officers encountered in the course of my research.

In the next chapter, I stress the Weberian conception of motives underlying the action and at the core of the investigation. I distinguish three pairs of concepts: the fictional and the "flesh-and-blood" individual, motive and intention, the consequences of action and individual destiny. I insist upon

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14 Some of my informants would not have minded or would have even liked being named by their real surname. Some insisted that they "had nothing to hide" or were "not afraid," attesting to what seems to be an attempt at independence within the forces.

the notion of motive in the Weberian sense in order to advocate an approach—and a technique—that would take social action into account so as to stress the interpretative task that such an approach presupposes, and to question anew the relation between the values of the researcher and the object of his investigation. In so doing, I reflect on what the (Weberian) sociologist and the police officer have in common: the study of motives and inquiring as a professional activity. Accentuating this trait no doubt constitutes a romantic bias: if police officers do cultivate the image of the investigator, they also concede that they spend an important part of their time—as sociologists generally do if they work in a university—writing reports, dealing with recalcitrant colleagues, and attempting—with more or less conviction—to reform the organization they belong to.