



MIGRANT TRANSNATIONALISM AND MODES OF TRANSFORMATION*

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The transnational lens on migrant activities allows social scientists to view the ways some significant things are changing. Notwithstanding certain criticisms of how this research perspective should be fashioned, a look through the lens shows clearly that many migrants today conduct activities and maintain commitments that link them with significant others (such as kin, co-villagers, political comrades, fellow members of religious groups) who dwell in nation-states other than those in which the migrants themselves reside. Migrants now maintain such connections technologically, legally and financially more intensely than ever before possible. What kinds of changes are stimulated by these connections? In what spheres of life? How deep are the changes and how long-lasting? What are their 'knock-on' effects? These are high among the questions begged by transnational takes on migrant dynamics.

In this paper I suggest that current migrant practices involve modes of transformation discernable on different levels of abstraction in three basic domains of activity. These include: (1) perceptual transformation (affecting what can be described as migrants' *habitus*) in the socio-cultural domain, (2) conceptual transformation (affecting meanings within the analytical triad 'identities-borders-orders') in the political domain, and (3) institutional transformation (affecting forms of financial transfer and local development) in the economic domain. Each set of transformations involves multiple causes, linked processes and observable outcomes. It is stressed throughout the paper that patterns of migrant transnationalism do not themselves cause such modes of transformation, but in each case migrant practices draw upon and contribute significantly to ongoing processes of transformation, largely associated with facets of globalization, already underway.

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The paper commences by considering the transnational approach to migrant practices in light of recent attempts at theoretical adjustment. Thereafter a brief discussion of the concept of transformation is provided in order to set the scene for three subsequent sections on migrant transnational practices and modes of transformation in socio-cultural, political and economic spheres of activity.

REFINING THE TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

TRANSNATIONALISM –A SET of sustained, border-crossing connections– is not of course found among migrant populations alone. Such connections are to be found among various sets of geographically dispersed social actors, including global corporations and business partnerships, media and communications networks, social movements, criminal groups and terrorist organizations. Each of these fields has generated its own relatively recent yet considerable body of research and theory concerning the emergence, shape and dynamics of different kinds of global networks.

Similarly over the past ten to fifteen years the study of transnationalism has rapidly ascended within migration studies. Ayse Caglar (2001: 607) summarizes the general perspective towards transnational aspects of migration:

Current scholarship on transnationalism provides a new analytic optic which makes visible the increasing intensity and scope of circular flows of persons, goods, information and symbols triggered by international labour migration. It allows an analysis of how migrants construct and reconstitute their lives as simultaneously embedded in more than one society.

In the last decade the transnational approach to migration research has expanded extraordinarily across academic disciplines, spawning a rapid proliferation of publications, PhD theses, seminars, conferences and research projects throughout the Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe. Critiques of the approach have multiplied as well (see Vertovec 2001). Recently it has become practically *de rigueur* for works on migrant transnationalism to commence with criticism of some conceptual flaw surrounding the notion before offering a corrective. It would be difficult for any one bibliography or critical review to account for the current extent and variety of intellectual debate surrounding the topic of migrant transnationalism.

Since the perspective hit the migration studies scene in the late 1980s, perhaps the most central question asked by scholars of the subject is: how is so-called transnationalism different from other, perhaps more long-standing, aspects of migration? Questions as to what's old and what's new about transnational migrant practices have been ably handled by scholars such as Ewa Morawska (1999), Nina Glick-Schiller (1999), Nancy Foner (2000) and Rob Smith (2003). Alejandro Portes (2001) has notably dealt with this issue, too, by recalling Robert Merton's notion of 'the fallacy of adumbration': that is, once a social scientific idea has been formulated, it is easy to find historical anticipations of it. This does not dismiss the idea. As Smith (2003) says, 'if transnational life existed in the past but was not seen as such, then the transnational lens does the new analytical work of providing a way of seeing what was there that could not be seen before.' Still, it might be true to say that long-distance connections maintained by migrants one hundred years ago were not truly 'transnational' –in terms of the contemporary sense of regular and sustained, and especially 'real time', social contact (Portes et al. 1999); rather, such

earlier links were just border-crossing migrant networks that were maintained in piecemeal fashion as best as migrants at that time could manage. Theoretically, fleshing out just such differences between the meaning of newer transnational practices and older migrant networks represents one way that the transnational approach can importantly contribute to theoretical development in migration studies.

It has often been pointed out that more conceptual and empirical work remains to be done with regard to sharpening the transnational take on migration research and analysis. There are a number of ways in which such refinement has been attempted. One way is through better differentiating and characterizing types and levels of transnational activity among migrants (cf. Faist 2000, Smith 2001, Levitt 2001a, Riccio 2001, Fitzgerald 2002). There is need for this despite the fact that, as Portes (2003) points out, 'it has been recognized from the start that transnational activities are quite heterogeneous and vary across immigrant communities, both in their popularity and in their character.' And most scholars recognize that not all migrants develop transnational practices, and many do so only in one sphere of their lives (Faist 2000).

Exercises in conceptual differentiation have generated several typologies of transnationalism. Examples include:

- 'transnationalism from above' (involving flows of global capital, media, and political institutions) and 'transnationalism from below' (primarily concerning local and grassroots activity across borders) (Smith and Guarnizo 1998a);
- 'narrow' (with regard to institutionalised and continuous activities among migrants) vs. 'broad' transnationalism (referring to more occasional practices linking migrants and places of origin) (Itzigsohn et al. 1999);
- 'transnational kinship groups' (based on reciprocity within families), 'transnational circuits' (based on exchanges of goods, people and information within global networks) and 'transnational communities' (characterized by feelings of solidarity within ethnic diasporas) (Faist 2000);
- 'great' (pertaining to the level of state and economy) and 'little' transnationalism (regarding the intimate level of family and household) (Gardner 2002);
- 'linear' (grounded in plans to return to place of origin), 'resource-based' (linked with labour market position and mobility) and 'reactive' transnationalism (especially based on experiences of discrimination) (Itzigsohn and Saucido 2002);
- 'broad' (including both regular and occasional activities) and 'strict' transnationalism (in connection to regular participation only) (Portes 2003); and
- 'core' (with reference to patterned and predictable practices within one sphere of social life) and 'expanded' transnational activity (bringing in occasional practices in a wider set of spheres) (Levitt 2001a,b).

Such types of transnationalism are variably manifested among different groups of people depending on a range of factors including geographical proximity of sending and receiving contexts, histories of interdependence between nation-states and localities, patterns of migration and processes of settlement.

Another way of refining transnational theory is through categorizing kinds of transnational migrants themselves. Here, such proposed categories of people involved in transnational activity identify those whose quests for work or 'mobile livelihoods' (Sørensen and Olwig 2001) involve them in transnational migration circuits (Rouse 1991) or patterns of circular migration (Duany 2002). In addition to the majority of cases described in much literature involving unskilled

labour migrants, other categories increasingly relevant to the transnational approach include: undocumented migrants (Hagen 1994), return migrants (Thomas-Hope 2003), retirement migrants (King et al. 1998), forced migrants (Castles 2003), refugees and asylum seekers (Koser 2002), religious specialists servicing migrants (Riccio 1999), highly skilled workers generally (Vertovec 2002) and specifically information technology workers employed through global 'body shopping' (Xiang 2001) and trained occupational specialists drawn back from diasporas to contribute to the development of their homelands (Meyer and Brown 1999).

A further means of typologizing transnationalism focuses on degrees of mobility relating to transnational practice and orientation. In this way observers differentiate transnationalism among people (a) who travel regularly between specific sites, (b) who mainly stay in one place of immigration but engage people and resources in a place of origin, and (c) who have never moved but whose locality is significantly affected by the activities of others abroad (Mahler 1998, Levitt 2001b, Golbert 2001).

Identifying types, specificities and differences surrounding migrant transnationalism is perhaps a conceptually burdensome task, but it is an arguably necessary one. Differentiation provides clearer ways of describing the infrastructures of transnational relations. Transnational infrastructures and their impacts among migrants vary with regard to a host of factors, including family and kinship organization, transportation or people smuggling routes, communication and media networks, financial arrangements and remittance facilities, legislative frameworks regarding movement and status, and economic interdependencies linking local economies. David Held et al. (1999: 19) suggest that such infrastructures 'may facilitate or constrain the extensity and intensity of global connectedness in any single domain. This is because they mediate flows and connectivity: infrastructures influence the overall level of interaction capacity in every sector and thus the potential magnitude of global interconnectedness.'

A decade or more of social scientific attention to migrant transnationalism has produced, among other things, elaborate typologies of border-crossing social practices and networks. Given that migrant transnationalism and its consequences take so many forms, how can we begin to think about possible broader transformations stemming from migrant transnationalism?

FROM TRANSNATIONALISM TO TRANSFORMATION

MOST STUDIES OF migrant transnationalism describe facets of social organization (Vertovec 1999a, Yeoh et al. 2003). That is, social scientists in this field of migration studies tend to research the nature and function of border-crossing social networks, families and households, ethnic communities and associations, power relations surrounding gender and status, patterns of economic exchange, and political institutions. Social change, in migrant transnationalism studies, tends to be gauged by the ways in which conditions in more than one location impact upon such forms of social organization and the values, practices and structures that sustain them. In other fields of study concerning global interconnections, though, some theorists attempt to understand broader –indeed, global– enduring, structural shifts in social, political and economic organization. Such shifts are often referred to as forms of 'transformation' rather than mere (localized) change.

For instance, in contrast to notions of social change pertaining to specific institutions, Kenneth Wiltshire (2001: 8) suggests that 'transformation... describes a more radical change, a particularly deep and far-reaching one which within a relatively limited time span modifies the configuration

of societies.' Neil Smelser (1998) importantly points to profound social transformations that develop out of both individual and collective short-term actions within immediate environments: these accumulate in often unexpected ways to constitute fundamental changes in societies. Ulf Hannerz (1996) and Stephen Castles (2001) directly link the contemporary study of processes of social transformation to the analysis of emergent transnational connections among a variety of social groups. And in their momentous volume, *Global Transformations*, Held and his colleagues (1999) advocate the 'transformationalist' thesis or view of the long-term changes wrought by the intensification of interconnections known as globalization.

In order to theorize contemporary processes of transformation that are stimulated by transnational linkages, Held et al. (1999: 15-17) concentrate on the following dimensions of connectivity that can be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively: (1) 'the extensiveness of networks of relations and connections', or the stretching of social relationships 'such that events, decisions and activities in one region of the world can come to have significance for individuals and communities in distant regions of the globe'; (2) 'the intensity of flows and levels of activity within these networks' that are not occasional or random, but somehow regular or patterned; and (3) 'the velocity or speed of interchanges' of resources and information that provide immediate feedback, often in real time. These are all dimensions of transformation that can be analysed by way of migrant transnationalism, too.

Furthermore, it is inherent to the views of Held et al. (1999) that large-scale patterns of transformation come about through a constellation of mutually conditioning factors and parallel processes. Such an approach to transnationalism and cumulative societal transformation is exemplified by the work of Manuel Castells (especially 1996, 1997) as he describes the joint impacts of various kinds of enhanced computer-mediated communication on work patterns, collective identities, family life, social movements and states. This is a point to be emphasized in analyzing the impacts of migrant transnationalism: while not bringing about substantial societal transformations by themselves, patterns of cross-border exchange and relationship among migrants may contribute significantly to broadening, deepening or intensifying conjoined processes of transformation that are already ongoing (and often subsumed by the overarching concept of globalization). This is what I argue in each one of the three domains discussed below.

What's not transformative in migrant transnationalism? The widening of networks, more activities across distances, and speeded-up communications might be important forms of transnationalism in themselves. But they do not necessarily lead to long-lasting, structural changes in global or local societies. We are back to the oldness/newness critique: migrants have historically maintained long-distance social networks, and the fact that messages or visits take shorter time does not always lead to significant alterations in structure, purpose or practice within the network.

But sometimes the matter of degree really counts. The extensiveness, intensity and velocity of networked flows of information and resources may indeed combine to fundamentally alter the way people do things. As Patricia Landolt (2001: 220) suggests with regard to migrant transnational activities, there are times when 'a quantitative change results in a qualitative difference in the order of things.' In this field of study we can sometimes observe –following Smelser– how transformation is brought about by numerous individual and collective short-term actions within social environments that span distance locales. As portrayed by Portes (2003):

Despite its limited numerical character, the combination of a cadre of regular transnational activists with the occasional activities of other migrants adds up to a social process of significant economic and social impact for communities and even

nations. While from an individual perspective, the act of sending a remittance, buying a house in the migrant's hometown, or travelling there on occasion have purely personal consequences, in the aggregate they can modify the fortunes and the culture of these towns and even of the countries of which they are part.

In this cumulative way migrant transnational practices can modify the value systems and everyday social life of people across entire regions (see for instance Shain 1999, Kyle 2000, Levitt 2001b).

Processes and practices of migrant transnationalism that can lead to broader transformations take place on different analytical scales in at least three domains of human activity. Of course, as Luis Guarnizo (2003) reminds us, 'Everyday transnational practices are not neatly compartmentalized, and nor are their consequences.' Dividing up the discussion in this way is simply for heuristic purposes. That said, in this paper it is suggested that such scales and domains of transformation fostered by migrant transnationalism include basic structures of individual *habitus*, fundamental political frameworks, and integral modes of economic development.

SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION: RE-ORIENTING HABITUS

AS MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY, most work on migrant transnationalism has examined social organization, or the configuration of social groups as they adapt to cross-border contexts. There has been a considerable amount of research that has detailed 'the emergence of transnational social practices and institutions that create a field of sociability and identification among immigrants and people in the country of origin' (Itzigsohn and Saucido 2002: 788). While this approach has certainly been significant and instructive –and there is still much to do– perhaps there has been an overemphasis on the social institutions of transnationalism. To balance the picture we also need to observe transnationalism as it occurs within, and has impact upon, the daily lives of individuals (Voigt-Graf 2002). While actor-centred approaches carry the danger of overlooking larger structural conditions, they have the advantage of emphasizing motivations, meanings and the place of people as their own agents in processes of change.

The following subsections suggest just a few ways through which transnationalism has transformed the everyday social worlds of individuals and families in both migrant sending and receiving contexts. The level or site of such transformation can be thought of as a kind of transnational *habitus*.

Habitus

PIERRE BOURDIEU'S (1977, 1990) CONCEPT of *habitus* refers to a socially and culturally conditioned set of durable dispositions or propensities for social actions. This set or repertoire is internalized by individuals in the course of their life experiences and in relation to their social positions. The dispositions of *habitus* selectively generate everyday social practices immediately and in the context of specific social fields. As a set of neither wholly conscious nor wholly non-conscious perceptions, outlooks, points of reference, *habitus* guides personal goals and social interactions.

The power of the *habitus* derives from the thoughtlessness of habit and habituation, rather than consciously learned rules and principles. Socially competent performances are produced as a matter of routine, without explicit reference to a body of codified knowledge, and without the actors necessarily 'knowing what they are doing' (in the sense of being able adequately to explain what they are doing). (Jenkins 1992: 76)

Most practices, Bourdieu (1990: 56) posited, can only be accounted for by relating them between 'the social conditions in which the *habitus* that generated them was constituted, to the social conditions in which it is implemented.' This relation between partially or non-conscious dispositions and contextualized action makes *habitus* a more useful concept than the older, related anthropological concept of 'worldview' –described as a kind of cognitive map or complex of motivations, perceptions and beliefs (see for instance Jones 1972). Although they are abstract concepts, both *habitus* and worldview manifest themselves in individual narratives and directly observable, daily practices and social institutions.

How does the concept of *habitus* relate to migrant transnationalism? A number of scholars bring into play similar notions to describe the nature and impact of transnational outlooks and experiences of migrants. Smith (2001), for example, invokes such a meaning when he describes the practices and relationships linking home and abroad as a 'life world' among immigrants and their descendants. Guarnizo (1997) draws directly upon Bourdieu's ideas of *habitus*. He suggests we might think of a transnational *habitus* as entailing:

...a particular set of dualistic dispositions that inclines migrants to act and react to specific situations in a manner that can be, but is not always, calculated, and that is not simply a question of conscious acceptance of specific behavioural or sociocultural rules. ...The transnational *habitus* incorporates the social position of the migrant and the context in which transmigration occurs. This accounts for the similarity in the transnational *habitus* of migrants from the same social grouping (class, gender, generation) and the generation of transnational practices adjusted to specific situations. (Ibid.: 311)

Guarnizo (Ibid.) further writes of how Dominicans retain 'a dual frame of reference' through which they constantly compare their situation in their 'home' society to their situation in the 'host' society abroad. Roger Rouse (1992), too, described the 'bifocality' of people's daily rhythms and routines of life joining localities in Michoacán and California. 'Their bifocalism,' thought Rouse (Ibid.: 46), 'stemmed not from transitional adjustments to a new locale, but from a chronic, contradictory transnationalism.' Sarah Mahler (1998) takes up Rouse's notion, emphasizing ways in which researchers need to look at the nature of transnational migrants' 'lived reality' to determine whether or how they might be 'bifocal' with regard to their social ties and personal outlooks.

The complex *habitus* of migrant transnationalism has been described in other, related ways. In a transnational community spanning 'OP' –Oaxaca and Poughkeepsie, New York– Mountz and Wright (1996: 404) describe how members 'act daily in pursuit of shared objectives and with an acute awareness of events occurring in other parts of [OP].' Aspects of life 'here' and life 'there' –whether perceived from the migrant's starting or destination point– are perceived as complementary (cf. Salih 2002). This relation is clearly conveyed in Katy Gardner's (1993, 1995) accounts of the interplay between notions of *desh* (home) and *bidesh* (foreign contexts) among Sylhetis in Britain and Bangladesh. While in everyday discourse, *desh* is associated with the locus of personal and social identity and religiosity, *bidesh* conveys material bounty and economic opportunity. Gardner (1993: 1-2) describes a kind of cognitive tension among Sylhetis that likely characterizes the predicament of a great many migrants around the world:

The economic dominance of families with migrant members has meant that *bidesh* is associated with success and power, which *desh* is unable to provide. Statements concerning *bidesh* are therefore part of a discourse about the insecurity of life in Bangladesh and the continual economic struggle which villagers face. ... Individual opportunism and enterprise are therefore channelled towards attempting to go abroad, leading to dependency on something which for many is no more than a fantasy, a dream-land, which few villagers will ever see.

Co-existing, sometimes uneasily, with this set of images and ideals is the centrality of *desh* to group identity, and the spiritual powers with which it is linked. There is therefore a constant balancing of the two views, between the economic and political power of *bidesh*, and the fertility and spirituality of *desh*. This continual ambivalence, and negotiation of what might appear to be oppositional presentations of the world, is an integral part of migration and the contradictions which it involves.

Ambivalence and negotiation around *desh-bidesh* are expressed and reproduced in a variety of ways, including the exchange of goods, images and ideas between the two settings. Gardner (Ibid.: 5) further describes *desh-bidesh* not as polar opposites, but as sites in 'local mental maps [that] involve a geography of power, in which locations are points along a continuum, with different types of empowerment to be found at each.'

The effects of transnationalism for changing meanings, attitudes and experiences both 'here' and 'there' are relevant to recent studies concerning migrants and transformations of the meaning of 'home' (Rapport and Dawson 1998, Al-Ali and Koser 2002). An illustration of this is provided by Ruba Salih (2002, 2003), who details how Moroccan women in Italy engage in material practices representing the two countries. Whether in Italy or Morocco, the women buy, consume, display and exchange commodities from their 'other home' in order to symbolize their ongoing sense of double belonging.

Once such a kind of *habitus* of dual orientation is constructed and reproduced by migrants, it might have further impacts. For one, it is hard to dismantle. David Kyle (2000: 2) discusses at least one informant who foresees 'no clear exit strategy from the binational life he had built over eleven years of shuttling back and forth' between New York City and his village in Ecuador. Another consequence concerns the transformation of outlook and practice among those closely associated with the transnational migrant. Here, through the experiences of his informants, Kyle came to think of the links between these distinct places 'as more of an emergent transnational social reality, involving migrants and nonmigrants alike, than simply an international movement of labor' (Ibid.: 9). The point about nonmigrants is significant: such a transnational social reality incorporates and infuses what we can call the *habitus* of many people 'left behind' but whose lives are still transformed by the transnational activities and ideologies among those who actually move (cf. Ibid.: 202).

Relatedly, Rebecca Golbert (2001) documents the case of young Ukrainian Jews who have developed 'transnational orientations from home' towards the Ukraine, Israel and other Jewish communities in the USA, Germany and elsewhere. She describes how young Ukrainian Jews undertake the evaluation of everyday experiences, the past, and the future with 'a double consciousness' garnered from transnational links and a transnational conception of self. 'Their daily reality,' Golbert (Ibid.: 725) observes, 'is embedded in a transnational frontier of intersecting ideas, relationships, histories and identities; at the same time, transnational practices are localised through intimate and shared experiences.' Recounting narratives and the sharing of experiences – particularly regarding Israel – Golbert shows how returnees have had a powerful impact even on the transnational orientations of those who have never left the Ukraine. They, too, have a *habitus* re-oriented to more than one locality.

By way of conceptualising transnational experience through *habitus*, social scientists might better appreciate how dual orientations arise and are acted upon. Values, perceptions and aspirations that may be grounded in a pre-migration setting are situated in relation to structural opportunities and constraints (including laws, bureaucracies, labour markets, patterns of racism and sexism) in post-migration settings. Families are the obvious sources and sustainers of a transnational *habitus*.

Families

THE PROVENANCE OF most everyday migrant transnationalism is within families. In many cases family life has been extensively modified in light of transnational practices (see Goulbourne 1999, Fournon and Glick Schiller 2001, Herrera Lima 2001, Gardner and Grillo 2002, Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). Guarnizo (1997) proposes that changes in family and household organization can be approached by way of transnational residential arrangements, budget management and intergenerational cultural reproduction. Yet there are other dimensions of transnational family life that need attention too –especially if we wish to understand the dynamics of *habitus*– such as the nature of parenting and the experience of children.

‘Long-distance parenthood’ linking ‘fractured families and geographically dispersed homes’ is a common feature characterizing much contemporary migrant experience (Lobel 2003). Within dispersed family structures, practically regardless of cultural origins of migrants, it is ‘transnational motherhood’ among female migrants which ‘radically rearranges mother-child interactions and requires a concomitant radical reshaping of the meanings and definitions of appropriate mothering’ (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997: 557). Such rearrangements are known to cause considerable emotional distress, anxieties, sacrifices, financial pressures and difficult negotiations with caregivers who must often fill-in for distant parents (cf. Mahler 2001).

Indeed, shifting work and travel arrangements mean that today more than ever, circularly migrating parents often rotate periods of migration to ensure that one of them remains with the children while the other works abroad (Orellana et al. 2001). The difficulties of juggling the responsibilities of parenting is also related to phenomena surrounding so-called ‘global care chains’ (Hochschild 2000) in which women from developing countries migrate to take care of other people’s children while financially supporting, and needing to find caregivers for, their own children. These and other patterns of transnational family life have necessitated new forms of managing and coping with mixed motivations, strategies and emotional tribulations among parents with regard to their children ‘left behind’ (Orellana et al. 2001). Such patterns entangle parents’ anxieties over their children’s welfare with the desire to improve the possibilities for their future.

Emotional entanglements do not just relate to children ‘left behind’; they pertain as well to children who accompany their migrant parents and to ‘parachute kids’ –such as Chinese or Korean children sent to the USA or Canada to attend school with the hope of eventually gaining admission to North American universities (Zhou 1997). In each case there is often a feeling of being ‘caught between two nations, educational systems, and ways of growing up, [that] conveys one of the risks of transnational childhoods –feeling marginal in both places’ (Orellana et al. 2001: 583). Similarly, Cecilia Menjivar (2002) found that Guatemalan ‘1.5 generation’ (born abroad, migrated young) children in the USA only partially inculcated the transnational orientations of their parents. This was compounded by the inability to travel to Guatemala (given the undocumented status of their parents), by poor linguistic competence and by a dearth of community institutions to foster and sustain transnational links.

This does not imply that the children's lives are played out independent of their communities of origin, because important decisions in their lives often involve families in both places. The children's ties with the parental homeland, however, depend on the parents' activities and interests, and the children themselves cannot always make sense of the parents' efforts to keep them oriented to home. (Ibid.: 547)

The disjuncture between parents' transnational orientations and children's local ones may lead to exasperation. Marjorie Faulstich Orellana and her colleagues (2001: 581), researching among Mexicans, Koreans and Yemenis, found that 'Parents expressed frustration that their children [in the USA] didn't appreciate the things their children back home would never have, and they thought about "sending kids back" to give them another perspective on life.' Using 'back there' as a reference point for values and behaviour, 'transnational disciplining' serves as an important strategy for some parents to control children's behaviour. But as Guarnizo (1997: 301) points out, when followed through this strategy often backfires because of the wearing down of kin support –a migrant's 'most valuable asset in the country of origin'– and the occasional unwilling return of mothers to take care of forcibly repatriated children.

These developments do not always entail a clash of social worlds, however. Drawing upon a detailed ethnography of Mexicans living between Mexico and New York City, Fernando Herrera Lima (2001: 91) suggests that 'the transnational family is buffered by its extensive social networks, allowing the transnational experiences to form a fluid continuum, rather than a radical divide compartmentalizing life into two separated worlds.' Such networks surrounding transnational families allow for the circulation of people, goods, jobs, information as well as for the re-creation and modification of cultural values and practices.

The 'everyday routinized activities and practices' within transnational families have obvious significance for gender relations (Al-Ali 2002: 250). Transnational families demonstrate how culturally constructed concepts of gender operate within and between diverse settings. In various related ways, the position of women in households –and thereby daily gender relations– may be fundamentally altered and liberating, especially when it is the wives and daughters who have migrated to become the breadwinners for the families who have stayed (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). In other cases a patriarchal grip on women within families may be reinforced due to the perceived threats, posed by transnational existence, to cultural notions of feminine virtue. It should be stressed that the significance of gender manifests in numerous spheres outside of family and household as well, of course, especially in transnational community associations, religious congregations and places of work (see among others Mahler and Pessar 2001, Goldring 2001, Salih 2003).

Through socialization within the family, individuals acquire and put to use some of their basic orientations, dispositions and social practices. When socialization and family life take place across two or more settings (which usually entail differing social positions and structures), ever more complex processes and components arise in building the personal repertoires of *habitus*. The practices, outlooks and points of reference of one context might displace, compete or merge with those of the other context. In this way, to adopt the view of Herrera Lima (2001: 91), 'Transnational families are therefore vehicles –better yet, agents– for both material exchanges and the creation, re-creation and transformation of cultures.' Indeed, for many migrants, living a transnational life itself entails a distinct kind of culture or set of norms.

Norms

WITHIN MANY FAMILIES in migrant sending and receiving contexts, transnational patterns of

everyday activity, communication and exchange have become normative (Portes et al. 1999, Faist 2000). Such norms of transnational life coincide with the conscious and non-conscious dispositions of *habitus*. They involve what Patricia Landolt (2001: 217) calls 'circuits of transnational obligations and interests'. Migrants' social patterns that span borders variously condition people's everyday expectations (about potentials for migration, work, household development and individual life course), moral duties (for disseminating information to friends and kin, engaging in reciprocal exchange of resources and enlisting in mutual support), institutional structures (including how best to organize or participate in religious communities and hometown associations) and relations to the state (fashioning practices to manipulate it, contest it or avoid it altogether).

Such norms are often embedded in a transnational moral economy of kin. This is underlined in Carmen Voigt-Graf's (2002) study of Punjabis, Kannadigas and Indo-Fijians in Australia. 'Given that kinship is the organising principle of Indian transnationalism,' she (Ibid.: 286) observes, 'the type and regularity of transnational flows depends primarily on what happens within the extended family rather than on the economic or political situation in the home or host country.' Migration and transnational communication within extended families involve tactics for collective upward mobility, while marriages are arranged to strategically extend a family's kinship networks. In this way the social capital of families can be transformed into economic possibility if the need arises (see Ballard 2003).

The norms that manage and sustain migrant transnationalism do not determine individual behaviour nor ensure social cohesion within the migrant group and its extended network in the place of origin. Such norms may in fact stimulate new social tensions, fragmentation and disarticulation within families and local communities. Alison Mountz and Richard Wright (1996) describe how, within a Mexican transnational community, both cultural traditionalists in the home village and a variety of 'dissenters' abroad oppose a number of emergent transnational norms (the latter set includes *los irresponsables* –the irresponsible ones– who fail to communicate with or send money to families, and 'practical questioners' who wish to pursue their own goals independently of family and community). Within many transnational families, perhaps the greatest concern over 'dissenters' –or at least potential ones– surrounds the orientations and practices of members of the second and subsequent post-migration generations.

High among questions and criticisms regarding the transnational lens on migration are issues as to how members of second and subsequent generations are affected by transnationalism. There is one common view that transnational practices among second generation youth are currently minimal and likely to dwindle further in the course of time. However, another view –and one in line with an understanding on how a transnational *habitus* is shaped and acted upon– suggests that there exist 'strong influences in the transnational social fields in which the second generation is embedded. This view stresses the importance of the sending-country individuals, resources, and ideas that are a constant presence in the lives of the second generation and holds that even selective, periodic transnational practices can add up' (Levitt and Waters 2002: 4).

Recent research suggests that there are patterns of intensive transnational activism at a particular life-stages among the second generation (Smith 2002, Levitt 2002). Further, and not surprisingly, there appears to be a considerable variety of patterns and kinds of transnationalism among different groups of second-generation youth (Kasinitz et al. 2002). In each case there is apparent the interplay of parents' transnational *habitus*, an array of local conditioning factors, and second generation youths' own hybrid or multicultural *habitus*. Thus among young Indian-Americans, Sunaina Marr Maira (2002: 23) observes that 'second-generation youth culture becomes a site of struggles to define notions of authenticity that, while drawing on transnational imaginings of "India," also work to position these youth in

relation to hierarchies of race, class, gender, and nationalism that mark them as “local”.’ Such studies suggest that even though specific transnational orientations and practices of communication and exchange may not be sustained in strong forms by second and subsequent generations, the process of being socialized within a milieu of such transnational orientations and practices will often have a substantial influence on longer-term configurations of outlook, activity and identity.

Summary

AS CASTLES (2002: 1158) SUBMITS, ‘It is possible that transnational affiliations and consciousness will become the predominant form of migrant belonging in the future. This would have far-reaching consequences.’ One possible approach to understanding such a process and its consequences is to consider how patterns of migrant transnationalism entail the re-orienting people’s *habitus* towards ‘bifocality’. The structure and workings of *habitus* are certainly hard to ‘measure,’ but they are arguably discernable in social practices and conveyed in narratives. The dispositions and practices generated by a transnational *habitus* are not, moreover, evenly spread within a group or family. Yet these are nonetheless not to be underestimated because such dispositions and practices have substantial impact on individual and family life course and strategies, individuals’ sense of self and collective belonging, the ordering of personal and group memories, patterns of consumption, collective socio-cultural practices, approaches to child-rearing and other modes of cultural reproduction. These latter functions particularly concern ways in which the re-orienting of first generation *habitus* conditions that of second and subsequent generations.

A re-orientation of *habitus* takes place in the course any person’s re-location. That is necessary since *habitus* involves the negotiation and competent selection of actions in respect to immediate, local systems of structured relationships. Migrants adapt. Sustained and intensive patterns of transnational communication, affiliation and exchanges, however, can profoundly affect manners of migrant adaptation through the maintenance of a particularly strong sense of connection or orientation to the people, places and senses of belonging associated with the place of origin. Such increasing incidence among contemporary migrants (afforded especially by cheap telephone calls and transportation) arguably contributes to a more widespread process of transformation affecting many Western societies, namely the public recognition of multiple identities.

More than twenty-five years of consciousness-raising activities around anti-racism and multiculturalism, indigenous peoples, feminism, gay rights, disability rights, regional languages and other civil identity issues has effected the transformation of the public sphere. Compared to conditions before this period, there is now much more public recognition, in a variety of forms (legal reform, political representation, positive media images, etc.), surrounding people’s claims to difference and multiple identities (see for instance Young 1990, The Runnymede Trust 2000, Hall 2002). By the late 1990s,

Pluralist understanding of persisting diversity, once a challenge to the conventional wisdom, had *become* the conventional wisdom, not only in the US and other classic countries of immigration such as Canada and Australia, but also in much of northern and western Europe. (Brubaker 2001: 531, emphasis in original)

The fact that many migrants feel powerfully bound to elsewhere –and that they now variously express it (transnationalism ‘has come out of the closet’, as Ewa Marawska [1999]

puts it)– both is legitimated by and contributes to this broader trend of public transformation (cf. Glick-Schiller 1999, Foner 2000, Levitt 2001b). Something else happening to the public sphere interestingly parallels this trend: namely, the reconceptualization of the model of the nation-state.

POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION: RECONFIGURING IDENTITIES-BORDERS-ORDERS

A CONVENTIONAL MODEL of the nation-state portrays borders that are presumed to ‘contain’ a people (characterized by some constructed idea of linguistic, social, and presumed cultural/ethnic identity); in turn, within the ‘container’ people are organized by an ideology represented in a constitution and a state comprised of legal institutions.

There is now a very large body of literature in which scholars debate whether, or how, processes of globalization have affected the conventional nation-state model (see Guillén 2001). For example, Martin Albrow (1997) sees the model as an outdated form of social and political organization; Susan Strange (1996) describes the ‘declining authority of states’ while Saskia Sassen (1996) asserts that economic globalization is leading to a fundamental redefinition of nation-state sovereignty and territoriality; Martin Carnoy and Manuel Castells (2001) depict a dramatic decline in the autonomy of nation-states and their growing dependence on globalized processes of production and trade, on other states, and on lower levels of the state. And in probing the concept of ‘cosmopolitanism,’ a variety of authors –including Craig Calhoun, David Held, Ulrich Beck, Rainer Bauböck and Mary Kaldor (all in Vertovec and Cohen 2002)– describe how assorted inter-state, intra-state and ultra-state practices test the viability of a conventional model of the nation-state and the international system based around it.

In some quarters the arguments around globalization and political change have gone to extremes, suggesting that we are witnessing the ‘death of the nation-state’. Others point to the continuation, if not strengthening, of the legitimacy and capacity of states to enforce their laws and policies. Whether they are sceptics, hyper-globalists or transformationalists (Held et al. 1999), most observers agree that nation-states have been radically challenged, if not changed, by processes and phenomena surrounding the emergence of complex new global economic patterns, regional pacts and multi-lateral agreements (on trade, the environment, crime and terrorism, etc.) and ‘humanitarian’ military interventions. While not necessarily dying, the nation-state is transforming into a type of political organization or apparatus involving more multiple and overlapping jurisdictions, sets of collective identities and social orders that borders no longer contain (Beck 2002).

There has been considerable discussion among sociologists, political scientists and political philosophers regarding the challenges to the nation-state specifically posed by immigration (e.g., Soysal 1994, Bauböck 1994, Soysal 1996, Joppke 1998, 1999). While debates over globalization and political change, immigration and the nation-state continue, we can see that migrant transnationalism itself does not itself bring about transformations of the nation-state. Such transformations are happening anyway, due to a confluence of processes within global political economy. But forms of migrant transnationalism importantly contribute to such significant shifts affecting the nation-state model. In what ways is this happening? Some answers become clearer through adopting a particular formulation of concepts surrounding the nation-state model.

Identities-borders-orders

CURRENTLY WITHIN THE field of International Relations, one attempt to understand broad contemporary political challenges is through the 'analytical triad' or 'dynamic nexus' between the three concepts of 'identities-borders-orders' (Albert et al. 2001). The idea here is that, in order to appreciate changes happening in any one of these three conceptual domains, it must be assessed in relation to the remaining two. Yosef Lapid (2001: 7) writes:

Processes of collective identity formation invariably involve complex bordering issues. Likewise, acts of bordering (i.e., the inscription, crossing, removal, transformation, multiplication and/or diversification of borders) invariably carry momentous ramifications for political ordering at all levels of analysis. Processes of identity, border and order construction are therefore mutually self-constituting. Borders, for instance, are in many ways inseparable from the identities they help demarcate or individuate. Likewise, they are also inseparable from orders constituted to a large extent via such acts of individuation and segmentation. Thus, in any specific case, if we want to study problems associated with any one of our three concepts, we can richly benefit from also considering the other two.

In other words, as with the conventional model of the nation-state, some sense of identity is presumed to characterize a people; this identity/people is believed to be contiguous with a territory, demarcated by a border; within the border, laws underpin a specific social and political order or system; this social order –which is conceived to be different from orders outside the border– both draws upon and reinforces the sense of collective identity. 'Identities-borders-orders' are legitimated and reproduced through a system of narratives, public rituals and institutions, formal state bureaucracies and informal social relationships, written and unwritten regulations, sets of assumptions and expectations of civility and public behaviour (Schiffauer et al. 2003).

Various processes of globalization and the rise of regional, global or 'cosmopolitan' structures of governance assail essential components of national 'identities-borders-orders' by compounding identities, ignoring borders and over-ruling orders. Migration itself confronts 'identities-borders-orders'. 'One reason migration enters political agendas with greater frequency and salience now,' suggests Martin Heisler (2001: 229), 'is that, at least in some host societies, it *disturbs the sense of boundedness*' (emphasis in original).

The ability to change countries of residence with relative ease and the possibility of reversing the move can vitiate the need to make lasting identitive commitments. Identities can thus be partial, intermittent, and reversible in the modern Western democratic state. Order no longer depends on unalloyed loyalty stemming from immutable national identity – identity for which there is no plausible or legitimate alternative. Countries' borders are not seen as coextensive with a comprehensive political community. (Ibid.: 236)

Nowadays, Heisler (Ibid.: 237) concludes, 'migration tends to attenuate territorial sovereignty, monolithic order, and identitive solidarity.' In various ways, some of which are described below, the political dimensions of migrant transnationalism inherently involve questions of identity (Vertovec 2001) and often raise contentious issues concerning civic order and the cohesiveness of 'host' societies (Vertovec 1999b).

With regard to the '*identities*' part of the analytical triad, politicians contribute to senses of 'peoplehood' by enacting laws of membership, determining who is included, who is excluded,

and determining what are their respective rights and duties (Pickus 1998). This need not be monolithic of course; recent trends in broadening such a national sense of identity can be seen in contemporary citizenship tests for immigrants and policies crafting multiculturalism. However, what such 'peoplehood' means is also affected by concurrent policies in many states extending and withholding rights, voice and welfare access to immigrants. These effectively create a multiply-tiered sense of membership (Motomura 1998).

With regard specifically to migrant transnational practices, David Fitzgerald (2000: 10) observes that transnational migrants challenge nation-state ideals of belonging in both sending and receiving countries. They do this not least by moving back and forth between states, sometimes circumventing state controls over borders and taxes. 'Transnational migrants often live in a country in which they do not claim citizenship and claim citizenship in a country in which they do not live,' he (Ibid.: 10) points out; 'Alternatively, they may claim membership in multiple polities in which they may be residents, part-time residents, or absentees.' This phenomenon is witnessed in examples of immigrants –even naturalized ones– going 'home' from Germany or the USA to vote in Turkey or Dominican Republic.

Such trends run counter to orthodox assimilation theories that assumed immigrants would be less likely to continue involving themselves in the political concerns of their nation-state of origin. Instead, for many migrants with transnational networks and lifestyles, 'the country of origin becomes a source of identity and the country of residence a source of right... The result is a confusion between rights and identity, culture and politics, states and nations' (Kastoryano 2002: 160). Once more the question of durability enters: are such border-crossing political identities merely an issue for first-generation migrants? Bauböck (2003) addresses this by suggesting that 'even if transnationalism remains a *transient* phenomenon for each migration cohort, the emergence of new legal and political conceptions of membership signifies an important *structural* change for the polities involved' (emphasis in original).

With regard to the '*borders*' part of 'identities-borders-orders', Sassen (1996) suggests that states are 're-nationalizing' themselves in this area more than others. 'There is a growing consensus in the community of states to lift border controls for the flow of capital, information, and services and, more broadly, to further globalization,' she (Ibid.: 59) notes; 'But when it comes to immigrants and refugees, whether in North America, Western Europe, or Japan, the national state claims all its old splendor in asserting its sovereign right to control its borders.' Almost regardless of global economic flows, inter-state pacts and other sides of globalization, nation-states firmly retain the right to admit or expel aliens, to maintain jurisdiction over what happens within their own territories, and through their border policies to control migration and membership. 'Territoriality,' Fitzgerald (2000: 29) contends, 'continues to define the state even as its citizens cross state borders.'

Although challenging 'identities' and 'orders,' migrant transnational practices do little to challenge state border controls (other than practices which sometimes seek to circumvent such controls). Indeed, it is usually the other way around: border policies often considerably impact on migrant transnational practices. Jacqueline Hagan (1994) shows how state policies are central to the formation of migrant communities, their survival strategies and transnational practices. She demonstrates how legal status –a powerful facet of border control– facilitates regular back and forth movement and exchanges, while lack of legal status seriously hinders such transnational practice. This is evident, too, following the recent beefing-up of border control measures in the United States (including, over the past decade, a tripling of its budget and a doubling of the size of the border patrol): these measures have meant that many undocumented Mexicans stay put in the USA rather than move back and forth through transnational circuits (Cornelius 2001).

With regard to the *'orders'* part of the triad, a broad range of policies surrounding migration and migrants is concerned with reproducing certain legal, social and political systems. In the realm of economic and cultural policy, for instance, 'migration has transformed the domestic political milieu... the collective strength and pattern of alliances of political actors has changed; and migration has reshaped political interests and perceptions of these interests' (Held et al. 1999: 322). Perhaps foremost in this field, however, political sociologists and political scientists have been interested in the relationship between migration and citizenship. In much literature nationality and citizenship are treated as co-equivalent (although some scholars like Michael Jones-Correa [2001] argue that we should differentiate nationality as formal status of state membership, and citizenship as rights and duties within the nation-state). Notions of order, particularly within the identities-borders-orders framework, are severely put to the test by emerging migrant transnational practices around dual citizenship/nationality and 'homeland' political allegiances.

Dual citizenship / nationality

IT HAS BEEN suggested that dual citizenship/nationality represents one of 'the most fundamental questions about the relation between immigration and citizenship in the next century' (Pickus 1998: xxvii). Dual citizenship/nationality has a long history that is not always tied to the subject of immigration (see Koslowski 2001). Dual citizenship or dual nationality can be claimed through birth, marriage, claiming ancestral lineage or through naturalization.

Until recently there was a 'prevalent distaste' for dual nationality in states around the world; now, particularly post-Cold War, that distaste is dissipating and we may be witnessing a long-term shift toward a more universal acceptance of dual nationality (Spiro 2002: 19-20). Long ago the League of Nations emphasized 'one nationality only', a platform reiterated in the early 1960s by the Council of Europe Convention on the Reduction of Multiple Nationality (see Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer 2001). By 1997 the Council of Europe had changed tack, producing the European Convention on Nationality which advocates that parents with different nationalities may transfer these both to their children (see Faist 2001).

There is now an upward trend in claims for dual citizenship/nationality, produced especially through migration. The loosening of rules concerning dual citizenship represents a global trend, particularly among migrant sending countries (Hansen and Weil 2002). It is reported that at present some eighty-nine countries –about half the world's countries– have some form of dual citizenship (Fritz 1998, Rogers 2001e). 'International and regional instruments,' according to a United Nations report (UNPD 1998), 'also seem to be reconciling principles of nationality with the trends towards multiple identities. This is evident by the reorientation of instruments regarding dual or multiple nationality.'

From an American perspective, Peter Schuck (1998: 153) writes that 'With current legal and illegal immigration approaching record levels, naturalization petitions quintupling in the last five years to almost two million annually, and legal changes in some of our largest source countries that encourage (and are often designed to encourage) naturalization in the United States, dual citizenship is bound to proliferate.' It is estimated that more than a half million children born in the United States each year have at least one additional nationality (Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer 2001). Among the one million people that naturalized in the USA in 1996, nine out of ten main countries of origin allow some form of dual nationality or citizenship (Fritz 1998). Similarly in 1996 seven of the ten largest immigrant groups in New York City had the right to be dual nationals (Foner 2000).

In other Western states, official attitudes on dual citizenship or dual nationality vary

considerably. The United Kingdom 'is perfectly indifferent' while France is tolerant and increasingly liberalising (Hansen and Weil 2002: 6-7). Even in countries like Germany that traditionally do not tolerate dual citizenship, Thomas Faist (2001) points out, about one fourth to one third of all naturalizations from the 1970s to the 1990s resulted in multiple citizenship. Additionally, every seventh German marriage is with a foreigner, leading to two nationalities of the offspring under German law, and the millions of *Aussiedler* (ethnic German repatriates) who arrived since 1989 were not obliged to give up their Russian or Kazakh citizenship (Thränhardt 2002).

The transnational identities, border-crossings and mixed political orders suggested by dual citizenship/nationality can be interpreted either as contributing to, or hindering, the integration of newcomers (Faist 2001). Such arguments are taken up by Randall Hansen and Patrick Weil (2002), who discuss five arguments against dual citizenship/nationality: (1) it can produce competing loyalties, (2) it creates a security threat, (3) it impedes immigrant integration, (4) it increases international instability, (5) it violates equality by giving dual nationals a wider range of rights and opportunities. Hansen and Weil engage these arguments by pointing out, among other things, that: (1) loyalty can indeed be multiple (e.g., the project of the European Union is based on this), (2) the security threat exists independently of dual citizenship/nationality, (3) far from impeding immigrant integration, dual citizenship/nationality furthers it (policies tolerant of dual citizenship/nationality are shown to increase naturalization rates), (4) the instability problem –exemplified in matters of military service, taxation and inheritance rules– is lessening through bilateral negotiations, and (5) equality issues are a concern, but the additional rights and opportunities offered by dual citizenship/nationality are often not much greater than those already extended by permanent resident status.

A kind of watering-down of the meaning of citizenship and nationality is another concern for many as well. 'A second or even a third passport,' writes Mark Fritz (1998: 1), 'has become not just a link to a homeland but also a glorified travel visa, a license to do business, a stake in a second economy, and escape hatch, even a status symbol.' This is seen by some as promoting a kind of 'citizenship of convenience' (Ibid.).

On the migrant sending country side, dual citizenship has been difficult to push through many parliaments since domestic politicians see more disadvantage than advantage in allowing this (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b). They often feel that emigrant or diaspora participation in domestic politics is distinctly not welcome –particularly absentee voting which might give too much domestic oppositional influence to people actually living outside the country.

In any case, as noted above, the incidence and impacts of dual citizenship/nationality are on the rise around the world, and migrant transnationalism plays a key role in this growth. In addition to shaping actual practices of migrants, such a trend is having important outcomes in government policy. As T. Alexander Aleinikoff and Douglas Klusmeyer (2001: 87) understand it, there is 'an emerging international consensus that the goal [of state policies] is no longer to reduce plural nationality as an end in itself, but to manage it as an inevitable feature of an increasingly interconnected and mobile world.'

'Homeland' political allegiances

IT IS WELL documented that over one hundred years ago many migrants maintained acute interest in the political plight of their place of origin (see e.g. Foner 2000). Now such interests –and particularly the ability to act upon them– have been heightened due to advances in communication, cheapness of transport and policy shifts such as the extension of dual citizenship/nationality.

Within and around transnational migrant communities, the politics of homeland can take a variety of forms (see Koopmans and Statham 2001, Guarnizo et al. 2003, Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a). Such forms include: exile groups organizing themselves for return, groups lobbying on behalf of a homeland, external offices of political parties, migrant hometown associations, and opposition groups campaigning or planning actions to effect political change in the homeland. Some migrant associations also manage to carry out dual programmes of action aimed at both sending and receiving countries (Østergaard-Nielsen 2001). Luis Guarnizo, Alejandro Portes and William Haller (2003) outline two major modes of transnational political participation:

Transnational electoral participation includes membership in a political party in the country of origin, monetary contributions to these parties, and active involvement in political campaigns in the polity of origin. Transnational non-electoral politics includes membership in a hometown civic association, monetary contributions to civic projects in the community of origin, and regular membership in charity organizations sponsoring projects in the home country. Non-electoral activities are political because they influence local and regional governments by determining which public projects receive migrants' financial support. By so doing, they compel authorities to take immigrant wishes and priorities into account.

'Homeland' political allegiances may involve additional dimensions, as well, in such highly diverse forms as:

- diasporic politics. These include the interests of long-established, subsequent generations stemming from migration (e.g. Irish Americans concerned with the situation in Northern Ireland) or religious/ethnic communities who may have never even lived in a 'homeland' (e.g. relationships between some diasporic Jews and the state of Israel);
- provisions for absentee voting. Examples can be found among overseas nationals returning home en masse to vote in elections in Israel –sometimes with political parties paying for flights, high-profile unofficial polls among expatriate South Africans, and large-scale voting at overseas embassies as in recent Indonesian and Algerian elections (Rogers 1999b);
- buying-in to homeland regimes. A prime illustration occurred in 1990 when Croatians abroad paid \$4 million towards the election campaign of Franjo Tuđman, and were rewarded with representation in parliament: 12 of 120 seats were allotted to diaspora Croats, more than to Croatia's own ethnic minorities (*The Economist* 2003a);
- key roles in war and peace. For years the financial backing of Tamil and Eritrean migrants sustained the wars in Sri Lanka and along the border with Ethiopia, but now these migrant diasporas are having a role in shaping the peace and facilitating post-conflict reconstruction (*The Economist* 2003a, Koser 2002);
- mass protest and consciousness-raising. A successful model of this followed the 1999 capture of Kurdish leader Abdullah Öcalan, when within a day organized mass demonstrations among Kurds took place around the world, bringing Kurdish issues to global attention (Rogers 1999a);
- overseas support for insurgency and terrorism. The potential role of migrant communities appears in backing guerrilla movements such as among Tamils or Kurds (Byman et al. 2001) and terrorist actions as among Palestinian or Irish political movements (Hoffman 1998).

The kind and degree of participation in 'homeland' politics differs with reference to a series of contextual factors, including the history of specific migration and settlement processes and political conditions in the country of residence (Guarnizo et al. 2003). Overall, however, homeland political allegiance and engagement rests on the re-configuration of identities-borders-orders, such that people from a particular place regard themselves as legitimate members of the collective identity and social order of a place even though they are outside of its borders.

According to Fitzgerald (2000: 106) such a reconfiguration posits 'a model of citizenship that emphasizes rights over obligations, passive entitlements, and the assertion of an interest in the public space without a daily presence.' There is a tension, he (Ibid.) goes on to say, between 'a reconceptualization of the polis as the transnational public space of the imagined community and the assertion that the polis should still be defined as a geographic space where citizens live together.' Hence we see governments of countries of emigration increasingly invoking national solidarity across state borders. This was exemplified by Vicente Fox's campaigning among Mexicans in California during 2000, in which he played upon the broader boundaries of an imagined nation and declared he would be the first President 'to govern for 118 million Mexicans,' including 100 million in Mexico and 18 million living outside the country (Rogers 2000; Fitzgerald 2000). Similarly following the Los Angeles riots of 1992, South Korean politicians evoked images of Korean-Americans as a 'colony' of the homeland (Shain 1999: 5), while in her 1990 inaugural address as Irish President, Mary Robinson proclaimed herself leader of the extended Irish family abroad. During recent election campaigns in Turkey and the Dominican Republic, candidates went abroad to encourage support through overseas 'nationals'. These notions of nationals abroad are akin to the concept of the 'deterritorialized nation-state,' in which boundaries are defined socially rather than geographically (Basch et al. 1994, Glick Schiller and Fouron 1998).

Pervasive rhetoric about extended nations abroad helps explain the fact that overseas communities are increasingly engaging themselves in the economic, social and political life of their country of origin. Meanwhile sending states 'are trying to channel this engagement to their own advantage' (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b). But although they use the same rhetoric, migrants and their sending states often have different expectations. Eva Østergaard-Nielsen (Ibid.) explains that,

While sending countries are quick to call for their expatriate population's economic and political contribution to development in the country of origin it is clear that most expatriates and their representative organizations expect this to be a two way deal. Emigrants want their country of origin to support their struggle for equal rights and against discrimination on the labour market. More established migrant and diaspora groups demand more transparency and good governance in order to feel that their remittances and foreign direct investment is spent in the best possible way. And if migrants are expected to be good representatives and do some lobbying for their country of origin abroad, then they would often like some influence on the policies that they are expected to represent

Ideas, activities and rhetoric find their way into government policies. There are a variety of reasons why specific countries develop certain policies toward expatriates (Levitt 2003). Policies regarding overseas nationals are usually to encourage a sense of membership (but not return) among sending states toward their perceived national communities abroad (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b). These include special ministries or government offices devoted to overseas nationals, special investment opportunities, special voting rights and, as we have seen, dual nationality/

citizenship. Their effects, however, are broadly similar: 'Such policies,' Levitt (2003) believes, 'are reinventing the role of states outside of territorial boundaries and in this way reconfiguring traditional understandings of sovereignty, nation, and citizenship'

Migrant transnational practices play a direct part in re-configuring identities-borders-orders. However, it is clear that at the same time many basic structures of the nation-state are intact as it continues to exercise sovereignty over populations present on its territory. Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (2001) stress that the different ways migrants are enabled, or constrained, to make their homeland (and local) political claims in different countries demonstrate that nation-states are alive and well and shaping migrants' transnational political practices. The transnational allegiances and political practices of migrants appear anomalous juxtaposed with the persistent principles of territorially based sovereign rule.

Summary

THE DISCUSSION IN this section has endorsed the view, expressed by Held et al. (1999: 9), that 'the power of national governments is not necessarily diminished by globalization but on the contrary is being reconstituted and restructured in response to the growing complexity of processes of governance in a more interconnected world.' Political features of migrant transnationalism –particularly surrounding dual citizenship/nationality and 'homeland' allegiances– are contributing to a fundamental reconfiguration of the conceptual nexus 'identities-borders-orders'.

Though conceptual, such reconfiguration has real impacts in policies, legal structures and national imaginaries. This is apparent when we recall what each part of the analytical triad entails. Here, among other things, 'identities' concern matters of membership, belonging, loyalty, and moral and political values; 'borders' involve territoriality, admission, legal status and deportation; 'orders' relate to sovereignty, implications of legal status, civil, social and political rights, obligations, and access to public resources. Migrants' transnational practices have implications for each of these areas of state interest and policy.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION: RE-INSTITUTIONALIZING DEVELOPMENT

GUARNIZO (2003) EMPHASIZES THAT economic aspects of migrant transnationalism include numerous activities and myriad impacts. Such variety may often be seen within a single group, as shown by Patricia Landolt (2001) when she describes –among Salvadoran migrants from the same origins and to the same destinations– a wide range of individual and household transnational economic activities.

Some economic activities directly occupy migrants, such as transnational ethnic entrepreneurship (Portes et al. 2002) or the facilitation of international trade (Light et al. 2002). Others only indirectly engage migrants, especially spin-off industries catering for migrant transnational practices. Indeed, Guarnizo (2003) discerns, 'some of the fastest segments of the telephone, air transportation, and financial industries are international long-distance calling, ethnic tourism, and the private remittance of money.' There are industries or enterprises (such as supermarkets or breweries) that are based in migrant sending countries but reach out to customers in diaspora. In Ecuador, for instance, hundreds of new business services have been established catering to emigrants, including travel agencies, cyber cafes and companies

specialising in shipping abroad traditional Ecuadorian foods and medicinal herbs (Rogers 2001c). Yet other economic facets of migrant transnationalism involve government schemes to attract migrant's foreign currency, such as expatriate bonds, high interest foreign currency accounts and tax exemptions for saving and investment.

Economically, by far the most transformative processes and phenomena of migrant transnationalism have concerned remittances, the money migrants send to their families and communities of origin. The following sections consider several significant dimensions of remittances and their transformative effects and potentials, particularly for homeland development.

Remittances

'REMITTANCES HAVE BECOME the most visible evidence and measuring stick for the ties connecting migrants with their societies of origin,' writes Guarnizo (2003). There are many studies probing the volume of remittances, their determinants and impacts in migrant sending contexts, and their channels of transference. Remittances are sent by all types of migrant workers: male and female, legal and undocumented, long-term and temporary, manual and highly skilled. Money is transferred through banks, agencies of various kinds, directly on-line, through professional couriers or through social networks.

Drawing upon research in El Salvador, Landolt (2001: 234) richly describes some of the ways remittances affect families and communities:

Households that receive remittances demonstrate tangible improvement in their standard of living. Remittance dollars grant access to education and health, and may permit a family to buy agricultural land or make improvements on an existing property. Remittances, combined with knowledge of wages and conditions in Salvadoran settlement cities, may also alter the labourer's relationship to the local economy. Weighing the value of their labour in transnational terms, workers have more leverage to reject the miserably low wages offered by Salvadoran employers. Entire communities are transformed, as enterprises, land holdings, and basic survival increasingly revolve around the remittance transfer. In turn, locals inserted in the circuits of Salvadoran economic transnationalism prosper relative to marginal, non-transnational locations, which remain mired in poverty. As they subsidize households and alleviate the worst forms of poverty, remittances finally have the unintended consequence of perpetuating a bankrupt economic system.

As Landolt suggests, remittances have broad effects, including the stimulation of change within a variety of socio-cultural institutions (such as local status hierarchies, gender relations, marriage patterns and consumer habits; Vertovec 2000). However, it is the economic impacts of remittances that receive most attention.

In numerous settings around the world, remittances have been shown to be directly invested in small businesses such as manufacturing and crafts companies, market halls, bakeries and transport agencies (Taylor 1999, van Doorn 2001). However, various studies show differing proportions of remittances spent on consumer goods versus 'productive' investments. Among the reported negative impacts of migrant remittances are the following. Remittances are said to: displace local jobs and incomes; induce consumption spending (often on foreign imports); inflate local prices of land, housing, and food; create disparity, envy between recipients and non-recipients; and create a culture of economic dependency.

Then again, J. Edward Taylor (1999), among others, has criticized much of the standard research on remittances. He points out that most surveys commonly assume a naïve model of remittance expenditure; instead, he says, there is a need to consider whole-household and community economy. Taylor (Ibid.: 64) emphasizes that ‘remittances may reshape migrant sending economies through indirect channels that are missed by traditional research approaches.’ This view corroborates the often-cited research by Durand and his associates (1996) demonstrating the multiplier effect of ‘migradollars’. Durand et al. (Ibid.: 425) argue that work focusing solely on the productive uses of remittances ‘have ignored the indirect effects that consumer spending has on economic production and income.’ Their research on multiplier effects suggests the (then) \$2 billion in remittances that entered the Mexican economy were responsible for \$6.5 billion increase in production in agriculture, manufacturing, services and commerce. ‘In short,’ says Taylor (1999: 72), ‘an important channel through which remittances stimulate productive investments may, paradoxically, be though migrant-households’ consumption spending.’ Supporting this view, one study in Bangladesh estimated that remittances of \$610 million created demand for \$351 million in Bangladeshi goods and services and generated at least 577,000 jobs (in Arnold 1992).

It must be stressed that a large proportion of migrants send money to families for mere subsistence (Suro et al. 2002). Also, schooling and other costs of education are often not factored into studies on the ‘productive’ use of remittances. ‘In any case,’ argues Peter Stalker (2000: 81), ‘it can be argued that many forms of consumption, particularly on housing, better food, education, and health care, are a good form of investment that will lead to higher productivity.’

In order not to paint a misleading picture, it needs to be stressed that migrants do indeed often channel remittances directly into investment, and that in this field we are not just talking about countries of the South. Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, for instance, thriving remittance systems are in place among migrants. Polish workers in Germany, for instance, send home as much as 80 per cent of their earnings (Vickerman 2002). Recent research suggests that throughout Central and Eastern Europe, moreover, migrants’ money goes more toward investment – especially for establishing small businesses – than it does towards consumption (Piracha and Vickerman 2002).

The sheer scale of contemporary global remittances itself represents a type of transformation. Figures from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) show a massive increase in the amount of formal remittances worldwide, from less than \$2 billion in 1970 to at least \$105 billion in 1999 (van Doorn 2001). Over 60 per cent of this amount goes to developing countries, and over the last decade remittances have become a much larger source of income for developing countries than official development assistance (Gammeltoft 2002). Such figures, however, must be taken as merely suggestive since the categories used to estimate them are contestable. Moreover, these figures are based on official transfers reported by central banks of receiving countries, who in turn rely on reports filed by remittance intermediaries. Therefore the IMF estimates are likely to be considerably short of real remittance values – indeed, it has been suggested that officially recorded remittances represent ‘only the tip of the iceberg’ (Puri and Ritzena 1999: 3).

Beyond official figures, unofficial remittance transfers may amount to another \$15 billion (*The Economist* 2003a). As much as 46 per cent of Mexican remittances may be hand-carried to recipients (Lowell and de la Garza 2000). In many African countries it is estimated that perhaps only 50 per cent of remittances go through official channels (Mohan 2002: 134). One survey in Japan found that 70 per cent of Thai and Filipino workers sent money home by illegal means, while in 1998 Japanese police found underground banks sending up to 176 billion yen (\$1.48 billion) in illegal transfers to China, Thailand, South Korea, Iran, Taiwan,

Myanmar and Nepal (Rogers 1999c). In Pakistan formal remittances (currently over \$1 billion) are thought to represent only a fifth or sixth of all remittances (Rogers 2001d).

Whether through official or unofficial means, remittances mean a lot to the countries –to say nothing of the families and communities– that receive them. In 2000 remittances from abroad comprised more than 10 per cent the gross domestic product (GDP) of countries such as El Salvador, Jamaica, Haiti, Ecuador, Eritrea, Jordan, and Yemen (UNPD 2002). They account for as much as one-quarter of national income of Nicaragua. Remittances have exceeded the total value of exports in El Salvador, and constitute more than half the value of exports in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua (Orozco 2001). The Inter-American Development Bank calculates that across Latin America the annual growth of remittances is 7-10 per cent: the 2001 figure of more than £23 billion in remittances for this region may be worth more than \$70 billion by 2012 (Rogers 2002). Remittances are so important to the current and future economy of many nations that they are now used as a valuation instrument to upgrade the credit-worthiness of impoverished countries to secure large-scale international loans (Guarnizo 2003).

Still, most experts on remittances argue that recipients are not getting their full worth. Most formal financial transfer institutions charge a fee from 6 to 15 per cent and additional costs can make the total deduction over 20 per cent (Lowell and de la Garza 2000). Of Latin America's \$23 billion in remittances in 2001, it is reckoned some \$3 billion was lost in transfer fees (Rogers 2002). Government investigations, campaigns by non-government organizations (NGOs) and class action law suits have all focused on the often exorbitant fees charged by international transfer agencies like Western Union and MoneyGram. The high and uncertain costs of transfers are known to be the most serious concern voiced by remitters (Suro et al. 2002).

It is widely believed that the worth of remittances would be much higher if the cost of transferring money was lower. A study of over seventy remittance companies demonstrates that improved and increased competition in the financial transfer sector will drive down the level of fees (Orozco 2002). Within Latin America, it is estimated that reducing the transfer costs to 5 per cent would free up more than \$1 billion a year for some of the poorest, migrant background households in the USA (Suro et al. 2002). Some agencies are considering moves toward a flat fee rather than percentage. There are currently a number of moves within government (such as the Wire Transfer Fairness and Disclosure Act of 1999), among NGOs and in financial institutions themselves to create more transparency in pricing and greater consumer awareness.

More money, effectively transferred, should have considerable consequences for positively changing the circumstances of those who get it. Given that recipients of remittances are largely in underdeveloped contexts, how can remittances contribute to development?

... And development

EXPERTS AGREE THAT remittances by themselves are not a panacea for impoverishment. Indeed,

remittances flowing to emigration areas often wind up producing what John Kenneth Galbraith called 'private affluence and public squalor,' or new homes reachable only over dirt roads. What is clearly needed is some way of harnessing some fraction of the remittances in order to develop the infrastructure that can help a region develop economically. (Widgren and Martin 2002: 223)

Some economic advisers have suggested that migrant-sending countries could earmark, perhaps through an import tariff, a portion of remittances for a specific development fund.

Only North Korea has successfully implemented such a scheme, while there have been failed attempts to create such funds in the Philippines, Pakistan, Thailand and Bangladesh (Puri and Ritzema 1999). It is likely most migrants themselves are, or would be, sceptical of such schemes: this is due not only to anxieties over possible corruption, but also to past experiences and frustrations with the ineffective, preferential or nonexistent development programmes of national governments and international agencies.

Susan Martin (2001: 5) asks, 'to what effect can the multiplier effect of remittances be increased by initiatives to encourage local purchase of locally-produced goods?' Perhaps a more laissez-faire policy climate will suffice, such that migrants and their families can find themselves the right ways to develop their communities and generate multiplier effects. This could be achieved perhaps with NGO advice, appropriate banking schemes and government support (but not control).

The multiplier effect involves a tricky equation, however. It is never so clear as to what counts as costs, and what as benefits, and what as ultimately productive spending of remittances. For instance, remittance investment in housing is said to generate more multiplier effects than any other industry (Taylor 1999). But in Ecuador, for example, where some 95 per cent of remittances are spent on new housing, this expenditure fuelled substantial inflation in land prices and construction costs that impacted negatively on most of the local population (Rogers 2001c). In Egypt remittances are often used to purchase gold, which has a high cultural status value but would appear to be a fairly non-productive use without multiplier effects. Yet there and many other settings, gold is locally regarded as a kind of insurance –something that will retain financial value in times of uncertainty and high inflation– which at a later date can be advantageously cashed in and spent in ways that stimulate local economies (Fouad Ibrahim, personal communication).

It should be kept in mind that 'development' includes not only matters of economic growth, but social (including gender, health, and civil), environmental and technological matters. Health is one of the most perceptible areas. In many places one of the most common and extensive uses of remittance money is toward health care expenses (DeSipio 2000). Some NGOs are developing schemes to creatively use remittances to provide regular transnational health care coverage. A different kind of multiplier or 'protective effect' concerns the general development of health profiles among remittance-receiving families. Research by Reanne Frank and Robert Hummer (2002) points to a direct correlation indicating that babies in migrant-sending families are less likely to suffer infant death or to be of low birth weight –a key determinant in health outcomes later in life. Remittances offset the effects of poverty by raising standards of living, improving nutrition and facilitating access to medical care. It is conjectured that financial remittances are also likely to flow alongside what Levitt (2001b) calls social remittances (values and behaviours) –in this case health information and practices. Frank and Hummer (Ibid.: 761) conclude that more attention should be given to 'how transnational activity affects the relationship between health and migration and in what ways.'

To appreciate more fully the impacts of remittances on development, it must also be recognized that these vary according to the level of inquiry, from individual to community to nation or state (Skeldon 1997). An institutional structure linking these levels can be found in migrant organizations.

... And hometown associations

THERE IS A long history of migrant associations sending money for collective benefit in the

home town or village. Nancy Foner (2000: 171-2) illustrates this by pointing to how, between 1914-1924, New York's Jewish *landsmanshaftn* or hometown associations sent millions of dollars to their war-ravaged communities of origin in Europe. Yet now 'we are seeing a very specific type of home-town association, one directly concerned with socio-economic development in its communities of origin and increasingly engaging both governmental and civic entities in sending and receiving countries in these projects' (Sassen 2002: 226).

There has been a marked growth in the number and function of migrant hometown associations (HTAs) throughout the 1990s (see for instance Orozco 2000a, 2001, Lowell and de la Garza 2000, Alarcón 2001). For instance in Chicago alone, the number of 'Mexican clubs' funnelling money to specific localities in Mexico to build schools, roads and churches jumped from 35 in 1995 to 181 in 2002 (*The Economist* 2003b). A concurrent change in HTA structures and roles has been observed as well (Mahler 1998, Goldring 1998, Alarcón 2001, Martin 2001, Levitt 2001a). Their significance should not be underestimated. One study in Los Angeles found that 'HTAs are clearly the most numerous and ubiquitous form of voluntary organization among first generation immigrants' (Zabin and Rabadan 1998: 1). Furthermore, HTAs represent the clearest evidence of the extensive institutionalisation of transnational ties (Orozco 2001).

Manuel Orozco (2000a) contends that HTAs exhibit at least four features: (1) they conduct a range of activities, from charitable aid to investment; (2) their structures vary; (3) their decisions depend on factors such as resource base, organizational structure and relationship with hometown; and (4) they tend to have a small economic base. HTA activities embrace charitable work such as donating clothes, goods for religious festivals and construction materials for repairing the town church. They raise money for improving infrastructure such as sewage treatment plants and health care facilities. They support educational institutions, such as providing scholarships and library books. Yet another kind of HTA activity involves managing collective capital investment for income-generating projects in sending contexts that are often co-managed by locals and migrants (Orozco 2000b, World Bank 2001). HTAs also play a significant role in organizing disaster relief following catastrophes such as Hurricane Mitch in Central America in 1998 and the earthquakes in Turkey in 1999 and in Gujarat in 2001 (Rogers 2001b).

HTAs are not of a single kind, nor are they the only mode of migrant transnationalism involved in collective remittance sending. Caroline Ndofo-Tah identifies a range of diasporic organizations involved in African development, including hometown associations, ethnic associations, alumni associations, religious associations, professional associations, investment groups, political groups and supplementary schools (in Mohan and Zack-Williams 2002). Their activities include community-to-community transfers, identity-building, lobbying in current home on issues relation to homeland, trade and investment with homeland, and payment of taxes in the homeland.

These kinds of transnational migrant institutions and activities are increasingly found around the world among migrant communities from highly diverse origins in developing countries. Whatever the form of collective remitting, Alejandro Portes and Patricia Landolt (2000: 543) observe, 'Life conditions in municipalities that receive "grassroots transnational aid" confirm the economic relevance of this collective remittance strategy. Towns with a hometown association have paved roads, electricity, and freshly painted public buildings. ...[T]he quality of life in transnational towns is quite simply better.'

'Consider the Salvadoran "United Community of Chinameca": their first largesse was \$5,000 to build a school, and then they built a septic tank worth \$10,000. Later they constructed a Red Cross clinic at a cost of \$43,000, and bought an ambulance worth \$32,000' (Lowell and de la Garza 2000: 2). Hagan (1994) likewise describes how a hometown group in Houston, calling themselves *Amigos de San Pedro*, organized and paid for medical supplies and a health clinic in

San Pedro, Guatemala. They also established organization linkages and exchange programmes with American health workers. Another noteworthy case is the University of Hargeisa, established in 1998 in Somaliland (Mohan 2002). This was made possible by transnational networking of Somalis in Australia, Italy, Sweden, Kuwait, Canada, the USA and Britain. While local businesses in Somaliland took responsibility for rehabilitating a dilapidated, government-owned school building, Somalis in Sweden provided 750 chairs and tables and Somalis in Kuwait provided computers. The Somaliland Forum, an Internet-based diasporic network, raises money, maintains email groups and forms taskforces to support the University.

Such forms of migrant transnational organization are so importantly engaged in local development that, Smith (1998: 227-8) believes, they are generating 'parallel power structures' that are 'forcing the state to engage them in new ways, either in kind or degree, but engage the state they must.' Some state and local governments match the funds raised by HTAs in order to magnify their impact (Martin 2001). Since 1993, one of the most noted programmes of this type has been the 'two for one' initiative of the *Programa para las Comunidades Mexicanas en el Extranjero* (PCME, Program for Mexican Communities Abroad; see Smith 1998, Goldring 1998, 2001, Mahler 2000). The programme operates through a network of 42 consulates and 23 institutes or Mexican cultural centres in the USA (Orozco 2001). The idea of 'two for one' is that for every dollar raised by a hometown association abroad, the state (e.g., of Zacatecas) and the federal government each put in a dollar for a community project. In 1995 in Zacatecas alone the 'two for one' programme added to the HTAs' \$600,000 to provide \$1.8 million towards 56 projects in 34 Mexican towns (Mahler 1998).

'Two for one' was subsequently extended to a 'three for one' programme, in which each migradollar is matched with one dollar from the federal government, one from the state government and one from the municipal government. Between 1999-2001, migrants invested \$2.7 million into such programmes (World Bank 2001). Despite some limitations, these initiatives in Mexico 'have produced a deep impact in the local communities and have been recognized as new and effective forms of public-private collaboration' (Ibid.: 6). The ultimate objective, according to World Bank analysts, would be 'to develop a self-sustainable private system for the development of projects and local programs financed totally or partially with remittances and savings from the Mexican community abroad. Available funds of international cooperation could be used for supporting some of the initiatives' (Ibid.: 7).

HTAs are not the only players in these kinds of schemes. Financial services firms such as Raza Express have joined in, contributing \$0.75 to the collective funds for each \$300 sent through their company. In this way Raza Express has contributed more than \$50,000, alongside \$500,000 from the government of Jalisco, in schemes creating 15,000 jobs (Orozco 2001).

The collective remittance work of HTAs for development is not entirely rosy, however. Disagreements on how to use the funds raised by HTAs are endemic. For example, one HTA raised \$2 million for Jalpa, a town of 13,500 in the state of Zacatecas, but got into a dispute over how to spend the money (*Migration News*, December 2002). Sarah Mahler (1998) and Luin Goldring (2001) both emphasize that while HTAs enjoy a veneer of altruism and democratic structure, they often significantly exclude women, reinforce existing power relations within a community, sometimes promote projects that are not the most needed but which generate the most symbolic power, and may be open to cooptation and exploitation by government. Further, Portes and Landolt (2000) point out problems of generating trust within HTAs due to suspicions of corruption, abuse of leaders' offices and lack of democratic representation.

Relationships between HTAs and states of origin are not unproblematic, either. HTAs might be 'left doing the lion's share of the government's work' in development while the government itself steps back from this responsibility (Levitt 2001a: 209). Mahler (2000) predicts that in

Central America the region will see an ever-increasing amount of government activity concerning emigrants abroad, particularly regarding their remittances. 'While such efforts are comprehensible,' she (Ibid.: 32) says, 'they are drawing increasing criticism because they place responsibility for Central America's economic stability disproportionately on the shoulders of migrants.' Additionally, the more governments attempt to control and channel remittances, the more migrants are pushed toward remitting via unofficial means (Meyers 1998).

In proportion to total remittances sent through families, collective remittances channelled through HTAs and other migrant transnational frameworks are small although likely to increase (Orozco 2001). Despite this fact, and that of the sometimes problematic nature of such organizations and their relationship to the state, the forms of institutionalisation they represent have much valuable potential for effectively directing remittances to highly needed and effective forms of local development. Other, newer forms of institutionalisation in the shape of micro-finance present important possibilities as well.

... And micro-finance

TAYLOR (1999: 74) USEFULLY PROPOSES that 'Migration is likely to have a larger effect on development where local institutions exist to gather savings by migrant households and make them available to local producers –that is, where migrants do not have to play the simultaneous roles of workers, savers, investors, and producers.' National governments have sought to establish economic schemes, such as special investment funds or savings accounts, to channel remittances and encourage business development. These have met with very mixed results (Puri and Ritzema 1999).

Microfinance institutions (MFIs) offer prospects for channelling migrant remittances in ways similar to those suggested by Taylor. The idea of MFIs began in the 1970s but took off among development agencies and researchers during the 1990s. More recently there has occurred what Marguerite Robinson (2001) describes as 'a paradigm shift' in microfinance development strategies, from government- or donor-subsidized credit delivery systems to self-sufficient institutions providing finance on very local levels. MFIs have the potential to meet a massive global demand for local banking services that many governments and donor agencies increasingly recognize as a priority (Ibid.; also see www.microfinancegateway.org).

A core function of MFIs is to provide small, low-interest loans (microcredit, e.g. from \$10 to \$3,000) and savings services to poor families –and often specifically to women– who ordinarily do not have access to formal financial institutions. Such loans are to help people engage in productive activities (involving, for instance, small farms, petty trading, craft enterprises or local business). MFIs offer credit, savings and insurance in often remote rural areas. They also may give financial and business advice and training. Many MFIs are non-profit NGOs, credit unions or cooperatives while there are also new commercial MFIs. Currently augmented by new information technologies, MFIs are growing in number, extent and function throughout the developing world.

One critical problem facing 'the microfinance revolution' is scarcity of capital (M. Robinson 2001). Channelled remittances –especially pooled funds represented by HTAs– can go a long way toward supporting the establishment and work of MFIs. In contrast to rural credit programmes which earlier absorbed large sums of money over several decades, many relevant agencies –such as the International Labour Organization, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank– are increasingly interested in the potential interface between remittances and MFIs. The Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank promotes and funds initiatives that will allow emigrants to invest their money in develop-

ment projects in places of origin. In 2001 the Fund extended a grant of \$1.1 million to support projects in Mexico facilitating the linkage of remittance transfers, local financial services and productive investments by migrants and their families. A further six such projects have been developed in 2002.

At one workshop on these issues convened by the International Labour Organization (ILO 2000: 15), it was agreed that microfinance institutions 'appear particularly well suited to capture and transform remittances for several reasons: (i) they deal with small-scale transactions where personal relations were important, (ii) they extensively involve groups and associations of intermediaries and (iii) they integrate the formal and the informal sector practices.' The ILO workshop group also advocated a number of additional factors that should contribute to the successful linkage of MFIs and remittances, including the provision of a large number of local contact points, a wide range of financial services products at the local level, and the widening of partnerships between micro-finance institutions and other organizations. The ILO group also believed that governments should at best mainly observe, but also act to create a positive regulatory framework and ideally provide matching funds to stimulate the use of MFIs for routing remittances for local community development.

Shivani Puri and Tineke Ritzema (1999: 25) suggest in a report to the ILO that,

rather than focussing on 'migrant-specific' investment programmes, labour exporting countries might wish to induce micro-finance institutions to capture remittances. The basic idea would be to design policies to transfer funds of the migrant workers through to entrepreneurs. Savings and credit schemes and investment instruments specifically designed to suit migrant workers' risk profiles could be important vehicles.

Puri and Ritzema emphasize that labour-exporting countries would benefit from policies and programmes that enable micro-finance institutions that are trusted at the village level to play a key role in directing remittances, thus ensuring that families have access to safe and secure savings and credit schemes as well as business skill development programmes.

One of the best ways to achieve remittance-MFI benefits may be through credit unions, who would use any transfer fees to reinvest in community development (Martin 2001). Especially in comparison to banks and financial transfer agencies, credit unions are shown to offer some of the best practices in remitting opportunities to migrants (Orozco 2002). In fact, the World Council of Credit Unions has recently established the International Remittance Network, or IRNet (Grace 2001). Set up originally in cooperation with the Mexican government, this should enable credit union members to use IRNet's money-transfer services to 41 countries at one-third to one-half the commercial cost (Rogers 2001a). Indeed, IRNet charges less than \$7 for most transactions. The use of credit unions can also provide needed access to savings, loans and insurance services, as well as broadly to 'increase the culture of banking' in both migrant sending and receiving countries (Grace 2001.: 4). This may represent a particularly significant transformation, as research shows that many if not 'most remittance senders and receivers do not currently have bank accounts of any sort and probably never have' (Suro et al. 2002: 17).

Another set of proposals seeks largely to cut out the financial middleman altogether. In 2002 the Bank of America began a low-cost service that allows people to use tellers, phone calls or the Internet to send money to relatives in Mexico, who in turn can get cash from any of the 20,000 automated-teller machines throughout the country (Wessel 2002). Naturally, this idea is only good for those with realistic access to such machines. A further idea is that of creating 'telecenters-cum-microbanks' in an array of village localities (S. Robinson 2001). In this way, it is proposed a collectively managed and secure system of digital remittance pooling

through Internet satellite facilities could considerably lower the transfer cost (from currently sometimes 20 per cent down to perhaps 5 per cent) while providing rural areas with microcredit and banking services. These centres might be appendices to established credit unions or local savings and loan institutions. 'On the back side of each village microbank is a telecenter –a public, low-cost access point for Internet and IP services, including telephony' (Ibid.: 4). These could have a role in local institutions and training programmes, especially as auxiliaries to schools, continuous education colleges, and health clinics.

Bangladesh's Grameen Bank is often regarded as an exemplary MFI (cf. Robinson 2001, Jain and Moore 2003). Grameen services 2.4 million borrowers –95 per cent of whom are women– through 1176 outlets. In recent years the bank has branched into a variety of enterprises, including telecommunications. The combined facilities for micro-banking, overseas transfers and international telephony have great development potential, as concluded by a report for the Canadian International Development Agency:

The Grameen Bank's long-term focus on providing electronic communication facilities between its head office, zonal offices and branch offices, together with the telecommunication infrastructure of GrameenPhone, are important steps in enabling it to provide safe electronic banking services that could assist with channelling remittances from overseas workers to their relatives in villages (Richardson et al. 2000: 28).

MFIs are certainly not a solution to all economic problems in developing countries, and they are not without their problems and failures (cf. Jain and Moore 2003). Nevertheless MFIs and the innovations in technology surrounding them have much transformative potential steering remittances –perhaps particularly collective ones– toward optimal development outcomes.

Summary

DRAWING ON A variety of studies for the Inter-American Development Bank, Orozco (2001: 36) observes that 'The links established through remittances suggest radical changes are remaking the look of countries' economies.' Migrant sending countries themselves certainly recognize this. Consequently many have introduced policies to maximize their benefits; in this way, 'Cooperation to increase remittances, reduce the cost of transferring money, and matching that share of remittances that are invested could open a new era in cooperative economic development' (Widgren and Martin 2002: 223).

The local and national economies of developing countries are changing for a variety of concurrent reasons, from the growing power of multilateral economic regimes and shifting international aid policies, through changing commodity markets and emerging patterns of global tourism, to expanding sources and impacts of foreign direct investment. This section has focused on ways in which patterns of migrant transnationalism –particularly surrounding remittances– are contributing to the re-institutionalising of local and national structures of development. Throughout many periods of migration hometown associations have sent money back to villages for the repair of schools and churches. Now the sheer scale, kind and degree of institutionalisation (increasingly involving HTAs and the sending state), along with the use of advanced telecommunications and new methods of financial transfer, have meant that remittances can transform the nature and pace of local development in migrant-sending areas by, among other things, constructing infrastructures, providing equipment and offering finance for enterprise.

Several significant questions continue to concern the place of remittances in national development, including how long remittances will continue to flow, and whether high levels of international migration are needed to sustain remittance levels. Most remittances worldwide continue to be sent by individuals, and these may indeed tail-off over time. Although this source of remittances will diminish, HTA or other forms of institutionalised collective remittance-sending –perhaps increasingly utilizing micro-finance institutions– may be better poised to persist and provide the broadest benefits directly to migrant-sending communities.

CONCLUSION

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN migrant transnational practices and modes of transformation suggested in this paper reflect the progression of changes considered by Portes (2001: 191):

Once migrant colonies become well established abroad, a flow of *transnational* economic and informational resources starts, ranging from occasional remittances to the emergence of a class of full-time transnational entrepreneurs. The cumulative effects of these dynamics come to the attention of national governments who reorient their *international* activities through embassies, consulates, and missions to recapture the loyalty of their expatriates and guide their investments and political mobilizations. The increased volume of demand created by migrant remittances and investments in their home countries support, in turn, the further expansion of the market for multinationals and encourage local firms to go abroad themselves, establishing branches in areas of immigrant concentration. (emphasis in original)

Each set of changes entails small-scale and everyday practices of individuals and groups. Incrementally and cumulatively, these practices may generate far-reaching modes of transformation affecting migrants, their families and communities in places of origin, wider populations surrounding transnational networks, and entire societies permeated by migrant transnationalism.

Many forms of migrant transnationalism and their related modes of transformation are likely to widen, intensify and accelerate. The governments of migrant sending and receiving states will continue to address a range of migrant transnational practices with greater attention and policy intervention. Technological changes (especially the building and extension of infrastructures in developing countries) will make it ever easier and cheaper to communicate and exchange resources, including remittances, across borders and at long-distance. Hometown associations and other such diasporic organizations have become institutionalised to a degree that they will likely be sustained, and probably enhanced, at least over the next several years. Individuals within post-migration second and subsequent generations will probably not maintain the everyday orientations and practices of their migrant forebears, but such parental orientations and practices are apt to have an enduring impression on their identities, interests and socio-cultural activities.

As evident in the massive literature on globalization, an array of global transformations are currently underway due to a confluence of contemporary social, political, economic and technological processes. Migrant transnational practices are stimulated and fostered by many of these globalization processes. In turn, such transnational migrant practices accumulate to augment and perhaps even amplify such transformational processes themselves.

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