Immigrant Transnationalism. A New Analytical Perspective on Political Trasnationalism.

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Abstract

Aunque la ciudadanía nacional ha sido la única forma de incorporación y acomodación de los inmigrantes a una comunidad política y territorialmente definida, dicho modelo de integración no parece ser hoy el más apropiado en un mundo que se caracteriza por un movimiento masivo de personas, dinero y información y una más y más amplia facilidad de comunicación en el tiempo y espacio. El modelo de ciudadanía nacional se encuentra cuestionado por nuevas formas de auto-identificación y afiliación que transcienden las fronteras nacionales.

En este sentido, dos fenómenos en desarrollo parecen tener una influencia particular sobre el concepto tradicional de ciudadanía, esto es: el nacionalismo minoritario y el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes. Sin embargo, el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes, generalmente definido en términos de actividades y identidades económicas, sociales, culturales y religiosas que se dan a través de fronteras políticas permeables (Rainer Bauböck, 2003), parece representar el competidor más serio del modelo de ciudadanía nacional. Además de cuestionar el estado-nación en nombre de otra nación o grupo minoritario, el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes pone también en tela de juicio la idea de sí la ciudadanía debe circunscribirse o no a las fronteras territoriales de una comunidad nacional.

Como proceso social, el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes está muy lejos de ser tan diseminado, no restringido socialmente, deteritorializado y emancipador como para cuestionar de verdad el estado nación **per se**. Generalmente, de acuerdo con diversos estudios empíricos comparados, el activismo político transnacional es efectuado por una minoría muy pequeña, es socialmente restringido a través de las fronteras nacionales, se desarrolla en lugares muy específicos y parece reproducir las asimetrías de poder pre-existentes. La idea de que el transnacionalismo podría llegar a transformar de verdad las asimetrías dentro y a través de los países necesita ser todavía examinada.

El objetivo de este estudio es la exploración normativa del concepto de transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes y la elaboración de una nueva perspectiva empírica que podría medir las características, dimensiones y la extensión de dicho fenómeno social. La estructura del estudio se divide en tres partes. En la primera parte, se presenta el concepto de transnacionalismo en su sentido más amplio y se analizan las varias tipologías desarrolladas sobre él. Después, se explora el concepto de transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes con un énfasis sobre sus varias formas, características y dimensiones. En la segunda parte, se examina el modo en cual el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes puede llegar a cambiar o cuestionar, desde un punto de vista normativo, la concepción tradicional de ciudadanía nacional, exigiendo asimismo un otro tipo de ciudadanía, una ciudadanía'post-nacional' o 'transnacional'.

En la tercera parte, se resuman las diferentes líneas de investigación empírica sobre el transnacionalismo de los inmigrantes. En la ultima parte se pone énfasis sobre una forma particular de transnacionalismo, el transnacionalismo político, que podría verdeadamente cuestionar desde abajo el estado nacional y la concepción tradicional de ciudadanía. Se intenta desarrollar una nueva perspectiva analítica sobre el transnacionalismo político.

Abstract

Even if national citizenship has been the only form of immigrant incorporation and accommodation to a territorial-bounded political community, this model does no longer seem to be appropriated for a world characterised by an increased flow of people, money and information and a continuous fluidisation of time and space. The place does not constitute anymore the key location of common identity formation and accordingly, of economic and social organisation. People move frequently between different countries and maintain important affiliations in each of them. Thus, the model of national citizenship finds itself challenged by new forms of self-identification and overlapping affiliations.

The two evolving phenomena, which seem to influence particularly the traditional conception of national citizenship, are minority nationalism and immigrant transnationalism. In Will Kymlicka' s opinion (2003), immigrant transnationalism - generally defined in terms of economic, social, cultural, religious activities and identities across permeable political boundaries (Bauböck 2003) - seems to be the most obvious contender to the model of national citizenship. Thus, apart from questioning the nation-state in the name of another nation or minority group, immigrant transnationalism also queries the idea that citizenship should be circumscribed within the territorial boundaries of a national community (Kymlicka 2003).

Nevertheless, immigrant transnationalism as a social phenomenon is far from being as widespread, socially unrestrained, 'deterritorialised' and liberator as to really challenge the nation-state system itself. Subsequently, according to various comparative empirical studies, transnational political activism is regularly undertaken by a small minority, is socially restrained across national borders, takes place in quite specific territorial jurisdictions, and appears to reproduce pre-existing power asymmetries. The prospective of transnationalism for transforming asymmetries within and across countries has so far to be determined and proved (Portes et.al. 2003).

The subject of the present study is therefore the normative examination of the concept of immigrant transnationalism and the elaboration of a new analytical perspective on political transnationalism. The structure of the study is divided in four parts. In the first one I analyse the concept of transnationalism in its broader sense and underline the various typologies developed on it. I then examine the concept of immigrant transnationalism and emphasise its various forms, characteristics and dimensions. The second part examines the way in which immigrant transnationalism could come to challenge, from a normative point of view, the nation-state conception of citizenship, requiring thus a new form of citizenship, a 'post-national' or 'transnational' citizenship.

In the third part I summarise the existent lines of empirical research on immigrant transnationalism. The fourth part focuses on political transnationalism, a particular form of transnationalism that could really challenge from below the nation-state system and the traditional conception of citizenship. I thus try to develop a new analytical perspective on political transnationalism.

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Introduction

In the last decades, Europe has become a land of migration. People from South-East Europe and from non-European countries try to settle in Western European societies in search for enhanced economic and social opportunities. They consequently adopt different ways of accommodation and integration. Moreover, complex social phenomena like globalisation and fragmentation (localization) affect migrants and their identities.[170]

Europe continues to change and so do cultural and national identities. The changes, however, are determined not only by global processes and state policies, but shaped also by people themselves through their own needs and aspirations for a better and new life. As a result, the way of being an immigrant and having a cultural identity differs from one socio-cultural environment to another. Migrants and refugees ask for diverse forms of recognition of their existence in the mainstream culture and society, a trend that has recently stimulated much rethinking on the concept of citizenship in its broadest sense and the idea of civil society.

I. Immigrant Transnationalism: Concept and Analytical Perspectives

In this chapter, I first analyse the complex and controversial concept of transnationalism. Then, I highlight some typologies developed in function of how political relations are being defined and of the types of activities and actors involved. Finally, I define immigrant transnationalism, a particular form of transnationalism that, according to the scholarly debate, might affect in long run the traditional conception of national citizenship.

1. Theoretical Debates on Transnationalism

Alejandro Portes (1999) analyses transnationalism by distinguishes among different actors involved. He identifies two main forms of transnationalism: "transnationalism from above" or activities "conducted by powerful institutional actors such as multinational corporations and states" and, "transnationalism from

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[170] For some authors the phenomenon of globalisation refers mainly to economic and political interdependence, global and free market, private entrepreneurship and privatisation of the public sectors (see Castells 1996, Beck 2000, etc.). Other authors reconsider globalisation, not only in terms of increasing political and economic interdependencies, but also in terms of other "cultural" and "subjective matters". Globalisation represents "a multifaceted phenomenon with economic, social, political, cultural, religious and legal dimensions intertwined in most complex ways". It is "contradictory and uneven", giving rise to new and contradictory rights such us, "rights to option" and "rights to roots". Thus, it cannot be associated with "homogenisation, uniformization or unification" on a global scale, but rather goes together with "old and new forms of localisation" or in other words, "deterritorialization" of social relations concurs with "reterritorialisation of social relations" (see Santos 1995: 253, 262, 270).

below" or activities "that are the result of grass-roots initiatives by immigrants and their home country counterparts".[171]

His further typology of cross-border activities (Portes 2001) discriminates among political, economic and socio-cultural activities that are performed by: (a) nation-states (international activities of governments and other national institutions); (b) global institutions (multinational initiatives of global institutions like the Catholic Church and various United Nations' agencies); and (c) non-corporatist private actors (transnational enterprises of nongovernmental and non-corporatist actors from the civil society).

According to Portes, two important premises in defining the concept of transnationalism derive from this typology: (1) the concept of transnationalism, in the way it is being used in contemporary literature, refers mainly to cross-border activities of private actors, including immigrants; so, (2) there is a need for a clear linguistic distinction between transnational activities of private actors (including immigrants), and activities realised by big bureaucracies and other global institutions.

Table 1.1: Examples of international, multinational and transnational activism by different types of actors

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[171] Nongovernmental organisations, human rights activists and movements or, other social movements like environmental ones are also included among those actors that perform transnational activities from below (Portes 1999: 221).

Activities	*Areas*		
	Political	*Economic*	*Socio-Cultural*
International	Establishing foreign embassies and organisations with diplomatic missions (actors: national governments)	Promoting agricultural, animal and fishing exports (actors: economic enterprises from a particular country)	Travelling and inter-change programmes (actors: national universities)
Multinational	Monitoring and improving specific areas of global life (actors: United Nations and other international agencies)	Production and marketing activities (actors: global corporations whose profits depend on various national markets)	Schools and missions in various countries (actors: the Catholic Church and other global religions)
Transnational	a) Global monitoring of human rights implementation (actors: NGOs)	a) Organising boycotts in order to impose to multinational corporations that function in Third World countries better work practices (actors: grass roots activists in First World countries)	a) Charity activities that promote child protection in the poorest countries (actors: NGOs)
	b) Activities to improve social conditions in homelands (actors: civic associations established by immigrants)	b) Establishing enterprises to export/import goods from and to homelands (actors: immigrants)	b) Electing beauty queens and artistic groups in order to participate in homeland annual festivals (actors: immigrant communities)

(Personal elaboration, source: Portes, 2001)

Will Kymlicka (2003), on the other side, perceives minority nationalism and transnationalism as two possible challenges to the traditional model of national citizenship. Yet, in his opinion, minority nationalism "replicates" rather than "challenges" the model of liberal-democratic citizenship within political communities, while transnationalism, as transnational activism and governance, constitutes the most obvious contender to the national model of citizenship.[172]

Kymlicka examines five forms of political activity, which have been described as examples of "transnational citizenship": (1) immigrant transnationalism; (2) transnational advocacy networks; (3) international legal authority; (4) transnational legislative/parliamentary bodies; and (5) intergovernmental regulatory authorities.

Table 1.2: Forms of "Transnational citizenship"

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[172] Kymlicka defines *minority nationalism* as "mono-national political communities,…,which mobilise to maintain or regain their historic rights of self-government, with their own public institutions, operating in their own language". Although minority nationalism asks for forms of ethnic minority accommodation like self-government and collective minority rights, it does not seem to challenge the very idea of nationhood but rather that of statehood like state's sovereignty and its mutually exclusive jurisdiction. State-sovereignty is being challenged especially for its inability to recognise substate national groups and give them the possibility to democratic cultural expressiveness (2003: 13-16).

1. Immigrant transnationalism	2.Transnational advocacy networks	3. International legal authority	4. Transnational legislative/ Parliamentary bodies	5.Intergovernmental regulatory authorities
Immigrant participation in homelands politics	NGOs that pressure on one's own government	International law (HR law); intergovernmental regulatory bodies (WTO); international legislatures (EU Parliament).	EU's European Parliament or a possible common North American Parliament	"…delegated powers by states to exercise in accordance with the interests of these states"

(Personal elaboration, source: Kymlicka 2003)

Immigrant trasnationalism is defined in terms of immigrant participation in homelands politics. Kymlicka mainly refers to one form of immigrant trasnationalism, more precisely, to political transnationalism. He mostly sees this phenomenon as the acceptance of dual nationality that, in his opinion, does not actually challenge the assumption that "politics should be organised through territorially-bounded national political communities" (2003: 16-19).

Transnational advocacy networks entail the recruiting of supporters, usually NGOs, in other countries to help pressure on one's own government.[173] However, in Kymlicka's opinion, this sort of transnational activism represents a "weak" transnational political agency, since it assumes that "the ultimate locus of decision-making is territorially-bounded national legislatures" (Ibid.).

The real challenge to the liberal/national model of citizenship seems to be not only some sort of transnational activism, but also of transnational decision-making or governance that could replace or contest the nation-state power. Accordingly, Kymlicka identifies three forms of *transnational* or *international legal authority*: (a) international law, such as human rights law; (b) intergovernmental regulatory bodies like the World Trade Organisation (WTO); and (c) international legislatures like the European Union Parliament. Yet, he concludes that international legal authority even though does put limits on state sovereignty, it does not actually challenge liberal/national models, but rather universalises and exports them (Ibid: 19-22).

The idea of creating a *democratic transnational parliament* at the global scale might seem utopian in a world in which many countries do not have democratic elections for their own governments. Just as democratically-elected national legislatures supervise national regulatory institutions like the Bank of Canada, so there would be democratically-elected transnational legislatures to supervise transnational regulatory institutions like the WTO. Nevertheless, regional democratic elected bodies like the EU Parliament or a possible common North American Parliament to make decisions regarding North American Free Trade Agreement - based institutions seem more feasible, even though there is little public support or quite indifference to this idea of transnational democracy (Ibid: 22-24).

In Kymlicka's opinion, ordinary citizens are "unenthusiastic" about *transnational democracy* because it threatens to return us to "the pre-national phase", in which "the masses will be governed by elites who do not share their own language and culture, and in which politics is conducted in a language and in a media that is 'foreign' to the masses". The size has nothing to do with people's perceptions about the appropriate boundaries of a political community, but what really matters is "a feeling of belonging together, of being a *nation*, *people* or *community of fate*" (Ibid: 24).

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[173] Kymlicka gives the examples of indigenous people in Canada and their appeal to international allies in local policy issues like, for example, the development taken up in James Bay by the Quebec Government, environmental groups trying to put pressure on Canada to stop the seal hunt, or Canadian environmental NGOs pressuring the Government of Brazil to change its policies in the Amazon (2003: 18).

If the idea of *transnational democracy* does not seem to be realistic at least for the foreseeable future, the level of democracy in our transnational institutions can still be supervised through *intergovernmental regulatory authorities*, "…delegated powers by states to exercise in accordance with the interests of these states". There is, however, the danger that these institutions would serve, in the end, the interests of their own agents and not of the people who elected them. Thus, the democratic accountability at a transnational level might be not only difficult to put in practice, but also more limited than that at a domestic level (Kymlicka 2003: 24-26).

Kymlicka concludes that none of these five forms of transnationalism really erodes the model of democratic citizenship and its political legitimacy that remains tied down to national political communities. He, moreover, considers that the so-called "postnationalism" (minority nationalism or transnationalism) should be best understood as "the latest adaptation of nationalist impulses" rather than "a new postnational political order" (Ibid: 26-27).

Alejandro Portes' s typology of cross-border activities (2001) differs considerably from Kymlicka's categorisation (2003). Portes distinguishes transnational activities according to the type of actors involved. Accordingly, international activities are conducted by states or nationally-based institutions; multinational activities are carried out by formal institutions whose aims and interests transcend a single nation-state; while transnational activities are initiated and sustained by non-institutional actors across national borders (in Bauböck 2003a: 4).

Thus, in Portes's typology, the United Nations is seen as a multinational organisation (international in Kymlicka's opinion) while international NGOs are seen as transnational. Usually both types of organisations are defined as international ones. Moreover, European Union is characterised as a supranational organisation (international in Kymlicka's opinion). Portes considers that only those political institutions and practices are transnational that transcends the borders of independent states and engage simultaneous overlapping affiliations of persons to geographically separate polities (in Bauböck 2003a: 4-5). Thus, he defines transnationalism as a form of overlapping membership of non-institutional actors, while Kymlicka defines it in terms of transnational activism (immigrant transnationalism and transnational advocacy networks) and transnational governance (transnational legislative/parliamentary bodies).

Steven Vertovec includes both, institutional and non-institutional actors in defining transnationalism as "a set of sustained, border-crossing connections" among various groups of geographically dispersed social actors such as immigrants, global corporations and business partnerships, media and communications networks, social movements or criminal groups and terrorist organisations. Thus, a global corporation with a multinational profit is seen as transnational rather then multinational how Portes would define it (see Table 1.1, chapter I). But Vertovec acknowledges the controversial aspect of the concept and its novelty by emphasising the considerable body of research and theory that has been recently generated on the emergence, shape and dynamic of different kinds of global networks (Vertovec 2003: 2).

As we can see, definitions and typologies do not necessarily coincide in identifying what is international, multinational or transnational and moreover, they are quite confusing. Rainer Bauböck tries to clear up this problem by taking as a starting point the dual meaning of the term *national*: (1) "an attribute of a territorially bounded state"; and, as well as, (2) "of communities that aspire for, or exercise, comprehensive self-government" (2003a: 4). He consequently distinguishes four basic types of relations: international, multinational, supranational and transnational.

Table 1.3: Types of political relations

International	Multinational	Supranational	Transnational
When state and polity coincide - external relations between independent states and for organisations in which these states are represented by their governments (United Nations, free trade zones or military alliances)	When several political communities can be nested within a larger state - multinational states, such as Canada, Spain, Belgium or the UK, and the internal relations between their historic minority groups who enjoy substantial political autonomy	When several states can be nested within a larger political community – the European Union	When several political communities can overlap between separate states - political institutions and practices that involve simultaneous overlapping affiliations of persons to geographically separate polities

(Personal elaboration, source: Bauböck 2003a)

The label *international* is used when state and polity coincide, meaning external relations between independent states and organisations in which these states are represented by their governments like the United Nations, free trade zones or military alliances. When several political communities can be nested within a larger state, *multinational* represents the right term. This is valid for multinational states, such as Canada, Spain, Belgium or the UK, and the internal relations between their historic minority groups who enjoy substantial political autonomy (Bauböck 2003a: 4-5).

When several states can be nested within a larger political community the term *supranational* comes in. It refers to *supranational* relations between independent states that have concentrated their sovereignty by forming a larger federal polity. Accordingly, the European Union represents the only case in this category.[174] Finally, the term *transnational* is used when several political communities can overlap between separate states. Accordingly, political institutions and practices that transcend the borders of independent states are *transnational* if "they involve simultaneous overlapping affiliations of persons to geographically separate polities" (Ibid.).

In contrast to Portes's typology on transnationalism, Rainer Bauböck's typology is more narrowly constructed as it covers only *political* relations. Thus, his typology does not account for the use of the expression *multinational corporations*, for example, which refers to multiple states where these corporations are active rather than to nations as distinct political communities within a state.[175] At the same time, Bauböck's typology is rather analytical than empirical. Thus, a certain phenomenon may be characterised using different labels depending on how we describe it.[176]

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[174] In Bauböck 's opinion, free trade zones or military alliances are considered international organisations rather than supranational ones (2003a: 4).
[175] In Bauböck's scheme, *transnational corporations* is a more proper description because these companies, although they can not be adequately called ´members` of political communities, are involved in simultaneous activities in the jurisdiction of several independent states. Accordingly, Bauböck suggests Michael Keating's solution, that of replacing the term *multinational democracy* with *plurinational democracy*, in order to avoid terminological confusion (2003a: 5).
[176] Bauböck gives the example of Romania that could be characterised as a multinational state, but its Hungarian minority in Transylvania is, at the same time, involved in transnational relations with its external homeland (2003a: 5)

Moreover, contemporary immigration normally does not transform the receiving state into a multinational polity whose minorities undergo separate nation-building projects within the same territory (see Kymlicka 1995a: chapter 2). In consequence, migration is an international phenomenon as far as it refers to movements of people between states, and becomes transnational only when implies overlapping memberships between territorially separated and independent polities (Bauböck 2003a: 5).

2. Defining immigrant transnationalism

In the last decades of the twentieth century, practically all the Western states have experienced large-scale immigration and found that immigrants do not simply assimilate into the mainstream society and culture, but develop new forms of accommodation and adaptation. Hence, scholars like Stephen Castles argue that more and more immigrants recognize themselves "as members of transnational communities based on a common identity with their co-ethnics in the ancestral homeland and other migration destinations" (2002: 2).

Transnational migration is seen as a form of migration through which persons, although they move across international borders and establish relations in new societies through information and 'cultural capital' or informal networks, maintain ongoing social connexions with the *polity* of their home country. Helped moreover by modern technology that makes easier to travel and communicate with their homelands, many immigrants today maintain themselves active in the economic, social and political spheres of their country of origin (Portes 1997, 2001, 2003; Portes et.al. 2003; Castles 2002).

Linda Basch and her collaborators define *immigrant transnationalism* as a "process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement". They call this process transnationalism in order "to emphasise that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders". One of its essential elements is "the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both, home and host societies: social, political or economic" (Basch in Portes 1997: 812-13).

But most scholars do not define immigrant transnationalism as a form of 'postnational' membership that might question the idea of nation-state, but rather as a form of dual membership or overlapping membership between territorial separated and independent polities. Thus, Kymlicka defines transnational immigrants as literally "dual nationals" not "postnationals", who "are as committed as anyone else to the view that politics should remain organised through bounded national political communities, both in their new home and their country of origin" (2003: 18). Bauböck considers that migration becomes transnational only when "it creates overlapping membership, rights and practices, which reflect a simultaneous belonging of migrants to two different political communities", without necessarily questioning the nation-state *per se* (2003a: 5).

Why transnationalism differs from other, perhaps more long-standing, aspects of migration? Portes considers that long-distance connections maintained by migrants one hundred years ago were not exactly transnational in the contemporary meaning of regular, sustained and, especially, 'real time' social contacts. Such earlier links were rather just border-crossing migrant networks, sporadically maintained by migrants as best as they could at the time (Portes et.al. 1999). Besides, Vertovec (2003) believes that these conceptual differences between the meaning of newer transnational practices and older migration networks represent an important contribution of the transnational approach to the theoretical development of migration studies. Yet, he focuses only on the intermediate role of diverse patterns of migrant transnationalism - more often associated with facets of globalisation, on social transformation or change.

3. Mapping immigrant transnationalism

The conceptual and empirical work on transnationalism is just at its beginning. Portes (2003) discovered that transnational activities are quite often sporadic, heterogeneous and vary across immigrant communities, both in their popularity and character. Other scholars found that not all migrants develop transnational practices, and many do so only in one sphere of their lives (Faist 2000). Vertovec (2003) ingeniously sums up most of the analytical perspectives that have been developed on transnationalism.

Table 3.1: Analytical perspectives on immigrant transnationalism

	Transnationalism from above		**Transnationalism from below**	
A. Smith and Guarnizo1998a	Flows of global capital, media, and political institutions		Local and grassroots activity across borders	
B. Itzigsohn et.al. 1999	**Narrow**		**Broad**	
	Related to institutionalised and continuous activities among immigrants		Referring to more occasional practices linking migrants and places of origins	
C. Faist 2000	**Transnational kinship groups**	*Transnational circuits*	**Transnational** *communities*	
	Based on reciprocity within families	Based on exchanges of goods, people and in formation within global networks	Characterised by feelings of solidarity within ethnic diasporas	
D. Gardner 2002	*Great*		*Little*	
	Pertaining to the level of state and economy		Regarding the intimate level of family and household	
E. Itzigsohn and Saucido 2002	*Linear*	*Resource-based*	*Reactive*	
	Grounded in plans to return to place of origin	Linked with labour market position and mobility	Especially based on experiences of discrimination	
F. Portes 2003	*Broad*		*Strict*	
	Including both regular and occasional activities		In connection only to regular participation	
G. Levitt 2001a,b	**Core**		**Expanded**	
	With reference to patterned and predictable practices within one sphere of social life		Bringing in occasional practices in a wider set of spheres	

(Personal elaboration, source: Vertovec 2003)

Vertovec emphasises that identifying types, specificities and differences in migrant transnationalism is maybe a conceptually heavy task, but it is nevertheless a questionably necessary one. By differentiating among various types of migrant transnationalism you can find out the channels and factors (infrastructures) that facilitate these activities: family and kinship organisation, 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 (2003: 5). He thus establishes three ways of categorising transnational activities among migrants.

The first one focuses on refining the different types and levels of transnational activity among migrants. Such types vary among different groups of people depending on many factors like geographical proximity of sending and receiving contexts, histories of cooperation and interdependence between nation-states and localities, patterns of migration and processes of settlement (Vertovec 2003: 3-4).

The second one distinguishes among types of migrants. The proposed categories of people involved in transnational activity spot those whose quests for work or "mobile livelihoods" involve them in transnational migration circuits or patterns of circular migration. The majority of cases portrayed in the literature refer to unskilled labour migrants. Other categories more and more significant to the transnational approach are represented by: undocumented migrants, return migrants, retirement migrants, forced migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, religious specialists servicing migrants, highly skilled workers, generally and specifically information technology workers employed through global labour market and trained occupational specialists drawn back from diasporas to contribute to the development of their homelands (Vertovec 2003: 4-5).

The third way one focuses on degrees of mobility of transnational practices and orientations. There are differences among people: (a) who travel regularly between specific localities; (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 (Ibid: 5).

II. Immigrant Transnationalism: A Challenge to National Citizenship?

In this chapter I first underline the development of the modern concept of citizenship and its opposing aspects. I then analyse, from a normative point of view, the possible impact of immigrant transnationalism on the traditional conception of national citizenship. I finally define concepts like transnational communities, cosmopolitans, ethnic trasmigrants or exile diaspora, which might become in long run future forms of political communities and identities.

1. Rethinking citizenship: a brief historical overview

The concept of citizenship is founded on a classical ideal. The ancient Greeks and Romans were the first ones to concretise the "ideal of citizenship". Two conceptions of citizenship were developed in these two socio-political realms: the "active" citizenship - the citizenship of the small, homogeneous Greek *polis*, and the "passive" citizenship - the citizenship of the large-scale political organisation of the heterogeneous Roman Empire. While the Greek ideal of citizenship implied the moral, cultural and personal good of each citizen, the Roman notion of citizenship usually had a more juridical meaning (in Low, 1997: 5).

A*ctive citizenship* has been defined in terms of equivalence between the private (individual) good and the public (social) world. It thus represents not just a political or legal category, but also a state of mind and being.[177] *Passive citizenship*, on the other side, has been based on the distinction between private and public spheres. The origins of the concept of citizenship go back in time to the ancient period, but it gets consolidated as a more normative concept with the emergence of modern welfare states and mass democracies. Thus, T.H. Marshall's conception of citizenship (1949) - although it distinguishes among civil, political and social rights - resembles to a more *passive* form of citizenship. The ideal of citizenship for Marshall did not suppose a process of internalization by the individual, but rather a political reality created by a state concerned with granting civil, political and social entitlements (Low 1997: 5-6).

Historically, citizenship has constituted both, an including and excluding category. Citizenship as an including category could be traced down to the French Revolution (1789) when the concept of *citoyen* was meant to eliminate the social privileges of the aristocracy and bring about *liberty, equality and fraternity* for all. Citizenship as an excluding category has commonly denoted a privilege and a limit of social acceptance in a nation-state, but also a mode of legitimating a certain type of identity and political activity. It could be thus traced down to the ancient Greece when the right to participate in *agora* (the political sphere) was strictly

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[177] On the idealist conception of citizenship see Henry Jones, a representative British thinker of the twentieth century (in Eugenia Low, 1997: 5-6).

bestowed to *citizens* (mainly the aristocracy), excluding, therefore, poor social categories like women (or children), foreigners and slaves (Aristoteles, "Politica", Libro III, 1989).

The modern concept of citizenship includes the membership in a nation-state that is characterised by delimited borders, a common culture, an ideology and the corresponding legal institutions. The model of citizenship that has dominated the theory and practice of Western democracies for the last 150 years has been based on two essential premises: the liberal-democratic values of citizenship (individual liberties and liberal duties) and the membership in national political communities (national institutions) (Kymlicka 2003: 4).

With the development of the modern welfare state citizenship has been perpetuated as an excluding category, political and social rights being the last ones to be fully implemented and still an exception for some social categories like foreign residents or immigrants. Today's cultural diversity and increasing instances of social exclusion imperatively require a more including concept of citizenship in order to reconcile the existing individual rights with the newly required group rights.

The formal matters of belonging to a nation-state are extended to more substantive ones of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights and duties. The limits of classical analyses like T.H. Marshall's distinction (1949) between civil, political and social forms of citizenship are being exposed by new theories on citizenship. New rights like economic rights in workplace, cultural or collective minority rights of recognition (see Santos 1995, Stavenhagen 1995, Kymlicka 1995b), and corresponding duties or obligations are advanced in the general debate on citizenship. Consequently, the traditional conception of national citizenship or the compatibility between individual liberal values and group rights has started to be questioned and argued (Rogers and Tillie 2001: 2-3).

Many scholars have started to question the conventional nation-state model and the concept of national citizenship under the influence of complex social processes and phenomena like globalisation and mass migration. Some authors have mainly underlined the effects of economic globalisation on the nation-state (Sassen 1996, Castells 1996). Other authors like David Held, Ulrich Beck, Rainer Bauböck have embraced a new concept of citizenship, that of *cosmopolitan citizenship* and described how various inter-state, intra-state and ultra-state practices challenge the viability of the conventional model of nation-state and the international system constructed around it (Held et.al.1999, Beck 2002, Bauböck 1994).

The impact of migration and migrant transnationalism on the nation-state and the construction and re-construction of national identities has been also underlined by many authors (e.g., Soysal 1994, Bauböck 1994, Joppke 1998, 1999, Castles 2002, Portes …., Kymlicka 2003). Yet, Steven Vertovec considers that while discussions over "globalisation and political change", "immigration and the nation-state" do persist, migrant transnationalism, on the other side, "does not itself bring about transformations of the nation-state". Such transformations are nonetheless occurring and are due to "a confluence of processes within global political economy", yet "forms of migrant transnationalism importantly contribute to such significant shifts affecting the nation-state model" (Vertovec 2003:19).

2. How does migrant transnationalism impact on citizenship?

In the twenty first century, globalisation contributes substantially to the intensification of mass migration. Can we accommodate the global migration to the inherited national design of present societies? Can we still classify persons primarily by ethnic nationality or national citizenship when present societies are more habitually resided by individuals and groups with multiple national and cultural identities? Does transnationalism - as a social phenomenon - pose problems to the traditional concept of national citizenship?

Transnationalism represents one by-product of the globalisation process and the increase in migratory movements. In the academic arena (see Bauböck 1994, 2003a; Castles 2002; Joppke 1998, 2001; Kiss 2001; Kymlicka 2003; Soysal 1994), the term is often debated as a possible 'post-nationalist' outset of political community. A postnational type of political community implies national deterritorialisation, but this does no

seem very clear in scholarly debates. There are different interpretations that lead to a contradictory meaning of the term: "post-", "trans-" national or "cosmopolitan" conception of political community?

Some scholars are primarily interested in describing and explaining how transnationalism might impact on the normative conception of citizenship. Janos Kiss, for example, suggests that new forms of self-government are being developed within European Union or under the frame of human rights organisations, which could enable ethnic minorities who currently live across national borders to act collectively. These new forms of self-government do not actually aim at making nation and state coincide, but somewhat create overlapping forms of membership that could cut across existing state boundaries and be sheltered by larger frameworks like European Union or international human rights organisations.[178]

Will Kymlicka, on the other side, does not see European Union or other international organisations nurturing the formation of a post-nationalist form of citizenship, but rather accommodate nationalist identities and aims. Even though he does not regard nationalism as a "static" and "unchanging" phenomenon but rather as an evolving one, he sees "post-nationalism" rather as a latest adaptation of nationalist goals than a real challenge to the nation-state. Minority nationalism and transnationalism represent two possible challenges to "the scope of citizenship" but not a real threat to "the values or principles of liberal-democracy *per se*". While constitutional democracies prevail in all Western democracies, the two phenomena could only challenge the primacy of the nation-state as "the locus of citizenship", and this "either in the name of a narrower substate political community (minority nationalism) or in the name of a broader suprastate political community (transnationalism)" (2003:12).

Authors like Alejandro Portes or Rainer Bauböck focus more on overlapping and changing relations of membership between territorially separated polities (see Bauböck 1994, 2003a; Portes et.al. 1999; Portes 2001). Bauböck (2003a) is concerned not so much about the relation between transnationalism and citizenship, but rather tries to recommend, from a democratic perspective, how governments have to respond to this challenge.

There is overall little academic agreement on the term and support for the assumption that immigrant transnationalism represents a real challenge to the nation-state system itself. It does seem though to question the *locus* of membership formation. Hence, all academic sides acknowledge that transnationalism represents an evolving phenomenon that might considerably influence in long run the national model of citizenship.

3. Transnational communities and identities

Alejandro Portes (2003) considers that through the networks established across political borders, an increasing number of people are able to lead dual lives. Glick- Schiller suggests the term *transmigrants* for these "people who live their lives across borders, developing social, familial, political, economic and religious networks that incorporate them into two or more states" (1999: 203). Many of these *transmigrants* are often bilingual and culturally more open. They frequently have homes in two countries and pursue economic, political and cultural interests in both of them (Portes 2003: 1212; Portes 1997: 812).

Stephen Castles uses the term *transnational communities* when referring to "groups based in two or more countries, which engage in recurrent, enduring and significant cross-border activities, which may be economic, political, social or cultural". Thus, only those groups whose "consciousness and regular activities transcend national borders" form transnational communities. Castles identifies four types of transnational communities: (1) transnational business communities and multinational corporations; (2) transnational

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[178] Janos Kiss gives the prospective example of ethnic Hungarians who live abroad and the current one, of the Irish republican minority, which through the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland, can exercise a degree of collective action with their kin in the Republic of Ireland (2001); Yasemin Soysal (1994) and Christian Joppke (1998, 2001), on the other side, have tried to investigate "postnational" forms of political membership among immigrants in Europe by emphasising the increased immigrant appeal to international human rights instruments and organisations.

political communities; (3) transnational cultural communities; and (4) transnational social communities (2002: 5-6).

Transnational business communities (leading to a form of "transnationalism from below") use "cross-border ethnic connections as a resource to run business of many different types and sizes". *Multinational corporations* ("transnationalism from above") "create their own transnational corporate culture and abandon the base country or 'headquarters' mentality" in order to increment their productivity and profits.[179]

Transnational political communities ("transnationalism from below") seek "the use of solidarity with co-ethnics in two or more countries" in order to change the socio-political conditions in the homeland or even "improve the situation of the group in settlement countries" (political or refugee diaspora – the Vietnamese who left their country in the 1970s and 1980s) (Castles 2002: 5-6).

Transnational cultural communities ("transnationalism from below") intend more "to maintain the homeland heritage and language among settler group". In case immigrants require voting rights while abroad or dual citizenship there is no clear distinction between cultural and political community. *Transnational social communities* ("transnationalism from below") emerge in those situations where migration becomes part of normal life for people from a certain place (regular cross-border migration from a village or town of origin to a specific destination – Italy between the 1860s and the 1960s or the Philippines today) (Castles 2002: 5-6).

Nonetheless, Castles criticises an inflationary use of terms like *transnational communities* and *transmigrants* in case of, for example, temporary labour migrants or permanent migrants who have loose contact with their homelands. A key-defining factor is that "transnational activities are a central part of an individual's life and that two or more societies form a continual frame of reference for them". This transnational approach can be use at both, individual and collective levels (Ibid: 6-7).

How these *transnational identities* look like? There is no sufficient empirical evidence for clear assertions. Castles, however, launches two possible types of transnational identities: *cosmopolitans* who are "capable of crossing boundaries and building multiple or hybrid identities" (global business and professional elites) or some kind of *ethnic transmigrants* or *exile diasporas* who "feel solidarity with co-ethnics in their homelands and elsewhere" (nations without states – groups based on forced dispersion, who mobilise politically to build or change their homelands). He, nevertheless, acknowledges "most members of transnational communities fall between these extremes, and probably have contradictory and fluctuating identities". The same applies to members of transnational communities. The notion of one loyalty to one nation has little relevance in the new migration world (Ibid: 8-9).

III. Lines of Empirical Research on Immigrant Transnationalism

In this chapter I explain why immigrant transnationalism should be studied and underline the main lines of empirical research on the phenomenon and their limits. I then emphasise the empirical link between immigrant transnationalism and the incorporation of immigrants in host society.

1. Why studying immigrant transnationalism?

In post-War period, socio-political analysts were mainly concerned with the problem of immigrant assimilation into an ethnically homogeneous society. By 1980s, they shifted to the 'softer' notion of integration developing, thus, a new policy perspective, that of multiculturalism. Later on, in 1990s, the focus was on new forms of citizenship and inter-group relations in local communities (cities) while today the main subject of interest is transnationalism (Castles 2002: 2).

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[179] Castles uses Portes's distinction between "transnationalism from above" and "transnationalism from below" (see Portes 1999: 221).

Transnationalism as a new concept in social and political sciences has been mainly developed from a top-down perspective ("transnationalism from above") directing the research interests to activities of governments or multinational corporations. Some of the literature, however, has started to look at the initiatives of common people in establishing solid economic, political and socio-cultural networks across national borders ("transnationalism from below") (Portes 1999).

In migration research, *transnationalism* refers to migrants' networks and activities that involve them in the socio-economic, political and cultural life of their country of origin. Non-governmental organisations, activists for human rights, environmental and other global issues also share this domain (Portes 1999; Portes et.al.1999; Portes 2001). *Transnationalism* is thus employed when referring to human activities (practices) and social institutions that expand across national borders. States are seen as delimited political entities whose borders are being crossed by flows of people, money or information and expanded through social networks, organisations or fields (Bauböck 2003a: 2).

American anthropological studies have suggested that transnationalism represents a generalised phenomenon among contemporary migrant communities that has been developed as an alternative to traditional ways of assimilation. This approach has created a methodological problem, that of selecting on the dependent variable. Hence, transnationalism has been overestimated in its general spread and its possible absence in everyday life of many immigrants has been thus overlooked. Additional comparative and quantitative studies on transnationalims were needed in order to test the causal mechanisms and find its forms, determinant factors and consequences (surveys and aggregate official statistics) or its generational transmissibility (longitudinal information) (Portes 1999).

Subsequent comparative quantitative and qualitative research has proved that regular or occasional participation in transnational activities is not a universal practice. Although immigrant remittances or visits back home might be considered as particular forms of transnationalism, they cannot justify *per se* the development of a new concept. Moreover, immigrants have been involved for a long time in these types of activities. Yet, the paradox that transnationalism as a new theoretical perspective in the migration field is based on the activities of only a minority of the members of the general migrant population (Guarnizo and Smith 1998, Portes et. al. 2003; Landolt 2001).

But Alejandro Portes considers that present transnational communities possess a distinct character that justifies the development of this new concept. He defines three main features of the phenomenon: (1) the number of people involved; (2) the nearly instantaneous character of communications across space; and (3) the cumulative character of the process that makes participation *normative* within certain immigrant groups".[180]

Although not all immigrants are transnational, existent transnational activities and practices give rise to a new social process that has important macro-social consequences. Money flowing between countries, investments in home countries, new cultural practices that modify radically the value systems and the everyday life of whole regions, are just some of these consequences (Levitt 2001; Östergaard-Nielsen 2001). Apart from the individual characteristics of immigrants, sending and receiving contexts seem to influence to a great extent migrants' desire and motivation to participate in transnational activities.[181]

2. Comparative research on transnational practices and activities

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[180] Portes documents in detail these various aspects and identifies multiple forms of transnationalism among immigrant groups in United States (1997: 813, 2001, 2003).

[181] Immigrants from urban areas who emigrate from a generalised context of violence in their home country tend to look for a quick integration in host society and avoid whatever form of active participation back home (Colombians in USA - Guarnizo et. al. 1999). In contrast, immigrants that come from small towns or rural areas and whose country is peaceful are more likely to get involved in transnational civic and political activities in order to help their communities of origins (Salvadorians in USA – Landolt et.al. 1999; Menjivar 2000).

Three main theoretical lines

There are three trends of conceptualising *immigrant transnationalism* in the scholarly world. *The first trend* suggests that transnational communities threaten the feeling of national identity and lead to a disintegration of social cohesion in the country of residence. *The second one* argues that transnational communities may constitute a new form of immigrant adaptation to the mainstream society. Finally, *the third trend* considers that there is nothing new about transnational communities that have existed since long time ago like *diasporas*. These academic debates have lead to more empirical research on transnationalism (Castles 2002: 2).

American research on Latin Americans' transnationalism argues that migrants' loyalty and their commitment with their homelands constitute an alternative political force that not only changes traditional local structures, but also gives new opportunities for homeland communities. Immigrants are seen as agents of change in their cities of origins, people who support and promote local initiatives of development through local associations, or as political activists and direct international investors. Monetary remittances, for example, represent a major source of currency flow and macro-economic and social stability in the countries of origins. Since more states have introduced the right to double citizenship and have given political representation to expatriates, many immigrant communities constitute an important part of the local electorate. These measures influence the way in which immigrants get incorporated in host societies and how do they relate with the politics of their communities of origins (Portes 2003, Guarnizo and Smith 1998, Levitt 2001).

Potential explanatory variables for immigrant transnationalism (at an individual level) have usually come from three different theoretical sources: 1) the classical theories on the role of individual characteristics in immigrant assimilation; 2) the contemporary theories on contextual roots as determinant factors in immigrant incorporation in host society; and 3) social networks theory (Portes et.al.2003: 1215).

The classical theories of assimilation consider that persons who emigrate will get 'assimilated' by the economic and socio-cultural systems of host society and thus lose their 'old' cultural practices and political allegiances. The main hypothesis is that, as longer immigrants reside and get socialised in the manner of the host country, as higher their probabilities to be completely 'absorbed' by it. Or, in terms of political transnationalism, longer periods of residence in host country lead to a progressive separation from the allegiances in home country. Besides, immigrants are expected to have a single national identity and political representation in one political community. Thus, another hypothesis might be that naturalised immigrants get involved to a lesser extent in the politics of their home countries (Portes et.al.2003: 1215-16).

Educational background, to the extent to which it favours a rapid integration and mobility in host country, might also lead to a breakdown of networks in home country. But an entire literature questions this assumption and considers education to increase the overall political participation. Thus, higher degrees of education will lead to more implication in immigrant transnationalism. Moreover, the literature on gender and immigration considers that men and women have different views on sending and receiving countries.[182]

The second theoretical line explores how exit and reception contexts influence immigrant transnationalism. As bigger the socio-cultural differences between recently arrived persons and natives, as difficult the process of immigrant incorporation. It is expected that migrants who come from remote rural areas to metropolitan areas of distinct countries have lesser possibilities to adapt and, therefore, tend to preserve the connections with their home countries (Portes 2003: 1217-18).

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[182] Studies on Latin American immigrants in USA have demonstrated that men normally experience occupational descent mobility upon immigration and a loss of status. Migrant women tend to experience something in the opposite direction, meaning that by immigrating to USA many women come to work for the first time in their life. Thus, these studies assert that Latin American immigrant men have a stronger political perspective and are more likely to get involved in transnational political activities than migrant women. This comes mainly as a compensation for the loss of status in receiving country (Portes et. al. 2003: 1216-7).

Another variable might be "the socially expected durations" (SED- developed by Merton in 1984), meaning the expectations held by relatives and friends about the proper duration of the staying abroad. The main hypothesis is that temporary SEDs (normative expectations of return), to the extent to which it helps preserve home networks and commitments, increase the involvement in transnational practices and activities. Reception contexts might also influence the political and economic incorporation of immigrants. A more negative context of arrival characterised by an occupational descendent mobility might lead to maintaining networks and commitments with home country. Transnational activism could thus function as a compensatory mechanism for the loss of status in host society (in Portes 2003: 1217-18).

The third theoretical line describes migration as a process that builds up networks that influence, in turn, the exit and settlement of newcomers. Early departures, for example, facilitate following ones by reducing the costs and risks of the initial journey. The main hypothesis here is that, as larger and more spatially diversified the social networks, as higher immigrants' opportunities to get involved in political activities across national borders (in Portes 2003: 1218).

The empirical link between immigrant incorporation in host society and transnational communities

Many empirical studies have shown that there is a link between immigrant incorporation in host society and transnational communities. Castles develops this idea by analysing three main approaches to immigrant incorporation: 1) *assimilation* (classical immigration countries like USA, Canada and Australia and some European immigration countries); 2) *differential exclusion* ("guestworker system" in European countries like Germany up to 1970s or "overseas contract workers" in Gulf oil countries and Asian tiger economies today); 3) and *multiculturalism* (2002: 7-8).

Castles considers that transnational communities have much in common with the cultural diversity accepted by multiculturalism with regard to "cultural maintenance and community formation". But transnational communities differ from multiculturalism because "they maintain strong cross-border affiliations, possible over generations" and "their primary loyalty is not to one nation-state or one territory", how multiculturalism does assess. In this regard, that of maintaining allegiances with two or more nation-states, transnational communities might constitute a challenge to nation-states (Castles).

Empirical studies have shown that immigrants have started to get involved in some sort of transnational activities as opposing 'assimilation' or different forms of discrimination and exclusion in host society. They suggest that the process of immigrant incorporation into host society influences immigrants' desire and motivation to participate in transnational activities. Those immigrants who get dispersed and almost lost in the new context by seeking to protect themselves from discrimination are less likely to participate in political activism.[183]

Transnational activities, moreover, grow up in communities that are highly concentrated and have experienced a hostile receiving procedure from local authorities and native population. These highly concentrated zones create multiple opportunities for transnational activities. Increased external discrimination makes immigrant communities to look in within and augment, therefore, the contacts with the communities of origins. Thus, transnational cultural activities and practices offer an important tool of defence against external hostility and might protect the personal dignity of the threaten ones.[184]

Other studies suggest that transnational activities create an alternative way of socio-economic and political adaptation of immigrants to host society and do not come, therefore, against the process of immigrant 'assimilation' or integration. Alejandro Portes gives empirical evidence that, typically, those immigrants who

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[183] The experience of Haitians, Dominicans and Mexicans in USA and of Hindu and Pakistan immigrants in Great Britain (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1999; Itzigson et. al. 1999; Roberts et. al. 1999).
[184] See Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1999; Itzigson et. al. 1999; Roberts et. al. 1999.

are better established or integrated into the host society, having therefore a higher security, are more likely to get involved in transnational activities.[185]

IV. A New Analytical Perspective on Political Transnationalism

In this chapter I grant a special interest to political transnationalism – political activities and practices realised by immigrants across national borders – as the most significant form of immigrant transnationalism that could really challenge in long run from below the conventional conception of national citizenship. I thus try to develop a new analytical perspective on the phenomenon by examining its various dimensions and indicators.

1. The concept

Immigration has led to many changes in the rules of citizenship. In many countries there has been a shift from *ius sanguinis* (citizenship through descent that tends to exclude immigrants and their descendents), to more inclusive forms of citizenship like *ius soli* (citizenship through birth in the territory) and *ius domicilii* (citizenship on the basis of residence) (see Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer, 2000; Castles 2002: 12).

Dual citizenship has been introduced in many countries in recent years. More emigration countries give this right as a way of biding emigrants to the home country and getting in turn benefits like remittances, technology transfer, political allegiance and cultural maintenance. More immigration countries give this right as a way of improving the social integration of minorities and preventing thus ethnic conflicts and racism (Kymlicka 2003, Castles 2002: 12). At the same time, many immigrant groups have started to perform transnational practices and activities.

According to Eva Östergaard (2001), transnational political practices and activities include "various forms of direct cross border participation in the politics of their country of origin by both, migrants and refugees, as well as their indirect participation via the political institutions of the host country" (in Bauböck 2003a: 2). But the focus in this definition seems to be more on migrants' networks and activities that engage them in the politics oriented towards their country of origin and less on how this migrant activism affects the receiving country.

Rainer Bauböck extends this definition including not only the "*politics* across borders", but also the way in which "migration changes the institutions of the (receiving) *polity* and its conception of membership". He, accordingly, considers that "migrant transnationalism affects both the institutions of the country of origin and of the receiving state". He, moreover, asserts: " It is thus not only about direct and indirect participation in the sending states from outside their borders, but also about the impact of migrants' external political ties on the political institutions of the host country" (2003a: 2).

In Bauböck's opinion, the main feature that distinguishes political transnationalism from international, multinational and supranational political relations, is that "the former creates overlapping membership between territorially separated and independent polities". Political transnationalism is not only about a narrow set of activities (external voting rights or dual citizenship) through which migrants become involved in the politics of their homeland (Kymlicka 2003), but also about how these activities affect "collective identities and conceptions of citizenship among the native populations in both receiving and sending societies" (Bauböck 2003a: 16). Hence, studies on political transnationalism in the migration context should be carried out not only at national level, but mainly at regional and local levels of government: "city polities are in many ways more open for transnational affiliations than nation-states" (Ibid.).

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[185] Portes in his analysis on Latin American groups in USA has found that political transnationalism is strongly associated with national origin and a product of greater human capital, greater stability and experience in receiving society, plus strong social connections and enduring moral ties with sending communities (2003 et.al: 1233)

Bauböck also gives some normative insights into the concept of migrant political transnationalism. First, he considers that transnational migrants should not be seen as threatening the national integrity of the receiving country. External voting rights or dual citizenship do not necessarily lead to or give good reasons for discourses or projects of extra-territorial nation building. On the contrary, they should be considered only as "legitimate means for involving those immigrants who have strong social and political stakes in their political community of origin" (2003a: 16).

Secondly, Bauböck questions the significance of democracy in transnational relations. According to him, overlapping membership of migrants creates different kinds of claims and rights towards both countries involved. Migrants' rights in the receiving country are derived from residence and are territorial-based, while migrants' affiliations to the country of origin give them the right to be reaccepted to their country's territory, but does not give the sending state the right to make any claim to the territory of the receiving state. Here comes in the difference between transnational migration and colonialism and irredentist nationalism. Thus, political theory has to cautiously distinguish between the challenge of multinational and international conflicts, which refers to delineation of territorial jurisdictions and the distribution of political powers between self-governing polities and, the challenge of transnational migration, which concerns "the permeability of international borders for geographic mobility" and the consequent overlapping membership, rights and identities linking both sending and receiving polities (Ibid: 17).

Nonetheless, the concept of *transnational citizenship* remains a controversial one. Does immigrant transnationalism really challenge the assumption that politics should be organised through territorially-bounded national political communities or it is just another form, more complex, of immigrant political participation in both, host and home countries as immigrants have started to acquire more and more political rights? (see Kymlicka 2003; Koopmans and Statham 1999; Bauböck 1994, 2003a; Portes 2001).

2. Operationalisation

Dimensions and levels of analysis

While individual studies accentuated the role of individual characteristics, social networks or the degree of integration into the host society, holistic studies have emphasised the processes of globalisation, the scale and nature of migration flows, the space and time facilities as possible sources of the proliferation of transnational networks and practices. Those that examined transnational political networks and practices paid a more careful attention to the political field and accentuated factors like the role of particular homeland politics towards mobilising the citizens or former citizens abroad, the development of competitive party politics in sending countries, the poor economic situation and political instability in sending countries, and the increasing proliferation of human rights law in the global world.

Comparative research on migrant transnational activities and practices in Europe and how these, in turn, foster or inhibit immigrant incorporation into the polity of the host country has been more or less absent from the political and social science research agenda. Some scholars, however, like Soysal (1994) or Joppke (1998, 2001) have tried to investigate "postnational" forms of political membership in European countries as a result of an increased immigrant appeal to postnational norms of human rights but this independently of immigrants' period of living or level of integration in the host society. But immigrants' appeal to international instruments of human rights leads to a reterritorialisation of immigrants rather than a deterritorialisation. Once reterritorialisation is being achieved transnational practices and activities should cease.

More comparative research on political transnationalism at both individual and collective levels is needed in order to identify its multiple forms, dimensions and extent. Stephen Vertovec (2003) offers an interesting **categorisation of immigrant transnational activities** that could bring in new dimensions for political transnationalism: (1) by different types and levels of transnational activity among migrants; (2) by distinguishing between migrants themselves; and (3) by degrees of mobility in regards to transnational

practices and orientations. But first, we have to clearly define the term. In this study I build up a new analytical perspective starting from Bauböck's (2003a), Kymlicka's (2003), Östergaard's (2001) and Portes's (2001) definitions of political transnationalism.

How we could already notice, Bauböck (2003a) broadens up Östergaard's concept of political transnationalism including not only the *politics* across borders, but also the way in which migration changes the institutions of both receiving and sending *polities* and their conception of membership. He thus establishes a dual analytical relation between migrant transnationalism and both contexts, of exit and arrival.

Immigrant transnationalism cannot anymore be seen only as a one-side process, meaning its relation with the sending society, but has to be understood as **a two-sides process** that involves both, sending and receiving countries: "…a transnational perspective that focuses on overlapping membership" can facilitate the understanding of how "patterns of integration into the receiving polity" and "unfinished projects of nation building in the homeland" form migrants' attitudes towards their country of origin (Bauböck 2003b: 17).

Immigrants' level of participation and representation in host society is extremely important for their consequent political integration. Thus, a more positive attitude towards immigrants in the receiving country that accepts linguistic and cultural maintenance and anti-discrimination policies that help immigrants to participate into mainstream culture and society might lead to their engagement in transnational activities. But multiculturalism does not automatically lead to transnational activities. Yet, it might offer immigrants more possibilities to get involve in cross-border activities (Castles 2002: 11).

But transnational political practices should not be reduced to a function of the political opportunity structure of a particular receiving country for two main reasons: (a) more inclusive political structures, which provide for more participation and co-operation on immigrant political issues, may, at the same time, and for that very reason, serve to exclude dialogue on homeland politics; (b) homeland political movements may draw on a different range of resources than their immigrant political counterparts, including those outside the local political institutional context (Östergaard-Nielsen 2001: 181).

The governments of sending countries particularly influence immigrant transnationalism. They have different instrumental grounds for regarding their emigrants as a resource, such as "an interest in upgrading human capital", "in attracting remittances", or "in using immigrant communities to promote economic and foreign policy goals" (Bauböck 2003a: 17). Moreover, many sending governments have special laws and programmes to maintain links with their nationals abroad even when these take the citizenship of the host country. Thus, introducing certain legal/political rights like dual citizenship or external voting rights in the national legislation might strengthen immigrant transnationalism (Castles 2002: 10-11).

Bauböck moreover believes that political transnationalism regards the boundaries of polities not only as a "demarcation of territorial jurisdiction", but also as "contested sites for determining political identities". Studies on immigrant transnationalism, therefore, cannot be anymore confined only to relations between independent states, but have to be also extended to regional and local levels of government. According to Bauböck, city polities are in many ways more open to transnational affiliations than nation-states, so studies on immigrant transnationalism should be particularly circumscribed to **the local level** (Bauböck 2003a: 16).

In Bauböck's opinion, the etymological and historical origins of citizenship are in the city: "citizenship was born in the Mediterranean city-states of Athens and Rome, it was reinvented in the liberties of Renaissance city republics and its modern national form arose in the urban revolutions that swept across Europe from 1789 to 1848" (2003b: 17). It is therefore extremely challenging, in his opinion, to conceive the city as a political space inside the territorial nation-state and probably redefine a more attractive concept of urban citizenship in new cosmopolitan democracies.[186] However, different levels of analysis might be intertwined in a study.

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[186] The models of cosmopolitan democracy have extended federal principles from the domestic to the global arena (see Held 1995, Bauböck 2003a). According to Bauböck transmigrants could be seen as urban citizens or cosmopolitans inside of a cosmopolitan type of political community (2003b).

At the same time, Eva Östergaard (2001: 5-6) develops a very useful **typology of transnational political practices and activities**. This consists of: a) homeland politics - political activities of immigrant organisations, which belong to domestic or foreign policy of sending country; b) immigrant politics – political activities that immigrant organisations undertake to better their socio-economic situation in receiving country, and that are supported by sending country; and c) trans-local politics – initiatives from abroad to better the situation in local community where one originates. However, these types of transnational political practices are not pure but rather overlap and blend into each other relating to the particular constellation of diverging/converging interests of the main actors involved. They might however help in the measurement of the concept.

Measurement

Political transnationalism should be measured using indicators that refer not only to a narrowly conceived set of activities through which migrants become involved in the domestic politics of their home countries, but also to those activities undergone in the receiving country that feed-back into homeland politics (see Bauböck 2003a). This depends on each research design.

Political participation is normally measured through indicators related to electoral activity. Immigrants, however, tend to participate in the decision-making process of host or home societies, not only through elections, but also through other political channels. Thus, political transnationalism should include both electoral and non-electoral transnational activities, which are meant to influence the conditions in both sending and receiving countries (Portes et.al. 2003, Bauböck 2003a).

Non-electoral activities are political as they influence national, regional and local governments by determining which public projects get financial support from immigrants. Thus, they force authorities to take into account the desires and priorities of immigrants. Besides, by financing local development projects or contributing to philanthropic projects, immigrants can maintain a high social status and political influence in home localities (Portes et. al. 2003: 1223-26).

Each type of political participation could be measured by counting the number of activities in which immigrants (immigrant associations) are involved on a regular basis. It could include both, "regular" and "occasional" political transnational activities, as some immigrants might practice them in a more occasional manner[187].

We can also distinguish between "broad" and "narrow" transnational practices as opposite ends of a continuum of different practices. The more a transnational political practice is institutionalised and has migrants involved and the more they move around to realise it, the narrower it is understood to be. Thus, "narrow" transnational political practices refer to actual membership of parties or hometown associations and the "broad" ones refer to (occasional) participation in meetings or events (Itzigsohn et.al. 1999).

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[187] The dependent variable - the number of transnational political activities - can be measured on a specific scale. Besides, regular participation or involvement can be codified (1), and occasional or no-participation (0) (See Portes 2003).

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