THE ESF FORWARD LOOK ON

IMMIGRATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Workshop 1:
Transnational ties and identities: past and present

Wassenaar, NIAS, December 6-7, 2002

Organizers:

Anita Böcker, fellow of the NIAS and attached to the University of Amsterdam

Leo Lucassen, fellow of the NIAS and attached to Nijmegen University

Convenor:

Prof. Dr. Wim Blockmans, rector of the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in Wassenaar.

Reporters: Leo Lucassen and Anita Böcker

‘Immigration and the construction of identities in contemporary Europe’

Transnational ties and identities: past and present

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The organizers of the Forward Look Workshop on Transnational ties and identities: past and present would like to thank all participants who took part in the workshop.

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Anita Böcker, fellow of the NIAS and attached to the Universiteit van Amsterdam

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Convenor

Prof. Dr. Wim Blockmans, rector of the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in Wassenaar.

ESF Preparatory group:

Prof. Gretty Mirdal,

member of the Standing Committee for the Humanities

and attached to the University of Copenhagen

Dr. Henk Stronkhorst,

Senior scientific secretary for the

Humanities and Social Sciences, ESF

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

In the framework of the Forward Look Action in the Humanities on 'Immigration and the construction of identities in contemporary Europe' of the European Science Foundation (ESF), the NIAS was asked to convene a workshop on historical perspectives. In view of the recent debate in the field of migration studies between historians and social scientists on the theme on transnationalism (Foner 2000; Gerstle et al. 2001; Lucassen 2002), and the strong relation between transnationalism and the construction of identities, the migration group of the NIAS[1] decided to focus on the comparison of transnational ties in the past and in the present.

During this two days workshop, transnationalism was split up into four sub-themes, for each of which leading scholars from the social sciences were asked to present a (provocative) introduction, based on their recent insights and backed up by a recent publication. In each case historians were asked to reflect on these papers from a historical perspective, followed by a plenary discussion, in which also a number of outside participants from both disciplines took part. At the end of each session the organizers of the workshop (Anita Böcker and Leo Lucassen) then listed the most important ideas for a research agenda.

In this report we will first give a short description of the transnationalist concept, followed by the highlights of the introduction and the discussion and closing with the main topics for a future research agenda. The texts which were discussed at the workshop, as well as a number of discussion-papers are attached as appendices.

[1] Consisting of Klaus J. Bade, Anita Böcker, Pieter Emmer, Han Entzinger, Abdelmajid Kaddouri, Leo Lucassen, Herman Obdeijn, Dietrich Tränhardt and Barbara Waldis (NIAS fellows for the year 2002-2003).

2. The concept of Transnationalism

As may be clear from the short introduction to the reader (Appendix B) one of the explicit aims of this workshop on "Transnational ties and identities Pas and Present" is to integrate the historical discipline in the broader field of social scientific migration studies. In this sense this initiative comes at a timely moment, because structural comparisons between developments in the past and the present with regard to migration and settlement processes are more and more occupying a prominent place in the scholarly discussion. Moreover, comparisons through time enable us to understand better the structural characteristics that underlie migration and integration processes. In this sense history is not merely a nice but largely irrelevant picture book of the past, but rather a long-term laboratory which can be used to highlight and understand better present developments.

This is not to argue that "L'histoire se repète" and there will never be something really new under the sun, far from it. A number of important changes, especially the role of the state in controlling and monitoring migration, defining citizenship and in excluding migrants from welfare arrangements, for example, as well as fast and cheap transport and means of communication have changed drastically in the last 150 years or so. Nevertheless the US debate shows that notwithstanding these structural changes, a number of key features of the migration and integration process are much more robust than is often assumed. One of these phenomena is the currently highly fashionable concept of transnationalism, which is often considered as a new phenomenon, inextricably linked to the process of globalization and post nation state identities.

By bringing social scientists and historians together the workshop was meant to stimulate the interdisciplinary debate, that is still so lacking in Europe, and go beyond the ritual exchanges in the manner of 'well transnationalism is nothing new at all; don't you ever read what we write', (historian) with the reply, 'well yes that may be so but we are not really talking about the same thing here' (sociologist). The question is not so much whether transnationalism is new or not, but rather a more subtle and differentiated discussion about the different aspects of transnationalism and the way these play out in different contexts through time.

In this sense we think it is useful to indicate very shortly how the term transnationalism is used in the current debate, if only to avoid a babylonic confusion of tongues. Borrowing from

a recent overview by Ewa Morawska (2001) we differentiate between two related but different interpretations. The first one is mainly used by U.S. based anthropologists/ sociologists/ historians: transnationalism is a combination of civic-political memberships, economic involvements, social networks and cultural identities, that link people and institutions in two or more nation states. Key actors are international migrants who are assumed to create new transnational spaces and thereby deterritorialise and extend the nation state, rather than undermine it. The second is en vogue among political scientists in Europe and runs as follows: transnationalism is a shift beyond the accustomed territorial nation state memberships and state bound national identities. This new realm refers to suprastatal memberships, identities and loyalties. One can think for example of the European Union membership, but also of panethnic (Gypsies), religious (Muslims) solidarities or the activities of the Arab European League in Belgium at the moment. These forms of transnationalism are thought to undermine the power of the state to control and regulate activities within its borders. To complicate the matter even further, as Steve Vertovecs paper (in the reader appendix D) illustrates, there are other related and partly conflating and competing concepts such as ‘diaspora’.

3. Four sub-themes, introductions and discussions

3.1: Transnationalism and religion: the position of Islam

Introduction: Pnina Werbner. Discussants: Herman Obdeijn and Han Entzinger

The central questions of this session concerned the transnational ties and identities of Muslim immigrants in Europe and the role of Islam in these ties and identities.

In her introduction, Pnina Werbner focussed on the case of Pakistani immigrants in Britain. She pointed out that a key feature of many diasporas is that they are connected by ties of co-responsibility across the boundaries of nations. Pakistani immigrants in Britain belong to several different diasporas. They have built a diasporic community oriented towards its national homeland, Pakistan. At the same time they have redefined themselves as a Muslim diaspora, asserting their membership in a transnational moral community, the *umma*. Particularly these two diasporas can be seen as communities of co-responsibility. An equally compelling orientation, however, is towards a South Asian aesthetic diaspora. Werbner emphasized the vulnerability of contemporary, politicized diasporas. In the Rushdie-Affair and the Gulf War, the Muslim community in Britain took a stance that did not directly serve their interests as a minority in Britain.

Both Herman Obdeijn and Han Entzinger focussed on second-generation Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands and their multiple identities. The vulnerability of these multiple identities became clear again in Herman Obdeijn's contribution. Up till 'September 11', young Moroccans in the Netherlands had started to think of themselves as being both Dutch and Moroccan, Berber, Muslim, Arab. After September 11, they feel they are perceived as a fifth column exactly because of these multiple loyalties and solidarities. Han Entzinger presented some of the findings of a survey among young (second-generation) immigrants and non-immigrants in Rotterdam.

The discussion focused on the concept of identity and the divergent use of this concept by historians and social scientists. It was furthermore stressed that it would be useful to distinguish between diaspora and migration. Finally the perspective of home countries was

underlined, especially with reference to the question how emigrant diasporas are perceived in home countries and abroad.

3.2: Transnationalism and diaspora

Introduction: Steve Vertovec. Discussants: Pieter Emmer and Nancy Green

The central questions of this session were how the diaspora concept relates to transnationalism, how new it is and what its consequences are for the integration process both at the short and the long term.

In his introduction Steve Vertovec made an analytical distinction between migration, diaspora and transnationalism. Migration was defined as the physical movement and ensuing settlement; diaspora as the consciousness of being connected to the (imagined) homeland and to migrants from the same origin in other countries; and finally transnationalism as the practices of crossing borders, especially by circular and (repeated) return migration. This implies that migration can occur without diaspora and transnationalism, but that diaspora and transnationalism are always the result of migration. Although Vertovec acknowledged that transnationalism is not a new phenomenon and migrants in the past did also keep in contact with their home countries (through return migration, letters, remittances, the ethnic press etc.), he stressed that in the present revolutions in transport and communication have increased the scale (intensity and velocity) and impact to such an extent that we can speak of a new phenomenon.

In their comments both Pieter Emmer (see his written comments in the appendix) and Nancy Green posed a number of critical questions based on their knowledge of various historical experiences. Pieter Emmer concentrated on the diaspora concept as defined by Robin Cohen and used by Vertovec in his paper in the conference reader, differentiating between three groups of transatlantic migrants: slaves from Africa, free European settlers and indentured laborers from South Asia (India and the Dutch East Indies). By this comparison he showed that the relation between migration, diaspora and transnationalism differed per group, depending on their possibilities to keep in contact with the homeland and on their interest in building transnationalist ties and in constructing diasporic consciousness.

Nancy Green also applied these concepts to a number of historical examples, drawing mainly on intra-European and European transatlantic experiences. Building on her comparative model (Green 1997) she showed that using divergent comparative models (looking at migrants from the same origin in diverse destinations) it is analytically useful to differentiate between diaspora and transnationalism, because it leads to different kinds of relations between migrants in various locations and between migrants and the homeland

Another important point she raised was the question of newness, which was so central to this workshop. Here she argued that it is debatable whether a change in scale, as stressed by Vertovec, automatically implied a change in scope. In this connection she noticed that the way scholars evaluate historical and actual evidence to a certain extent depends on their disciplinary background: whereas historians tend to look for and stress continuities, social scientists are more interested in (structural) change and discontinuities. And, she continued, it is not difficult to find either continuity or discontinuity if one looks for it.

If we want to understand why migration scholars are studying this newness now, Green called attention to the fact that the different disciplinary traditions underwent a major paradigmatic and historiographical shift that took place in the last decades from a (pessimistic) structuralism to a (more optimistic) stress on agency. This shift was mirrored in the growing interest in ethnicity and diaspora, and a rejection of the once dominant assimilation and essentialist ethnic paradigmata. Especially the increasing attention to the way people have constructed and still construct their own ethnicity and (diasporic) identities. Instead of viewing transnationalism as imposed from above, scholars have started to consider it as a deliberate, voluntary (empowering) choice from below.

In the discussion the contributions by Emmer and Green proved to be very helpful and fruitful to overcome the classic opposition between historians and social scientists by creating a common theoretical ground and by making them aware of the importance to make their assumptions and interests explicit. Moreover, both historians called for a empirical approach which charts as good as possible the concrete actions migrants and their offspring undertake to uphold diasporic and transnational identities. An important aspect, which also came up in the discussion was that the proof of the pudding is in the eating on the long term. Will second and third generation children of migrants still maintain these kind of links and/or define themselves in these terms. Finally several participants (both historians and social scientists)

warned for the inherent essentialist associations attached to the disapora concept and expressed their skepticism as how useful the concepts transnationalism and diaspora are, as we already have concept as ‘networks’, ‘ethnicity’ and ‘migration’ at our disposal which seem to be able to describe and explain these phenomena.

3.3. Dual citizenship at work

Introduction: Dietrich Thränhardt. Discussants: Nancy Foner and Barbara Waldis

The central question of this session was how immigrants deal with multiple citizenship in their daily life and what it means for their identity.

In his introduction, Dietrich Thränhardt analyzed how the attitudes of Germany and other Western states towards dual or multiple citizenship have changed. Three developments have led to an increase in the number of people holding dual or multiple citizenship. In the first place, there has been a development in citizenship law toward gender equality. Secondly, specific categories have been accorded the right to hold dual or multiple citizenship. Thirdly, Thränhardt pointed at the process of decolonization: the former colonizing powers wanted to keep their influence in former colonies. Thränhardt then turned to the perspective of immigrants: why do some want to acquire the citizenship of their country of immigration, while others do not; why do some want to retain their old citizenship; and how do dual nationals use their dual citizenship? For most people, citizenship has both an instrumental and an identitarian aspect. Thränhardt predicted that dual nationality will become more common. However, he also predicted that this will have little impact on the situation in Germany.

Barbara Waldis who did extensive research on bi-national couples in Switzerland endorsed Thränhardt’s analysis and stressed that choosing for a certain nationality has not only to do with a feeling of belonging in the sense of national affiliation. Instead, the state and its borders are crucial, but not the nation. She argued that therefore the term transnational movements is not always the right one, and that we should rather speak of trans-state movements. Inversely, if scholars hold on to the term transnational, the term nation does not imply ethnicity or if the term is not used in such circumstances, it will then take another meaning and cover another field of social reality. A second important remark was that in order to grasp the meaning of dual nationality in everyday life, one has to differentiate

between several social domains. She argued that in this respect we have to focus on the participation of migrants and their spouses in the place of permanent residence and the quality of life guaranteed. Depending on the state model, there is a specific interweaving of different levels in society of the rights and duties linked with the status of citizen or rather the different possibilities of participation. Political participation has at least four levels: European Union, state, department and local level. Citizen participation also concerns questions such as taxation or military service, they do not necessarily need to be national, in the same way as participation in civil society, which deals with health and social security, and with access to professional and educational networks. Such a differentiation points to a diversification of models and possibilities of dual – or multiple or flexible – citizenship. It might therefore be interesting to know more about a re-conceptualization of citizenship, nationality and residence, to sharpen the outlines and the reach of these notions in order to work out differentiated and flexible models, adapted and adaptable to social reality within the state and across state borders.

Nancy Foner pointed out that in discussing dual citizenship, a comparison across space is useful. The evidence from the United States suggests that dual nationality will not necessarily dilute the meaning of American, or for that matter German, citizenship. The acceptance of dual citizenship may not only encourage immigrants to naturalize; naturalization in turn is likely to promote identification with the immigration country's civic and political life. With regard to Thränhardt's analysis of the concept of ethnicity, Foner underlined that a nation's historical experience affects the very terms used to analyze and discuss immigration and immigrant populations. She pointed out that in the US, the term race has not been replaced by ethnicity and that race is still used to officially categorize people. Finally, she raised a number of issues that directly relate to the themes of the workshop and that require further study: To what extent have transnational ties helped migrants in the past – and to what extent do they continue to help them in the present – to cope with discrimination and prejudice? How do transnational ties operate to reinforce migrants' ethnic identities? What role does dual nationality play in shaping migrants' identities, and how does it affect their political and other involvements in both their country of immigration and their country of origin? Foner emphasized the need for more empirical studies of what dual nationality means for the people involved and how it affects their actions and engagements. Thränhardt's prediction about the limited practical significance of dual nationality, she cautioned, might need to be revised.

In the plenary discussion, one of the historians suggested that a comparison across time might yield insight into why people may or may not seek to have the nationality of their country of immigration (and to retain their old nationality). In the past, many people did not have a nationality at all. Their decision whether or not to apply for it was influenced by various factors. It might be interesting to compare this to present-day decisions about acquiring a second citizenship. The historians also pointed out that rights and obligations attached to citizenship have changed over time. A related topic that came up in the discussion, was the importance of voting rights: these rights, it was argued, may be more important than is often thought. If immigrant groups have MPs and city-councilors, this may have a moderating effect, because MPs and councilors, unlike self-appointed ethnic leaders, are not just representing their ethnic group. One of the participants suggested that comparative studies of postcolonial immigrants (who upon arrival already have the nationality of the immigration country) and other immigrant groups may yield insight into the actual importance of citizenship for the integration process. Finally, several participants emphasized the need for research into the long-term effects of dual nationality on the socio-economic integration of immigrants. They suggested that dual nationality might have detrimental effects particularly for the second generation, because their parents would be inclined to keep all options open.

3.4 Transnationalism and assimilation.

Introduction: Michael Bommes. Discussant: Leo Lucassen

The central questions of this session were to what extent transnational ties influence or change the assimilation process.

Michael Bommes started by criticizing the transnationalist concept for its vagueness and container like qualities. He then argued that the assimilation concept has been widely misunderstood. Building on the work of Milton Gordon and Hartmut Esser Bommes stressed that any form of migration implied assimilation to some extent. To function in a new society, even at a minimal level, some knowledge of this society is necessary and therefore migrants have to adjust. This process of adjustment then varies widely and can be divided into four dimensions:

1. cognitive assimilation
2. structural assimilation
3. social assimilation
4. identificational assimilation

The classical assimilationist argument assumes that the last phase (identifying with the norms and values of the society of settlement) is the logical and inevitable outcome of the assimilation process. According to Bommes, however, this is not a necessary sequence. Transnationalists, on the other hand, are right in stressing that identificational assimilation does in certain cases not occur, but fail to see that these migrants always assimilate in a cognitive sense, if not also structurally and socially. To bridge the gap between the two worlds, the transnationalists will have to acknowledge that assimilation as a differentiated functional process is inextricably linked to the settlement process, whereas the assimilationists need to realize that the four dimensions are not automatically linked and that migrants, or their descendants may be structurally assimilated without identifying with the new country and continue to be attached to the home country.

Leo Lucassen welcomed Bommes' modeling and suggested that the concept of differentiated societies should be elaborated even further. In stead of functionalist differentiations, using social systems (family, school, work, institutions) as point of departure, societies can also be split up along other lines, which also make clear that national states were socially and culturally far from homogeneous, and have never been. Such an alternative differentiation (focusing on religion, class, gender and localism/regionalism) is very relevant, if not essential, to understand the way in which immigrants assimilate.

These alternative differentiations, which all to some extent are linked up with power relations, are important if we want to apply the Bommes/Esser model to long-term developments. Class religious and gender differences are reproduced in institutions that are so central in their functionalist model: schools, workplaces, organizations. Looking at the 19th and 20th centuries the way assimilation takes its course very much depends on which specific period one is interested in. Until World War I, the anti-democratic character of society and the existing inequalities explain the failing, or at most partial, integration of many and large segments of the population into society. Class, gender and religion, each in their own way, determined to what level of schooling (if at all) one could go, what kind of housing was available and what

kind of health system was accessible. Ethnicity could also be added, as some groups – like the Irish, Poles and Italians – in various countries were locked in their own ethnically closed worlds. From the end of the 19th century onwards workers and women emancipated, albeit far from entirely, which contributed to the homogenization of societies and which made ethnic differences more important. Especially when states after World War I started to make a more fundamental distinction between native citizens and aliens. This distinction, which includes another aspect of power relations, in this case between natives and immigrants, has only increased in the course of the twentieth century, although always modified by and channeled through class and gender. In this process immigrants have become more alien than in the past, especially when conflated with other elements (like religion, especially in the case of Islam).

To show how the model used by Bommes can better be applied to historical situations by inserting class and gender dimensions Lucassen argued that it could be helpful to combine it with the differentiation applied by Ewa Morawska in her book *Insecure prosperity* (1996) on small towns Jews in America in the first half of the twentieth century. Here she argues that assimilation (she uses the term ethnicization) is far from a homogeneous process but takes place in at least four different dimensions (economic, political, social, religious), each with their own specific characteristics. Assimilation can proceed very quick and be encompassing in one dimension, but take place much slower and more partial in another. When we apply the Esser/Bommes model to a specific historical case study, the Irish in England in the period 1840-1914 for example, its explanatory power is greatly enhanced by combining it with the differentiation used by Morawska, especially because the class and gender aspects can be highlighted much better.

In conclusion: the functional differentiation model used by Bommes is very useful not only to bridge the gap between assimilationist and transnationalist scholars, but also as starting point for historical analyses of integration processes over generations. A combination with the dimension-differentiation as proposed by Morawska makes the model even more powerful and allows to integrate power relations (class/ gender) into the analysis. By using such a model both in the past and the present makes comparisons much more transparent and makes it much more easier to put the claim of transnationalists, as explained by Vertovec in this workshop, to the test.

4. Towards a research agenda

During the workshop a number of suggestions were made in view of a future research agenda with regard to transnationalism and the contribution of historians working in the field of migration and integration. These were both of a methodological and a more empirical nature:

Methodology

1. Students in the field of migration and integration should be more aware, and make explicit, their disciplinary positions and realize to what extent a particular outlook can influence expectations and interpretations. This point was especially stressed in the discussion on the question to what extent integration patterns in the past resemble that in the present.
2. By accounting for one's assumptions it will be much more easy and productive to elaborate a set of past-present comparisons. Only by defining what scholars mean by terms like 'transformative' and 'different' it is possible to engage in a fruitful interdisciplinary exchange.
3. Applied to the phenomenon of transnationalism this would mean that we need to research in different periods what the character of transnationalism is (intensity, long term effects, under what conditions is it sustained?) and thus how it relates to assimilation. Especially the generational changes in the intensity of transnationalism, as well as gender differences have to be looked at carefully.
4. Furthermore it is of utmost importance to differentiate between functional (behavior of migrants through their own networks) and ideological (policies by sending states and organizations of migrants) transnationalism.
5. Making comparison in space (between countries) implies that one has to distinguish between plural and non-plural states and find out whether this influences the intensity and impact of transnationalism.
6. Equally, comparisons through time will have to account for structural changes in the structure of receiving societies. Especially changes in the character of the nation state and the expansion of the state after World War II, especially in the form of the welfare state, has to be taken into account when comparing the past and the present.

7. Finally several participants put forward that it would be important to map out the effects of stigmatization of certain immigrant groups on the emergence and the persistence of transnationalism.
8. Finally, the leading question for a research agenda could be formulated as follows: looking both at the past and the present, under what conditions does transnationalism emerge, under what conditions is it sustained and if it is sustained how does it influence the nature of the integration process?

5. Key references

Foner, Nancy, *From Ellis Island to JFK. New York two great waves of immigration* (New Haven 2000).

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6. Appendices

A. **List of Participants**

Hans van Amersfoort
IMES
Rokin 84
1012 KX Amsterdam
hvanamersfoort@fmg.uva.nl

Klaus Bade
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
bade@nias.knaw.nl

Wim Blockmans
Rector NIAS
Wassenaar
blockmans@nias.knaw.nl

Anita Böcker
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
Böcker@nias.knaw.nl

Michel Bommes
Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg
Kunzenweg 21
D - 79117 Freiburg
GERMANY
bommes@ph-freiburg.de

Pieter Emmer
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
emmer@nias.knaw.nl

Han Entzinger
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
entzinger@nias.knaw.nl

Nancy Foner
785 Park Avenue, 5E
New York 10021
USA
nfoner@spec.net

Nancy Green
EHESS
54 Boulevard Raspail
75006 Paris
FRANCE
Nancy.Green@ehess.fr

Betty de Hart
Instituut voor Rechtssociologie
Postbus 9049
6500 KK Nijmegen
B.deHart@jur.kun.nl

Jan Lucassen
International Institute of Social History
Amsterdam
jlu@iisg.nl

Leo Lucassen
NIAS-fellow
Wassenaar
lucassen@nias.knaw.nl

Gretty Mirdal
Department of Psychology
University of Copenhagen
Njalsgade 88
DK-2300 Copenhagen S
DANMARK
gretty.mirdal@psy.ku.dk

Mies van Niekerk
IMES
Rokin 84
1012 KX Amsterdam
vanniekerk@pscw.uva.nl

Herman Obdeijn
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
obdeijn@nias.knaw.nl

Karen Phalet
ERCOMER
Utrecht University
KPhalet@compuserve.com

Marlou Schrover
International Institute of Social History
Amsterdam
msc@iisg.nl

Henk Stronkhorst
ESF
Strassbourg
hstronkhorst@esf.org

Dietrich Thränhardt
NIAS fellow
Wassenaar
tränhardt@nias.knaw.nl

Steven Vertovec
Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin
Wallotstrasse 19
14193 Berlin
GERMANY
02VEST@wiko-berlin.de

Barbara Waldis
Institut d'ethnologie - Université de Neuchâtel
Saint-Nicolas 4
CH-2000 Neuchâtel
SWITZERLAND
Barbara.Waldis@unine.ch

Pnina Werbner
School of Social Relations
Keele University
Keele
Staffordshire ST5 5BG
ENGLAND
P.Werbner@keele.ac.uk

B. **Programme**

Friday December 6, 2002

9.00-10.00
Breakfast in the Ooievaarsnest (NIAS)

10.00-10.10
Opening by Wim Blockmans, rector of the NIAS

10.00-13.00
Session 1*:* Transnationalism and religion: the position of Islam

- Introduction: Pnina Werbner (Keele University)

-.Discussants: Han Entzinger (NIAS/ Rotterdam University), Herman Obdeijn (NIAS/ LeidenUniversity)

- Chair: Anita Böcker (NIAS/ Nijmegen University)

13.00-14.00
Lunch in the Ooievaarsnest (NIAS)

14.00-17.00
Session 2: "Transnationalism and diaspora": how does the diaspora concept relate to transnationalism, how new is it and what does it mean for integration processes?

-Introduction: Steven Vertovec (Wissenschaftskolleg Berlin)

-Discussants: Piet Emmer (NIAS/Leiden University), Nancy Green (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

-Chair: Leo Lucassen

17.00-18.30
Drinks

19.00
Dinner in restaurant Sankt Moritz on the Beach

Saturday December 7, 2002

9.00-10.00
Breakfast in the Ooievaarsnest (NIAS)

10.00-13.00
Session 3: "Dual citizenship at work": how do migrants deal with multiple nationalities in daily live? What does it mean for their identity and integration?

- Introduction: Dietrich Tränhardt (NIAS/ Münster University)

- Discussants: Nancy Foner (State University of New York) and Barbara Waldis (NIAS/ University Neuchâtel)

- Chair: Klaus Bade (NIAS/ Osnabrück University)

13.00-14.00
Lunch in the Ooievaarsnest (NIAS)

14.00-17.00
Session 4 "Transnationalism and assimilation": To what extent do transnational ties influence or change the integration process?

- Introduction: Michael Bommes (Osnabrück University)

- Discussant: Leo Lucassen (NIAS/ Amsterdam University)

- Chair: Dietrich Tränhardt (NIAS/ Münster University)

17.00-18.00
Drinks

18.00
Indonesian Rijsttafel in the Ooievaarsnest (NIAS)

C. **Selected comments (Steven Vertovec, Piet Emmer, Nancy Green, Barbara Waldis, Nancy Foner, and Leo Lucassen)**

Transnationalism and Transformation

Steven Vertovec, University of Oxford & Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin

Outline of Presentation given at the Workshop on Transnational Migration,
Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Wassenaar, 6 December 2002

The presentation commenced with a summary of some key points derived from Vertovec 2002 (which was circulated in advance to workshop participants). These are summarized below under point 1. Subsequently key criticisms of the transnationalism perspective were highlighted and discussed (point 2) before a number of key aspects of broader social, political and economic transformation were suggested (point 3).

1. Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism

These three terms have been conflated in much of the literature over the past ten years. While certainly related, it is important to bear in mind that they represent discrete processes and sets of phenomena. The following suggested takes on the three concepts underline this point.

Migration refers to the movement (circular or long-term) and resettlement of individuals, families and communities along with the processes of re-establishing (by way of contextual modification in light of things like mode of migration, legal status, local state policies toward migrants, position in labor market) key social institutions such as social structure (including family, class, gender relations), religious practices, and mutual welfare or cultural associations.

Diaspora refers to a consciousness of connection to people and traditions of a homeland and to others elsewhere in the world who share the perceived connection to the homeland. Such a consciousness can give rise to a variety of social forms, including ethnic associations, media and Internet sites.

Transnationalism refers to actual practices of exchange or resources (money, goods, information, people) across the borders of nation-states. Recent shifts in telecommunications

(especially cheap telephone calls, alongside faxes, satellite TV, email) and transportation (namely the relative cheapness of and regularity of flights).

With these basic working definitions in mind, we can observe that:

- *Migration* creates diasporas, but not all migration entails a sense of *diaspora* (indeed, in the great era of assimilation to places like the USA in the 20th century, much diasporic consciousness was stamped out in a single generation, or firmly 'closeted');
- *Transnationalism* arises from *migration*, but not all migrant communities engage in *transnationalism* (or some transnationalism remains very occasional rather than intense or sustained);
- *Transnationalism* can only function through a sense of *diaspora*, but not all diasporas engage in *transnationalism* (that is, many groups may feel strongly about homeland issues and co-ethnic elsewhere in the world without actually having much interaction with them).

Hopefully these distinctions will help disentangle much of the conceptual conflation plaguing the field. In seeking to account for certain practices and trajectories among migrants, it is important to assess whether and how these arise through migration, diasporic consciousness or transnationalism in light of specific local conditions.

Transnationalism, the 'newest' notion or approach in the field of migration studies, suffered perhaps most from conceptual conflation. This is just one of the criticisms of the term that have arisen.

2. Criticizing Transnationalism: The usual suspects

Gathered from a variety of published articles, conference sessions and workshop debates, a specific set of criticisms have emerged concerning the transnational lens on migrant communities. I call these 'the usual suspects' by way of two meanings: (a) the same criticisms are very recurrent (and often don't take account of how they have actually been addressed by a variety of scholars), and (b) although purporting to criticize 'the transnationalism literature', they most often focus on specific works by a small set of authors (especially Glick Schiller et al., the contributors to Smith and Guarnizo 1998, and Portes). Criticism of the transnational lens usually involves one or more of the following issues:

- **conceptual conflation and overuse:** 'transnationalism' is often used interchangeably with 'international', 'multinational', 'global' and 'diasporic'. This is not only confusing but removes any usefulness is adopting the term. There is also the problem of inadvertently suggesting that all migrants engage in transnationalism;
- **newness:** questions abound as to whether transnational activities among migrants are new, and how or to what extent they are new;
- **testing on the dependent variable:** researchers have looked for transnational patterns and found them. What about the cases in which transnationalism doesn't develop, or what conditions particular forms of transnationalism?
- **trans-what?:** studies have not adequately problematized the difference between trans-*national*, trans-*state* and trans-*local* processes and phenomena;
- **transnationalism vs. assimilation (vs. multiculturalism):** false dichotomies between these terms have been posited, rather than a robust account of their inter-relationship;
- **technological determinism:** are contemporary forms of migrant transnationalism brought about just through today's modes of real-time communication and cheap transportation?
- **one-generation thing:** are current patterns of transnational participation among migrants going to dwindle or die with the second and subsequent generations?

The 'newness' critique is probably the one raised most often. Alejandro Portes (2001) has dealt with this 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 Robert Smith (2003) puts it, '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.'

While it can't be pushed too hard, there is an analogy with the study of gender and migration. We can say that obviously gender issues 'were there' historically all along in migrant phenomena; however it is only in the last twenty years or so that scholars have begun to focus on gender-specific issues in the study of migration (see among others Phizacklea 1983, Buijs 1993, Willis and Yeoh 2000). Moreover, it is arguable that in recent years some processes have occurred surrounding gender and migration that have been particularly new and transformative (such as the feminization of migration flows, the changing place of women in the labor market, and shifts in family, household and kinship structures). No one would want

to suggest that we do away with the recently developed gendered study of migration because women were migrants one hundred years ago.

To call these 'usual suspects' is not to underestimate their importance. It is true that much criticism of the term comes by way of tiresome conceptual nit-picking. Yet for the most part, all the points outlined above represent highly important caveats, problematics and grounds for theoretical correction. But none, contrary to some critics' perspectives, delivers a knockout blow. Moreover, they are all points that have been or are currently being engaged by a wide variety of social scientists, including the usual suspect authors.

It is clear, however, that much more conceptual and empirical work remains to be done with regard to sharpening the transnational approach to migration research and analysis. One way to do this is by better disaggregating and typologizing kinds and levels of transnational activity and accounting for their difference (cf. Smith 2001, Levitt 2001a, Fitzgerald 2002, Portes 2003).

3. Transnationalism and Transformation

Transnationalism in danger of becoming -- as David Held et al. (1999: 1) say of globalization -- a 'cliché of our times: the big idea which encompasses everything from global financial markets to the Internet but which delivers little substantive insight into the contemporary human condition.' What is the added value of the term? Portes et al. (1999) have gone a considerable way towards answering this question; they conclude that there is value in using it, but we must be clear as to what aspects are different from what migrants have long done. Again akin to the way Held and his associates approach globalization, I believe that certain aspects of migrant transnationalism involve 'developments that signal the emergence of a new conjuncture; that is, a transformation of the nature, form and prospects of human communities' (Held et al. 1999: 1).

By transformation I am suggesting significant patterns of change affecting elemental structures of social organization. What are some indicators of such transformation by way of migrant transnationalism? The following sections briefly represent a few possibilities.

3.1 Socio-Cultural: the emergence of normative transnationalism

For many individuals, families and communities in both sending and receiving contexts, transnational patterns of activity, communication and exchange have become normative for worldview and practice – a kind of 'life world' or habitus (Guarnizo 1997, Portes et al. 1999, Smith 2001). Such social patterns that span borders variously condition people's everyday expectations (about potentials for migration, work, household development and individual life course), obligations (for exchanging information, reciprocal exchange and mutual support), institutional structures (including religious organization and hometown associations), and relations to the state (to manipulate it, contest it or avoid it). In an increasing number of local communities in developing countries, it is almost taken for granted that certain members of the family will emigrate using pre-existing transnational social networks to do so.

Normative transnationalism has also transformed one of the most fundamental social structures, family and kinship. This has arisen both through physical relocation and long-distance communication. Decisions that many non-migrant families commonly make across a kitchen table (e.g., can we buy a refrigerator? what do we do about the teenager's behaviour? when, where and for how long does someone or family next travel?) are now regularly made by some migrant families across oceans. Cheap telephone calls have largely facilitated this. For a single family to be stretched across vast distances and between nation-states, yet still functioning for collective gain, is now common for many. In various related ways, the position of women in households – and thereby everyday gender relations – has in turn been transformed too (especially when it is the wives and daughters who have migrated to become the breadwinners for the families who have stayed).

Such transformation of individual worldview and daily family practice contribute to larger impacts. 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 way migrants transnational practices can modify the value systems and everyday life of entire regions (see for instance Shain 1999, Kyle 2000, Levitt 2001b).

3.2 Political: redefinitions of identities-borders-orders

There is now a very large literature spanning the social sciences in which scholars debate the idea that processes of globalization have significantly undermined the authority of the nation-state system (see Guillén 2001 for a summary of such debates). Whether sceptics, hyper-globalists or transformationists (Held et al. 1999), most observers agree that the nation-state has been radically challenged by the processes and phenomena surrounding such things as the emergence of complex global economic patterns and massive new, instantaneous financial flows, regional pacts and an array multi-lateral agreements (on trade, the environment, crime and terrorism, etc.) and 'humanitarian' military interventions – all things which seem to upset longstanding notions of sovereignty.

Within the field of International Relations, one way of attempting to understand such challenges is through what Yosef Lapid and his colleagues (2001) describe as the 'analytical triad' or 'dynamic nexus' between the concepts of 'identities-borders-orders'. The idea here is that order to appreciate changes happening in any one of these conceptual domains, it must be assessed in relation to the other two. Lapid et al. write:

> 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. (Ibid.: 7)

The conventional model of the nation-state involves: international borders are presumed to 'contain' a people characterized by some linguistic, social, presumed cultural/ethnic identity, who are themselves organized by an ideational, moral and political (legal/juridical and democratic/authoritarian) order. 'Identities-borders-orders' are legitimated and reproduced through a system of narratives, public rituals and institutions, formal state and informal social

relationships, written and unwritten regulations, sets of assumptions and expectations of civility and public behavior (Schiffauer et al. 2003).
Various processes of globalization and the rise of regional, global and 'cosmopolitan' structures of governance assail essential components of 'identities-borders-orders' (see among others Vertovec and Cohen 2002)

Migration itself presents a challenge to '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)

Transnational political attachments of migrants – expressed in their homeland political activity (e.g. Østergaard-Nielsen 2003), politicians' campaigns among emigrant communities (e.g. Fitzgerald 2002), and a basket of issues surrounding dual citizenship and dual nationality (e.g., Koslowski 2001) – combine the longstanding challenges of migration with an intensified political assault on any singular sense of 'identities-borders-orders' marking a nation-state.

Migrant transnationalism does not itself bring about the transformation of the nation-state into a more multiple and overlapping set of identities and orders which borders no longer really contain (see for instance Beck 2002). Such a transformation is happening anyway due to a confluence of processes within global political economy. But it migrant transnationalism importantly contributes to such an arguably era-breaking shift.

3.3 Economic: the impact of remittances

The economic dimension of migrant transnationalism includes many forms (Guarnizo 2003). Remittances represent perhaps the most exemplary form of transnationalism among migrants.

Drawing upon her research in El Salvador, Patricia Landolt (2001: 234) richly describes some of the ways remittances transform 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.

While some critics claim that remittances merely create dependency and are spent on consumption rather than investment, it is known that remittances often also go towards funding education and health care as well as infrastructure (houses, clinics, churches and mosques, water systems, etc.). A variety of cultural phenomena – including marriage arrangement, local status hierarchies, religious practices and consumer tastes – are often modified through the impact of remittances (Vertovec 2000).

Migrants have always sent money home: that is usually one of the main reasons they migrate (aside from occurrences of forced migration). However, today the sheer scale of global remittances has arguably changed the nature of the phenomenon. International Monetary Fund figures show a quadrupling of official global remittances over the past twenty years, from $28 million to now over $100 million. [Since this amount refers to official transfers though banks, it considerably underestimates the true figures since many migrants utilize non-official transfers through couriers and personal networks.] In 2000 remittances from abroad augmented by more than 10 per cent the gross domestic product (GDP) of countries such as El Salvador, Eritrea, Jordan, Nicaragua and Yemen (UNPD 2002). Numerous other countries around the world also rely on migrant remittances to contribute substantially to GDP, including Egypt, the Philippines, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and virtually all Central American countries. For such countries remittances are often worth more than foreign aid, tourism and, sometimes, key exports. Over the past few decades migrant remittances have thereby wrought major economic transformations for a large number of developing countries.

While most remittances are sent by immigrants within family-based networks, an increasingly important economic role has been developed by migrant hometown associations. Historical evidence shows that immigrant communities in many parts of the world established hometown associations of various kinds a hundred years ago. 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). In addition to simply pooling money to send for collective villages back in their places of origin, migrant hometown associations have importantly begun to organize on a large scale the ways the money is spent. '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). The transnationalism represented by this kind of collective remittance activity is transforming modes of local development.

Another way remittances are transforming – or at least providing the potential for transforming – local development in sending contexts is through micro-finance structures. Micro-finance entails local banks and financial institutions providing low-interest credit to support small-scale manufacturing to provide goods to local markets. Their development potential is large. To the extent they already exist, for instance; a large number of micro-finance clients in developing countries are low-income women; providing them with financial support to develop small enterprises will have a substantial transformative effect on local economic and social structures. In contrast to rural credit programmes that absorbed large sums of money over several decades, many relevant agencies – such as the Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank – are increasingly interested in the development potential of micro-finance institutions. The number and quality of micro-finance institutions in Latin America has increased greatly in the past decade, but there remains an acute need for private investment in this sector (Sanabria 2000). Many analysts are now recognizing the role that migrant remittances might have for building up this sector (see for example Martin 2001). In this way, writes G. Pascal Zachary (2002: 3), diasporic communities ‘have the capability to promote, in the case of developing countries, de-centralized, knowledge-based, indigenous alternatives to the economic structures produced by the nexus of finance capitalism, multinational corporations and multilateral global institutions such as the World Bank.’

Some conclusions

Contemporary transnational practices, although not altogether new to the experience of migrants, have some arguably new effects on individuals, families and communities. They represent one set of facets surrounding a larger set of transnational activities affecting society and social science. Stephen Castles (2001: 14) explicitly links the contemporary study of social transformation to the analysis of transnational connectedness affecting national societies, local communities and individuals.

> The point is that global change and the increasing importance of transnational processes require new approaches from the social sciences. These will not automatically develop out of existing paradigms, because the latter are often based on institutional and conceptual frameworks that may be resistant to change, and whose protagonists may have strong interests in the preservation of the intellectual status quo. If classical social theory was premised on the emerging national-industrial society of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, then a renewal of social theory should take as its starting point the global transformation occurring at the dawn of the twenty-first century. (Ibid.)

The social scientific study of migrant transnationalism still has to make more rigorous its associated concepts and methods in light of a range of contemporary criticisms. But such analytical honing is worthwhile if we are to understand some of the major structural transformations taking place across the world today.

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Diaspora and Transnationalism in the early history of the Atlantic, 1500 –1900

Comments on Steven Vertovec "Religion in Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism"

P.C.Emmer, Dept of History, Leiden University, P.O. Box 9515, NL-2300 RA Leiden.
E-mail: p.c.emmer@let.leidenuniv.nl

Introduction

- Limit myself to discussing the outcome of three trans-Atlantic migration movements
    - The migration of Europeans to the New World between 1500 and 1850, totalling about 3 million migrants, both contract labourers and others
    - The forced migration of about 11 million Africans between 1500 and 1850 to selected areas in the New World
    - The immigration of about 0.5 million South Asians to the New World between 1840 and 1914 as contract labourers-

The contribution

- Problem with the scheme as set out in table 1 "Common features of a Diaspora"
    - The first three common features indeed apply to all three groups: 1) they are dispersed from there original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign countries. West Europeans: to the New World and to Eastern Europe, Africans to the New World and to the Middle East and South Asian migrants to the New World as well as to Africa and other parts of Asia. 2) They did so in search of work or to be employed, pursuit of a trade and to further colonial ambitions and 3) all three groups have collective memories of their respective homelands. So far so good.

    - However, there is to my knowledge no idealisation of the putative ancestral home or of a return movement among the European immigrants and the African slave population. The return movements to Liberia and Sierra Leone after the ending of slave were much more popular with the abolitionists than with the freed slaves. Indian contract labourers should be excepted, as a free return journey was written in their contracts

- The ethnic group consciousness is also problematic. Of coursed, it does apply to the majority of the European immigrants, but the Africans were ethnically mixed and so were the Indians. The way in which the Africans and Indians migrated made it impossible to keep ethnic groups together. In the slave barraccoons slaves from various ethnic backgrounds were mixed and the same happened in the depots used in the recruitment of indentured labourers from South Asia There is some reporting about ethnic cleavages among Africans and Indians once they had arrived overseas, but the system by which these groups moved to the new world made it virtually impossible to retain ethnic ties. Last, but not least: we should not forget that part of the European migration across the Atlantic was also mixed. We now find that soldiers and sailors make up a larger share of the immigrants from Europe than previously assumed.

- I will now turn to the patterns of change that surround migration and minority status and follow the topics as mentioned by Steve Vertovec: 1) organisation and mobilisation, 2) the politics of recognition, 3) the position and role of women, 4) Generations and 5) Ethnic and religious pluralism

  - 1) *The organisation of migrants with a view of religious worship*: in all three cases this is what happened. In case of the Africans and the Europeans there are so many studies that I cannot begin to summarize them. The main discussion focuses on the question whether the African and European religions in the New World were a copy of the old religion or something new. In case of the Africans and Indians, most scholars agree that a set of new religious practices had been created as these migrants were unable to import religious leaders from Africa and Asia unlike the Europeans

  - *2) The politics of recognition*. Again all three groups, albeit in different ways attempted to obtain "legal tolerance or cultural rights surrounding specific practices, freedom from discrimination, and access to public resources". Obviously, slaves had a harder time in obtaining these changes than Europeans

and Indians. However, we now know that the slaves could exert more informal pressure than we had originally thought. Any planter would be well advised not to interfere with the religious life in the slave quarters and most of the time he could not care less. Interestingly, the Indian contract labourers in Suriname protested against their access to public resources. Under colonial law all children were required to attend elementary school between the ages of 6 and 12 and that law was instituted in 1878, well before it was instituted in the Netherlands. One of the ideas behind it was to educate the ex-slaves so they would become reliable workers. At the same time forcing the ex- slave children to attend school would reduce the income the family could make and that would in turn force the parent or parents to earn some money by offering labour to the plantations. When the Indian indentured labourers arrived, their children were also forced to go to school and the British consul had to intervene, as the parents were keen to have their children earn money. The solution was the foundation of several plantation schools where Indian teachers taught the coolie children.

- *3) Women's position and roles.* This is an important point and little comparative work has been done. The exceptional cause is Europe, where from the late Middle Ages onward women and children were pushed into marginal positions in the economy. Women could not own a business or become a member of a guild. In Africa man and women had different roles in the economy, but in agriculture women were as important as men if not more important. In the New World, the Europeans were able to imitate the pattern prevailing in Europe albeit that the women in the New World seemed to become less marginalized. In using Africans, the Europeans adapted the African social code and made women and children perform heavy labour in the fields. I have no idea whether African female slaves played a more important role in New World slave religions than did women in Africa. Similarly, female indentured labourers were also contracted for field labour, but they were usually not forced to serve the full length of their contract. In all cases women were in a minority when arriving: usually between 30 tot 40 per cent of the total arrivals. In case of the slave trade, that mix was the result of the supply of

African slave traders, in case of European trans-Atlantic migration that mix was the result of cultural inhibitions in Europe against female migration and in the case of India the number of female migrants was set by law.

- *4) Generations.* In this section Vertovec points to the difference between the generations caused by the fact that second and third generations usually have a different religious, educational and societal position from the first generation. That obviously applied to all three groups of trans-Atlantic migrants. The we are dealing with a long-term phenomenon can be demonstrated by the fact that today the discussions about the problems of assimilation and integration of the first generation of immigrants were similar in the time of slavery. That is why Creole slaves fetched higher prices than African slaves.

- *5) Ethnic and religious pluralism.* Migrants do realize that their religion is one out of many when they arrive in their country of destination. They accept that their children might not be as religious or even embrace a modified form of their religion or change to another religion or even to no religion at all. This is certainly true for the Africans. They learned about other African religions (both animist and Muslim) during their stay on shore before embarkation, during the passage to the New World and in the New World. There, they also learned about Christianity and some converted to it. The same applied to the Indians who were of mixed Muslim and Hindu origin. I have no idea what the religious pluralism of the immigrant world meant to the Europeans. At first more of the New World might have been even more mono-religious than the Old. In Spanish and Portuguese America the only religion allowed was Roman Catholicism, albeit that Jews and New Christians seemed to enjoy more liberties than on the Iberian Peninsula, while Massachusetts and Pennsylvania were religiously limited to one brand of Protestantism. In actual practice, however, the settlement colonies allowed for more mixing as well as for more isolation as any group of immigrants that wanted to retain its religious purity could move out and isolate itself.

Conclusion

- Of the three groups entering the New World between 1500 and 1900 no doubt the Africans seemed more part of a diaspora and could not develop the feelings of transnationalism to the same extend as the European and Asian immigrants in the New World. The Africans could not return home or obtain regular information about their place of origin. I realize that we should differentiate between the various parts of the New World. As more than 80 percent of the forced migration from Africa to the New World was directed either at the Caribbean or North eastern Brazil, we should expect the strongest development of transnational communities there. Strangely, Blacks in North America seem to identify more with Africa than blacks in the Caribbean and Brazil, the Jamaican Rasta's excepted.

Europeans should have developed their transnationalism when the number of immigrants was highest and when contacts with the country of origin were most frequent. The situation in the Caribbean seems to bear this out. In the British, French and Dutch plantation colonies nationalism among the European section of the population was virtually absent as the Creole element remained small due to frequent immigration and the high death rate. The only section of the Caribbean where nationalism did develop was Spanish as Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico only had with weak ties with the mother country and low numbers of immigrants from Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Most transnational of all should have been the attitude of the Indian and Southeast Asian contract labourers arriving in the New World during the 19th century. Of all immigrant groups the Asian contract labourers enjoyed the best opportunities to remain in touch with the country of origin as free postage and free return passages were part of their contracts of indenture. I am excluding the Chinese. Yet, there is a remarkable difference in the rate of return between the Indians and Javanese in the Dutch colonies in spite of the fact that they migrated with the same contracts. That seems to suggest that in addition to movement and contacts cultural factors come into play and that some migrants retain their transnational attitude longer than others because of their cultural background.

NANCY L. GREEN (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales)

TERMS AND CONCEPTS, THEN AND NOW

Steven Vertovec's paper, "Religion in migration, diasporas and transnationalism" is both stimulating and very useful. We all stumble over a variety of concepts, and Vertovec's call to clarify them is most welcome. Terms are often used interchangeably, and, as he comments, everything seems to be a "diaspora" these days.[2] Vertovec thus proposes the following distinctions: "migration" as referring to physical movement, "diaspora" as relating to a certain consciousness resulting from that movement; and "transnationalism" as regarding interactions across borders.

Concepts and Language

I would identify perhaps three sources of our current terminological difficulties: one related to perceptions of time, another linked to disciplinary differences; and a third the result of poststructuralist theories.

Past and Present: The Debate over Newness.

The crux of the question is: how new is transnationalism? Indeed, the term itself has been coined (or rejuvenated) to express novelty, postulating a contemporary increase of movement and communications back and forth across borders that implies a withering away of the pertinence of the nation-state. (Older terms that could be drawn upon include: internationalism, which however presumes a certain stability of the nation-state; or cosmopolitanism.[3] Another new term, globalization, seems to refer mostly to goods, as distinct from transnationalism, which refers to people.) However, the debate over the newness of transnationalism seems to be essentially one of scale versus scope. When is a change in scale a change in scope, as Vertovec argues?

The difficulty with responding to this issue is that we often mix history and historiography. We are asking questions about lives past and present and the possibilities of comparing them.

[2] Vertovec has collaborated on several projects with Robin Cohen, whose *Global Diasporas: An Introduction* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), serves as a useful introduction to the debate over definitions.
[3] Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, eds., *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford University Press, 2002)

The comparative method is important for analyzing similarities and differences, but the tendency toward a "Method of Agreement" or a "Method of Difference" (John Stuart Mill) is sometimes implicit in the construction of the comparative research project itself; if you look for similarity across time you find it, if you look for differences across time, you find them.[4] Furthermore, temporal historical comparisons of past and present are important, but they are, of necessity, engaged within the (historiographic) context of our present. Questions about transnationalism have thus become a contemporary issue, applied to both the present and the past. And, like the researcher's tendency toward similarity or difference, looking for transnationalism one can find it.

Anthropologist Nancy Foner's ambitious book, *From Ellis Island to JFK*, is one what seeks systematically to answer the question of migrations past and present.[5] She discusses technology, prosperity, dual citizenship, ethnic pluralism, etc., as elements of contemporary migrants' experience which were not those of the past. Hers is a resolutely temporal comparison, looking at the similarities and differences between early and late 20th century immigrants to New York City. Yet, it is interesting to note that, in addition to the multiple challenges of researching and writing comparative history, we can add the question of reading and interpreting it. How is a book such as Foner's read? Leo Lucassen, historian, emphasizes the historical continuities in Foner's book, while Steven Vertovec, social scientist, summarizes her book as emphasizing newness in the more recent immigrants' experiences.

Disciplinary biases?

One of the important (and successful) aims of this workshop has been to bring together researchers from different disciplines in order to overcome that which Leo Lucassen and other historians have characterized as a disciplinary divide. We should explore, I would argue, the ways in which each discipline has its own perceptions of time and newness. Historians can study moments of newness past (the marvel of Marconi, the speed of steam over sail, etc.),

[4] John Stuart Mill, "Two Methods of Comparison" (excerpt from *A System of Logic*, 1888), in Amitai Etzioni et Frederick L. Du Bow, eds., *Comparative Perspectives: Theories and Methods* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), pp. 205-13; Nancy L. Green, "The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism -- New Perspectives for Migration Studies," Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, eds., *Migration, Migration History, History*, Bern, Peter Lang, 1997, pp.57-72; cf. Caroline B. Brettell, "Is the Ethnic Community Inevitable? A Comparison of the Settlement Patterns of Portuguese Immigrants in Toronto and Paris", *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 9:3 (Fall 1981): 1-17: "One chooses a community to find or prove 'community.' The assumptions become the conclusion." Michaël Bömmes brought up a similar point in the workshop discussion.

[5] Nancy Foner, *From Ellis Island to JFK: New York's Two Great Waves of Immigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

however, we often tend to look for signs of continuity (while, of course identifying moments of rupture). Historians then, are perhaps more inclined toward a mode of *déjà vu* in understanding today's migration and (un)settlement patterns than sociologists who see contemporary detail with disciplinary eyes that emphasize newness. Indeed, as anthropologists, who used to study "tradition" – elsewhere – have begun to study modernity within tradition and vice versa – at home, they, like other social scientists have placed their emphasis on the contemporary world, postulating a difference of the present from the past, which is distinct from the historian's lens.

The Shift from Structure to Agency

Our disciplines, like our choice of terms, also change over time. Why, for example, study this newness now? As I have already suggested, the answer undoubtedly has as much to do with scholars as with their subjects. A general shift in interpretation over the last thirty years has affected all of the social sciences. An emphasis on structures has given way to one on individual agency; research into oppression and constraints and collective protest movements has given way to an emphasis on individuals and the possibilities of their own action. More generally, one could characterize the shift as one from an underlying pessimism to a more hearty optimism!

This, I would suggest, is why a new vocabulary has arisen to characterize the present – and perhaps the past. Historians who contest its "reality" are not necessarily dismissing "transnationalism"; they are arguing that it happened in the past too. In the United States, the early study of migration, from the Americanization literature of the 1920s through the 1960s, was characterized by an interest in assimilation, which was challenged by the "ethnic revival" of the 1970s.[6] The massive shift to studies of ethnicity and identity have perhaps in turn run their course today, as cultural pluralism has been reified by some essentialists (whom I would call "hard multiculturalists"), discrediting the valence of a "droit à la difference". But one could also interpret this historiographic shift in relation to the debate over post-structuralism. The older assimilation literature was perhaps grounded in a belief in the integrative structures of the countries of arrival, whereas the ethnicity literature developed within a context of increasing attention to individual (and group) agency, expressed as a continuity with imported forms of cultural expression.

But perhaps ethnicity is not enough? The concepts of "diaspora" and "transnationalism" seem to be even more emphatic expressions of cultural agency. They both take part in redefining migration and its sequel from a positioning within structural constraints to a more positive expression of human agency. The ideational reference to the homeland, the diasporic imagination, has become an empowering force against the vulnerability of minority status. Indeed, from a historic term that initially referred to the tears of forced expulsion (and the difficulty if not presumed impossibility of return), "diaspora" has been redefined and re-used, with an essentially positive emphasis on connectedness with the homeland. Transnationalism, in this respect, and in keeping with Vertovec's distinctions, refers to the actual communications possible with the homeland and with other diasporic communities. It, too, stresses the positive, perceiving individual and group movement from below, as distinct from other forms of trans-nationalism, such as colonialism or imperialism, which imply movement from above.

Religion as a category of analysis

Is religion a subset of "culture" or of ethnicity? I have argued recently that if you look at religion or ethnicity as categories of analysis with regard to the history of migration in France and the United States, the results are somewhat surprising.[7] The comparison, especially as seen from France (Americans are less inclined to compare themselves to others), would postulate that American discourse is more religious, while French is more secular: the French view that religion is pervasive in the United States (down to the "In God we trust" on the coins) parallels the self-representation of republican secularism as the foundation of the modern French state. Such a distinction overlooks the fact that both countries' contemporary regimes are based on a theoretical separation of church and state, which has exceptions built into it on both sides of the Atlantic. More generally, however, I would argue that the categories of analysis of immigrants in the last twenty to thirty years have been contrary to (French) expectations.

Religion has not been a category of analysis of immigration in the United States. Ethnicity has. Although Will Herberg proposed an analysis of American society based on an

[6] A classic statement of this shift is Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot : The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963).
[7] Nancy L. Green, "Religion et ethnicité: De la comparaison spatiale et temporelle," *Annales HSS*, 57:1 (January-February 2002), pp. 127-144.

understanding of the three major religious groups of the time in his *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*,[8] published in 1955, the new immigration history, which took off in the 1970s, concomitant with the ethnic renaissance, offered another category of understanding which led to the development of ethnic studies. Parishes, congregations and synagogues are present in this literature (and they must be studied with regard to conflict as well as cohesion among groups, as Vertovec points out), but, I argue, they have been studied largely as expressions of ethnic community.

In France, where the process of separation of church and state has historically been more violent and still erupts as contested terrain from time to time, the *républicain* social scientists have explicitly rejected ethnicity as a dangerous form of identity assignation[9]. Yet, in the meantime, Algerian immigrants, who were first seen largely as "Arabs" have, since the 1980s, been referred to increasingly as "Muslims", especially since the factory strikes of 1982-1983, when North African workers demanded prayer rooms at the workplace and the "Scarf Affair" in 1989, when high school girls asserted the right to wear Muslim headscarves to (public) school. Here, as elsewhere, it is necessary to distinguish between the popular and scientific literature and examine more carefully the relationship between the two in the genesis of categories of understanding. But, by and large, the conclusion – which may be provisional, in light of September 11th – is that American and French social scientists have chosen different terms, laden with different meanings, to study their immigrant populations.

[8] Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* [1955], Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983.

[9] See, for example, the debate between Michèle Tribalat and Hervé Le Bras: Michèle Tribalat (with Patrick Simon and Benoît Riandey), *De l'immigration à l'assimilation. Enquête sur les populations d'origine étrangère* (Paris: La Découverte/INED, 1996); Hervé Le Bras, *Le Démon des origines* (La Tour-d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube, 1998). Cf. Joan Stavo-Debauge, "Prendre position contre l'usage de catégories 'ethniques' dans la statistique publique, Le *sens commun constructiviste*, une manière de se figurer un danger politique", in Pascale Laborier and Danny Trom, eds., *L'historicité de l'action politique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, forthcoming).

Prophecies, Ius Soli and Dual Citizenship. Interpreting the Changes in the German Citizenship System

Comments on the text of Dietrich Tränhardt

Barbara Waldis, University of Neuchâtel

Double citizenship at work – multiple nationalities in everyday life

The perspective which I bring to bear on double citizenship concerns the social realities of binational marriage. In such a situation people have to deal in everyday life with different languages and with different religions, with different nationalities and maybe with different colours. It is true, in Switzerland, that such families profit from a less rigid legal framework with regard to residence permits and naturalisation than other immigrants, but as couples and families these people have to decide questions of how or whether cultural and national references can be mixed: Where is it possible to get married? Where is it economically possible to live? What religion and languages are to be transmitted to the children? How can the social relations with the in-laws and friends in the other country be maintained? How can the exchange of goods between the families in two countries be dealt with? And how can the family cope with the fact that the foreign partner suffers from – sometimes serious disadvantages in the political sphere, with respect to social security and is restricted in mobility? Some of these questions can be resolved once and for all, others come back a couple of times throughout different life stages, and some need daily negotiation. Indeed, binational families have a lot of practice in the dealing with their double – and sometimes even triple or multiple – cultural and national inscriptions. But that does, of course, not mean that binational families always know best. Encouraged by love and the decision to live together they bridge over, combine and evaluate differences in a very pragmatic and creative way. In Switzerland in the last fifteen years, a quarter of all marriages have been binational. Therefore double nationality is for quite an important part of the population in Switzerland a reality, and people have acquired considerable practice in dealing with this. That is why it seems worthwhile including their experiences in my considerations on double citizenship as nationality.

This background implies a certain understanding of the term „transnational“. The empirical research on intermarriage shows that it does not just mean border crossing. It is much more

visible, when limits are overrun or when the limits of borders are reached. In these situations, where the limits of the reach of concepts and laws appear, the discussion of transnational action takes on another hue. Let me give you an example. The most frequent cases treated in court under international private law are binational family matters. Mainly in cases of binational divorces questions of child care, parental duties and responsibilities as well as that of the validity of residence permits – and the realistic possibility of taking care of a child arise and point to the outlines of the cultural closure of national legal conceptions. But not only divorce. For some binational couples the question of the country in which – for reasons of residence permits and incompatible family laws – a marriage can take place already turns out to be a very tricky one. The increasing number of binational families suggests that they don't let themselves be discouraged by such perspectives or obstacles: they don't make a big issue of dual nationality, they just live with it, as good and as far as possible. Some families even develop a very fine sense of tackling or bypassing the normality of mononational citizenship.

In the case of binational families, dual citizenship or nationality does not only concern migrants. To talk of dual citizenship only with regard to migrants narrows the field of investigation and deprives us of the possibility of research on the transformation, which the issue of dual nationality involves for the rest of the population. Dual citizenship, national participation and identity concern both migrants and non-migrants, be it in relations with administrators, neighbours, schoolmates, professional colleagues, friends or within the family. Again, a comparison with the reality of binational families might help to clarify this point. The local partner often learns a great deal about immigration and nationality laws, and inequalities in political rights, social security and professional opportunities through her or his binational marriage. This process fosters further participation and integration – not only of the foreign partner, but mainly of the local one. And most of the time, in a binational marriage, one also finds the idea that the local partner would love to have the opportunity to go to the home-country of his or her foreign partner, maybe even to have the possibility of living there. In this case again, integration relates to the local and to the foreign partner. Such dynamics indicate that double citizenship is not only of importance to migrants but also to non-migrants. Dual nationality is very much linked with practices in social reality and – it seems to me – it concerns the society as a whole.

In his text „Prophecies, ius soli and dual citizenship. Interpreting the changes in the German citizenship system", Dietrich Tränhardt presents a not only surprising historical discussion of

the notion of nation, the internal Others of Germany and the divergent problems of immigrants and Aussiedler, but also a very clear picture of the transformation in society throughout the nineties which allowed dual citizenship laws in Germany to emerge. It is on this last point that I will focus my comments as these changes seem to have a paradigmatic character and comparisons of a „French“ or a „German“ model of dual nationality require revisions, as the old dichotomy of citizenship models seems no longer valid. Whereas in France the principle of residence is in some respects combined now with the principle of ethnicity and heritage, the changes in Germany point to a clear preference for residence criteria. The radicality of the changes in Germany might astonish. However more important seems to be that Dietrich Tränhardt shows that the limits of the principle of ethnicity as a criterion for citizenship were already present in German history.

The main obstacles for dual citizenship in the German past which Dietrich Tränhardt identifies are: the ethnic immigration from Eastern Europe or the „Aussiedler“; the immigration from southern Europe since the sixties which did not lead to naturalisation; and the concepts of the state and the nation. On the basis of these three obstacles, I will discuss three points. The first deals with the interpretations of changes in the citizenship laws throughout the nineties, the second point concerns the meaning of citizenship and its multiple forms, and includes some reflections on the nation, the state and citizenship. Finally, I will try to state what this could, always from the actor’s point of view, imply for further research on citizenship and dual – or multiple – nationality.

1. This point deals with the importance and interpretation of the changes in citizenship laws in Germany throughout the nineties. Following the analysis of Dietrich Tränhardt, the politics of admitting „Aussiedlers“ did not change throughout the Cold War as the numbers of immigrants were not very large and it was only after 1989 that things start to evolve. Until 1993 hundreds of thousands of Aussiedlers from Eastern Europe and Asia applied for residence in Germany. I remember discussions with German ethnologists in the nineties on the Germanness of the Aussiedlers, the language classes and the differences in their behaviour. The Aussiedler problematic led to the question of the criteria for being German. This was a discussion about own or internal German others. This discussion contrasted, in my eyes, with the question of the external German others, the Turkish, Yugoslav, Greek and Italian immigrants who since the sixties had settled in Germany. Their children went to school in Germany, spoke German, knew about social norms. But they did not have German citizenship and were not considered as Germans, although the language skills and the

behaviour of these different others did sometimes not distinguish them from Germans. A third point of importance seems to me the reunification of Germany. Again, the question of difference towards internal or own others was discussed, this time in terms of culture, ideology and economy. The German state, society and population has undergone quite important transformations in these last fifteen years and it seems to me that the debates on the different others in Germany have contributed and maybe fostered the changes in German citizenship laws towards acceptation to a dual nationality.

Further, it is interesting to consider the use made of the possibility of double citizenship. As Dietrich Tränhardt points outs, it has not been immigrants from other European states that have applied for German citizenship but rather Turks, Moroccans and Vietnamese. A possible interpretation of this tendency might be that what is at stake is not so much German citizenship, but instead access to citizenship in a European country. With this, the focus lies in access to the Western – in this case European – world for citizens of Third World countries. This limits the importance of German nationality. The same argument might be valid for asylum seekers. The guarantee of gaining permanent access to the West matters, not a specific nationality. The instrumentalisation of naturalisation process – in this case the German one – seems of importance for those people who need to improve their economic situation. One might therefore also turn the argument the other way round. If political and social citizenship offers the same possibilities as national citizenship, no second nationality is needed.

Coming back to the three main points outlined above (the immigration of ethnic Germans, immigration since the sixties, and the concept of nation and state in Germany) one might state the following. Dietrich Tränhardt presents the changes in the legal framework towards the acceptance of dual nationality in Germany during the nineties as a rather unproblematic process. It reflects the acceptance of Germany as a country of immigration. It further points to the acceptance of non-ethnic Germans as full members of German society. And it signifies a radical change towards the conception of a multicultural society and illustrates the importance of residence as a principle for according national citizenship.

2. Dietrich Tränhardt's text ends with a prophecy about the future importance of the notions of nation and state. Dual national citizenship will increase. Without any doubt, this prediction has proved to be correct. If that is so, what are the reasons for the increase of double national citizenship and what problems will be linked with it? Some of the main reasons to adopt dual

national citizenship lie in the guaranteed access to a territory, social security – in a very broad sense – and the participation as citizens in the place of residence. Secondly, a specific European national citizenship seems less important than the fact that it is European. And thirdly, dual nationality may seem crucial for people coming from outside Europe or wanting to go and live outside Europe. The specific nationalities within Europe might therefore lose some of their sacred character. The affiliation to a national citizenship could then be compared with membership of a club.

With European unification, national citizenship also becomes less central. The elaboration of universal human rights further limit the importance of national citizenship and the focus on citizenship agency shifts the interest from national membership to participation. These processes point to a transformation of the ties between the nation, the state and citizenship. First, citizenship does not automatically signify an ethnic nationality. And the meaning of nation can be reconsidered. Such a desacralization of national citizenship need not be a devaluation. As Dietrich Tränhardt shows, the ties between the state, the nation and citizenship are forged through history and are thus country-specific. Also the notion of nation in Germany as an immigration country is not an ethnic one. The feeling of belonging to a state, the feeling of affiliation to a nation is perhaps changing into a rather diasporic feeling. Double citizenship as double affiliation can have the effect of making a person always a stranger somehow or somewhere. Acceptance of this idea might not only foster a process of desacralisation of the notion of nation but also open the way for the conception of double nationality as an advantage.

A last reflection concerns Third World people applying for German national citizenship. It serves to guarantee international mobility across state borders and has not only and not always to do with a feeling of belonging in the sense of national affiliation. In this sense, the state and its borders are crucial, but not the nation. The question then is if the term transnational movements is really the right one, if we should not rather speak of trans-state movements. Inversely, if the term transnational is kept for these movements, the term nation does not imply ethnicity or if the term is not used in such circumstances, it will then take another meaning and cover another field of social reality.

3. In the current global setting, the question of citizenship is changing. This is not only due to European unification, the formulation of human rights and rights of personhood, but also to

international mobility. At the level of social actors, the dynamics as well as the limits of dual or multiple citizenship depend very much on family ties and the individual life course.
Research on binational families reveals that the choice of national citizenship, although a symbolic question, should not be overemphasised. National citizenship matters only from time to time and is often renegociated in the second and third generation. Much more important seem social differences and integration and participation in the place people choose as their – more or less permanent – residence. That means, actors do evaluate the cards they get in their life, and they also learn – more or less – how to play them.

The multiplication of citizenship affiliation also has to be reconsidered using a gendered approach: is it not because of a patricentered model that single national citizenship seemed normal, although, in reality, double affiliation was always the case? It is with the politics of gender equality in state and society that national and citizenship affiliation have to be reconsidered.

From an actor's perspective, much of what is discussed as national citizenship matters could be also be discussed within a framework of citizenship as participation, which does not really need national membership, but rather with the participation in the place of permanent residence and the quality of life guaranteed in that place. Depending on the state model, there is a specific interweaving of different levels in society of the rights and duties linked with the status of citizen or rather the different possibilities of participation. Political participation has at least four levels: European Union, state, department and local level. Citizen participation also concerns questions such as taxation or military service, they do not necessarily need to be national, in the same way as participation in civil society, which deals with health and social security, and with access to professional and educational networks. Such a differentiation points to a diversification of models and possibilities of dual – or multiple or flexible – citizenship. It might therefore be interesting to know more about a reconceptualization of citizenship, nationality and residence, to sharpen the outlines and the reach of these notions in order to work out differentiated and flexible models, adapted and adaptable to social reality within the state and across state borders.

A view from New York

comments on Tränhardt's paper

Nancy Foner

Dietrich Thränhardt has written a fascinating paper about citizenship and dual citizenship in Germany focusing on why Germany, as he argues, could so easily and radically embrace *ius soli* (citizenship by birth on the soil of the sovereign's territory), and what the conflicts about dual nationality mean in this context.

In my comments, I want to look at his analysis in terms of a past-present framework and to bring in yet another kind of comparison, across space as well as time – by looking at the United States. I think this can shed light on some of the issues raised in the paper, particularly about dual nationality. In fact, along the way, the paper itself makes reference to certain ways the German situation differs from that in the U.S. I also want to touch on another theme that Dietrich Thränhardt mentions – how the historical experience in Germany has affected the very terms and classifications used to describe and analyze migrants today.

First, then, there is the question of the changes in citizenship rules in Germany. The big change, as Thränhardt writes, is that *ius soli* is now a fact of life in Germany and no longer controversial as a principle. There is what he calls the "one and a half generation solution" – with *ius soli* applied to the children of any parent who has either been born in Germany or lived in the country since she/he was fourteen. Clearly, this is new. But, in Thränhardt's view, it's less of a break with the past – admittedly, the recent past -- than might be thought. Indeed, he argues that it was introduced and accepted by a broad majority in Germany because there was already a "feeling of permanence, a legitimacy of the immigrant population" and immigrants were already included in collective bargaining, belonged to trade unions, and had access to the generous German welfare state, including public housing and benefits of the medical, school, and pension systems. Thränhardt says that as early as 1988 he was writing about Germany as an "undeclared immigration country," where, in contrast to official non-acceptance there was, in his words, a high degree of cohesion and intermarriage. The change in citizenship laws, in short, was simply the logical next step.

What about dual citizenship, a topic that Thränhardt turns to at the very end of his paper? In general – and not just in Germany – the incidence of dual nationality has risen throughout the twentieth century. In a recent article on plural nationality, Alexander Aleinikoff and Douglas Klusmeyer argue that there are several reasons for this: (1) the lack of agreement between states over the rules governing the acquisition and loss of nationality in a world witnessing significant movement of people over state borders; (2) changes in gender policies behind the rules governing the acquisition and loss of nationality in that women increasingly have the option to retain their own nationality irrespective of marital status – in contrast to the past, when they were expected to assume the nationality of their husbands at marriage – thereby increasing the likelihood that parents within such a marriage will pass on different nationalities to their children; and (3) advances in travel technology and the globalization of commerce which have made the movement across states much faster, easier, and more common – so that people increasingly have the means to live with concrete connections to multiple states.

In Germany, dual nationality, Thränhardt predicts - despite his initial warning about the risks of making prophecies or predictions – will become more common, and much depends on policies of the states from which migrants come. If, as he notes, other countries follow the example of Morocco and Tunisia, and do not allow their nationals to give up their citizenship, "the clause of the German law about the acceptance of dual nationality in such cases would apply."

What seems clear in the German case – as well as elsewhere - is that dual nationality is on the rise and is something new. What is the reaction? In Germany, Thränhardt mentions a "hot ideological controversy about dual nationality," with fears that it involves a symbolic devaluation of German citizenship and that it is unfair to Germans – since they have only one nationality, while immigrants can have two. In the end, according to Thränhardt, dual nationality will have little impact on what goes on in Germany because – as he says in the very last sentence of the paper – "in the internal situation…. only the national and the EU citizenships will be valid."

In discussing dual nationality – the reaction to it and its potential impact – I think a look at the United States case is useful. The United States has, of course, operated under the principle of *ius soli* since its founding. (Indeed, because every child born inside the US is automatically a

citizen, even the children of illegal immigrants born in the United States are U.S. citizens. This can provide a way for illegal immigrants to legalize their status – because eventually their children, as adult citizens, can sponsor them.) Although the United States requires naturalizing citizens to formally renounce prior citizenships, it unofficially tolerates dual citizenship – what one historian calls the "silent toleration of naturalized citizens who maintain their old citizenship." Or as the political scientist Michael Jones-Correa writes, there is a "don't ask, don't tell policy." And the big change in recent years is that more and more states of origin are permitting their citizens to retain nationality despite naturalization elsewhere. By 2000, 17 of the top 20 sending countries to the United States in the 1990s allowed some form of dual citizenship. Certainly, this is a huge change from the past!

The details of dual nationality policies vary from country to country. In Latin America, Peru, Argentina, and Colombia allow absentee voting by their dual citizen nationals. El Salvador, Panama, and Uruguay do not. Colombian nationals can vote at the Colombian consulate or polling sites in New York City and run for office in their homeland even after they have become U.S. citizens. In 1994, the Dominican Republic recognized the right to dual nationality, and three years later the government adopted a proposal to give naturalized Americans of Dominican descent the right to vote in Dominican elections from abroad rather than having to return to the island to do so. When, and if, they are implemented, these reforms would make the Dominican community of New York City the second largest concentration of voters in any Dominican election – a reason why some observers argue it is unlikely to happen. If Mexicans gain the right to vote from abroad – a much-contested issue in Mexican politics – they will be a major factor in Mexican elections.

What are the implications of dual nationality – which is becoming more common in the United States and in Europe? In the United States, as in Europe, there are those who fear it will dilute the meaning of American citizenship – making citizenship akin to bigamy. In a recent Center for Immigration Studies publication, Stanley Renshon warns that multiple citizenship in an era of cultural pluralism will retard the assimilation process and is likely to encourage the maintenance of 'former cultural/country attachments that put at risk development and consolidation of newer cultural/country identifications."

The evidence suggests that such dire predictions are unwarranted. Dual citizenship may actually encourage immigrants to naturalize since becoming a U.S. citizen does not require

renouncing allegiance to and privileges in their home country. A recent study, in fact, shows that immigrants from countries that recognize dual nationality are more likely to seek out U.S. citizenship than those from countries that do not recognize dual nationality.

Moreover, whether one retains homeland citizenship at the same time or not, becoming a U.S. citizen is likely to promote identification with American civic and political life. As Patricia Pessar and Pamela Graham argue in their analysis of politics among Dominican New Yorkers, dual engagement in politics in New York and in the Dominican Republic is not mutually exclusive: Dominicans may be simultaneously incorporated into the political systems of New York and their country of origin. Many who are actively involved in local-level politics in their upper Manhattan Dominican neighborhoods – and cast their ballots in elections in the United States – also follow political events in the home country and attend forums and rallies held in New York for candidates in Dominican elections. The trend, over time, has been for Dominicans to become increasingly integrated into the U.S. political system, a process that has been facilitated by the growing number of US citizens in their ranks. As Michael Jones-Correa has written, "even if we accept the metaphor of citizenship as marriage and think of dual citizenship as the equivalent of having two spouses, immigrants live with us." In fact, Alexander Aleinikoff argues that the appropriate family analogy to describe dual citizenship is not bigamy bur rather relations with one's family or in-laws: "Such relations at times produce conflict and need negotiations, but one can still be a functioning member of two families, loyal to both."

Although Thränhardt's paper is mainly concerned with citizenship and dual nationality, it raises a fascinating question with regard to ethnicity that is pertinent to the theme of this workshop about the past and present. In analyzing the German case, Thränhardt points to the way a nation's historical experience affects the very terms used to analyze and discuss immigration and immigrant populations. In Germany, he notes that terms like "blood" and "race" are taboo in political discourse because they are associated with the Nazis. Likewise, given the Nazi's forced assimilation policies, there is a taboo about assimilation in Germany. This is clearly different from the United States – which, in addition to not having Nazi rule!, also has a long history and identity as a nation of immigrants. Despite the fact, as Nathan Glazer puts it, that "we are all multiculturalists now," assimilation is widely seen as a desirable goal in the United States; the symbolism of the flag remains important – as Thränhardt mentions; and a key mission of schools is to teach newcomers English and core

American values and symbols, from George Washington to Abraham Lincoln. In the scholarly discourse, there have certainly been critiques of, indeed attacks on, the notion of assimilation – but, interestingly, assimilation theory is experiencing something of a revival, in a new guise, in American scholarly circles, in the form of discussions of segmented assimilation, by Alejandro Portes and his colleagues, and in Richard Alba and Victor Nee's rehabilitation of the term in their forthcoming book, *Remaking the American Mainstream.*

As for race, America's history of slavery, and the legacy of the color line in post-civil rights America, continue to put race on center stage in public and scholarly discourse. Race has not, as Thränhardt suggests, been replaced by the term ethnicity. (In the American context, ethnicity, as a folk or popular category, is seen as related to common ancestry, the perception of a shared history of some sort, and shared symbols of peoplehood as compared to race, which is seen as related to shared physical characteristics, most often skin color. In the scholarly literature, there is quite a bit written trying to make analytic distinctions between ethnicity and race and I refer you to, among others, a recent book by Steve Cornell and Doug Hartmann on this.) And the fact is that, in the U.S., the term race is not viewed as politically incorrect. Newspaper stories refer to race all the time; so do politicians and activists; and so do scholars. And race is still used to officially categorize people – the census being a case in point, with people now allowed to report themselves as belonging to two more races, the races being – White, Black, Native Indian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific islander, Asian, and Other.

Whether this should be the case is another matter. And it may well be that the complications following the introduction of the new multi-race item in the U.S. census will result in growing doubts concerning the value, appropriateness, or legitimacy of racial categories -- and questions about how racial categories can be used to administer and enforce nondiscriminatory laws and race-based public policies. (The multiple-race option converts six categories into 63, which when cross-tabulated by the ethnic category of Hispanic generates 126 categories of race/ethnicity. In 2000, only about 2 percent of the population reported themselves as being of two or more races, and collapsing rules were devised to meet administrative/policy requirements.) These problems give further backing to Thränhardt's concern about the possible negative consequences of legitimizing and giving priority to ethnoracial categories if Germany and other European countries adopt the U.S. model of using race/ethnicity as classification categories, even for such purposes as policing and preventing

discrimination. In this normative debate, Thränhardt seems to come out on the side of the view that no racial discourse is the best racial discourse of all.

In the United States, we are definitely not there yet. Race, as social scientists agree, has no basis in genetics – and races are socially and culturally constructed categories – but race is all too real in the U.S. because, to paraphrase W.I. Thomas, people act as though it is real and it is real in its consequences. In what has now become something of a cliché, after the title of Cornell West's book, race matters – and certainly continues to play a powerful role in shaping the life chances and everyday life experiences of many Americans, most notably those of African ancestry who are considered black. It is something that scholars – and policy makers – cannot and should not ignore.

This discussion of race has taken me rather far afield, so let me end my remarks by coming back to the themes of this workshop, on transnationalism, and raising some issues that directly relate to the connections between transnationalism (and dual nationality) and race/ethnicity, past and present. Among the important questions that require further study are: To what extent have transnational ties helped migrants in the past – and continue to help them in the present – cope with the discrimination and prejudice they face in the receiving society? How do transnational links operate to reinforce and strengthen migrants' ethnic identities? And do they do this today in the same way that they did in the past? And, to conclude with the topic of dual nationality, which is the theme of this particular session, what role does dual nationality play in shaping migrants' sense of themselves and of others? And to go beyond the question of identities, how does dual nationality actually affect migrants' political and other involvements in the country where they now live – and the country where they are from? It may be, as Thränhardt predicts for Germany, that dual nationality will have little impact – but this of course could be one of those prophecies that need to be revised in light of actual developments. What is clear is that, as dual nationality becomes increasingly common, we need more on-the-ground studies of what it means for the people involved and how it affects their actions and engagements so that we can see what impact it actually has and, to come back to the past-present theme, what difference it makes to the current migrant experience.

Transnationalism and assimilation

A reaction to Michael Bommes

Leo Lucassen

Introduction

The paper given by Michael Bommes is an interesting and important attempt to bridge the paradigmatic gap between scholars interested in assimilation and those focussing on transnationalism. In this sense his contribution fits very well with that of Nancy Green to the session on transnationalism and diaspora. Bommes not only revitalizes the assimilation concept by elaborating the ideas of Milton Gordon (*Assimilation in American life*, 1964) and Hartmut Esser, but also integrates transnationalist phenomena into his innovative assimilationist model.

Let me start by giving two examples to illustrate these points. In the 1970s second generation Moluccans in the Netherlands highjacked trains and kept people hostage with the aim to get more attention to their political ideal of an independent Moluccan state. These dramatic events, which ended in the death of both hostages and Moluccan activists can easily be interpreted as typical expressions of transnationalism. On the other hand it is striking that these Moluccans, many of whom had been born in the Netherlands, spoke perfect Dutch, were educated in the Dutch school system and knew exactly how to use the media and in formulating their demands copied contemporary examples, such as the Black Panther movement in the U.S. When the heydays of violent activism were over, the Dutch government decided to launch a full-scale integration policy for the Moluccans. One of the things they did was to offer young Moluccans to fly to the Moluccan Island to orientate themselves. Confronted with their idealized homeland, however, these Moluccans realized how Dutch and westernized they had become and became aware of the great cultural, economic, social – and political! - gap between them and the inhabitants of the Moluccans who, moreover, were barely interested in a nationalist struggle.

A second example is very recent and concerns the newly established Arabic European League, lead by Lebanon born and Antwerpen based Abou Jahjah. One of the aims of the

AEL is to mobilize all 'Arabs' (interestingly including the non-Arab Berbers from Morocco) in Western Europe, to stimulate a pan-Arab identity and resist assimilation. At he same time Jahjah and many others supporting him speak perfect Flemish, are (well) educated and – just as the Moluccans – know how to use the media. Moreover, Jahjah in an interview with the Dutch *Volkskrant* (December 6, 2002) suggested that he might establish a new political party, according to the Christian-Democratic model.

These two examples stress the utility of Bommes assimilation typology, which allows for migrants and their descendants to be assimilated in certain domains and at the same time not identify with the society in which they live. My comments are therefore not so much a critique of his theoretical position, which I fully support, but can be considered as an attempt to apply his model on long-term integration processes. First of all I will offer some suggestions to differentiate his model even further and subsequently to apply such a more refined and layered model to a particular historical situation.

Putting the assimilation model into history

Michael Bommes uses an assimilation model/ typology that has been constructed by Hartmut Esser, which distinguishes between four dimensions of assimilation:[10]

1. cognitive assimilation
2. structural assimilation
3. social assimilation
4. identificational assimilation

For a historian this model, and the way Bommes uses it, can create two problems. First of all, the model is rather functionalist and might give the impression that the social system approach in which it is grounded leaves no room for other kinds of differentiations. Secondly, the model seems to be timeless, yet on the other hand Bommes repeatedly use the word 'modern' to refer to the type of society in which his model is positioned. From his paper, however, it is not entirely clear how this 'modern' society is structured and differentiated with respect to various subcultures, norms and values, which brings us back to the first problem. In

[10] Hartmut Esser, *Aspekte der Wanderungssoziologie: Assimilation und Integration von Wanderern, ethnischen Gruppen und Minderheiten: eine handlungstheoretische Analyse* (Darmstadt 1980).

order to make the model more useful for historians it should be differentiated even further, allowing for other organizing principles and allowing for changes through time.

Differentiated societies

In stead of functionalist differentiations, using social systems (family, school, work, institutions) as point of departure, societies can also be split up along other lines, which make clear that national states were socially and culturally far from homogeneous, and have never been. In the following I will illustrate that such an alternative differentiation is very relevant, if not essential, to understand the way in which immigrants assimilate. I will do this by distinguishing between four major ordering principles: religion, class, gender and localism/regionalism.

Religion has for a very long time been one of the most relevant ways to discriminate between people, both migrants and non migrants. From the Reformation onwards the division between Catholics and Protestants (and within this cult the various protestant denominations), as well as Jews, has been a very important principle to categorize people, as well as in- and exclude segments of the population. Religious groups often were restricted to their own social, cultural and political worlds and often had not much knowledge of other 'religious spaces'. This religious categorization could even have repercussions for the way different segments of the population defined the nationhood. As the Dutch geographer Hans Knippenberg has shown, Dutch Catholics and Dutch protestants at the end of the nineteenth century has their own, exclusive, image of the nation.[11] In the case of Irish migrants in England and Polish speaking migrants in the Prussian Ruhr are in the second half of the nineteenth century their Catholicism was seen as alien *and* it was inextricably linked to the interpretation of nationalism by both the native population and the migrants themselves. The religious affiliation of migrants, in relation to the dominant religion in the receiving society, was therefore essential to understand the way migrants could assimilate.

A second important organizing principle was class. This may be as evident as religion, but is too often neglected as a relevant factor for immigrant assimilation. From a historical perspective it is clear that especially the working classes (with many internal differences) was far from integrated in the rest of the society, at least until universal and not wealth based

[11] Hans Knippenberg, *Cuius regio, eius religio ? Over godsdienst, staat en territorium* (Amsterdam 2002).

suffrage came about, in most countries immediately after World War I. Until then, and also after that period, workers lived in their own worlds, characterized by specific values, world views and ideas of nationhood. Peasants (and workers, one might add) may have been turned into Frenchmen, to use Eugen Weber's famous book title *Peasants into Frenchmen*,[12] but this did not destroy their culturally and socially defined worlds. Migrants therefore did not encounter one society, but many and their assimilation was in this sense segmented.

Apart from religion and class, gender divided society yet in another fundamental way. As women were until far into the twentieth century barred from many aspects of public life, education etc. their participation in society was only very partial. Migrant men and women therefore encountered to a large extent different worlds in which they participated and in which they had to assimilate. How these worlds looked like depended on many factors, such as the gender-composition of migrants groups (families or overwhelmingly male or female) and their position at the labor market. Foreign female servants for example, working for and living in with native families, experienced very different assimilation contexts than wives who joined their husbands and who participated in the ethnic niche, or of single women working with co-ethnics in factories.[13]

Finally it is important to include local and regional allegiances and characteristics (including ethnic bonds, dialects etc.), which sometimes conflicted with the national ideal. Many people throughout the world only very gradually integrated into the nation state, stimulated by national education and national conscription. Only in specific contexts did the national identification take over.

This short overview illustrates how differentiated nation states were and in a broad sense how multi-cultural they have always been. Again following Eugen Weber and others one can argue that these states – in contrast to what many transnationalists assume - are becoming rather more than less homogeneous. The fact that especially regional, but also other differences are stressed in the latter part of the twentieth century, confirms this development and shows that exactly because cultural and social differences have diminished people feel more need to highlight these small differences.

[12] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The modernization of rural France 1870-1914* (Stanford 1976).
[13] Pamela Sharpe (ed.), *Women, gender and labour migration: historical and global perspectives* (London 2001)

These alternative differentiations, which all to some extent are linked to power relations, are important if we want to apply the Bommes/Esser model to long-term developments. Class religious and gender differences are reproduced in institutions, that are so central in their functionalist model: schools, workplaces, organisations. Furthermore, studying assimilation in the 19th and 20th centuries implies that it is essential to take the specific structure of the society one studies into account. Until World War I, the anti-democratic character of society and the existing inequalities explain the failing, or at most partial, integration of many and large segments of the population into society. Class, gender and religion, each in their own way, determined to what level of schooling (if at all) one could attain, what kind of housing was available and what kind of health system was accessible. Ethnicity could also be added, as some groups – like the Irish, Poles and Italians – in various countries were locked in their own ethnically closed worlds. From the end of the 19th century onwards workers and women emancipated, albeit far form entirely, which contributed to the homogenization of societies and which made ethnic differences more important. Especially when states after World War I started to make a more fundamental distinction between native citizens and aliens. This distinction, which includes another aspect of power relations, in this case between natives and immigrants, has only increased in the course of the twentieth century, although always modified by and channeled through the prism of class and gender. In this process immigrants have become more alien than in the past, especially when conflated with other elements (like religion, especially in the case of Islam).

Revising the model and putting it into practice

To show how the model used by Bommes can better be applied to historical situations by inserting class and gender dimensions, it could be helpful to combine it with the differentiation applied by Ewa Morawska in her book *Insecure prosperity* (1996) to small town Jews in America in the first half of the twentieth century.[14] She argues that assimilation (she uses the term ethnicization) is far from a homogeneous process, but takes place in at least four different dimensions (economic, political, social, religious), each with their own specific characteristics. Assimilation can proceed very fast and at the same time be very advanced in one dimensions and take place much slower and more partial in another. When we apply the Esser/Bommes model to a specific historical case study, the Irish in England in the period 1840-1914 for example, I argue that its explanatory power is greatly enhanced by combining it with

[14] Ewa Morawska, *Insecure prosperity: small-town Jews in industrial America, 1890-1940* (Princeton 1996).

the differentiation used by Morawska, especially because the class and gender aspects can be highlighted much better. The following figures illustrate this point. In the first figure we look at both men and women who as unskilled (or at best semi-skilled) workers entered the English labor market.

Figure 1: The assimilation of Irish migrants in England (1840-1900): Male and female workers, Catholics, unskilled, first generation

	Cognitive	Structural	Social	Identificational
Economic	X	-	-	-
Social (public)	X	?	-	-
Social (private)	?	-	-	-
Cultural (incl. Religion)	?	-	-	-

Irish migrants were looked upon as very different by the English population, because they were Irish (ethnicity), poor (class) and catholic (religion). Moreover, many Irish became very nationalistic and organised themselves in nationalist clubs. As a result most Irish were isolated in their own Irish quarters within big cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and London and the first generation participated only very marginally in English society. If we differentiate for gender and class, however, and look at skilled men, the degree of assimilation changes, especially in the economic domain.

Figure 2: The assimilation of Irish migrants in England (1840-1900): Men, Catholics, skilled, first generation

	Cognitive	Structural	Social	Identificational
Economic	X	X	X	-
Social (public)	X	X	-	-
Social (private)	X	?	-	-
Cultural (incl. Religion)	?	-	-	-

The assimilation of their wives, however, most of whom did not enter the labour market, resembles more that of unskilled Irish workers and shows the relevance of gender differenciations.

Figure 3: The assimilation of Irish migrants in England (1840-1900): Women, without occupation, married with skilled men, first generation

	Cognitive	Structural	Social	Identificational
Economic	-	-	-	-
Social (public)	X	-	-	-
Social (private)	X	-	-	-
Cultural (incl. Religion)	?	-	-	-

The situation for (male) protestant Irish migrants, finally, was markedly different, especially because their denomination implied that they immediately identified with the English nation, whereas they were on average well skilled so that assimilation in the economic and social domains also went much faster than with their Catholic brethren.

Figure 4: The assimilation of Irish migrants in England (1840-1900): Men, Protestant, skilled, first generation

	Cognitive	Structural	Social	Identificational
Economic	X	X	X	X
Social (public)	X	X	X	X
Social (private)	X	X	-	-
Cultural (incl. Religion)	X	X	X	X

This exercise could be prolonged much further, bringing in the generational dimension as well as the influence of local opportunity structures (big/small cities, local labour market structures etc.), but I hope this serves to make my point.

Conclusion

The functional differentiation model used by Bommes is very useful not only to bridge the gap between assimilationist and transnationalist scholars, but also as starting point for historical analyses of integration processes over generations. A combination with the dimension-differentiation as proposed by Morawska enhances the explanatory capacity of the model and allows to integrate power relations (class/ gender) into the analysis. By using such a model both in the past and the present comparisons become much more transparent and enable us to put the claim of transnationalists, as explained by Vertovec in this workshop, to the test.

D. **Conference reader**

Introduction and general framework

- Nancy Foner, 'Transnational Ties', chapter 6 from her book, *From Ellis Island to JFK New York's two great waves of immigration* (Yale UP 2000).
- Leo Lucassen, 'Old and new migrants in the twentieth century : a European perspective', *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21 (Summer 2002) nr. 4, 85-101.

Session 1: Transnationalism and religion: the position of Islam

- Pnina Werbner, 'The place which is diaspora: citizenship, religion and gender in the making of chaordic transnationalism', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28 (January 2002) no. 1, 119-133.

Session 2: "Transnationalism and diaspora": how does the diaspora concept relate to transnationalism, how new is it and what does it mean for integration processes?

- Steven Vertovec, 'Religion in migration, diasporas and transnationalism', *Working paper* No. 02-07of the Vancouver Center of Excellence (March 2002).

Session 3: "Dual citizenship at work": how do migrants deal with multiple nationalities in daily live? What does it mean for their identity and integration?

- Dietrich Tränhardt, 'Prophecies, Ius Soli and dual citizenship. Interpreting the changes in the German citizenship system', unpublished paper.

Session 4: "Transnationalism and assimilation": To what extent do transnational ties influence or change the integration process?

- Michael Bommes, 'Cultural plurality, closure and contextuality. A case against transnationalists and assimilationists', unpublished paper.