

Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist (eds), **DIASPORA AND TRANSNATIONALISM: CONCEPTS, THEORIES AND METHODS**, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010, 5+352 pp., € 44.50 (paper).

Social scientific terms do not obtain definitional consensus by executive committee fiat. On the contrary, there being no legitimate and widely-accepted arbiter on these matters no executive committee arriving at a shared understanding of the meanings and appropriate uses of particular terms entails a far messier process, one that is often convoluted and just as often contested. Such is clearly the case with the two concepts that are the focus of this edited collection: diaspora and transnationalism. During the past two decades, both terms have gained increased currency in migration studies, being widely used in shaping research agendas, the focus of theoretical debates, and the conceptual undergirding of various conferences, journals, books, research centres, and the like.

The historical trajectories of the two concepts stand in sharp contrast to each other. Transnationalism is relatively new, appearing on the scene in the 1990s, while diaspora has a considerably longer history. In its earliest iteration, transnationalism was depicted as an alternative to assimilation, a novel mode of immigrant relatedness to both the receiving and sending nation and sometimes to other locales as well. At the same time, it was viewed as pervasive, a phenomenon from the bottom that mirrored the transnational activities of elites at the top. It was, in short, part of the warp and woof of globalization. While many embraced this articulation of transnationalism and others dismissed it out of hand, a number of sympathetic critics entered the debates by critiquing conceptual confusion or inflation while suggesting ways to revise the concept into something both more empirically convincing and theoretically robust. For their part, some of the principal advocates have taken these critics seriously and revised their earlier positions. The result is that by the end of the past decade, revised versions had appeared that were somewhat more limited in scope and range. Moreover, it was no longer treated an alternative to competing modes of incorporation, but rather as a factor capable of shaping whichever mode happens to be operative.

In contrast, diaspora was originally a term meant to describe the migratory status of a select number of groups, beginning originally with Jews alone in mind. As Stéphane Dufoix's fine history (*Disaporas*, University of California Press, 2008) of the career of this concept reveals, its earliest use was both theological (God threatening Jews with being dispersed across the globe) and a description of the movement of Jews out of the land of Israel. It subsequently was used to describe Africans caught up in the slave trade. The term was intended to indicate the unique histories of these two groups by being essentially limited to them. However, during the past several decades, the term has been applied to an ever-growing number of migrant groups, so much so that some people are inclined to treat diaspora as a synonym for migration, and thus as a term that has lost its usefulness as a social scientific tool.

I note these histories to contextualize Bauböck and Faist's book, which is intended not simply to further refine each concept, but to indicate how they might be related to each other. Faist's introductory chapter identifies the issues at stake in attempting to determine what kind of 'dance partners' diaspora and transnationalism might be. His is a programmatic assessment, primarily concerned with raising questions rather than seeking to offer answers, though he does attempt to steer further discussions in a direction committed to uncovering the social mechanisms at play in transnational social formations. Bauböck's concluding chapter goes further by making a case a convincing one for treating diasporas as a subset of transnational political formations.

Thirteen chapters are located between these two essays, some primarily conceptual, some largely empirical, with others falling somewhere in between. Revealing the fact that there is no party line in the collection, Michel Bruneau argues that diasporas and transnational communities constitute two

discrete types of phenomena. Janine Dahinden constructs ideal typical constructs of differing transnational formations predicated on differing relationships between mobility and locality. Agnieszka Weinar and Maria Koinova's respective chapters are concerned with diasporas as non-state actors, the former primarily in relation to policy discourse, the latter in terms of international politics. Nina Glick Schiller's brief on behalf of approaches to migration that eschew methodological nationalism, makes a case for replacing it with what she defines as a 'global power analysis of migration'. Myra A. Waterbury seeks to offer a comparative perspective on the differing ways that migrant-sending and kin states pursue policies aimed at engaging e'migre' populations.

Karsten Paerregaard presents a case study of Peruvian migrants to explore the extent to which diasporic aspects are present, while Paolo Boccagni engages in a similar exploration of Ecuadorian migrants. Russell King and Anastasia Christou examine several instances of second-generation return in order to reflect on the implications of this data for our understanding of both diaspora and transnationalism. Laura Morales and Laia Jorba's analysis of migrant organizations in Spain leads them to conclude that transnational engagements are quite limited 'selective' rather than 'comprehensive'. A similar finding emerges from Koen Jonkers chapter on the level of co-publication between Chinese scientists on the mainland and their e'migre' counterparts.

Two articles address methodological concerns. Valentina Mazzucato discusses the implications of using a simultaneous matched sample methodology in studying transnational networks, while Kathrin Kissau and Uwe Hunger point to the significance of the internet as a topic of investigation in global migrant networks.

As these thumbnail sketches reveal, the collection as a whole offers a wealth of useful theoretical, empirical, and methodological material that, taken as a whole, puts us in a considerably better position to clarify the two concepts under scrutiny and to begin to get a handle on how they best ought to be synthesized. For that reason, this is a book that deserves a wide readership.

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