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**Transnational Migration**

Thomas FAIST, Margit FAUSER & Eveline REISENAUER

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£15.99 (pbk), 209 pp.

At the beginning of *Transnational Migration*, two major shortcomings of contemporary migration research are identified by the authors. First, cross-border transactions of any kind are often treated as an 'on-off' thing—a migrant is classified as either transnational or not. Second, the authors point to an overemphasis on geographical mobility—not enough attention is paid to family members remaining in the country of origin who nonetheless participate in transnational practices. To tackle these issues, Thomas Faist, Margit Fauser and Eveline Reisenauer introduce the concept of transnational social spaces, which, the authors claim, allows for a description of migrants and non-migrants as 'being transnational to different degrees' (16).

Chapter 2 presents an overview of transnational practices in four different spheres of life: familial, socio-cultural, economic and political. Four brief case studies from the German survey of the European TRANS-NET research project are used to illustrate each of these categories, which not only makes the chapter very readable and accessible, but also underlines the authors' position that a transnational perspective in migration research helps broaden the focus and investigate flows between migrants and non-migrants in countries of emigration.

Chapter 3 reviews the 'novelty' debate, that is, the question of how far transnational practices are a new phenomenon. While some scholars claim that, for example, European migrants in North America had already established 'transnational households' at the turn of the twentieth century through sending letters and remittances, others argue that the number of global migrants increased over the last few decades, and that changes in transportation and communication contributed to a different level of intensity of cross-border activities. The authors support the latter position, identifying an 'increased visibility of the transnational phenomenon from the early 1990s on' leading to a 'transnational turn' in migration research (53).

Chapter 4 discusses the role of transnational practices, especially remittances, for the economic development in sending countries. Several examples of transnational business ties are given, such as the hometown associations of Mexican migrants in the United States that raise funds and invest in infrastructure projects like roads, schools and public spaces in their members' respective Mexican hometowns.

Chapter 5 explores migrant's cultural integration into the receiving countries' societies. Critics claim that, when migrants are simultaneously embedded in two places, people are kept from integrating into the host society. The authors challenge this position, reviewing quantitative studies on the transnationality of US immigrants. The findings indicate that transnational ties do not

disappear the better someone integrates into the host society. On the contrary, for the majority of migrants, transnationalization and integration go hand in hand: the longer people's residence, the more likely they are to take part in transnational cultural and business activities.

Chapter 6 investigates policy changes in receiving countries' political practices. With regard to dual citizenship, the authors outline how previously policy-makers in immigration countries were worried about dual citizens not integrating into host society and being exclusively loyal to the country of origin. However, in recent years a change has taken place, and more than half of the states in the world 'now permit some form or element of dual citizenship' (116).

Chapter 7 discusses methodological consequences that the increase in transnational practices has for migration research. The chapter presents three challenges: methodological nationalism (data collection on a purely national level without paying attention to cross-border ties); essentialism (defining ethnicity or nationality as dominant categories, thereby treating migrants as a homogeneous group); and positionality in multi-sited research (the domination of Western concepts and ideas). After outlining these challenges, the authors suggest ways of tackling these problems.

Finally, Chapter 8 describes how migrants' cross-border activities shape civil society, for example, through migrant-led NGOs (anti-discrimination movements, branches of labour unions) or migrant-run communication media (webpages, newspapers, radio stations). The authors conclude that old institutions in national states are changing while new ones are emerging beyond the nation-state. Both, the authors conclude, 'belong to [a] transnationalizing civil society' (179).

The volume is aimed at upper-level students, which explains why the authors are giving a very broad and dense overview of terminology and concepts. At times, however, the individual chapters are missing depth. For example, in Chapter 4 the phenomenon of 'brain drain' is discussed too briefly. The case of the Philippines is mentioned, but nothing is said about the impact of the massive outflow of highly qualified people on the country's economy (e.g. the shortage of trained medical staff) or the consequences this had for the higher-education sector which today is largely privatised owing to the massive outflow of graduates.

On a similar note, in Chapter 6 social and political practices of 'expatriate' individuals and organisations are reviewed. The change in China's diaspora policy towards an active encouragement of return migration, however, is only mentioned very briefly (119), and the role of the South African diaspora in the anti-Apartheid movement is summarised in a single sentence (132).

In summary, the introduction of concepts and terminology and the review of the different points of view in contemporary migration research in the first half of the volume are well worth reading, but the second half of the book at times turns into a rather challenging read. The text would most certainly have benefited from a slower pace and elaborations on the examples mentioned. Nonetheless, the volume presents a thorough and affordable overview of the field of transnational migration.

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### **Solidarity. Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism**

David FEATHERSTONE

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£14.99 (pbk), 304 pp.

Featherstone's provocative study of the history and current manifestations of political solidarity draws into focus an often overlooked aspect of left political organizing from below, namely the