

Como citar este trabajo:

**Bokser Misses-Liwerant, Judit.** Globalization, transnationalism, diasporas: facing new realities and conceptual challenges, en Michel Wieviorka, Lauren Lévi Strauss y Gwenaëlle Lieppe (eds.) *Penser global. Internationalisation et globalisation des sciences humaines et sociales*. Francia, Maison des Sciences de L'Homme, 2015, pp. 309-336.  
ISBN 10 2-7351-1990-4/ISBN-13 978-2-7351-1990-5

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### **RESUMEN / ABSTRACT:**

En décadas recientes y en el marco de un mundo crecientemente móvil, emergen complejos sistemas de interrelaciones que se despliegan en diferentes niveles: global, regional, nacional y local, fortaleciendo la expansión, interacción y aceleramiento de flujos y actores. Consecuentemente, enfrentamos nuevos desafíos conceptuales asociados al carácter multidimensional y multifacético de los procesos de globalización. Estas transformaciones se dan tanto en el ámbito de la esfera pública como de la sociedad y la cultura, siendo esta última fuente de nuevos significados, mecanismos y ordenamientos así como de actores e identidades. Los cambios no siguen un desarrollo lineal y su impacto sobre la morfología social es de amplias consecuencias. Los diferentes momentos territoriales, identitarios, culturales y políticos de estos procesos confrontan a las ciencias sociales con el contenido y alcance de conceptos tales como globalización, transnacionalismo, y diáspora como andamiaje teórico prevaeciente y sujeto a reformulaciones. Consciente de la naturaleza multidimensional de estos conceptos, este trabajo subraya su contribución para una nueva lectura de tendencias pasadas y su relevancia para el presente, de frente a procesos aún en desarrollo. Este trabajo se lleva a cabo a la luz del imperativo de pensar globalmente y, por tanto, de manera integrativa e histórica.

In recent times and within a context of an increasingly changing world, complex systems of interrelations are arising that unfold at the global, regional, national and local levels, thus reinforcing the expansion, interaction, and acceleration of flows and actors. As a result, we are facing new conceptual challenges associated with the multidimensional and multifaceted nature of globalization processes. These transformations occur both in the public sphere and in society and culture, the latter being a source of new meanings, mechanisms, and regulations, as well as of actors and identities. Changes are not linear in their development and their impact on the social morphology is wide-ranging. The various territorial, identity, cultural, and political moments of these processes confront the social sciences with the content and scope of concepts such as globalization, transnationalism, and diaspora as a prevailing theoretical framework which may need to be reformulated. Recognizing the multidimensional nature of these concepts, this work aims at advancing a new reading of past trends and their relevance for the present, vis-à-vis still ongoing processes. This work was carried out in view of the imperative of thinking globally and, therefore, with an integrative and historical perspective.

*sous la direction de*

**Michel Wieviorka,  
Laurent Lévi-Strauss et Gwenaëlle Lieppe**

## **Penser global**

Internationalisation et globalisation  
des sciences humaines et sociales

Ouvrage publié avec le soutien  
de l'Association des Amis de la FMSH

Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme

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# Globalization, transnationalism, diasporas: facing new realities and conceptual challenges

Judit BOKSER LIWERANT

In recent decades, complex systems of interrelations have emerged and developed on different planes: global, regional, national and local, enhancing the expansion, intensification, and acceleration of interactions, flows, and actors in an increasingly mobile world. Therefore, new conceptual challenges derive from these changes, associated with the multidimensional and multifaceted character of globalization processes. Multifaceted, insofar as they bring together economic, political and cultural aspects, as well as the interdependence and influences between these planes; multidimensional, because they are expressed both in networks of interaction between transnational institutions and agents, and in processes of organizational, institutional, strategic and cultural convergence, alignment and standardization. Globalization processes are also contradictory: they can be intentional and reflexive and at the same time not intentional, with international as well as regional, national or local scope. Globalization has led to economic, social, political and cultural changes that upset geographical, territorial and temporal referents without which it would be impossible to think the structures and institutions, economies, social relations and cultural spaces today. The concept acquired multiple meanings according to diverse theoretical approaches related to their heuristic scope and their specific focus on the variables of space and time.<sup>1</sup>

1. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System, Vol. I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York and London, Academic Press, 1974; Malcom Waters, *Globalization*, London and New

Transnationalism, on its part, points to networks, individuals, groups, goods, commodities and cultural circuits that transcend national borders. It unleashes and accounts for continuous and intense interactions between communal and social, global and local, national and transnational levels. A massive and diversified system of migration, transnational networks developed by national border crossers, and simultaneous social, economic, political and cultural participation in interconnected societies all mark a new era in which territorial spaces are reordered while ascriptions, belongings, and identities are redefined. Prevailing theoretical approaches are thus challenged: on the one hand, de-territorialization and porous borders geographically detach communities and social sectors while simultaneously connecting them with other entities; on the other hand, transnational networks, spaces and social circles are created and bolstered.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, new configurations emerge that claim conceptual shifts. Classical institutional orders see their capacities restricted or modified, while identities develop in diverse ways along national and transnational axes. Ethnic, national, and religious old and new diasporas have been likewise redefining their nature and scope on national and world scenes. The recovery and even resurgence of the concept of diaspora and the emergence of transnationalism as an analytical approach can be used productively to study central questions of social change. In a globalized world and extremely mobile scenario, both concepts shed light on new realities while offering novel readings of past ones.

In his introductory essay to the book on *Diaspora and Transnationalism* coedited with Bauböck, Faist framed the relation between both concepts as 'awkward dance partners'.<sup>3</sup> While they refer to similar processes and actors and are sometimes used interchangeably,

York, Routledge, 1995; Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, London, Sage Publications, 1992; Jan Aart Scholte, "The globalization or world politics", in J. Baylis and S. Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations*, London and New York, Oxford University Press, 1997; Michel Wieviorka, *Neuf leçons de sociologie*, Paris, R. Laffont, 2008.

2. Sanjeev Khagram and Peggy Levitt, "Constructing Transnational Studies", in S. Khagram and P. Levitt (eds.), *The Transnational Studies Reader. Intersections and Innovations*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008: 1–18; Steven Vertovec, "Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), 1999: 447–462.
3. Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist (eds.), *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2010.



the two terms reflect different intellectual genealogies. The current literature recognizes that they refer to cross-border processes, while the changing contours of the diaspora and its profusion—due to innovative modalities of migration and dispersion—have led to new formulations that recover and redefine classical dimensions. Indeed, while older notions of diaspora concern mainly forced dispersal, today this concept covers diverse groups such as migrants, expatriates, refugees and displaced peoples, temporary migrant workers, groups of exiles, or ethnic communities.<sup>4</sup>

The classical research on diaspora has highlighted three essential components: a) dispersion of its members, b) orientation toward an ethno-national center, real or imaginary, considered to be a homeland, and c) host country maintenance of the group's ethno-cultural borders.<sup>5</sup> However, it has gradually pointed to the dynamics both of boundary maintenance and boundary erosion, and widened the concept of return to include old-new interactions and interconnectedness. Moreover, in its wide parameters, the national and transnational dimensions interact, shift and overlap. Transnationalism, on its part, has focused mainly on more recent migration movements. While it has emphasized hybridity over distinctiveness and border maintenance as its characteristic, it is our contention that it must be seen as an analytical angle that complements and apprehends the current transformation of diasporas.

In a global world, individuals and groups claim recognition both in the public sphere and in the terrain of culture. New interactions trigger new forms of participation and groups are defined by distinctive markers of our time's imaginary, as collective and minority identities stand at the forefront of public discourse.<sup>6</sup>

4. *Ibid.*; Donald M. Nonini, "Diasporas and Globalization", in M. Ember, C.R. Ember and I.A. Skoggard (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Diasporas: Immigrant and Refugee Cultures Around the World*, New York, Springer, 2005: 559–569; Rogers Brubaker, "The 'diaspora' diaspora", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(1), 2005: 1–19.
5. Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: an Introduction*, London and New York, Routledge, 2008; Frédéric Brenner, *Diaspora: Homelands in Exile*, New York, Harper Collins, 2003; Milton J. Esman, *Diasporas in the Contemporary World*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2009; Judit Bokser Liwerant and Leonardo Senkman, "Diasporas and Transnationalism: New Inquiries Regarding Latin American Jews Today", in *Judaica Latinoamericana*, Jerusalem, The Hebrew University Magnes Press, Vol. 7, 2013: 11–71 (Sp.).
6. Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*, Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 2002.

Along these axes, changes follow non-linear trends with significant implications for social morphology. There are different territorial/identificational/cultural/political moments of these processes for which the categories Globalization, Transnationalism as well as Diaspora provide analytically useful approaches. Aware of these concepts' multidimensional nature, we underscore their contributions both to the analysis of ongoing changes and as of yet uncertain developments, as well as to the understanding of past trends with a fresh perspective. These concepts' concurrent relevance to the past and to the present nourishes the justified claim that to think global means to think historical—in other terms, to reflect on the historical continuum.

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\* \* \*

Latin America may be seen and thought upon from a historical global perspective; that is, it's transiting from a past global condition to a new insertion into globalization.

Space and temporal dimension have elicited a debate that seeks to clarify if the current expressions of globalization processes are related to new contemporary dynamics and/or if historical precedents or analogues can be traced.

Although there is no agreement among scholars regarding their origins or their basic characteristics, there is a convergent approach in identifying radical changes that upset spatial, temporal, geographical and/or territorial references, without which it would be impossible to think of economic, political, social and cultural relations in the contemporary world.<sup>7</sup>

A broad perspective points to different periods and moments of globalization related to uneven developments over time (and in space). There are certainly approaches which underline that, during the last centuries (500 years), increasingly dense and intense interactions brought by capitalist labor markets, commodity production and the political expansion of the nation-state as well as migrations, wars of conquest, flow of commodities and ideas lie behind globalization.<sup>8</sup>

7. Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, *op. cit.*; Roland Robertson, *Globalization*, *op. cit.*; Jan Aart Scholte, "The globalization or world politics", *op. cit.*

8. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, *op. cit.*

Latin America's historical trajectory represents a pathway to globality as a result of the world's expansion and the extension of Europe. The conquest, colonization and the Europeans' encounters with native peoples and civilizations produced societies that differed from its 'original model', thus marking the complex and heterogeneous character of a global world in the making.

In the last decades, however, a new phase claims globalization in unprecedented ways. Among the changes that most perceptibly affect spatial and temporal referents we find the communication media, that intensify the density and speed of cross-border connections as a result of the manifold, diverse combinations between telecommunications, digital computers, audiovisual media and satellites; the global corporations, the networks of alliances and associations they establish and the global products they develop and promote as well, and the linkage between supranational agencies that tend to align and standardize economic, social and cultural policy criteria, among others.<sup>9</sup> All these trends are closely related and underscore aspects of the same phenomenon: time and space cease to have the same influence on the way in which social relations and institutions are structured, and economic, social and political arrangements depend neither on distance nor on borders, nor have they the same influence on the final shaping of institutions and social relations.<sup>10</sup>

The presence and strength of transnational, supranational or global actors and institutions radically transform the State, its powers, functions, as well as spaces and territories in which it concentrates its activity. It seems clear at this stage that, far from what some hurried estimates maintained, far from disappearing, States continue to be actors that have a decisive influence in many fields at national and international levels. They are even considered among the most active and committed forces of globalization.

Nonetheless, their sovereign status weakens in various fields: they become incapable, for example, of regulating financial and trade flows, property and authorship rights, universally sanctioned human rights and other cross-border economic, social and cultural transactions.

9. David Harvey, *La condición de la posmodernidad: investigación sobre los orígenes del cambio cultural*, Buenos Aires, Amorrortu Editores, 1998.

10. Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1990.

Likewise, the authority of the State loses effectiveness in regulating and applying sanctions to International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO), and its relations with communities and identities that go beyond national borders are reconsidered, reconnecting the links between the local, the national and the global. State sovereignty, according to which states exercised supreme, comprehensive and exclusive control over their territory, is a phenomenon or historical category, which, as an organizing principle, arose in the seventeenth century. In the context of globalization, state apparatuses survive, grow, strengthen and penetrate new spheres of society. On the other hand, sovereignty, as the supreme and exclusive control, ceases to operate because the State's regulatory capacity is eroded *vis-à-vis* the emerging mechanisms of regulation and governance at a global level.<sup>11</sup>

In parallel, within their borders, States face new forms of regrouping of civil society, of political participation—individual and collective—and of building and rebuilding citizenship. All of this imposes efforts of redefinition and specification regarding the competence of public and private domains and the changing relations with civil society. New possibilities for coexistence arise today stemming from what has been defined as the dialectics between globalism and localism, in view of the simultaneous and contradictory trends of integration and reshaping of States.

Globalization processes are not uniform; instead, they take place in differentiated modes of time and place, with territorial, cultural, sub-ethnic sector, and social stratification inequalities.<sup>12</sup> As a result of unequal and contradictory terms, regionalization may enhance cores and peripheries or semi-peripheries.<sup>13</sup>

Globalization also restates some of the cultural grounds of sovereignty. As an outcome of increasingly intense cross-border interaction,

11. Jan Aart Scholte, "The globalization or world politics", *op. cit.*; David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995; Judit Bokser Liwerant and Alejandra Salas Porras, "Globalización, identidades colectivas y ciudadanía", *Política y Cultura*, No. 12, 1999: 25–52.
12. David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order*, *op. cit.*, Roland Robertson, *Globalization*, *op. cit.*; Saskia Sassen, *A Sociology of Globalization*, New York and London, W.W. Norton & Company, 2007; Malcom Waters, *Globalization*, *op. cit.*
13. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, *op. cit.*

diverse groups, communities and/or classes adopt identities and loyalties over and above national sentiments. Such is the case with new social movements, members of the corporate elite, epistemic communities, migrants, diasporas and ethnic groups that place various values (economic growth, human rights including those of women and minorities) above sovereignty and even self-determination. At the same time, globalization encourages and strengthens local, ethnic and indigenous identities.

Behind these contemporary developments there is a past that has known connectedness. Thus, while Latin America today has been directly impacted by the contradictory nature of current globalization facing both new horizons of opportunities and sectorial inequality, historically it has been constituted and incorporated into the world configuration by the export and extension of the European modern experience to the Americas. However, as S.N. Eisenstadt analyzed, the Americas became not just 'fragments of Europe' (Heartz) neither replicas of one another. They were civilizations and societies in their own right and thus the first case of Multiple Modernities.<sup>14</sup> Through a peripheral connection of Latin American's countries to external centers—rightly conceptualized as a 'global immersion',<sup>15</sup> a sustained global dynamics developed. Their being part of the West but differing from it led Latin American cultures to global awareness and reflexivity. Certainly, territorial, national, cultural, socio-economic and political diversity underline the region's internal variation.

The Americas followed distinctive institutional patterns and cultural projects to enter and/or create modernity. While the Western program of modernity constituted a crucial—although ambivalent—referent, Latin American societies developed distinctly modern singular paths and models related to their cultural premises, traditions and historical experiences. Modernity as an institutional design and as a cultural project has been an ongoing challenge to the American cultures and institutional patterns of pre-modern civilizations and societies as well

14. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities", *Dædalus. Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 129(1) - *Multiple Modernities*, 2000: 1-30.
15. Luis Roniger, "Global Immersion: Latin America and its Multiple Modernities", in L. Roniger and C.H. Waisman (eds.), *Globality and Multiple Modernities: Comparative North American and Latin American Perspectives*, Brighton and Portland (OR), Sussex Academic Press, 2002: 79-105.

as to those civilizations that did become modernized.<sup>16</sup> This approach certainly refutes a uniform view of globalization processes as well as the homogenizing and hegemonic assumptions of the Western program of modernity. While retaining a global scope, it emphasizes the fragile, contingent, and even antinomian, character both of modernity and modernization. Following Eisenstadt, it can be conceived as an inherently contradictory and contingent series of open-ended processes. He very explicitly set up the Multiple Modernities' scenario in contrast to other meta-narratives of the post Cold War era, such as Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' theory or Fukuyama's 'End of History' thesis.<sup>17</sup> This view certainly represents a meaningful step forward into global thought through a heterodox and peripheral theory based on a critical reflection upon the profound tensions, contradictions and paradoxes arising from the emergence of globally interconnected realities.<sup>18</sup>

Multiple pathways to explain social transformations at the local or national, regional and global levels demand indeed to understand continuity, variability and changeability in the region and abroad concerning both new institutional designs and cultural models: "The notion of Multiple Modernities denotes a certain view of the contemporary world—indeed of the history and characteristics of the modern era—that goes against the views prevalent in scholarly and general discourses. It goes against the view of the 'classical' theories of modernization and of the convergence of industrial societies prevalent in the 1950s, and indeed against the classical sociological analyses of Marx, Durkheim and (to a large extent) even of Weber, at least in one reading of his work. They all assumed, if only implicitly, that the cultural program of modernity as it developed in modern Europe and the basic institutional constellations that emerged there would ultimately dominate in all modernizing and modern societies; with the expansion of modernity, they would prevail throughout the world."<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the

16. *Ibid.*

17. Bjørn Thomassen, "Anthropology, Multiple Modernities and the Axial Age Debate", *Anthropological Theory*, 10(4), 2010: 321–342.

18. Simon Susen and Bryan S. Turner, "Introduction to the Special Issue on Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt", *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 11(3), 2011: 229–239; Wilfried Spohn, "An appraisal of Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt's global historical sociology", *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 11(3), 2011: 281–301.

19. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities", *op. cit.*

idea of Multiple Modernities assumes that “the best way to understand the contemporary world—indeed to explain the history of modernity—is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs.”

By questioning the homogenizing character of globality, it revisits the studies of modernization and its alleged assumption that the cultural dimensions or aspects of modernization—the basic cultural premises of Western modernity, the secular rational worldview including a strong individualistic orientation—are inherently and necessarily interwoven with the structural ones. The actual development indicated that the various modern autonomous institutional arenas, the economic, the political, the educational or the family are defined and regulated, and come together in different ways in different societies and in different periods of their development.<sup>20</sup>

The building of modern institutions and cultural projects in Latin America following colonization and the Europeans' encounter with native peoples and civilizations produced societies that differed from those of the metropolis; new civilizations, varying modernities, multiple ones.

Thus, in unique ways, migration processes defined Latin America's relations—contested and ambivalent—to an outside Western referent. The cultural program of modernity, which entailed 'promissory notes' that sought to define in new terms the meaning of human agency and its role in building social and political orders, acted permanently as a critical referent in the orientation of the region *vis-à-vis* the center(s).<sup>21</sup> Its principles of freedom, equality and individual autonomy as

20. *Ibid.* For S.N. Eisenstadt, the view of modernity as a distinct civilization, as a distinct cultural program entails the necessity to distinguish analytically between the structural, specially the trends to structural differentiation, and the cultural dimensions thereof. It became therefore central to distinguish between different components of the structural dimensions of modernity and between them and the cultural ones: great differences in scope or extent of such differentiation between different modern and modernizing societies could be identified. The different modes were influenced by the diverse ways in which the basic civilizational premises of modernity were interpreted even within societies with seeming similar degrees of such 'differentiation' or of development, as for instance between the most fully industrialized constitutional societies.

21. *Ibid.*; Björn Wittrock, “Modernity. One, None, or Many? European Origins and Modernity as a Global Condition”, *Dædalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 129(1) ~ *Multiple Modernities*, 2000: 31–60.

a substratum for association and community belonging; reflexivity as the basis for tolerance and pluralism and the centrality of public spaces for citizenship building confronted Latin Americans with common, and distinctive ways of becoming modern. The alternative Western centers acted as a project to follow (and to contest). Shifting centers and global foci of identity were successively: Spain and Portugal in the foundational encounter defined by asymmetry; France and England, later, as the Imperial balance of power changed; the United States, with tensions and ambivalences that endure.

The distinctive character of the encounters generated from the very beginning tensions between the changing centers of references and the inner composition of societies.<sup>22</sup> As Roniger further elaborates, Latin America's societies shaped their political institutions and public spheres based on models that were conceived locally as the epitome of advanced global progress and modernity. Furthermore, these multiple models generalized in the West turned hybrid in Iberoamerica. "Thus, in the realm of ideas and due to the need to create the 'nations' in the name of whose sovereignty the new states based themselves, its people imagine Iberoamerica in future-oriented terms and through the prism of various languages of civilization and Western modernity."<sup>23</sup>

Global history and the history of modernity can't be seen exclusively in terms of continuity and evolution, but must be approached also in terms of discontinuity and breakdown. There must be a critical reflection upon the profound tensions, contradictions and paradoxes arising from the emergence of globally interconnected realities.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, it is essential to rescue the tensions and disjuncture as basic conceptual tools to address complexity between the dynamics of inclusion

22. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "The First Multiple Modernities: Collective Identity, Public Spheres and Political Order in the Americas", in L. Roniger and C.H. Waisman (eds.), *Globality and Multiple Modernities*, *op. cit.*: 7–28; *Id.*, "Latin America and the Problem of Multiple Modernities", in M. Sznajder, L. Roniger and C.A. Forment (eds.), *Shifting Frontiers of Citizenship: The Latin American Experience*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2013: 43–54; Luis Roniger, "Global Immersion", *op. cit.*; Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Thinking 'Multiple Modernities' from Latin America's Perspective: Complexity, Periphery and Diversity", paper presented at the XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology, Gothenburg, July 2010.

23. Luis Roniger, "Global Immerston", *op. cit.*

24. Simon Susen and Bryan S. Turner, "Introduction to the Special Issue on Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt", *op. cit.*



and exclusion of collective identities and the constitution of the public sphere.<sup>25</sup> It further extends to the patterns developed in Latin America between elites and representation processes; between elitist patterns and popular massive protest movements; between nation-State and the State of Law; between authoritarian legacies, unstable democracy building and processes of de-democratization.

Along these processes, economic and political changes as well as social instability have led to inner changes and substantive reconfigurations, as well as to emigration.

The increasing migratory trends reflect not only regional trends but ongoing global undercurrents and longer-term historical constraints and opportunities.

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Contemporary Latin America has experienced profound transformations in the scope and nature of the public spheres, in the criteria for social inclusion and membership but also in the dynamics of exclusion.

As stated, such changes follow non-linear trends. An increasingly expansive force of democracy takes place amidst global cycles of economic crises, social conflicts and public violence. Neo-liberal and growingly institutionalized regimes coexist with corporatist political forms, popular mobilization and plebiscitary democracy. The region has incorporated global sequences of political opportunities and social conflicts in contradictory ways, as evident in social transformation; centralization and decentralization; civic citizenship and ethnic allegiances; collective affirmation and individualization of rights. The region's changing reality reflects both the welcoming of democracy and its recessions, regressions, and reconfigurations. Contradictory trends act as push factors. A dynamics of being national/being transnational unfolds scenarios that cross the public sphere.<sup>26</sup>

Changes in the scope and nature of the diverse scenarios influence the constitution of social boundaries as migration today acquires new

25. These two analytical axes were central for Eisenstadt's theoretical formulations.

26. Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, London and New York, Routledge, 2009; Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Being National. Being Transnational: Snapshots of Belonging and Citizenship", in M. Sznajder, L. Roniger and C.A. Forment (eds.), *Shifting Frontiers of Citizenship: The Latin American Experience*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2013.

forms and narratives related to transnational communities of migrants and transmigrants, of old and new diasporas becoming transnational. Transnationalism embraces a variety of multifaceted social relations that are both embedded in and transcend nation-states, cross-cutting sociopolitical, territorial, and cultural borders, leading to the pluralization and diversification of semantic-ideological and institutional connections between major arenas of life. Thus the relevance of the challenge to overcome methodological nationalism that equates social processes with nation-state frontiers.<sup>27</sup>

Certainly, the State/civil society equation becomes the prominent venue for continuous interactions between individuals and their communities as well as between national and transnational spheres. Strong and persistent trends of material and symbolic exclusion parallel the search for inclusive political forms, thus hindering democracy itself.<sup>28</sup>

Radical changes point to region-wide population's movements. During the 1970s, violence and authoritarianism determined regional and international emigration and political exile, especially in the Southern Cone; a decade later re-democratization was a pull factor for exiles to return to their homelands. But in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the combination of economic crises, political uncertainties and security problems pushed the region into a global international migration pattern. This tendency has expanded, though intermittently, since the 1990s. The last phases of accelerated globalization processes have witnessed significant increases in the number of Latin American migrants.

Globalization has brought migration to unexpected levels—from 75 million in 1965 to 150 million in 1990, 175 million in 2000 and 232 million in 2013. United Nations identified 37 million of Latin

27. Ulrich Beck, "La condition cosmopolite et le piège du nationalisme méthodologique", in M. Wieviorka (ed.), *Les Sciences sociales en mutation*, Auxerre, Éditions Sciences Humaines, 2007: 223–236; Anna Amelina, Devrimsel D. Nergiz, Thomas Faist and Nina Glick Schiller (eds.), *Beyond Methodological Nationalism. Research Methodologies for Cross-Border Studies*, London and New York, Routledge, 2012.
28. Lucía Álvarez, Carlos San Juan and Cristina Sánchez Mejorada (eds.), *Democracia y exclusión. Caminos encontrados en la Ciudad de México*, Mexico City, UNAM – Centro de Investigaciones Interdisciplinarias en Ciencias y Humanidades, UAM, UACM, INAH, Plaza y Valdés Editores, 2006.

Americans living outside the region in 2013, 11 million more than in 2000.<sup>29</sup>

Latin America is a relevant case of the global scenario of international migration that became more massive and diversified, thus reflecting and shaping diverse paths—territorial, cultural, sub-ethnic—and social experiences in unequal terms.<sup>30</sup> The expansion of globalization processes has brought migration waves to unexpected levels of intensity and dynamism, and also to disruptive consequences.<sup>31</sup>

Following the ‘new economics of labor migration’,<sup>32</sup> population movements cannot simply be explained by income differences between two countries, but also by factors such as secure employment, availability of capital for entrepreneurial activities and the need to manage risk over long periods. However, the reality of segmented labor markets seems to better describe the bifurcation of migration today. The twofold pattern points to an increasing migration of marginal sectors—mainly non-skilled workers and peasants that lack formal education—whose movement is associated with the logic of labor markets and to the fluidity of the migration chains that connect sending and receiving cities and countries. These sectors face the impact of restrictive policies that respond and lead to an increase in undocumented migrants.<sup>33</sup>

At the same time, there is a sustained increment in the population of qualified labor, including professionals, scientists and entrepreneurs. From 1990 to 2007, the migrant qualified population of OECD countries increased 111%, moving from 12.3 to 25.9 million. Latin America and the Caribbean showed the highest levels of relative growth of qualified

29. Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe, *La migración y las remesas hacia América Latina: tendencias, mejores prácticas y experiencias de desarrollo*, Caracas, SELA, 2014: 6.
30. Hania Zlotnik, “Trends of International Migration Since 1965: What Existing Data Reveal”, *International Migration*, 37(1), 1999: 21–61; Stephen Castles, “International Migration at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century: Global Trends and Issues”, *International Social Science Journal*, 52(165), 2000: 269–281.
31. Michel Wieviorka, *Neuf leçons de sociologie*, *op. cit.*
32. Oren Stark, *The Migration of Labor*, Oxford and Cambridge (MA), Basil Blackwell, 1991.
33. Thomas Faist, *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2000; *Id.*, “Transnationalization and development: toward an alternative agenda”, in N. Glick Schiller and T. Faist (eds.), *Migration, Development and Transnationalization. A Critical Stance*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2010.

migrants to OECD countries. Between 1990 and 2007 this population increased 155%—from 1.9 to 4.9 million. Out of the 4.9 million, a high number (4.2 million) migrated to the United States, thus reaching 84.3% of the total qualified migrants from the region.<sup>34</sup> In the Mexican case, approximately 9% of migrants with primary education reside in the US. In contrast, 20% of Mexican migrants have high school education and 36% of total Mexican migrants in the US have done graduate work. A close look points to this trend. In the year 2008, migrants with 12 years or more of education represented 9% of the total migration to the United States while in the year 2012 this proportion reached 30%;<sup>35</sup> 33% of the Mexican population with a PhD degree inhabits the US.<sup>36</sup>

Indeed, Mexico is characterized by exceptional high migration fluxes; close to 10.5% of its total population live outside the country. It is estimated that 11.7 million of migrants born in Mexico live in the United States. According to US sources, by the end of the 1990s, the yearly net migration rate of Mexicans was higher than 500,000 individuals, on average. Out of a total Hispanic population living in the US, and reaching 50 million, more than 30 are of Mexican origin.<sup>37</sup> From the approximately 11.5 million undocumented migrants in the US, 6.5 million are Mexican, representing 57% of the total. Undocumented migrants from other Latin American countries represent an additional 24–26%.<sup>38</sup>

In the twentieth century, the majority of Mexican migrants had their origin in a few rural communities of central Mexico and settled in Texas, California and Chicago. In the last two decades, however, there has been a diversification of place of origin and of destination, signaling

34. Fernando Lozano and Luciana Gandini, *La emigración internacional de alta calificación desde países de América Latina y el Caribe. Entre la fuga y el desperdicio de cerebros*, paper presented at the IV Congress of the International Migration and Development Network, Quito, May 2011.

35. BBVA, *Situación Migración. México*, Mexico City, BBVA Research Mexico, 2013: 32, bit.ly/1aTllIE [viewed 2014-12-23].

36. Emir Olivares Alonso, "Radican en Estados Unidos más de 11 mil mexicanos con doctorado", *La Jornada*, 8 April 2013, www.jornada.unam.mx/2013/04/08/sociedad/038n1soc [viewed 2014-12-23].

37. Cf. Pew Hispanic Center last decade data, evaluated based on self-described family ancestry or place of birth, pewhispanic.org [viewed 2014-12-23].

38. Jorge Durand, "Balance Migratorio en América Latina", in J. Durand and J. A. Schiavon (eds.), *Perspectivas Migratorias. Un Análisis Interdisciplinario de la Migración Internacional*, Mexico, CIDE: 25-67.

a new pattern of dispersion. In the twenty-first century (2000-2006), the population born outside the US increased 12% in six traditional states of destination and 36% in 'new settlement states'—such as those of New England, Washington, the south of Florida.

Borders can create reasons to cross them, and may act both as barriers and opportunities. Michael Kearney describes how Mixtecs from Oaxaca move to the North, looking for a higher standard of living, risking their life and liberty when crossing illegally.<sup>39</sup> The border area ambitiously becomes both a region where culture, society and different levels of development intersect, and a zone in which space, capital, and meaning are disputed.<sup>40</sup> It certainly points to the impact of inequality and marginality underlying these new migratory movements, and to the form in which transnational and translocal experiences may become either a way to empowerment to countervail marginality or a reproduction of marginality.

If we refer briefly to the south, Argentina, an historical hub of immigration, became a country of emigration and exile. Data about the migration phenomenon are not very precise. According to the National Division of Migration, in 2007, there were approximately 1.053.000 Argentinians residing abroad (Resolution 452/2007, Ministry of Interior.) On its part, the International Organization for Migration estimates their number at 971.698 in 2010, that is to say 2,4% of the total population of the country (IOM, 2012). In fact, Pellegrino suggests that worries about international emigration resulted from its qualitative aspects, mainly associated with the highly qualified population that left the country who had high educational levels, a strong presence of professionals and individuals with technical specializations.<sup>41</sup>

The reality and imaginary of Latin American diasporas redefining and reconnecting belongings are related to processes of *diaspora making*

39. Michael Kearney, "The Local and the Global. The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24, 1995: 547-565.

40. Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration", *Anthropological Quarterly*, 68(1), 1995: 48-63.

41. Adela Pellegrino, *International Migration Papers*, No. 58 - *Skilled Labour Migration From Developing Countries: Study on Argentina and Uruguay*, Geneva, ILO, 2003, [www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms\\_201785.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/publication/wcms_201785.pdf) [viewed 2014-12-23].

and *diaspora un-making* provoked by migration crises.<sup>42</sup> Migration causes social transformations in both migrant-sending and receiving countries. Multiple relocations and the emergence of transmigrants generate diversified interactions as well as exchanges of economic and social resources, cultural narratives, practices and symbols between societies, thereby creating and redefining associational frameworks and ethnic, religious and national identities.<sup>43</sup>

While contemporary migration becomes a multi-level process encompassing different types of movements, its extensive and intensive nature enhances global and transnational spaces and fields, mainly anchored in massive mobility of material, cultural and symbolic commodities (and their influence on institutional arrangements). A sort of contradictory process takes place: an interconnected-unified mental and relational space emerges that tends to minimize the impact of physical dispersal while simultaneously the tension between the global and the local persists and even reaches acute tones. Global spaces give a new density to the close and specific, the characteristic and particular, and encourage the building of collective identities on institutional bases, spaces and frameworks that are radically different from those known by social theory.

In Latin America we observe a new relation between 'external' and 'internal' centers and the new expansive diaspora. The encounters between traditions lead to convergences and divergences in the diversification of social categories. Therefore, we witness changes in collective representations and in the scope and nature of extended public spheres along the new articulations of local, global and transnational levels and the consequent redefinition of the place and role of the nation. Scenarios characterized by transformations in the constitution of social bound-

42. Nicholas Van Hear, *New Diasporas: The Mass Exodus, Dispersal and Regrouping of Migrant Communities*, London, UCL Press, Global Diaspora series, 1998; Judit Bokser Liwerant, Sergio DellaPergola and Leonardo Senkman, *Latin American Jews in a Transnational World. Redefining and Relocating Jewish Experience and Identities on four Continents*, Research Proposal, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2010, [www.givathaviva.org.il/hebrew/mifgashim/huji/Transnational AmLat Proposal.pdf](http://www.givathaviva.org.il/hebrew/mifgashim/huji/Transnational%20AmLat%20Proposal.pdf) [viewed 12014-12-22].

43. Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant", *op. cit.*; Stephen Castles, "International Migration at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century", *op. cit.*

aries and by the new status of ethno-national-transnational-religious diasporas challenge basic assumptions of social thought.

The construction, resilience, transformation, competition and reconstitution of identities reach new profiles. Evolving patterns of ethnic and civic citizenship have a meaningful though differentiated impact on society, all of which bring to the surface interesting conceptual dimensions with global implications. Primordial identities become increasingly influential in the shaping of geopolitical spaces. Appadurai, following Lash and Urry, attributes this new visibility to the disorganization of capitalism:<sup>44</sup> the speed and intensity of global flows alter and aggravate increasingly profound disjunctions between the ethnic, ideological, financial, technological, and media landscapes, whereas class differences take second place. However, these deep disjunctions also splinter the homogenizing bases of the integrating paradigm. This primordial revival has also been ascribed to the displacement and fragmentation of the discourses of modernity, precisely in the context of a global order. If globalization produces conditions of radicalized modernity, social relationships and communication worldwide may be among the causes of weakened nationalist sentiments, resulting in other types of regional or ethnic identifications that lead to the emergence of conflicts with local tinges. The expansion of social relations, then, results in the strengthening of processes of local autonomy, and regional cultural identity and new alternative collective identities overlap profound individualization processes.

To think global demands to face the conceptual challenge to move in between nation-state, transnational spaces and diaspora belonging. Although national societies continue to be the frame of reference of daily life, the globalization experience no longer runs its course there. Both the territory of a nation and its symbolic horizons have lost their exclusive standing in the multiplication and dissemination of cognitive and normative maps. The idea of cultural diversity has distanced itself both from any assimilationist pretensions derived from liberalism and

44. Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy", *Theory, Culture and Society*, 7(2), 1990: 295-310; *Id.*, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimension of Globalization*, Minneapolis (MN), University of Minnesota Press, 1996; Scott Lash and John Urry, *The End of Organized Capitalism*, Madison (WI), University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.

from a nationalism “in search of the national soul, reconfigured as a legitimizing myth”.<sup>45</sup>

From a complementary perspective, Latin America diasporas benefit from a more comprehensive, less reluctant gaze toward the old binomials of national/foreign, or local/alien, in a continent that has welcomed thousands of migrants and exiles while it triggers exiles and acts as push factor of unemployed and qualified labor.

Simultaneously, we witness the unprecedented respectability granted to diasporas in the public spheres of modern Latin American nation-states, basically due to migration movements and to the role of civil society in countries that have successfully transitioned from dictatorships to democratic coexistence. Whereas in regimes with strong States that are stable and democratic, the conception of civil societies led to redefine the role of the State and favored a new political-institutional equilibrium, new democratized scenarios of civil society aim to legitimize diasporic formations seen as emerging social movements that contribute to cultural pluralism and diversity.<sup>46</sup>

However, societies that have not yet consolidated democratic transitions channel the lion's share of their efforts into implementing and strengthening their traditional republican institutions, as well as streamlining their political efficiency for improved governability and reform of the State.<sup>47</sup> Indeed, far more than the political horizon of liberal democracy and of civil coexistence, as well as new civic conceptions, in Latin America external transnational processes have validated diasporic formations. In other words: the legacy of the national constitutional order, reestablished within the republican democratic tradition, lukewarmly legitimized traditional diasporas; and if these were actually revitalized, it was because of processes exterior to the local political system, such as the impact of globalization processes and the expansion of transnational networks.

45. Amparo Menéndez Carrión, “The Transformation of Political Culture”, in M.A. Garretón and E. Newman (eds.), *Democracy in Latin America. (Re)constructing Political Society*, New York, United Nations University Press, 2001: 249–277.

46. Judit Bokser Liwerant and Leonardo Senkman, “Diasporas and Transnationalism”, *op. cit.*

47. José Rubio Carracedo, “¿Democracia republicana versus democracia liberal?”, in J. Rubio Carracedo, J.M. Rosales and M. Toscano Méndez (eds.), *Retos pendientes en ética y política*, Madrid, Editorial Trotta, 2002: 133–147.



It is interesting to outline that one major contribution to understanding diasporic revitalization emerged from the criticism of a 'stagnated' Latin American modernity developed by a group of postmodern thinkers inspired by European postmodern intellectuals in the fields of sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, and social communications. Most significantly, for a cultural scholar such as García Canclini, the relationship between the hybridization of modernity/postmodernity of traditional popular culture and the heterogeneity of mass culture is entrenched in earlier cultural policies that tended to homogenize national culture in societies riddled with differences, and disseminated through symbolic contents widely differentiated in the collective imaginary.<sup>48</sup>

But on the contrary, postmodern thought distances itself from conceptualizations of ethnic groups and society at large, tending to focus on processes of individualization within a private and intimate realm that remains indifferent to public concerns. A privatizing approach takes precedence once it becomes more difficult for social science categories to explain major themes—both social actors and spaces—of the nation-state and of transnational links: classes, elites, unions, parties, corporations, and social conflicts, which have been displaced to new ones (family, school, non-governmental organizations, social movements, neighborhood councils).<sup>49</sup>

Along the same changing horizons, there is a growing interest in the citizen's role, a "return of the citizen".<sup>50</sup> Perspectives oscillate between those who, in effect, emphasize the weakening of politics as a result of varying losses of credibility, representation, and citizen participation (and its equivalent in communitarian sectors, understood as public orders), *vis-à-vis* those who stress its revitalization, derived from a renewed interest in reconstituting the public sphere with novel codes. Thus, on the one hand, there is an over-exhaustion of politics

48. Néstor García Canclini, *Consumidores y ciudadanos. Conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*, Mexico City, Grijalbo, 1995; *Id.*, *Imaginario urbanos*, Buenos Aires, Eudeba, 2005.

49. César Cansino, *La muerte de la ciencia política*, Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, 2008: 306–308.

50. Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, "Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory", in R. Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship*, Albany (NY), State University of New York Press, 1995.

as expressed in the lack of credibility regarding the performance of governments and public institutions; or a minimization of politics, expressed by the displacement of citizens' demands toward the social sphere. This process is explained both in terms of the contraction of classical institutional capacities and the expansion of social alternatives not centered on axes of power,<sup>51</sup> and as the outcome of the 'privatization' of citizens no longer anchored in shared representations that are strictly universal and inclusive, but rather in differences, particularities, and fractures.<sup>52</sup>

On the other hand, emphasis is placed on the renewed vigor of politics due to the broadening of the public sphere as the field and space where collective coexistence is defined. Together with the recognition of social diversity, approaches that vindicate political pluralism and the solidity of efficient institutions based on increased participation and consensus building are reinforced. Latin America, in turn, would be constrained by the need to precisely overcome historic gaps and contradictions between politics and social inclusion, economics and culture, which have given rise to a serious democratic deficit in processes of collective reflection and deliberation.<sup>53</sup>

As part of the new challenges to global thought, and due precisely to the innovative modalities of migration and dispersion, the other referred concepts are calling our attention as well. As seen, a paradigmatic case is the concept of diaspora. Its changing contours and profusion have led to new meanings<sup>54</sup> and even its heuristic value has been questioned.<sup>55</sup> Thus, Tölölyan affirms that "the term that once described Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest

51. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "The New Religious Constellation in the Framework of Contemporary Globalization and Civilizational Transformation", in E. Ben-Rafael and Y. Sternberg (eds.), *World Religions and Multiculturalism: A Dialectic Relation*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2010: 21–40.
52. Adam Przeworski, "El Estado y el ciudadano", *Política y Gobierno*, 5(2), 1998: 341–379.
53. Víctor Alarcón Olguín, "Ciudadanía y participación política en América Latina", in J. Bokser (ed.), *Agendas de investigación en la ciencia política*, Mexico City, Colegio Nacional de Ciencia Política, 1999.
54. Donald Nonini, "Diasporas and Globalization", *op. cit.*
55. Dominique Schnapper, "Del Estado-nación al mundo transnacional. Sobre el sentido y utilidad del concepto de Diáspora", in N. Golubov (ed.), *Diásporas. Reflexiones teóricas*, Mexico, CISAN UNAM: 149–179.

worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community".<sup>56</sup> Still more recently, new ones have been included—such as 'long distance nationalists'<sup>57</sup>—in addition to the migratory and ethnic approaches, originally focused on diasporic practices and projects, parting from the formation of new diasporas of Asians (Chinese, Hindi, Pakistani), Middle Easterners (Lebanese, Palestinians), Eastern Europeans (Baltic Germans, Hungarians, Rumanians, Russians, Byelorussians) and other ethno-national communities that had been separated from their real or imaginary homelands.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the minimal criteria that define diasporas, e.g. dispersion, homeland orientation; boundary maintenance; and preservation of distinctive identities have been redefined by the polysemy of concepts derived from competing theoretical traditions in a global world.

The coexistence of an original home—mythic, symbolic, real—with interconnections between communities of dispersion, plus the fact that migration is no longer a unilateral movement that proceeds from the homeland to a land of destination—exhibiting, rather, greater recurrence and circularity in its destinations—points toward a novel convergence of processes, such as the diasporization of communities of migrants, or the de-diasporization, re-diasporization and also the conversion of ethno-national diasporas (as the Jewish one) into transnational ones.<sup>59</sup> Multiple spatial, labor, social, and cultural displacements imply a change in analytical optics, thus providing new perspectives.

56. Khachig Tölölyan, "The Nation-State and its Others: In Lieu of a Preface", *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(1), 1991: 3–7; *Id.*, *Redefining Diasporas: Old Approaches, New Identities – The Armenian Diaspora in an International Context*, London, Armenian Institute, 2002.
57. Wann W. Anderson and Robert G. Lee (eds.), *Displacements and Diasporas: Asian in the Americas*, New Brunswick (NJ), Rutgers University Press, 2005.
58. Eliezer Ben-Rafael, "Multiple Transnationalisms: Muslims, Africans, Chinese and Hispanics", in E. Ben-Rafael, Y. Sternberg et al. (eds.), *Transnationalism: Diasporas and the Advent of a New (Dis)order*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2009: 639–686; *Id.*, "Las diásporas transnacionales: ¿una nueva era o un nuevo mito?", *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales*, 58(219), 2013: 189–223.
59. William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return", *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(1), 1991: 83–99; Gabriel Sheffer (ed.), *Modern Diasporas in International Politics*, London, Croom Helm, 1986: 1–15; Judit Bokser Liwerant, Sergio DellaPergola and Leonardo Senkman, *Latin American Jews in a Transnational World*, *op. cit.*

Transnational studies focused on the diasporic practices of *émigré* ethnic communities have emphasized processes of cultural hybridization, fluidity and creolization, as well as religious syncretism, rather than analyzing diasporic practices as derived from the maintenance of borders between those communities.<sup>60</sup> Rogers Brubaker warns us about such emphasis that resists and even refutes diaspora practices signed by *boundary-maintenance* and highlights the tension in the literature between *boundary-maintenance* and *boundary-erosion*.<sup>61</sup>

The proper development of conceptual bridges required further inputs. Other characteristics entered the interactive spectrum of globalization and transnationalism, widening the understanding of diasporas as social formations, as consciousness and as modes of cultural production.<sup>62</sup> To think global implies therefore to compare and connect diasporas with other 'transnational communities'. In a mobile world, shifting identities, loyalties and allegiances are part of expanding social and cultural circulation and include lateral axes of diasporas "decentered, partially overlapping networks of communication, travel, trade, and kinship that connect the several communities of a transnational people [...] diasporas, as simultaneous mobility and fixity, closeness and distance, only exist through circulation".<sup>63</sup>

Latin American's diaspora in the United States exemplifies these changing social contours and complex identity building processes developed within the same transnational space. Thus some migrants self-ascribe as Latin American (pan-national and pan-ethnic) and Colombian, Mexican or Venezuelan, while others may self-identify with the Latino and/or the Hispanic labels, (referring to ethnic or religious identity).<sup>64</sup>

The categories Hispanic and Latino have contested meaning and scope, although frequently used interchangeably.<sup>65</sup> Despite differences

60. Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora", in J. Rutherford (ed.), *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1990: 222-237.

61. Rogers Brubaker, "The 'diaspora' diaspora", *op. cit.*

62. Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, *op. cit.*

63. James Clifford, "Diasporas", *Cultural Anthropology*, 9(3), 1994: 302-338.

64. Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Being National. Being Transnational", *op. cit.*

65. These categories emerged in 1970 in order to provide a common language by which, to "promote uniformity and comparability for data on race and ethnicity" for various population groups, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) created a broad definition of 'Hispanic'. The OMB defined Hispanic as "a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican,

in nationality, class, race, and culture, and in forms of Spanish language and Catholic religion, Latino and Latina immigrants are sometimes made visible by being unified as a racialized 'Other'. Latino/Hispanics constitute socio-cultural (and political) containers that may represent their 'being' but not necessarily their 'belonging'. Thus, these categories also reflect—although in less visible ways—diverse patterns of insertion, national origin, and citizenship status, among other factors which are related to cultural encounters.

Let us add that the Latino-Hispanic communities in the United States are fast approaching the size of a critical mass of significant importance: they constitute the largest minority group; it is estimated they will comprise 25% of the US population by the year 2020. This burgeoning sector is rewriting some of the old ground-rules in American life concerning ethno-national identity and transnational affinities. They have increased their visibility and their capability of influencing particular/national agendas. The focus on the cross-national borders accounts, as seen, for new trends, in which transnational social fields are constructed as places for building and dwelling. Thus, the current questioning of the methodological nationalism that has constrained social theory, thereby limiting the study of social processes to national societies and states, leads to new perspectives closer to a global thought.<sup>66</sup> Among others, formulations of citizenship building cover a wider spectrum

Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race". In 1997, a revision was made to the definition to equalize Hispanic with 'Latino'.

The US Census, on the other hand, has a broader definition of what constitutes Hispanic. Although, based on the OMB definition, the Census allows for self-identification, so in essence anyone who considers him/herself to be Hispanic or Latino is indeed defined as Hispanic or Latino, which therefore can also include persons of Portuguese and/or Brazilian descent. Scholars such as Marcelo Suárez-Orozco and Mariela Pérez prefer the 'cultural category' of Latino even if it does not signify a precise racial or national origin, and define it broadly as the segment of the US population that traces its descent to the Spanish-speaking, Caribbean and Latin American worlds.

Sources: Office of Management and Budget, "Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity", Washington, DC, The White House, [www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg\\_1997standards](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards) [viewed 2014-12-24]; Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), "Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data: Standardization for Health Care Quality Improvement", [www.ahrq.gov/research/iomracereport/reldata1tab1-1.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/research/iomracereport/reldata1tab1-1.htm) [viewed 2014-12-24]; "Hispanic Origin", [quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long\\_RH1825212.htm](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/meta/long_RH1825212.htm) [viewed 2014-12-24].

66. Ulrich Beck, "La condition cosmopolite", *op. cit.*; Michel Wieviorka, *Neuf leçons de sociologie*, *op. cit.*

that includes global, dual, multiple, multicultural and transnational citizenship.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, large and instantaneous flows of technologically transmitted information and images have recently tended to dismantle the *delimitative function* of culture in a global world. Its role has been gradually redefined: new horizons of shared cultural goods opened, rather than concrete and symbolic national boundaries and hierarchies between the 'inside' and the 'outside.' Latin American cultural life, too, has been undergoing the general process of dismantling and transformation of what George Yúdice defined as traditional 'behavioral genres' that kept the social world 'in its place' during the past years.<sup>68</sup> Thus, through migration waves and beyond, by crossing borders, Latin American culture transcends the region's frames of reference and, through diversified interactions and exchanges, widens the experience of being (and belonging) in the 21st century. In a global world and transnational contexts, Latin Americans follow multiple pathways, thereby moving and fixing old-new definition and membership criteria.

## Final remarks

Our contemporaneity evinces multiple and accelerated social, economic, political, technological and cultural changes. Through a multidimensional dynamics of interdependency and autonomy, transformations have been both simultaneous and contradictory. In the last decades, social sciences have approached and attempted to explain these processes and new realities through diverse analytical angles and theoretical perspectives. The conceptual resources of globalization theories challenged prevailing schools of thought. New questions and queries regarding the nature, scope and links of globalization with modernity

67. Paul Johnston, "The Emergence of Transnational Citizenship Among Mexican Immigrants in California", in T.A. Aleinikoff and D. Klusmeyer (eds.), *Citizenship Today: Global Perspectives and Practices*, Washington (DC), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2001: 253-277; Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Being National. Being Transnational", *op. cit.*: 343-365; *Id.*, "Latin American Jews in the United States. Community and Belonging in Times of Transnationalism", in L. Saxe and S. DellaPergola (eds.), *Contemporary Jewry*, 33(1-2), 2013: 121-143.

68. George Yúdice, *The Expediency of Culture: Uses of Culture in the Global Era*, Durham (NC), Duke University Press, 2003.

were raised. Some saw in it the culmination of modern dilemmas, a more reflexive and inclusive condition of diversity of traditions. The factual and discursive prevalence of tradition was rescued and emphasized through the Multiple Modernities lens, thus conceived not exclusively in terms of continuity and evolution, but also in terms of discontinuity and breakdown. Such a critical-comparative approach allows regarding tradition as a creative and integral, rather than a redundant or even dysfunctional element of the evolving civilization of modernity.<sup>69</sup> Tradition may thus be conceived as the reservoir of the most central social and cultural experiences of society.

Certainly, globalization's contradictory impact questions the simplification of an alleged discursive homogeneity and unity.

Interconnectedness between societies and countries; migration movements and the relocation of individual and groups, a 'world on the move', demanded, as seen, additional analytical angles provided by the concepts of Transnationalism and Diaspora. Given the profusion of uses of the concepts and their heuristic value, the equilibrium between the explanatory power and its descriptive scope is a sustained challenge. Sometimes, the double logic that characterizes them adds complexity, as is the case of the concept of globalization. As Wieviorka properly analyzes, its use is both descriptive and conceptual and while its descriptive dimension accounts for the multidimensional reality of globalization processes, conceptually, its scope widens and becomes a tool to analyze the problems of the contemporary world.<sup>70</sup>

Other concepts follow a similar path and thus exemplify the tests and challenges of paradigmatic shift. The transnational lens adds analytical value to the concept of social transformation and social structuring—and de-structuring—by facilitating our understanding of complexity, interdependence, variability, contextual and multilevel mediations of migratory processes and their aftermath in a rapidly changing world.

It is pertinent to underscore that while Transnational Studies have typically focused on individuals, their links and networks as the principal units of analysis, the challenge to analyze and include the institutional underpinnings of transnationalism and its structural effects

69. Simon Susen and Bryan S. Turner, "Introduction to the Special Issue on Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt", *op. cit.*

70. Michel Wieviorka, *Neuf leçons de sociologie*, *op. cit.*

stands before us.<sup>71</sup> Thus, though the essential connection with globalization processes has been stressed, its fertility for new readings of diasporas—new and old ones—still requires attention.

Certainly, the importance of these analytical perspectives is threatened by extreme ‘hyperglobalizing’ or ‘transnationalizing’ exercises. Some enthusiastic, other skeptical and structurally critical, and some others with moderate and pluralistic positions, the analytic paths to decipher an increased complex reality multiply and diversify. Among them, normative social and political theory experienced a meaningful renaissance. The theoretical debates have serious influence on global thought because they are related to the various challenges that globalization poses to central questions such as the individual’s identity and autonomy *vis-à-vis* collective identities; universalism *vis-à-vis* particularisms and certainly the pair State/civil society. Diverse theoretical traditions are confronted today with multiple questions that arise from the transformations and behavior of these binomials (and the need for new synthesis): why, precisely when the individual is recognized as a central social actor, do communities and primordial identities acquire unexpected prominence? How has the tension between community belonging and individual affirmation been historically solved and how can the debate be reconsidered? Has the balance been broken and, if so, can it be restored only at a national scale or is it feasible to recover it starting from the opportunities brought about by globalization processes and transnational spaces?

The approaches that participate in the debate are not static. Thus, for example, to speak about communitarianism and liberalism as two homogeneous, antagonistic and endogamous theories would lead us to reductionist and simplifying views, not only because the dialogue and debates between them have shown rich argumentative synthesis but also because such debates have an impact on political institutions and contribute to shape social and political practices of different scope. So, whereas in Europe the debate has developed around two characterization axes: whether it be realist liberalism *vis-à-vis* ethical liberalism or individualist liberalism *vis-à-vis* social liberalism, in the United

71. Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo and Patricia Landolt, “The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2), 1999: 217–237.



States it has developed as communitarianism *vis-à-vis* liberalism, which partly corresponds to the former currents and partly separates from them. Within each one of these currents the diverse formulations are differentiated and enriched, the tree ramifies and becomes complex and hybrid.<sup>72</sup>

In the different analytical levels it is necessary to prevent the risk that, due to over-explanatory tendencies, the heuristic potential of the concepts might be limited. It stands the challenge to bring together both their widened descriptive scope and their capacity to address singularities. In order to maintain the analytical-explanatory power of concepts, it is required to rigorously observe the fields, areas and regions in which they theoretically and factually display. The aim is to guarantee analyses in which global thought recovers singular articulations and formulations that would account for variations in processes, actions and actors, both individual and collective.

Latin America faces shared tests and specific ones linked to the tensions derived from the diverse analytical axes addressed: current globalization processes, transnational fields and spaces, diaspora consciousness and processes of diaspora-making. In the region, the contradictions and perplexities associated to global interconnectedness and regional transformations nourish ambiguities that characterize processes of democratization and consolidation of inclusive public spheres. The State's authoritarian structures and strategies are persistent and still resistant to participatory processes that vary throughout the continent; the place of political parties differ in their mediating role, thus drawing varying scenarios in which the two main functions of politics—participation and representation—are displayed. In democratizing regimes, civil societies show different degrees of strength in their search for autonomous (and collaborative) spaces. As Waisman has stated,<sup>73</sup> two poles have simultaneously developed in Latin American societies: a strong civil society, very much like that of established democracies, and a marginal one, susceptible to clientelistic co-optation, and in some

72. Judit Bokser Liwerant and Alejandra Salas Porras, "Globalización, identidades colectivas y ciudadanía", *op. cit.*; Judit Bokser Liwerant, "Globalization and Collective Identities", *Social Compass*, 49(2), 2002: 253–272.

73. Carlos H. Waisman, "The Multiple Modernities Argument in Societies in the Americas", in L. Roniger and C.H. Waisman, *Globality and Multiple Modernities: Comparative North American and Latin American Perspectives*, *op. cit.*: 106–116.

cases, coercion. The first pole generates citizens, the second apathetic subjects, prone to short-lived instances of anomic activation, not sustainable because of the low capacity of autonomous organizations.

The new scenarios also imply revisiting the legitimacy of difference. The crystallization of Latin American cultures has determined the profiles of social frontiers and public spheres. Consequently, implications on national identities and on social integration are strongly felt, as well as the effect on the redefinition of membership criteria. Intertwined with the complex and differentiated historical trajectory of Latin America, public spheres and democratic spaces grew highly fragmented: Latin American citizens were the first in the modern West that failed in their attempt to reconcile social equality with cultural differences, provoking socio-ethnic fissures in the continent's public life.<sup>74</sup> The road towards recognition of difference, a new identity politics and the emphasis on heterogeneity, act as a substratum that enhances and reinforces pluralism. 'Struggles for recognition',<sup>75</sup> 'identity/difference movements'<sup>76</sup> signal a new political imaginary that propels identity issues to the forefront of the public political discourse. Elective and civic bonds coexist with ethnic and/or religious affiliations, linking individuals, communities and larger societies in unprecedented ways.

Finally, on national, regional, global and transnational planes, structures and processes interact in unprecedented ways, interweaving social action and cultural patterns along complex scenarios that can serve as catalysts for new pathways in global thought. Diversity doesn't limit the potentialities of shared conceptual spaces; globalization, transnationalism and diaspora, as well as nation, ethnicity or citizenship throw light on new realities that pose conceptual challenges. They call for convergent efforts in a wide terrain of theoretical approaches to analyze, explain and interpret new phenomena and world dynamics.

74. Carlos A. Forment, *Democracy in Latin America 1760–1900*, Vol. 1, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2003.

75. Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, London and New York, Verso, 2003.

76. Samuel A. Chambers and Terrell Carver (eds.), *William E. Connolly: Democracy, Pluralism and Political Theory*, London, Routledge, 2008.